

[06/20, 17:48] Lynne: *FAMILY FEUD* : *IN LOVE WITH THE ENEMY*

Prologue

At first it feels like a dream because the voices sounds very afar, in the mist of my confusing dream I can hear a man with a squeaky voice excitedly repeating “they are in here, they are in here” then another “hai wena mam do you want him to wake up, shut up” this one sounds deep and raspy, the reprimanding tone is not to be missed My eyelids flaps open involuntarily I’m still a little dazed from the deep sleep I’ve just abruptly woke from but I don’t miss when the man with the raspy voice starts to barks orders “you, stand here and guard the window and you, come with me” that’s when my little brain start to presses what’s happening, these people are here, they are just outside I’m not dreaming.

Is this a break in!

Oh no

They came to rob us

Who the hell is this brave or rather stupid enough to test my father's patience?

You see Bheki, that's my father's name by the way, is no monster but he is well respected man and feared by many which is why I'm shocked that someone would do this, no sane man would do this, these people are crazy I tell you, they must have a death wish.

Whoever that was told to stand guard starts fiddling with the window's handle, seeing that I'm fully conscious my natural instinct to scream kicks in but before I could open my mouth, my brother, Gcina already has his hand over my mouth muffling my voice. Tears are already blinding my sight, I'm shaking from fear. Gcina keeps swooshing me when I let out a loud whimper, its dark I can't see anything but I can surely feel my father's presences, I don't know when or how did he manage to come in

here without making any sound, he quietly but sternly orders Qcina and myself to get under the bed, which we do without protesting, I want to run after him but I know better so instead I cry silently as he looks the door behind him

My poor brother is shaking like a leaf next to me but he is doing a good job in making sure that I don't scream or cry out loud. His one arm is draped across my shoulder while the other hand is still covering my mouth making sure that I don't make a sound.

Rowdiness erupts from the front door but because it's so dark around the house I'm unable to see anything but from what I hear those men have made it into the house. The man with the hoarse voice keeps shouting for his people to search the whole house, it sounds so chaotic, I can hear glasses breaking, doors breaking, people shouting, some screaming.

How many of them are out there?

The noise it's now deafening, "Baba, Baba" one of

my brother screams, I'm not sure which one because it can be difficult to distinguish their voices apart at times I can hear my father's voice in the mist of everything when he shouts for whoever that is to run.

“HEY WENA” that hoarse voice again this time his sternness is followed by a gunshot

No..no..no..no

A gunshot, that was a gunshot right?

[06/20, 17:57] Lynne: (continuation)

My ears are ringing from that loud bang sound but I don't dwell on it, I want to know who shot who, is it my father, any of my brothers or could it be one of those men, I'm crazy with worry and I can't even come out from under this bed.

“God I know I don't pray regularly but please don't let that be any of my family member, I promise I'll go to church every Sunday” I even pray silently.

“There's two more look for them” I've long

concluded that the man with the croaky voice is the boss, he's been ordering everyone around.

I hear my father shouts for the man not to harm his kids before the door to my bedroom is kicked to the ground, the movements around the room tells me there's two man searching, they are breaking everything that's breakable I want to cry out loud but Gcina is ensuring that I don't, he's holding me tightly close to him before I know it I'm yanked under the bed by my foot and the man roughly carry me over his shoulder like a bag of potatoes, my head his handing low from his back I'm kicking and screaming for him to put me down but my scream falls on death ears, the man is too strong and too big for my tiny self I'm busy hitting him on the back with my small fist but that doesn't faze him one bit. Another man that's a mountain follows behind carrying Gcina on his shoulder as well, he's kicking and screaming too but as expected the man too unfazed. It feels like forever before we are outside, both men roughly put us down...

No, please God no...

Nothing, I mean nothing could prepare me for the sight before me, my father is on the floor, kicking and screaming for the man to stop, but that is just fuelling him up, when my father tries to stand he kicks him right back to the floor, its kick...kick... kick...kick after kick but my father is relentless he keeps trying to stand even though he's weak. Tears are blurring my eyes, mucus is blocking my nose I'm just a mess. My father manages to raise his eyes that when he sees me and he stops fighting "Ntonto" he says softly dashing me with a feeble smile, his hands are wrapped around his stomach trying to hide the wound that has been inflicted That's when I notice the pool of blood surrounding him

Lord I asked you to protect him, the one thing I ask of you and you fail to deliver

The blood is oozing from his stomach.

The blood... God the blood, it's just too much.

"Baba" I reply softly after sniffing

I feel like my heart has been ripped right out of my chest, it's like a hole has been dug and it replaced what used to be my heart. In my head everything is happening so slowly, in the corner of my eye I can see the blazing fire that has ignited and my father's taxis are set alight.

His bread and butter, gone.

Gatsha is the first one to notice me and he manages to shrug himself out of the strong hold that he's been under and runs my direction but before he could reach me a man twice his size has his knee on Gatsha ribs battering him with the back of the gun, the kicking and screaming starts again not only from me but from the rest of my brothers once the man is satisfied with himself he forces Gatsha to stand, blood is flowing from his beautiful face Misuzulu is no longer fighting he's just standing and watching everything unfold, he is emotionless, his face is hard his eyes are those of the devil. he's so much like our father that it scares me sometimes

“Sgidi, not my kids” my father says for the hundredth time

The man with the raspy voice smile slyly, I guess he’s Sgidi

“I told I’d kill you wena nja (You dog)” he spits venom

He goes on to order one of his goons to bring a petrol can. Tell me he’s not about to do what I think he’s about to do.

All my brother’s and myself included start fighting to get out of these men’s strong holds which is futile at this point because all these men are bigger and stronger than any of us. The man that was ordered to bring the petrol can finally come back and not only is he carrying a can but he has a car tire in his other hand.

Lord help us

Another man helps him shove the tire down my father’s shoulders, I don’t know how many men this boss guy brought but I’ll tell you that he came prepared.

Through my teary eyes I still manage to see everything that's happening, once the tire is secured around my father's shoulder the boss pours petrol all over him and lights a match

My father has stopped fighting, none of his kids are fighting anymore we all just looking at what await us.

His eyes travel from Misuzulu , then Gatsha who's still bleeding from the beating, then Nqaba, Mondli, Gcina and finally his eyes meet mine.

“Qhamukile” he says softly

“Be a good girl and close your eyes baby, don't open them ok” I say nothing but nod in response and close my eyes

I'm trying too hard to block everything that's happening and I'm also fighting the urge to open my eyes “don't open your eyes, don't open your eyes” I repeat the mantra more than I can count in my head but I still fail

“Boys you are now men, take care of your sister for me” that's the last thing he says before the evil man

set him afire.

I tried, I really tried to keep my eyes closed but I failed, we all fighting to get to our fathers burning body but to no avail. The smell of flesh mixed with tire lingers on the air.

They say the darkest hour is just before the dawn and that I can attest to, this has been a very long and daunting night

[06/20, 17:58] Lynne: (end of prologue)

Morning light starts to creep in though the sky is dark from the smoke. it's getting light but my heart is dark, hallow, tears have dried, I no longer have any tears left to cry, me and brothers are just looking at what used to be our father, his remains lies before us.

I have never seen any of my brother this broken, it's like their souls have been ripped right out of their bodies, they show no emotion even Mondli the softy is just heartless right now.

“Alright, my work here is done” the devil himself say
startling us

“Now boys lets finish up here so we can go
celebrate” he says filling up his gun with bullets

He killed my father now he is killing his kids too I
thought I would be scared but no, none of us are
showing any emotion I guess we all knew our fate,
we were all expecting this I don't know about my
brother but I want to die.

I'm ready

Can he get it over and done already?

I'm ready.

Yes, I'm ready I try and convince myself one last
time

The man that's been holding me throughout this
ordeal starts to shift uncomfortably and starts
shaking his head.

“You mean, we killing them too” he asks, his voice trembling

I think he is cared of the boss

the boss says nothing, he doesn't even lift his head, he just continue loading his bullets till he is done after that he raises his head to look at all his goons one by one and says “does anyone have a problem with that” no one dears to say anything but they all look very apprehensive

“We didn't come here to kill kids” one of them finally say, he's a bit younger than the rest of them. I commend his bravery but again he killed my father They all start mumbling and shifting around. I don't know why they are now reluctant, they came here to kill us, they must finish up the work and leave I want to die already

“Cowards” he boss say shaking his head

“I’ll do it myself then” he says cocking his gun

Finally.

This is it

This is the end of Bhekumuzi and Nandi Buthelezi lineage, this is the end of us.

BANG! BANG! BANG! BANG! BANG! BANG!

“Wake up, wake up” he says shaking me vigorously

[06/20, 17:58] Lynne: chapter 1

I’m sorry, you must be thinking I’m rude here I am already reliving the nightmares of my childhood and I haven’t even properly introduced myself, again please accept my sincere apology.

Introduction.... Where do I even starts?

from the beginning right, well here goes..

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(to be continued)

please like and share

[06/20, 17:58] Lynne: chapter one

my name is Qhamukile Buthelezi, sixteen years of age and currently in grade ten, I'm from a small rural area called Mvubukazi situated in the outskirts of Pietermaritzburg. As you now know I'm the last born and only rose amongst thorn, you got that right I'm the only girl child at home. I have five older brothers, a whole big five I tell you I'm just surrounded by too much testosterone, we have our fights like any other siblings out there, mostly I fight with Qcina I don't know why that is but we always in each other's throats, I blame the fact that there's too many of them and just me so maybe sometimes think I'm one of the boys, my physical appearances don't do me any justice either, you should see me, I'm thin, tall and dark just like them, I thank our father for those physical attributes, that man genes are too strong. Couldn't I at least take my mother's light complexion, or her hour glass figure?

Speaking of my mother, I hear she died after giving birth to me, so I don't know her. I used to blame myself at first but my father assured me that it was not my fault so I've learnt to live with it, the guilt

was too much of a burden to carry anyway. She was a beautiful woman, her wedding picture is still hung on our dining room area, and she looks no older than eighteen, she looks very happy. Her smile is enough to make anyone's heart melt I hear she was very benign and loving, she had a good heart I've been told and I can see it from her big brown eyes at least that's one physic I took from her, I'm always told how much I look like her but I'm not convinced she was a goddess not that I'm ugly I'm beautiful in own way, just look past my flat chest, my flat buttocks or my big coyly afro and you will see the beauty somewhere there.

I've long made peace with my physical appearance. I know I'll blossom pretty soon and I too will have the boobs and the hips like girls my age, ag enough about me and what I lack.

After she passed, my aunt, her sisters wanted to take Qcina and myself as we were too young and thought my dad won't be able to care for a toddler and a new born but she had to deal with my stubborn father who I believed said "I'm not dead

am I, so I'm much capable of caring for my kids”
shoot the woman from trying to help, my poor aunt.
I wouldn't wish anyone to be on the receiving end of
my father's wrath.

My aunt tried again after my dad's passing I was
just eight years and Qcina was just nine, hey don't
start counting how it be possible that he's just
months older than me, my parents were too in love.
Anyway my poor aunt had to now deal with big old
Musizulu who was twenty-two by then, his exact
words were “I'm old enough to take care of them”
imagine the burden of being twenty something and
having to care for five people, God bless his heart.
Musizulu is a total replica of our father not only did
he take his looks, he inherited his stoic personality
as well, you can imagine how my aunt felt like
having to deal with Bheki junior.

SMH

[06/20, 17:58] Lynne: 2

I love Misuzulu he's a father, a brother wrapped in

one, I love him dearly, he's such a good brother in fact they all are. Seeing that I'm already raving about how much I love them let me tell you more about them.

The first born is obviously Misuzulu, thirty years of age, he's got zero tolerance for nonsense, he's just forever serious, then the second one is Gatsha, twenty-seven years he's the ladies' man and the clown of the family

The third Nqaba sigh. This one is the prodigal child, he is very irrational, he acts instantly and deals with whatever the repercussion after, he's trouble I tell you. Oh he is twenty-five.

Mondli, ah my favourite, he is the intellect of the family and the softy I hear he took my mother's personality, he's the voice of reason. It's unfair to say he's my favourite but hey he's not as strict as the rest of them, for a twenty-year old he surely knows how to reason and understand objectively which I can't say about the rest.

The last one is Gcina who is still going through

some identity crisis at the moment but he's seventeen so I guess he will figure himself out as he grows.

I'm sure you're wondering how did we survive that night well like you I'm not sure I just know that I was ready to die so when shots were fired I just closed my eyes and waited to draw my last breath but it never happened I guess those men chose the latter all I know is there was more than one body count that night. Imagine, one day I had a father then the next we were burying what was left of him. It's heart-breaking and very traumatic. God, the fire, the screams, the tears, the blood, the blood was just too much. I think my brain suppressed the horrors of what happened that night somewhere in the back and I'm thankful for that.

“wake up” he continues to shake me, Gcina has no gentleness in his bones I tell you.

Seating up straight I try to process what's happening, I'm dreaming, damn it felt so real and I

wish I could tell you that it was all a bad dream but no, I had to witness my father being gruesomely murdered. At eight years old I had to watch my father burn to ashes, his cry's still haunt me till this day.

Tell me, how do I unlive that?

How do I move on?

Not only am I teary I'm also drenched in sweat, the nightmares have never been this vivid. It was like I was there all over again, I feel very suffocated right now it feels like I'm breathing in that fire all over again I

quickly wipe away the lone tear that has managed to escape before I answer

"I'm awake bhuti, it was just a nightmare" I tell him trying to sound convincing. I just hope my voice doesn't sound as timid as it does in my ears

After the funeral everyone moved on including that aunt of mine and forgot about us but we are the Buthelezi's right we pulled through and here we are but that doesn't make anything easy.

Gcina looks like he's seen a ghost. His eyes are about to fall out of their sockets I can understand though

"I'm fine Gcina it was just a dream; I was being chased by lions. It felt so real" I lie

how can I tell him the truth; how do I remind him of the night that we lost a father.

He doesn't say anything but masks the worry written on his face very well and nods, he's not convinced is he?

"I'm fine really" I say giving him a weak smile which he reciprocates with his weak smile

he generally doesn't talk much and he's not easily fooled, I'd like to sit him down and explain but I don't have the energy and more importantly time.

"let me get ready or else I'm going to be late" I say already pushing the blankets away from me.

He nods and leave the room, I'm sure he's already calling one of the older ones right now.

He is gone by the time I finish preparing for school,

damn him, he drives a school transport so he usually drops me off at the bus stop but I guess not today now I have to walk all the way to the bus stop he dropped out of school last year because he want to 'hustle' whatever that means

[06/20, 17:59] Lynne: (continuation)

I'm early even bab'Mkhize, the bus driver is amazed that he doesn't have to wait for me, I'm always late if you must know but this old man always wait for me, he's the best right.

It's Wednesday, not particularly my favorite day. I think my strong dislike of this day is motivated by that fact that I'm forced to participate in those sporty activities I hate so much I mean I failed at netball long ago, let's not even mention soccer so I don't see myself running around all day in the sports grounds, did I mention that It's mid- March so you can imagine the scotching sun J eses...I hate sports unless, I wonder why this hasn't crossed my mind before 'no Que, don't even think about it' I

inwardly scold myself but the rebel in me is just overpowering the sensible me as what the hell, I'm doing it.

I'm bunking.

My father would be disappointed I think to myself as I scout my surrounding ensure no one sees me and I'm out.

I can safely say I made it out unseen, I'd make a good spy if I say so myself. I didn't think this through though it's midday and there are no buses this time and taxis don't use this route so I have no choice but to walk. It's about a seven kilometers' walk but it's better than running around all day.

Gugulethu by prince kaybee is blasting through the speakers of my headsets, I'm even doing Vosho's inwardly so I'm energized.

The sound of screeching tires and a loud hoot scares me half to death that I roughly remove my headsets and jump on the pavement cursing. Fuck. Did he have to stop so close to me, in fact he nearly

bumped me

Stupid boy.

“Hey wena, are you trying to kill me” I shout at this idiot.

I’m seriously rattled, he stopped so close to me no wonder I feel like I’ve had a near death experience, my hands are on my chest and I’m trying to steady my breathing

“Kill you, don’t blame, blame those things you had on your ears” he retorts
what the f...the nerve he nearly killed me and he’s blaming me

“What” I’m seriously outrage

“Yes, those things will kill you”

I’m shocked to say the least, he’s unbelievable.

“I’m not at fault here” I’m still shouting at this nincompoop

“in case you didn’t notice, you walking on the wrong side of the road miss ‘I’m not at fault’” he’s even air quoting, mimicking my voice sarcastically. I’ve been trying to contain my anger but he’s just pressing my last buttons

“yes, I’m not at fault, go demand a refund from wherever you got that fake drivers licence from cause clearly you can’t drive” with that said I tighten my backpack straps and starts walking. I’m not one to back down from a fight but I don’t want to waste my energy on him I have five more kilometres to walk so instead of continuing to argue with this fool I soldier on.

I can see him smile from the corner of my eye.
Creep.

“Hey, where are you going? I demand an apology”
the nerve.

I thought I was going to keep my cool and walk away. Be the bigger you know but not anymore.

“An apology? You must be crazy” I shout after I’ve stopped to look at him he is seriously crazy if he thinks I’ll apologize

“No need for insults girly” he says smiling
I don’t know why is he smiling because he’s not even good looking

wait...he said girly, girly?

“Listen here, I won’t apologise for almost getting killed by you, in actual fact you the one that owes me an apology” I click my tongue and put back my headsets back on, I’m not playing any music but I’m done with this argument. I look ahead on the road again and start walking I seriously need to get home.

He hoots again and I get jumpy I was not expecting that all

“What”

“Get in the car” I’m not getting into the scrap he calls a car so instead I shake my head and look ahead.

He smiles and shakes his head

I’ve been walking for about thirty minutes, I have about another twenty minutes to walk until I reach home and this fool is still driving slowly behind me

What a creep.

At first I was annoyed but now I’m alarmed what if he’s a serial killer, God I didn’t bunk to be followed by some creep. I’ve increased my pace but he’s driving so he catches on really quick

“Why are you following me” my voice sounds shaky I must be rattled than I let on.

He looks at me long before he answers

“I just want to make sure you get home safe” he says softly; my eyes have rolled back three sixty degrees backwards. He can’t be serious. I’ve walked this route before and it was safer then, than now that he’s following me

“I know I’m safe so please, just go I’ll be fine” I say pleadingly
how the all mighty has fallen now I’m even saying please.

He looks at me long without saying anything that I start to see a flicker of regret in his eyes

“quit being stubborn and get in the car” did I say regret, clearly I’m seeing wrong, he’s still arrogant it’s no time to be defiant so I try for the last time “I know I was walking on the wrong side of the road and I’m sorry but please. Can you stop following me”?

He doesn’t answer but looks at me long before he tilts his head to look back on the road. I don’t

understand why the road is so empty today, it's mid-day I know but heck it's too empty

“I'm sorry Ntokazi I didn't mean to scare you, tell you what how about you get in and I'll take you home” from girly to Ntokazi

SMH.

He doesn't get it uh...I let him be and continue walking

“nawe you scare easily” he says after a while

Now he's making small talk, I turn my head to look at him, he's smiling urg he's so annoying.

I'm just happy I'm close to home I can see the start of the gravelled road going into Mvubukazi.

“why did you bunk school” I don't know who appointed him as my guardian besides he's wearing Alexander's high school uniform himself and he has

a nerve to ask me about bunking

I continue to ignore him. Doesn't he take a hint. I
DON'T WANT TO TALK TO YOU.

I know for a fact that he won't use the gravelled
road. His car is too pimped up, the rims looks new
and it's too dropped to handle the dongas of
Mvubukazi.

“See you again tomorrow” with that said he turns
and drives away speeding before I could gather
strength to protest and HELL no, he's not seeing me
tomorrow or any other day for that natter.

* * *

good morning good people I hope you still enjoying
the story

please don't forget to like, comment and share
we need more good people to like the page. lovely

day to all!

[06/20, 17:59] Lynne: (continuation)

I see Gatsha as I approach home, I wonder what's he doing here so early. He's leaning on a body of what was once my dad Cressida busy peeling an apple with his pocket knife he does that a lot especially when he's nervous.

“you home early” that's the first thing he says, a hello would have been polite

“Bthuti” I say greeting to which he nods to and follow behind me as I walk to the door.

Can you believe he didn't unlock the door, so like he came home and stood outside urg now I have to scratch in my bag for a key.

“what's wrong”

“period pains” he answers himself before I could.

Eye roll.

you do know how awkward menstruation conversations are right, now imagine how terrifying it is to have one with your brother, this reminds me of when I was twelve and I had just started my periods dear Gatsha came home with three different brands and told me to tell him which one do I prefer so he can know for future. I don't know how he knew I had started my periods.

That's Gatsha for you.

“No, I have a headache so they let me leave early” I say looking everywhere but him, he knows when I'm lying “Mmh”

“why are you home early”

“Haibo Ntonto can't a brother check on his favourite sister” yeah right!

“You mean your only sister” I say jokingly giving him an inquisitive look I’m not buying into his ‘checking up on me’ story
“That too” he says giving me an innocent smile.

I shake my head and walk to my bedroom he follows behind but does not enter the room instead he leans on the door frame with his apple still uneaten, he’s not going to it.

“So how are you” he asks sweetly.
He has his left scared eyebrow raised it’s like he’s daring me to lie. The scar was caused by that beating he suffered from that man years back but he still looks handsome.

“I’m fine bhuti, it’s just a headache”

“I hear you had a dream about what happened to....”
he pauses to draw a deep breath “..to ubaba” he finishes off.

We have never spoken about that night, it happened

and we moved on.

“it was just a bad dream I’m fine” I don’t want to talk and he knows it.

It’s funny how he’s the one that understands me better, he comes to pat my shoulder and nods just like that we spoke.

“I’m glad” he says leaving my room

“don’t cook tonight, those monkey you call brothers will have to sort themselves out or better yet get themselves girlfriends” he say from somewhere around the house and he’s gone.

I have no homework and I’m not cooking how blessed am I. I’m going to visit my best and only friend Thobile, she can’t stop complaining about Khaya’s cheating escapades, that’s her boyfriend I don’t know what she’s still doing with him but the heart wants what the heart wants, her words.

* * *

chapter two loading

[06/20, 17:59] Lynne: chapter two

Shit... please excuse my profanity but fuck I'm late I don't know how did I not hear my loud alarm at five am but again I sleep like the dead, I'm the type that can sleep till nine am, don't look at me like that I blame the fact that I never had any female figure to teach me these things, I know what you thinking...excuses, excuses well whatever, I don't really care what you think of me.

I finish preparing for school in an ample time, by the time I get to the bus stop babMkhize is long gone, he knows I'm always late why didn't he wait for me today. I take back what I said about him being the best.

I have no choice but use my pocket money for taxi fare, can this week end already I can't deal.

A very familiar mustard Corolla approaches

speeding leaving dust behind, some people are show off really. The windows are tinted so I can't really see who the driver is but I'm sure is some thug wanna be. It stops right in front of me and the driver rolls down his window

“Ah we meet again” Lord help me.

Out of all people it had to be him, it's the same fool that harassed me yesterday. I don't respond instead I scout to see if there aren't any taxi approaching I'm already late.

“Get in” he says leaning back to open the back seat door, I'm not getting in to this car.

“No” I don't have to explain myself

“I'm sure you don't want to be late than you already are” he's right I'm late

“you know very well that taxi's hardly use this route so just get in” I hate to admit it but he's right

A very exasperated urg sound comes from the passenger seat and looking past this idiot I see none other than Nokhaya, the school's drama queen,

I was contemplating getting into the car but now I'm definably not getting in.

"I know you like being late but I don't so just get in" she says bored, like hell I will.

"no I'm fine" I tell her
pride...

"Can we please go, I'm already late" she says to this fool, I don't know why would he think I'll get in his car, he's driving with his girlfriend for goodness sake, well I don't know if they are an item but they look like it. He doesn't even look at her, his eyes are still fixed on me.

"Quite being stubborn, get in please" he says softly
I'm late so I swallow my pride and get in.

it's silent in the car, this guy keeps looking at me in the rear-view mirror and smiling to himself. It's not long that we arrive and few late comers like myself are running, the minute the car stops Nokhaya runs out without saying thank you or giving her boyfriend a kiss.

Sigh

I don't know if I should pay him or what but it would be rude not to so I search for the ten rand note to pay him.

"I didn't ask you to pay me" he says after I offer him the money sounding offended

boys and their egos oh well he just saved me a ten rand.

I say my many thank you's and I attempt to unlock the door to make my exit but it's child locked

like really...how old am I...five?

"the door please" I try not to roll my eyes

"what about it" he sounds so authoritative right now

"Can you please unlock the door?"

"the door please" he says mimicking me "what do you think this is" yoh ok.

"it look like I have lots of teaching to do" this one thinks he's an elder. I'd roll my eyes but they too tired to roll back.

"I'm Mngqobi by the way" whatever can he open

“Alright, can you please open for me”

“You know it’s very rude not to introduce yourself when someone has politely done so”

yoh J esus I need strength

“Q” I say dismissively

“Q? what that? Is that even a name” can lightning please strike me

“Yes, Que for Qhamukile” I say rolling my eyes earning myself grimace from him

“I see, you need to stop with this Que thing, it’s not cute” he says serious. Ok father can I go now.

“So Qhamu, will you be bunking again” as for Qhamu

I don’t know how does he shift from being hard Mngobi to playful Mngobi, it must be hard

“Mngobi I seriously need to go, I’m late remember” he only lets me go after I’ve promised to see him

after school and I had no choice but to agree.

The principal is already waiting at the gate for the late comers like myself.

“maShenge, you still don’t want to wake up I see” he says once he’s sported me.

He’s the only one that call me by my clan name which I hate, he has a soft spot for me I don’t know why though maybe it’s because we share the same surname. He says I remind him of his mother so that’s why he calls me maShange.

“I’m sorry sir, it won’t happen again” I say giving him my most sincere smile

he shakes his head and smiles back. What did I say, I’m liked... I know he won’t punish me but he’s going tell me about how him and my father had to wake up in the wee hours of the morning to make sure that cows grazed before they could get ready for school...that’s punishment enough for me as I’ve heard those stories too many times.

“You see maShenge your father and I used to...”
What did I say.

[06/20, 18:00] Lynne: (Chapter two continues)

TGIF

At last it's a Friday, my favorite day of the week.

I'm late...again... I know, I know....story of my life but at least babMkhize is waiting for me. I was angry at him thinking he left me yesterday but it was actually BabMbhele that's was driving that one waits for no man, with him walala wasala so I guess babaMkhize is still the best.

Fortunately for me Mr Buthelezi, the school principal is no where in sight when I arrive, how lucky am i?

My first period is Maths, I understand nothing so being late makes no difference by the time I attend my last period which is business studies I'm

drained and impatiently waiting for the bell to ring, business studies used to be my favorite subject until Mr Govender was replaced with Mrs Ndaba yoh that woman can give you headache.

The bell.

Thank goodness, at last It's after school and what we usually do on Friday's is chill outside the school gates until the bus arrives so today it's no indifferent it's just after one pm and the bus will only arrive after two thirty I'm walking with Thobile listening to her complain about Khaya, her boyfriend whose on his way to get her.

“Yaz Que, he say the reason he cheats is because I don't want sleep with him” she says as we exit the gate.

Did I mention that I don't like this khaya guy

“Hai Tee, that's a dumb excuse. If he loves you like

he says he does then he will wait for you” I say

Her father is a pastor, not just any church but Shembe and not forgetting that he is very traditional so she must just forget about giving him her virginity

“I know...” she pauses a bit

“But I think I’m ready you know”

I’m distracted by a loud laugh coming from a distance and shifting my eyes to that direction I see Nokhaya with her entourage laughing but that’s not what gets my attention. I’m seeing Mngqobi and they are laughing at something he said, he is leaning on his car Nokhaya is standing on the right then the wanna be drama queen Nontombi is standing on the left, he says something which they laugh to again, this time Nontombi even leans on his shoulder.

Urg, I even get repulsive from just seeing the way

those two are rubbing themselves on Mqobi

I don't know what's happening to me but I'm somehow pissed by that scene, why I don't know.

It's not jealousy!

Mngqobi is wearing his school uniform, his shirt is untucked and his sleeves are rolled up to his elbows, the shirt is even loosened around the neck and the tie is hanging loosely giving him that bad boy vibe.

"Que are you hearing me" that's Thobile jolting me out of my little jealous trance

"Yes Tee, just look at them, I mean who laughs like that. That's so unladylike" I find myself say incoherently

"Who are you talking about" she glances around trying to see but I drift my attention back to her

before she could spot Mqobi and his two bitches.
They seriously behaving like dogs in heat.

“No one, let’s go wait at the bus stop” I say grabbing her hand but she yanks it away

“Hai Qhamu, it’s till early besides I told you Khaya is coming so he’ll give us a lift” she’s walking slowly and I just want to get to the bus stop.

“Hai man Thobile stop telling me about that cheat of yours” I snap
Tell me why am I angry now.
She looks at me questionably

“And then, what’s wrong with you” she says almost rolling her eyes and that pisses me even more
I know once my mouth starts running I’ll say things

I don't mean so instead of talking I angrily walk to the bus stop

"Haibo Qhamukile, what did I do now" she says running behind me

"Just leave me alone" I say and put my headphones on.

By the time I get to the bus stop I'm breathing fire, I guess Thobile turned back cause she's no longer following behind me.

I need to come down and good music has that calming effect so I tune in to funkcommunity -make it that way and in an instant I'm calm.

The bus stop is empty I even have my feet put up on the bench I know I was wrong for snapping at Thobile like that I don't know what came over me I must be getting my periods soon.

Please allow me to use that as an excuse for my outburst

A soft touch around my neck straddles me and turning back to see who is it that has the nerve to touch me like that I see Mnqobi, the calmness in me vacates instantly and just like I'm angry all over again.

“Yin wena”

“Woo ooh easy tiger, who got your claws unleashed”

If I wasn't pissed now I am.

“What do you want Mnqobi”

“You” I'm not going to answer to that.

“Why are you running from me” he asks after a while

“I'm not running from you I just don't want to talk to you”

“Ok then you'll listen” he's so exasperating

“Don't you have somewhere to be I'm sure your

girlfriend is waiting” Can he just leave me alone.

“Girlfriend”

“Yes your girlfriend Nokhaya or Nontombi I’m not really sure which one cause you guys were all so cozy there”

Now I sound like a jealous freak, well done Que

The fool that is Mngobi smiles

“Qhamu is that jealousy I hear” he says amused

What??

“What, no I’m not jealous” I say fast

I don’t know if I’m trying to convince him or myself

“Could’ve fooled me” Ag I’m done.

“Please go away” with that said I put my headsets back on and increase the volume.

I wait another twenty minutes till the bus arrives, he’s been seated next to me not saying anything not that I want him to say anything.

The bus stop is now full with pupils from my school

and neighboring schools, it gets chaotic when the rowdy young ones fight to get in, they all want to get a seat in the back.

Once they are done pushing each other I stand up and make my way into the bus. I can feel Mngqobi's heavy presence behind me

“where do you think you're going” I ask after I've turned just as he was about to enter. I'm inside already and he's still outside.

“Getting in the bus” he gives me that duh facial expression

“Why, whose going to drive your fathers car back home”

He chuckles shaking his head

“My fathers car”

“Yes, can you go back where you come from”

“Qhamu kwenzakani lapho” that's babMkhize

I'm flush with embarrassment when I turn around to look at him, his arms are folded on his chest looking at me and his fool

“Ngiy’xolis a baba” I say, tap my card get a sit.

Mqobi is left negotiating, more like begging the old man to let him in, that goes on for some time before the old man relents and let’s him in. He smiles when he spots me I’m seated by the window and my headsets are on.

He comes to sit comfortably next to me.

It’s going to be a long ride.

[06/20, 18:00] Lynne: (Chapter two continues)

I just four more stops then I’ll be getting off I just hope that this bus doesn’t go where this one stays I want him to walk.

“That’s not my fathers car” he says jolting me from my little evil trance

“Then whose is it” he turns his body to face me before he answers

“Mine” he pauses a bit like he’s thinking

like I believe that’s it’s his besides isn’t he a but

too young to own a car

“Like you” he says looking me right into my eyes
what the hell...

“I’m not yours” I say and look away

“you’re just in denial Qhamu but don’t worry you’ll
see soon enough” oh please

“I’m not yours and I’ll never be so do me a favor and
leave me alone” I say adamantly after I’ve gathered
guts to look at him

“Ouch I’m wounded” he says holding his chest

Dramatic much?

“And here I thought you’re a Bride ya kwaNqcoobo”
he says chuckling

We all allowed to dream right?

“Well you thought wrong and by the way I’m a
Buthelezi and forever will be” it’s true I don’t see
myself married with kids, living in a white picket
fence house.

He looks away instantly, his face is hard and I see a

flash of anger, I'm not sure I might be imagining things or it could be that he can't believe what I just said, if I didn't know him I'd say he's seriously heartbroken

He turns his head to look at me again, his face is a little too serious for my liking he continues to stairs silently and it get too long for my comfort that I end up looking away

His eyes are just piercing, I don't know why does his eyes make me this weak

his got beautiful hazel brown eyes though.

“Buthelezi” he says softly, I don't know what happening with him right now he's suddenly lost for words

He remains quite for a while I'm just a stop away from where I get off and I couldn't be happier

“My phone” he just took it out of my hands, no permission asked.

How rude.

he presses it a few time and puts it on his ear

I need to put a password on that phone

“My airtime” I say trying to grab it but he stops my hand mid-air

Don't tell me he's calling his people with my airtime

I had to sacrifice my lunch for that airtime

“Cheap-skate” I murmur

“What was that” he's looking at me with a hard face like he's daring me to repeat

This is the Mngobi I know.... rude, vile, authoritative

“Nothing” I don't know why am I so intimidated all of sudden

“Thought so”

He drops the call and hands me my phone which I grab roughly and put it in my breast shirt pocket.

He snickers and get really close to me, too close that I can feel his minty breath on my face

“Like that would stop me” I'm flushed, I don't know what's happening to me but I feel butterflies in my stomach thank God for my melanin or else I'd be

red as tomato right now.

I hate the effect he has on me and he knows this so he uses it to his advantage

“You’re very defiant and stubborn baby but don’t worry I’ll fix that” he says

baby?

Ain’t we in a dreamland maybe

“I’m not....” he shuts me up by planting his lips on mine

Wait.... did he kiss me, he kissed me right?

Everything happened so fast, I’m not dreaming right?

His lips touched my lips?

I don’t know if I’m happy or pissed of, I roughly grab my bag and push him deliberately I need to get fresh air, I need to get out of here. I make a silent prayer for my legs to be strong enough to carry me out of this bus. I can hear him laughing as I walk away.

After I've said my goodbyes and lovely weekend wishes to babMkhize I step out of the bus but not before I hear him murmur "teenage love"

* * *

Goodnight good people.. I'm not getting as many like and comments as I would like but what can I say my Good people don't want to press that like icon

[06/20, 18:00] Lynne: (chapter two still continues)

He kissed me , he kissed me, he kissed me maybe repeating it would somehow I don't know make me believe it.

It's still surreal.

My hand involuntarily goes to my lips and I brush a finger against them slowly, these are the he very same lips he kissed?

I know it was just a peck but heck our lips touched and that's a kiss enough for me if only I could remember what his lips felt like.

Are they soft?

Thick?

Juicy?

I don't remember, everything happened so fast.

I brush my finger on my lips again.

Lord, that was my first kiss.

My first stolen kiss and I don't remember anything.

“And then wena, what are you thinking about” damn Mondli for raining on my parade I'm deep in my fantasy thoughts and he had to disturb me.

“Nothing”

“Alright then, let's see how you performed this week”

I'm with Mondli tonight, we've just had supper

nothing fancy just pap and beef stew, these men don't like rice so I don't even bother with it anymore.

I'm not sure of the whereabouts of the rest of my brothers but a tarven is my best guess. Mondli can be an nuisance at times it's a Friday I should be relaxing and enjoying the start of my weekend but no, he wants to check my books.

how boring can a person be?

He'll be disappointed shem, we can't all be clever like him. He first checks IsiZulu, I see a smile on his face at least he's happy with that, he moves on to geography, english, business studies, so far so good.

"I see you still struggling with simultaneous equations" he's now checking Maths my least favorite subject

"Im trying bhuti" like I am.

He lifts his face to look at me

"You'd tell me if you needed my help right" he coos

He's so sweet.

“Yebo bhuti, I know you are always avail....” my ringing phone disturbs me

‘My Love’ it reads and not only that there’s a red heart next to it.

What the fuck.. my love?

Mondli eyes are already on the screen before I could manage to hide it.

I’m in trouble

My love?

This has Mngqobi written all over it

I can’t help look at Mondli, he has his eyebrow raised not shifting his gaze on me

Think Qhamu, think, think fast.

“It’s Thobile” I say and hang up.

“Then why are you hanging up” he says leaning back on his sit and folding his arms.

I’m in deep deep trouble

Right on queue it rings again, now I have no choice

but to answer

“Tee, Can I call you back” I say as fast as I can

“Ntokazi” I did say this had something to do with Mngqobi, his voice sounds so raspy right now it kind of reminds me of someone I don’t know

Weird.

“Tee, I can’t talk right now I’m with Mondli” my heart is beating so hard against my chest and with the way Mondli is staring at me I swear I’d be six feet under if looks could kill

“Mondli? are you already cheating on me” world swallow me please.

“Tee Mondli is busy checking my books so I’ll call you when I’m done” i don’t know why am I not hanging up

“Hai maan stop with with this T nonsense and whose this T you keep referring me to” his tone is so reprimandin

Eye roll.

“Yes I do have the book Thobile, you’ll get it

tomorrow” why am I even entertaining this fool
“What’s so difficult with saying Thobile” he sounds
so irritated

I forgot he doesn’t like it when call people by the
first letter of their names

Isn’t he exhausting?

“next thing you’ll be calling our kids A,B and C’s”
Kids?

He’s such a big, big dreamer.

“Ya, ill bring it tomorrow, I have to go”

“Agree to be my girlfriend and I’ll hang up” he says
amused

That ain’t happening

“No” besides my brothers made it clear that I’m not
allowed to date as long as they’re still alive.

That was no joke, they were deadly serious. They
meant each and every word

“Come on baby, you know I can’t stop thinking

about those soft lips”

At least he knows what mine feels like.

I'm not sure if I'm blushing or what but the corners of my lips are twitching and I feel flushed I even forgot that Mondli is still here

“So from today you're my girlfriend” imagine, he's not even asking but telling me.

This one thinks I'm one of his many girlfriends I see I'm so done with this conversation.

“Don't you dare even think of hanging up, I'll come knocking and we wouldn't want that now would we” is he a mind reader now.

I was just about to hang up.

But If he thinks blackmail is a way to go then he clearly doesn't know me

“Thobile sends her regards” I say to Mondli after I hang up and quickly switch off the phone

That one that come knocking I don't care, i can't deny him an early grave.

“Mmh” Mondli hums shaking his head

“Tell THOBILE to stop calling you and while at it delete those numbers, I don’t want to be send to prison for murder” my mouth is left agape with incredulity after that

He’s so serious right now and his face is hard I swear I thought I was convincing.

“You must think I’m a fool” with that said he stands up and leave me standing there.

The phone is off but I remove the battery just in case.

* * *

I thought I wasn’t going to post today but because I love yoll So much I just had to. Happy Sunday good people

[06/20, 18:01] Lynne: Chapter three

Can he just stop it, I keep telling that he'll wrinkle my uniform never mind that it's after school, he keeps picking me up, hugging and kissing me imagine the looks I'm getting from fellow schoolers and the Maskhandi music that blasting in his taxi is not helping either, I just wish I can die from embarrassment already.

I keep telling him that I'm a big girl now but its pointless at this moment he's too happy so instead Im sulking. I thought now that I'm in grade two he'll stop but clearly I was wrong. This is going to be another long year of kisses and hugs. Once he's done harassing me with hugs and kisses he straps me in a front seat of his taxi and walks to go speak with Mr Buthelezi, he didn't even switch off his music. My father seems to be the one doing all the talking and Mr Buthelezi is just nodding, their friendship is remarkable. They shake hands and my father comes back.

Finally we can now go home.

It pains me to relive such memories, that was the very last day I saw my father alive by the way. Then he used to be embarrassing with his affections but now I'd give anything just to have him fuss over that seat belt again.

I'd do anything just to have him kiss me one last time, I used to complain that he wrinkles my uniform with his hugs but now I want him to hug me over and over again. Heck I'd give my life away just so I could have one moment with him, just a second to see him again. I have so much that I need to tell him, how much I love him, how much I miss him, how I regret ever thinking that he embarrass me though he did but I know that's all just a wishful thinking, he's gone, he's in a better place now.

I need to heal, I need to move on.

Advice...

Don't take people for granted cause one day you'll wake up and they're gone. Show those that you love that you appreciate them, remember we just here

for a time being so love then hard.

I'm trailing ain't i? Forgive me.

It looks like Mngqobi and my father have one thing in common and that is to embarrass me, Mngqobi has been coming to my school everyday for the past three weeks without fail, he even rides the bus with me no now, Bab'Mkhize's finds all this amusing, he just laughs at us when we start fighting so I've learnt to not argue with Mqobi. He's being a pest to say the least. I haven't had time to change his name on my phone so whenever he calls which is every morning and night "my love" it reads.

I'll change it ok!

If you must know I haven't been late in these past three weeks because of his morning calls, at least there's some positive outcome to all this. He's still nagging me about being his girlfriend I must admit he has grown on me a bit, I know I say he annoys me I'm just being a hypocrite, he's not all that bad. I like his hazel nut brown eyes, he has a nice smile

too mostly I love the way he looks at me.

Is it safe so say I kind of like him?

Well I like him.

It's Friday after school and I know he'll be waiting, Thobile has been distance lately, I don't know why, I apologized for snapping at her that day but she's still giving me a cold shoulder, she even left early today because she was sick I must make time to go see her and apologize face to face.

Just as I thought there is Mngqobi, leaning on his car looking roguish and cute, did I say cute?

I must really like him but what the hell is he wearing?

Yoh, he's wearing a gold batik material shirt, the infamously Madiba shirt, God he looks ridiculous, he dressed it with a black jean and sneakers I wonder why isn't he wearing his school uniform.

Did I say he looks ridiculous?

He's laughing with Nontombi, she even drapes her hand around his stomach when she laughs. My heart rate is quickening just by seeing that.

Isn't he dating Nokhaya?

Nca!

My blood pressure increases instantly and I angrily walk to them.

"Mnqobi" I say harshly

Nontombi and I are exchanging looks to Mnqobi's amusement.

He doesn't answer but looks at me then back at Nontombi and smiles

I can feel my anger brewing from the pit of my stomach, he came here for me right?

My anger over clouds common sense that I find myself yanking the passenger seat door and get in, I even bang the door when I close it but he doesn't even look at me, to say I'm angry would be an understatement I'm deranged.

He's been trying to get me to get into his car for the

past three weeks and when I do he doesn't acknowledge me.

Yeses

Nokhaya comes waltzing but her faces changes when she sees me, not only am I in her boyfriends car but I'm in her sit. She doesn't like me that much and I hate her, well not hate but she's not my favorite pers on either.

"What is she doing here" she asks Mngqobi with a very bored tone

"You talking a taxi today" he says handing her a 20 rands note, notice how he didn't answer her.

"Why should I, can't she jus..." she stops mid sentence when Mngqobi gives her the look, you know that look that says dare continue.

I'm beaming with happiness inside, I can't believe he dismissed her like that.

She takes the 20 rands angrily and stomps away leaving her friend there.

"See you around" Mngqobi says to Nontombi and

gets in the car without waiting for her reply.

You should see me, I'm inwardly doing cartwheels and naynay's I'm a happy girl.

[06/20, 18:01] Lynne: (continuation)

“I'll have to entertain Nontomi more if it gets you to be less defiant” Mnqobi says chuckling as he drives out of the school

I don't know why does he think that's funny

I'm still angry so I ignore him and gaze out the window.

His phone rings

“Ufunani” that's how he answers

Rude much....

he talks for a couple of minutes totally disregarding me and here I was happy that he left with me.

“Hai Manqoba, I'm with my wife here and you disturbing us” I turn my head to look at him, he's smiling at me.

He looks so handsome instead of snickering I smile too.

“That’s was Manqoba” he says after he hangs up
“Manqoba”

“Yes my idiot twin brother” he says shaking his head

Mnqobi, Manqoba how much conquering were his parents doing?

We all know how our African parents are, they name their children after a situation look at me for instance my parents were done with kids hence they named Qcina,Qcina. But I happened to appear and I was named Qhamukile imagine nje you’d think they would put much effort in naming their only daughter but nope Qhamukile it was.

I didn’t know he’s a twin.

“A twin” I say surprised

“Yes I have a twin, he look like me but of cause I’m more handsome” he says wiggling his brows

The chauvinist in him never cease to amaze me.

I roll my eyes at him and look outside again.

He's driving very slow, he keeps looking at me and smiling to himself. We both silent it's not an uncomfortable silence we just happy silent I guess

He fiddles with the car stereo and intombi by sjava fills the silent once he's done he rampages through the glove compartment and pulls out a box of camel double switch cigarettes and pulls one out of the box and puts it on his lips, I'm watching as he does all this.

I didn't know he smokes.

Once he's located the lighter, he lights his cigarette and take a long drag and huff that smoke right at me.

Yeses

I start coughing which tickles him

Nca

I'm angry all over again

“Intombi ishelwa nga manga

ng'the an'gsi is ghemngu

Ng'the ang'phuzi, ang'bhemmi “ the irony of it all

He's singing along with the song, by the time the song repeats for the the third time he's lit his second cigarette

Heavy smoker...

he's driving really slow and seems to be enjoying himself.

There's a big bamboo tree just before you enter Mvubukazi, he parks under it and turns his body to look me after he turns the music off.

“So I take it you're done playing games” he says and throw out the cigarette butt out the window

“What games”

“I've been running after you for sometime now Qhamu”

“Yes why have you been running after me” I know he likes me but he has a girlfriend right.

“I love you Qhamukile” he says even he looks

shocked that he uttered those words

my eyeballs are about to fall off I'm shocked
beyond.

Did he say he loves me?

"You love me" I say unbelievably

He clears his throat before he answer

"Yes and you know this"

I don't know what to say, I knew he liked me but
love...

"Do you love me and Nokhaya at once" I can be
sensible at times, he can't date the both of us at
once.

"I love Nokhaya and I'm in love with you"

Love her and in love with me?

That doesn't make any sense to me.

"Mngobi I don't want to share you" I find myself say.

Am I even ready to date?

"You won't be sharing me with anyone baby, this

heart beats only for you” he say talking my hand and placing it on his chest.

I’m speechless right now

“So you have nothing to worry about” but I am worried

He’s busy trailing his fingers up and down my arm giving me chills, my stomach even feels weird.

when I look down he hold up my chin to lift up my face.

“Kiss me” he says softly after he’s lift my face

I’ve never kissed anyone before what if I bite him or something. I can’t face him right now so I look away but he gently cup my cheeks and brings his face close to mine

“Don’t overthink it, just go with the flow” he says against my lips and nodding I bring my face closer to his and our lips touch.

At fist the kiss feels sloppy and rushed, but it keeps better as we continue to kiss, his lips taste like mint, they are soft, wet, cold and lush.

God.

I pull away to catch my breath I'm feeling hot. I've never felt this way before.

"I...i... " words have failed me

He pulls to close to his chest that I feel his heart pumping

"Shhhh, you Qhamu have a knack of ruining beautiful moments" with that said he brings his lips in and I reciprocate.

* * *

It's a little rusty but I do hope you enjoy.

Mnqobi's POV loading

[06/20, 18:01] Lynne: MNQOBI

I know some of you already think I'm bad news and

I won't even bother to try and convince you otherwise, one thing I've learnt about humans is that if they already perceive you in a certain way nothing you do or say will change that so why even bother...

but to tell you the truth I'm not bad I'm Much worse than that.

I'm an eighteen years old young man on a mission. A mission for vengeance.

My name is Mngobiwesizwe Ngcobo, I'm from Emats heni, a small location in Pietermaritzburg and I'm currently in grade 12. I belong to the cum laude squad, for those of you who don't know what that means, I'm very intelligent that's what it means it a gift.

Not only am i book smart but I'm street smart too, that I had to learn from a very young age. My father disappeared when I was ten, you been right all along Sgidi is my father he left home and never came back. I know he was killed and from what I hear from the grapevines, he was killed by the

Buthelezi's, those dogs they didn't even leave his body for us to bury.

I'm a broken young man and nothing I mean nothing can mend this stone cold heart.

Say I'm evil I couldn't give a rat's ass what you think, I am my father's child after all.

The rivalry between two families has been going on for decades now and to tell you the truth I don't even know what we're fighting for I guess we were just born into it, our fathers were born into it so why try and stop it.

If you must know I'm planning to hit the Buthelezi where it hurts the most

Qhamulike.

The love they have for their sister is remarkable and that will be their downfall, by the time I'm done with her she'll pray for death to claim her.

My brothers have been planning to avenge our father for years, now that we're of age Makhosini, that's my older brother has put the plan in motion.

Initially this task was given to Manqobawezitha because he's more sweet and loving but he's dragging his feet so I took matters into my own hands.

The day I met her was just pure luck, i didnt even really know her, yes I knew of her but not her so you can imagine how surprised I was when she revealed that she's a Buthelezi.

Amadlozo a kwaNgcobo played their part and I could not let that kind of opportunity pass me by and what do you know she fell for my pretense charm.

Now I have to pretend to be someone I'm not.

I'm the less chatty one, I never smile, I'm just the devil on earth and I'm fine with that.

I just don't understand how can Manqoba not be hungry for revenge like I am.

Shaking my head

I know you must be hating me right now but Like I said I don't care I have my reasons which I don't

have to explain to you or anyone for that matter for
now just join me in my quest for revenge.....

.....

Please don't hate on poor Mngqobi.

It's about to get bumpy

[06/20, 18:01] Lynne: (Chapter four)

QHAMUKILE

One plus one equals two.

That's simple arithmetic right?

Well... I think not, someone thought adding
alphabets into the whole equation was a good idea

tell me.... where do numbers and alphabets mix?

Yeses

Maths is easy when adding and subtracting but because someone wanted to complicate life So here I am scratching my head trying to solve for X hai man..

X is right here so why am I solving it lord give me strength.

I'm with Mngqobi and he's trying to explain all this but I'm failing to understand.

We've now been dating for two month and it has been a bliss.

Nokhaya hates me even more now that I took her boyfriend, not that he was hers to begin with, she's been calling me all sorts of derogatory names...whore, bitch, nondindwa, tikilyn, anything thing that you can think of.

I'm not bothered really, the boy is mine so she can go jump in the nearest cliff for all I care....

I've started with my mid year exams and I'm writing maths on Monday, that's why Mqobi is helping me out.

“Qhamu we went through this, remember to solve a variable you use inverse operations into the operation in the equation and be sure to do the same operations to both sides of the equation”
Mngobi say

Confuse me further Mngobi...

“Uh”

I’m seriously confused

“Baby, look here....” he says dragging the book closer to me, he has a desk in his room and that’s where we seated.

He refused when I suggested we chill on the bed for comfort. He hasn’t tried any shenanigans, he didn’t even kiss me. He’s been a perfect gentleman really.

“Hai i’m confused” I say throwing the pen away.

“Look..”

“Can we please take a break” I say giving him my most mischievous smile

“No Qhamu, how do you expect...”

“Please” i continue to smile

He smiles back, I’m winning

I move to sit on his lap and give him my most
dashing smile

“Qhamu...” I stop him by planting a kiss on his lips

“Flattery won’t get you anywhere baby” he says that
trailing his hand down my spine, he’s trying to
resist...

“Just one more break” I kiss him again and what do
you know this time he kisses me back, deep.

I’m left panting by the time we stop, I can’t get over
how lush his lips are.

“Fine, you win” he says kissing me again

This time the kiss is passionate, its like we pouring
our hearts out, my heart is swelling with emotions
right now

I’ve never felt anything like this before all these
emotions are very foreign to me.

“I love you” I say after we break the kiss

I've never said those three words to him, he smiles and kisses my forehead

"You love me" he says unbelievably.

He tells me he loves me every chance he gets but I've never said it back.

"I love you" I repeat again

I mean it

I mean every I and LOVE and YOU.

He looks at me long, his eyes are glistening like diamond, he's looking at me very fondling and I can't help fall more deeply for him. I can just see the love he has for me in his brown eyes.

Dammit I'm in love.

I love Mngobi with my all.

I know what you thinking, I'm only sixteen yes but I know what I feel and that is love, I love him so please keep your thoughts to yourself....

"Baby..." he plants a soft kiss on my forehead

"...what are you doing to me" he continues planting

soft kisses on both my cheeks, then my neck and finally he finds my lips. His lips feels really soft against my own, he is nibbling on my bottom lip and our tongues are dancing rhythmically.

God....

That feeling comes back rushing, I don't know what do to with myself, breaking away from this kiss seems to be right thing to do....

“You have a nice room” i say standing up from him.

I need to catch my breath...

I'm also trying to divert from what we both feeling, I'm not myself, I can feel the moist on my panties and I can also feel his groin area poking me.

Qhamu breath in and out....

Mnqobi stays with his mother and brothers, they live in those low cost mortgage houses but it's a

really nice house. I had sneak into his back room because one of the older brother is home he's a bit of a clean freak his room is very clean and neat for a teenager, his clothes are nearly folded in the wardrobe and he has a lot of those Madiba shirts, any color you can think of he has.

SMH, atleast Mandela's choice of wardrobe was an inspiration to someone.

My ringing phone disturbs my trail of thoughts

It's Nqaba

"Bhuti" I answer

"Qhamukile what time is it" He says calmly but stern, he's trying to control his anger

What have I done now?

Rolling my eyes

My brother is dramatic I tell you

"I don't know, maybe it's after 4" I say casually, Nqaba can be extra.

"Four...." he chuckles bitterly

“I don’t know which watch you looking at but mine clearly state that it’s after six” he’s still calm and calm Nqaba doesn’t exist

“Six” my eyes trail to the watch on the wall and it read six thirty two...

fuck..

“I’m coming bhuti, I was with Thobile practici...” I’m panicking now.

“Hey wena, you mean the same Thobile that was here looking for you” now he’s shouting

All my brothers don’t respond kindly to lies

“Lalela la ntombaza, you have exactly five minutes to get your ass home or God help me” with that said he hangs up.

SHIT.....

To be continued

[06/20, 18:01] Lynne: (Continuation)

I'm very frantic as Mngqobi drives me home, I'm shit scared I don't want to get on Nqaba's wrong side, remember I said he's irrational.

Mngqobi is speeding like a maniac, he doesn't even slow down when he enters Mvubukazi

"Bye baby" I kiss him again for the hundredth time

I want to leave but something keeps pulling me back when I have to, we parked just a few houses away from my homestead, its winter so it's already dark.

"Bye-bye sthandwa sam" he says and pulls me closer to kiss him again

Damn his lips...

The sound of shattering glass forces us to break away from the kiss. I'm already screaming my lung out, please don't tell me we getting highjacked.

I scream more when i see the shattered glass on Mngobi lap. Lord please don't let them kill us I pray silently as I continue to scream, maybe if I scream louder someone might come to our rescue before I know it my side of the door is yanked open and I feel a sting on my cheek, tears are streaming down my face so everything is just blurry plus it's also dark so I can't really see what's happening

I'm still trying to process what's happening when another slap finds my cheek

“Qhamukile, what are you doing” that's Nqaba, his voice is a lot deeper and croaky than any of my brothers so it's easy to distinguish him from the rest. it must be from all the weed and cigarettes he smokes

Meet angry Nqaba

“Bhuti” I say crying

I can't believe he slapped me

“What the fuck is going on here”

“Bhuti I..I” words have deserted me

“Uyabona wena, you'll know me today” he says angrily and slaps me again.

I have never seen him this angry I cover my face when I see him raising his hand again, not another slap please.

Who am I kidding this is Ngaba I'm expecting more than just slaps but I'm surprised when I don't get anymore slaps so I uncover my face to check what's happening

Oh no....

he's charging towards Mnqobi but it looks like Qcina got to him first because Mnqobi is already on the floor getting kicked.

I don't understand why Mnqobi is not fighting back

I can't let that happen, I run to his side and try my best to restrain Gcina but it's now him and Nqaba beating Mnqobi up

"Bhuti...please" I cry trying to get in between the mist of everything I have to stop them.

I don't know where Mondli came from but he manages to pull me away from the fight.

Nqaba and Gcina keeps kicking Mnqobi and I'm fighting to get out of Mondli's hold

"Mondli just leave me alone" I scream at him

I can't let my brothers do this to Mnqobi, I can't just stand and let that happen right in-front of me.

Nqaba is furious to say the least he keeps

screaming at Mngqobi

once they are satisfied with the kicks they gave him,
they let him stand up straight

“If I ever I mean ever catch you with her again, I’m
going to kill you” Nqaba says looking at Mngqobi
with so much hatred

And I believe him, he will kill him.

“Bhu...” me

“Wena shut that hole in your face” Gcina has never
spoken to me like that before

We fight a lot yes but he has never been this vile to
me

Mngqobi is bleeding and that just break my heart, I’m
trying to fight the urge to run to him but my
resistance is not strong enough cause I find myself

next to him

“You blee....”

“Qhamukile please, just leave me alone, just go home” he leaves me standing there and gets in his car

“Wena you testing me” Nqaba says and leaves us standing there

“You better run home” Mondli says angrily and follows Nqaba track I have no choice but to run after them.

Gcina is cursing behind me, I’m still crying, I’m not crying because I got caught or slapped I’m crying because Mnqobi dismissed me like he did, he didn’t even let me touch him.

I’m hurt.

“Qhamukile explain to me, what were you doing with that boy uh...” that’s the first Nqaba says when we enter the house

“Usuya jola wena manje” he continues, he’s shouting his lungs out

I don’t answer him

“Don’t you have respect for yourself, busy kissing abafana in the middle of the road nje ng’s febe”

I breakdown and cry hysterically, how can he insult me like that

“Or is that what you want to be uh” Nqaba is furious

“Didn’t I tell you to delete his numbers” Mondli says

He’s just digging my grave deeper

he's angry too but not Nqaba angry

“Delet...Mondli you knew about this boy and you didn't tell me” Nqaba again, he's breathing fire I tell you I'm thankful for the kitchen table in between him and myself right now

“And wena you don't listen now, Mondli spoke to you but you still went against him” Nqaba

“He baby's her too much” that's Qcina

“I don't” Mondli says defensively

They both look at him and snub

“Him Qhamukile... him. Off all guys you could date you chose him” Qcina again, he's more sad than angry

“I love him bhuti” shit...

my thoughts and mouth colluding against me, now I'm dead.

“WHAT?!” they all say in unison
I’m dead....

“You love him” Mondli I bet he doesn’t believe that
I’ve just subliminally uttered those words

“You must be going crazy” Qcina

“I’m going to kill you” Nqaba says charging towards
me I have no choice but to run behind Mondli to
take cover

“Hitting her won’t solve anything” Mondli says to
Nqaba trying to restrain him from coming to me

“Hey man Mondli let me deal with her, she’s clearly
lost her mind” Nqaba

“What does she even know about love” Gcina says shaking his head

“Calm down Nqa, let talk ab...” the forever reasonable Mondli gets cut off by Nqaba

“Awo kahle Mondli, Qhamukile is mad” he’s stoped fighting Mondli atleast I’m not dying well for today atleast

“Wena..” Nqaba says pointing a finger at me

“If I ever I mean ever see you with that Ngcobo boy again, I’ll forget that we have the same blood running through our veins, believe me when I say I’ll kill you first before I can get to him”

I have never seen Nqaba this angry, I know it’s just anger talking but hell he seemingly sounds pretty

adamant.

I know he won't kill me though

“Him Qhamukile, him mtase” If I didn't know Qcina well I'd say he's in a verge of tears

Something is amiss here, this is not only about me dating Mngobi is it.

The enormity towards Mngobi is too much for it to be just about him and I.

“Bhuti please, don't hurt him please” he says nothing but just looks me with disgust

“Look at yourself, crying over that bastard” Gcina See what I mean, they don't even know him but the hatred is too rife.

“I promise bhuti, I won't see him again just don't hurt him please” I don't know if I'll be able to keep that promise but I have to try and convince Ngaba

Nqaba doesn't make empty threats so I know he means what he says

"For your sake I hope really hope so" he says and walks towards the door but he turns his head before he walks out

"Oh December you going to emhlangeni, you better pray that you still sealed or else I don't know what Misuzulu will do to you after I've dealt with you" and he's gone.

What...

emhlangeni? We Zulus yes but we have never practiced that part of our culture, now I'll have to open my legs for some strange winkled woman.

Yeses...

and they can't tell Misuzulu about all this, he will kill me for real.

"Please don't tell ubhuti Zulu about this I promise I'm going to stop seeing Mngqobi" I'm literally on my

knees begging

“I’m done here” Mondli says and leaves me there still on my knees

I’m left with Gcina whose looking at me with so much rage, his eyes are bloodshot red, Qcina has never been this angry, in fact none of my brothers have been this angry at me

“Uyang’nyayisa” he says and walks out.

[06/20, 18:02] Lynne: Chapter FIVE

MNQOBI

It’s been a week since I’ve had that encounter with the Buthelezi boys, my bruises are healing better than I thought but my nose still looks broken and my rib is healing slowly, can you believe they fractured my rib... imagine, but besides that I’m good.

I admit those boys can throw some mean punches I tell you.

I didn't fight them back because of Qhamu, that girl is my weakness.

I haven't seen or spoke to her since that fight and I know she's stressing like I am and I can't even call her because they broke my phone when they were busy kicking me.

I miss her.

Nqaba has been stalking me for the past week so I'm forced to keep a distance, that one is crazy but if he thinks I'm going to let Qhamu go then he doesn't know me.

Stubborn me, Makhosini told me not to go anywhere near Mvubukazi that's their territory but what else was I suppose to do. Qhamu was in a verge of having a panic attack I had to take her home.

She's so innocent which saddened me, if only I was capable of loving then maybe I'd call this off and move on like Manqoba but I can't, the hatred is too much.

My father was no saint yes but he loved his children more than anything and that's why I'm hungry for revenge like this.

Im very much intrigued by Qhamu's innocence, she's very benign and she likes to acts tough but she's actually a softy inside. She is just simply amazing.

Her eyes spark when she looks at me and I know that I'm loved by her....

how do I hurt her like I want to when all she does is love me like she does, how do I look her in the eye knowing what I'm planning.

She loves me so much, I have never had a girlfriend love me like she does and I've had plenty.

I can't help feel that ping in this cold heart of mine, I feel sorry for her.

Focus Mngobi focus....

I'm in a mission here, I can not allow Qhamu's eyes to be my weakness

Mnqobi you hate her, I try and convince myself again.

I'm actually on my way to see Nokhaya, she can be such a bore at times, she likes to act as if she's my girlfriend and we had an agreement I need to cut her off before it gets too much. The sex is good yes but I'm Mnqobi replacing her won't be hard.

"I'm outside" I send her a text

Soon she comes out wearing a very skimpy night gown, Mind you it's freezing out here.

My penis is protruding from just seeing her smooth thighs

"Hey baby" she says after she gets in the car

I don't know why is she is calling me baby, I hate it when she does that besides it sounds different coming from her only Qhamu is allowed to call me all sorts of pet names.

"Hi" I say already unbuckling my belt, she knows

what to do, that's all that I'm here for anyway

I need to release.

“Mhmmm you don't waste time do you” she says
seductively

Lust is written on her face but I'm not here to please
her I just want to release then I'll be on my way.

uMapholoba is up and ready to play so why waste
time.

“You know me too well” I say stroking my already
hardening dick

She smiles lazily before she takes it in her mouth

Damn this girl....

Her mouth is very warm that I want to release
instantly

uMapholoba is twitching in her mouth

“Ahhh”

She sucks my dick slowly, shit... she does it with
precision, she's so good

My head is leaned back against the car seat and I'm moaning as she continues to suck

You see, this is the only reason I haven't cut ties with her, she's good.

she twirls her tongues around the top again before she goes throat deep, I can feel it hit the back of her throat.

Fuck..

She sucks my dick like life depends on it,

Shit....

I wonder if Qhamu will be able to do this

Fuck Qhamu, why am I even thinking of her.

Qhamu, Qhamu, Qhamu..... why am I thinking of her. She's just a prawn in this game I'm playing she means nothing to me

Her beautiful faces comes to me like a portrait, I see her beautiful smile.

No no no no no I can't be thinking about her, I have my dick buried deep in Nokhaya's mouth

I'm trying so hard to block Qhamu out of my thoughts but all that I'm seeing is her broken heart and tears.

Eish

Tell me why the hell do I feel like I'm cheating on her.

Focus Mngobi...

I close my eyes again and try to focus on what Nokhaya is doing to me but...

"Fuck" I can't get Qhamu out of my thoughts

"Enjoying" Nokhaya says licking my pre-cum

"Yes" I close my eyes again I need to focus on this

"What wrong" Nokhaya says and I open my eyes to look at her, she looks disappointed

"With what"

Her eyes trail to my dick and it's no longer hard what the fuck is happening to me, why am I not hard..

"Clearly you doing something wrong" I say pissed,

I'm not pissed at her in just pissed at my thoughts
but I guess she's here to take the fault

She looks down embarrassed

"You know what let me just leave" I'm pissed
beyond, I need to see Qhamu as in yesterday.

"I'm sorry baby let me try again" she says coming
closer to me but I stop her

"It's fine Nokhaya" I say sternly

"Come on baby" am I not clear enough

"It's..."

She already has my dick in her mouth before I could
protest I can feel it getting harder and harder with
every tongue twist

Yes Mngobi this is it...

I can feel it, I'm close to coming.

She does her thing with her tongue again

"Fuck" is all I say when she quickens her pace I'm
so close.

“Fuck” I explode in her mouth and she swallows.

“That was nice” she says wiping the corners of her mouth

I’m still trying to steady my breathing so I ignore her, I don’t even want to look at her all that I want is to get home and deal with these new developed feelings for Qhamu.

Once my breath is stable I look at Nokaya, she’s a beautiful girl, light skinned and bodied. I like that she’s naughty and not shy she’s a perfect fuck buddy she’s just my type.

“I need to go home” I say serious, I can’t help it, being nice is not me.

She looks a bit hurt but I don’t care

“I’ll call you” I say and lean in to peck her lips

“I thought we were going to talk” she says softly

I let an exasperated breath out, I hate talking and she knows

“About”

“Us”

Imihlola ke le

“I thought I made myself clear, there’s no us and never will be. If you can’t do this anymore tell me and I’ll gladly let you go” it’s getting tiring telling her one thing over and over again

“But...”

“Nokhaya I’m dating Qhamukile and you know this so please don’t complicate things” I didn’t want to use Qhamukile as an escape but dammit

“I know but I want more”

“And I’m saying I can’t offer more”

“But...”

“Lalela la, and this time make sure you listen attentively cause I’m not going to have this conversation with you again” I’m now seated straight

“You and I are just fuck buddies, nothing more nothing less, so I’m saying no to a relationship if you can’t deal with that then we can part ways” my

voice is also hard now

“Do you want us to end this” I ask her, her head is hanging low, I can see that she’s trying to suppress her tears

She shakes her head

“Good then” I say and start the car. I’m done here

She makes her exit without saying anything, I don’t really care.

“Oh and continue to be discreet. No one should ever find out about this or else...” with that said I drive away.

[06/20, 18:02] Lynne: Chapter SIX

QHAMUKILE

Ive heard somewhere that forbidden love is the best kind of love and that it’s exciting and fun but that’s not the case with me is it...

I’m hurt to say the least.

I feel very empty and lost right now, so please tell me where is the fun in that?

Clearly whoever said that doesn't know what they were talking about.

I haven't spoken to the love of my life, Mngqobi in two weeks now and I'm going crazy from worry

What if something happened to him, what if Nqaba kil... no Que don't you dare even think that I reprimand myself inwardly

I'm worried...

I've tried calling him thousands of times with Thobiles phone because mine was confiscated by Nqaba but to no avail.

The number you have called is not available... the white woman says again

"It's still on voicemail" I tell Thobile and give her phone back

"Don't worry he will call back" she says pitifully

“Yeah....sure” maybe he no longer wants to be with me, why would he, my brothers beat him up.

It's after school and we walking out the school. I was writing my last paper today, maths, I just hope I passed.

if it was any other day I'd be happy that I'm going home but not today, today I want to stay here.

This place has become my happy place, it has become my joy, but I have to go home and face my sour reality.

Nqaba and Gcina are still angry at me so they have put me under a tight leash all that I'm allowed to do is come to school and go home nothing more I'm surprised they haven't hired any body guards for me. Mondli is still angry but at least he doesn't look at me like I'm some murder of some sort.

You'd swear I've killed someone with the way they are behaving.

I'm just glad they haven't told Musizulu and Gats ha

yet... or else I'd be dead.

I see my reflection on the car window, I'm a mess. My eyes are puffy from all the crying I've been doing, my face looks very dull and the fact that I'm on my periods isn't helping either I just look like an aftermath of a hurricane.

This pity party I'm in needs to come to an end but how do I move on not knowing if Mngqobi is fine where ever he is?

He's the only one that can burst this bubble I'm in right now, I need him to feel whole again, I need him.

Does love have to hurt like this?

Khaya is here to get Thobile

I'm not a fan of this Khaya character, did I mention that he's old, He looks like he is in his late twenties if not his early thirties but he's busy with a sixteen year old, how much more shady that he be.

I told Thobile to break up with him a long time ago

but she doesn't want to listen so I've learnt to accept it, they have been dating now for six months and Thobile is deeply in love.

Anyway she says her goodbyes and leaves with him

I'm walking to the bus stop when a voice startles me

"You look horrible" its Nokhaya, I'm used to this torment now.

"Lover boy broke your heart so soon" she continues

I don't have the energy to entertain her so I just ignore her and continue walking, If only Nqaba didn't take my phone then I'd be listening to music it helps block out the world

"Don't worry skeleton, you not the only one" she says behind me

I'd be offended if it was someone else calling me a skeleton but because it her I just brush it off and move on.

I can hear her and her squad laughing as I walk

away

Fuck her....

“Nokhaya if you ever call her that again, then you will know me” that raspy voice

Turning my head back to Nokhaya and her group I see him

I see Mngqobi

Tears of joy come gushing down my face, I run to him and throw myself in his arms

“Baby” he says softly against my ear

I’m now full on crying, I’m such a cry baby though

“Shhh your knight in shining armor is here now” he says cupping my face with his hands making me to look at him

My knight??

I roll my eyes at that

“Oho roll those beautiful eyes one day they won’t

turn back I'm telling you" he says kissing both my eyes

All eyes are in us now, I don't care about that he is here that's all that matters

But his face...

"Baby what did they do to you, your lip is busted, Baby your eye, is it Nqaba, did he follow yo...."

he shuts me up with a kiss

"I'm fine baby I'm here with you so I'm good" he says after he breaks the kiss

"And no crying ok" He says and wipe my tears away

I didn't even realize I'm crying

"I thought you left me" I'm still emotional

"Leave you?" He sounds a little sad I don't know why

"I'd never leave you, besides whose going to shower you with this hotness, phela mina baby ng'yababa" he says playfully

Lord help me

The egomaniac in him will never cease to exist
I'd roll my eyes But they are too puffy and too tired
to roll back so instead I smile and chuckle at him
“Ah she smiles, my work here is done” he says
kissing me

Is it normal to love someone like I love Mngobi?
“How was Maths” he asks taking my backpack and
strapping it over his shoulder and drape his arm
around my neck and walks towards where he is
parked

“It was fine” I lie

It kicked my ass but I was busy stressing over him.

“Qhamu my darling, you are not a good liar” he says
and kisses my forehead and opens the passenger
door.

Today he's not driving his car, it's an old Toyota
Camry.

I need to ask him about these cars.

[06/20, 18:02] Lynne: (Continuation)

We parked under the bamboo tree, we moved to the back seat for comfort I've laid my head on Mnqobi's lap and he's busy playing with my bushy hair.

he randomly kisses me all over my face and I couldn't be happier

He told me that Nqaba has been stalking him for the past two weeks so he couldn't come see me, they even broke his phone.

SMH

I'm not surprised by that, that's just Nqaba being himself

"What if he's following us right now" I'm suddenly scared

"Don't worry he's busy following Manqoba as we speak" he says and kisses my shoulder blade

Random kisses I did say..

"What do you mean"

"That brother of yours is crazy" he says chuckling

“It’s difficult to tell Manqoba and myself apart so I gave Manqoba my car so he’s busy trailing him” he says laughing

I don’t know why is he finding all this amusing, Nqaba is crazy.

“I’m sorry for what they did to you” I says looking at him smiling

I’ve never noticed this before but he has light dimples. You have to look very close to see them.

“Don’t worry about it darli” he says and kisses my temple

Darli?

I’ve been called baby, ntokazi , sthandwa sam never darli though

“I’d do the same if you were my sister” he’s now trailing his hand back and forth down my arm giving me goosebumps

“I love you” I tell him

He kisses me before he answers

“I know my baby I know” he says lightly and looks away

For the first time Mngqobi is not being cocky or being his usual self, he’s genuine and real, it’s like he sees right through me.

It’s after three pm I’m still with Mngqobi, we have been chilling and just getting to know each other.

I don’t know how will I stop seeing him when I’m this deeply in love

When I’m with him I feel complete.

He is my happy place.

My peace.

My home.

My solace.

My everything.

We still seated in the back seat my head is now

resting on his shoulder and we just talking and talking. We have somehow moved from arguing about music to talking about family

Oh before I forget to tell you... I also asked about the cars... it's his, it was given to him by his father I get the feeling that he was the favorite child, Mnqobi speaks very highly and fondly of his father. I can tell they were very close.

I thought he lived with his biological mother but it turns out that its his step-mother, his biological mother left when he was just a baby leaving him and Manqoba to fend for themselves because they were too young

Sad..

He has other order brothers, the first born is Makhosini followed by Langalibalele,

Zwelethu, Mcedisi then him and Manqoba , the last born is Simangele from the step-mother

That's a lot of kids....

And I thought my parents had too many of us.

He tells me his father was abusive that's why his mother left.

Yes, this conversation is that deep.

"So you have never looked for her" my voice sounds very low I'm saddened by his mother's departure

"No, my father remarried and we had to accept the situation and move on" he sounds very say

"And what happened to him"

He keeps quiet for some time that the silent starts to get uncomfortable

"You don't have to answer that" I say looking away

He kisses my shoulder before he answers

"It's ok, my father left and never came back home but I know for sure that he died" he's sad more than anything

"What if he's not dead" what are the odds

He chuckles "I know he died love" he kisses my cheek before he continues

“He had too many enemies”

I don't know what to say to that

“He was no saint you know, but I loved him. He was my father and he loved his children more than anything, my mother says he was abusive but I've never seen that side of him, to me he was always perfect but I guess someone got to him” the sadness in his voice breaks my heart

“Enemies?” That all my dry mouth manages to say

He nods

“Yes, our family history is very complex Qhamu”

What does he mean OUR family

“Our family” I ask looking at him

He shakes his head laughing nervously and answers “I meant to say my family history, ang'thi you'll soon be a Ngcobo so you'll be part of the family”

I'm flushing profusely at the thought of being married to Mngqobi

I can already picture a mini him

“Anyway my paternal grandfather was killed by this family that we’ve been fighting with for decades and my father was there to witness it all so he grew up wanting revenge more than anything but i guess he was killed in the mist of everything”

This is sad.

“If it’s any consolation I too lost my father very gruesomely” I take a deep breath before I continue

“So I know how you feel, but I do believe that he’s in a better place, he’s now my guardian angel it’s not easy I know but all that we need to do is learn to live without them and hope that it will get better with time” I say and wipe away the lone tear that has managed to fall

He lifts my face with his fore finger forcing me to look at him and smiles at me

I know he’s going to say something stupid...

“I’m sorry” he sounds genuine

He disappointed didn’t he?

“It’s alright”

“What happened to him” he asks after some time

Drawing in as much breath my lungs can contain and exhaling I prepare to relive the horror of my past

“Well long story short, a bunch of men came into the house and shot him, I was scared you know but I’ll never forget that whoever those men were burnt him alive” I’ve never told anyone this before

see what I mean when I say Mnqobi is my everything.

“I’m sorry” he says softly in my ears

I’m now enveloped in his warm embrace and he kisses my tears away before I continue

“Its ok, I’m healing. You need to heal too” I say against his hard yet soft chest

When did we move from talking about his family to mine anyway

“Do you know who killed him” that comes out more of a whisper, I can tell he doesn’t want to open old

wounds

I remove myself from his hold once I'm calm, and
tell him what I heard during that night

"I was young but I heard my father saying Sgidi"

Mnqobi starts coughing

"Mnqobi are you ok" I ask frantic

"Ye...yes I'm good I think it's getting late I need to
leave now" he says already opening the door

I can't help feel hurt, I thought we were going to talk
more

I don't argue instead I lean in the front seat and take
my backpack before I exit the car.

The engine come to life and just like that he's gone.

Ok.. what happened there?

[06/20, 18:02] Lynne: Nokhaya

I'm angry, furious, bitter but mostly I'm hurt. I've
done nothing but love Mnqobi with my all and what

does he do?

He crews on my heart and spit it out like nothing.

I've loved Mngqobi since I was twelve years old and what he's doing is breaking me apart and what's more hurting is that I don't even know how to unlove him, is that even possible?

Mngqobi has always been a bad boy and that's what attracted me to him in the first place. I was that innocent little girl who fell in love with a bad boy, that Bonny and Clyde kinda love story but my Clyde is in love with someone else.

Though Mngqobi won't admit that he's in love with Qhamukile, I see it, he doesn't look at me the way he does her, he doesn't touch me like her does her, he doesn't even talk to me like he does to her so tell me why am I still in love with him.

I've tried to get him to notice me but when he looks at me he sees nothing but a sperm dish.

I want Mngqobi and I'm not going to let anyone take him from me.

Anyway let me tell you a little more about myself as you know I'm Nokhaya the surname is Mayekisa I moved to Matsheni from Port Elizabeth after my mom passed away I was sad to leave the only place I called home but Mngobi made me love matsheni

My aunt took me in because my pathetic excuse of a father refused to so I had no choice but she's being a great mother to me, thing is I'm kind of a rebel, I don't know why do I cause her so much heartache I love her though she's the best.

I hated everything about Matsheni but I fell in love with Mngobi and just like that I loved this place. I love him and I can't let him go. I know he's using me, all that he does is want sex from me and that's it I even had to give him my virginity to show him that I love him but I guess its not enough.

We have been having this sexual relationship since I was fourteen and he still insist that we keep it under the wraps, no one knows that we sleeping

together I haven't even told Nontombi and she's my best friend.

"I'm coming" I receive a text from him.

"I can't come out right now" I reply back

I'm with my aunt and uncle, my aunt is not so strict I can always come up with a lie but my uncle on the other hand is not so understanding.

My aunt has been been talking about the pending umhlanga ceremony that will be held eMvubukazi in a month time

"I know you going to make me proud wena ke sisi" that's my aunt, I can't help feel ashamed.

How am I going to tell her that I'm no longer a virgin

"Yebo aunty"

The excitement in her voice is too much for me to bare

"I can already see you mtaka sisi, and who know knows you might find yourself a very handsome boy to marry you"

My aunt is still old school so to her I'm at a age where I should be preparing to get married and have kids, but I only want that with Mnqobi.

Kids... Mnqobi...

Why hasn't this crossed my mind, I'm going to fall pregnant for Mnqobi and he will be forced to be with me.

It's short I know I'm just introducing Nokhaya into the mix.

[06/20, 18:03] Lynne: Chapter seven

MNQOBI

'Hi baby, I know you going to seek an explanation for what I'm about to tell you but please don't. I love you so much sthandwa sam but I can't do this

anymore I can't continue to lie to you like this. I'm sorry Qhamukile but you and I can't be together. I'm sorry for hurting you but it's better this way. I love you forever and always'

I'm contemplating whether to press the send button or not.

"And then wena. whats wrong" that's Manqoba startling me

"With"

"You've been mopping all morning gawking at that phone,yin baby girl dumped your sorry ass"

I'd laugh if I was not caught up in this predicament

He calls Nokhaya baby girl, why?

beats me.

I've been starring at my phone all morning deleting and retyping this message but something keeps

restraining me from pressing that green button

I can't do this to Qhamu

I love her too much.

There you have it, I admit I love her

Are you happy now?

I can't continue to look her in the face knowing what my intentions were, I know she won't forgive me so that's why I want to break up with her.

I've been ignoring her calls and text since that day she told me that my father liked hers.

How do i continue dating her knowing what my father did to hers?

I ran away that day I couldn't sit and pretend like everything was fine but what are these two families fighting for?

I'm chilling with Manqoba he keeps teasing me about the Nokhaya saga, I know I'm leading her on but I don't know how to let her go, the sex is just

amazing.

Hypocrisy I know...

Makhosini is the first one to join me on the couch then soon after the rest follow.

Langa: "So any feedback" he's looking at me

"She's in love" I tell them

Manqoba looks at me disapprovingly, he hates this idea.

"Auzwe ke" Zwelethu says excitedly

I don't know how that makes me feel but I know I don't like it

"Now it's time for phase two" says Langa

"And that is" Manqoba asks bored

“Break her heart to an extent that she takes her own life” Langa again

This doesn't shock me at all, Langa became heartless after our father died

“Haibo, you can't be serious” Manqoba

“This is madness” he continues and stands

“And where you going” Makhosini.

he's not shouting but he is stringent

Manqoba sits back down without uttering anything or protesting

“Bafo I don't think I'll be able to carry on with this, I'm sure there is another way we can do this without hurting her”

I've gathered some bravery at last

Langa is the first one to snicker shaking his head, Makhosini is just looking at me with a hard face.

“Why” Mcedisi

“Nje” I answer

How do I tell them I'm in love

“Nje, that's no reason enough. This will go on as planned and I expect you to play your part” Langa

“But bafo why, she didn't do anything to us, we should be trying to get to her brothers not her” i say pleading

“Hai marn Mnqobi, we cant go back to the drawing board, this has been planned you can't just change the game plan” that's Zwelethu

“Hai let Manqoba take over then” I say irked
Besides this was not my task to begin with

“Hai leave me out if it” He says dramatically
throwing his hands in the air

“Are you in love with her” Makhosini finally talks

All eyes on me now....

Mokhosini has been observing me throughout

It goes dead silent that I can literally hear my heart
beating

I can't bring myself so say no so I look away instead.

I'm in love with Qhamu, I can't help it.

“Heeee you in love with princess” Manqoba says
almost laughing but Makhosini's grimace forced

him to calm down

I hate how fond Manqoba is of Qhamu.

She's mine and mine alone.

“Are you in love with her” Langa half shouts

“That's not an issue here” I say standing up

“Sit down” Makhosini doesn't shout but you will do what he wants

He can be very intimidating so I have no choice but to sit back down

“You have clearly let that small head between you legs do the thinking so I want you to listen and this time use this head” he says tapping his finger on his temple

“You are never going to see that girl again, I want to forget she ever existed, if I ever catch you with her hell will break loose” he’s is not shouting but he sounds so stony

I don’t take Makhosini threats too lightly he means what he says but will I be able to stay away?

“And wena continue where this fool left of and make sure not to fall in love too” he says looking at Manqoba and stands up

“Bhuti how will I do that I’m not Mnqobi” Manqoba protest before he walks out

“I don’t care how you do it, just do it” he says and walks out

“It should be easy, you two are a total replica of

each other. I sometimes get confused and I'm your brother" Zwelethu says before he walks out too.

That will never happen over my dead body.

[06/20, 18:03] Lynne: Chapter eight

QHAMUKILE

Finally Schools are closed for June holidays so I'm a happy girl plus I've made peace with my brothers in fact it's like we never fought, Nqaba even gave my phone back. I apologized to all three of them and they forgave me after I promised never to see Mngobi ever again

Like that will happen....

speaking of Mngobi, he's been very distant lately I don't know why.

I called and texted him but he didn't reply

I hope Nqaba isn't stalking him phela you never

know with Nqaba

The last text I received from Mngobi was very vague explaining why he left so abruptly like he did the other day

'I'm sorry for leaving like I did but baby please promise me that whatever that will happen with our families you won't break up with me. I love you and I'm going to fight for us' I re-read the SMS again and put my phone back into my pocket

it doesn't make sense I know.

I don't know what does he mean by that and Frankly i refuse to dwell too much on it. I know my brothers don't like him but that's only because I'm their sister so he will explain whatever he means by that once he resurface from where ever he is besides I love him too much to break up with him.

And I miss him.

Let me tell you this before I forget, I passed, yes I, Qhamukile passed and not only did I pass I did pretty well actually I'm talking distinctions, one in isiZulu and business studies too I'm not so dumb after all.

But again I don't remember telling you that I'm stupid, I may hate school but I'm not dumb

All my brothers are proud, Misuzulu even agreed that I visit my aunt, Cebisile for December holidays. I haven't seen her in years so you can imagine how surprises I was when Misuzulu told me that she wants me to visit.

She lives in a beach house in Umhlanga rock with her daughter, Nomcebo.

Nomcebo is just a few years older than me, she's a lovely girl, free spirited and beautiful we used to be close when we were younger but I guess people grow apart. They live in a very posh house, I'm talking top billing houses, they are the richest family I have so you can imagine my excitement.

I can already see myself strolling on the beach with

big summer hats and swimming costume drinking
hundred percent juice.

Whooo I can't wait...

Don't laugh at me please....

Misuzulu gave me one thousand rand to get myself
new clothes for my pending Durban trip, Gatsha five
hundred and Nqaba gave me three hundred.... see
what I mean, our fight is long forgotten it's now
water under the bridge.

I hope that emhlangeni issue is forgotten too

Gatsha and Nqaba gave me this money as a reward
for my good marks I should perform well more
frequently if it means I'll be receiving such monies
so I'm one thousand eight hundred rich right now
which means I can now afford to take my best
friend out.

Nothing fancy, just lunch.

I'm sure you have noticed how I've been neglecting
my best friend status lately. It's high time I started

acting like a friend that I am.

I need to apologize to Thobile for the way I've been behaving, being distance and snapping at her like I've done in the past

That's not how people behave.

Blame new love...

Anyway I sense something is bothering her though she doesn't want to tell, I just hope it's not Khaya.

I've decided to take her out for lunch that shouldn't dent my wallet that much we just going to get mcd's so I'll be fine.

Bribe?

Hell yes it is...

I look very good I must say, I'm wearing my black knee length boots with beige fur coat, my afro is combed into submission so I'm looking fly.

"How far are you" a text from Thobile comes through

“Entering the mall” I text her back

I’ve just taken the charterton off ramp so I’m just a few minutes away. I spoke to her earlier on but she didn’t sound as excited as I expected which is unlike her I guess she needs this lunch date just as much.

I’m excited on the other hand, this is the first time I’ve been to a mall without Gats ha hovering around me so as expected I’m overjoyed

I can see her waiting at the entrance so once I get off the taxi I run to her

“Tee” I give her a hug greening

She returns the smiles and the greeting too but her smile doesn’t reach her eyes, she looks sad and her eyes looks very puffy it’s like she’s been crying

“Are you good Tee, you don’t look well” I’m seriously concerned, she doesn’t look like the bubbly, forever happy Thobile I know

“I’m fine Que, I just slept late that’s all”

her voice even sounds croaky

Something is amiss here

“Are you sure”

“Yes I’m sure stop worrying, let’s go. Im excited”

she says trying to mask her sadness

I’m not convinced but I’m going to let it go for now at least

Once she’s ensure that she has done a good job in convincing me that she’s fine she pulls me inside

the mall

We first go to Mr price and get a few summer dresses, a pair of sandals and a swimming costume my wallet is even kind enough to let me get a bright floral body hugging dress for Thobile

Unlike me, she has meat in the right places so that dress will accentuate her curves perfectly.

It's winter so it takes me forever to get a swim suite but I finally get it at some shop I don't know. it's blue in color and its open in the back but it looks decent, It should compliment my charcoal skin complexion really well.

I'm dog tired from window shopping by the time we sit at KFC, we decided against mcd.

We chose a seat by the window so we have the perfect view to the entrance, we can see everyone that comes in and out of the mall.

Our order gets called and I drag my already paining feet to collect it and go back to my seat.

I think this is a perfect time to talk to her about

what's bothering her

“So tee hows everything, we haven't spoken in a while”

“Yes ag'thi you've been caught up in Mnqobi's world”

she's says giving me a naughty smile wiggling her brows

“Not at all, We haven't had time to talk so...”

“So hows is it dating the hottest guy” she's says cutting me off

“Where do I start, it's been a bliss. I think I love him”

She's shocked by my revelations

“Wooo never thought I’d see the day, my Qhamu is in love” she says dramatically clapping her hands

“What happened to I’ll never date” she continues laughing mimicking my voice

Mnqobi happened

“Ah Come on Tee”

“So have you two done it” she asks lowering her voice

“No, I’m not ready for that besides I’m still young I want I wait till I’m twenty one” I tell her

She looks down shyly why I don’t know though

“Hey phela you’re in everyone’s lips at school these days, you dating the hottest and coolest guy ever”

she says playfully

“I don’t know about the hottest” I say modestly
Mnqobi is hot I know but I won’t rub it in her face

“Oh please, every girl wants him”

Notice how’s she’s diverting, she know I won’t stop raving about Mnqobi and she’s using that to stop me from talking about what’s bothering her

I can see right through her, id love to sit and talk about Mnqobi non stop but not today.

She won’t be able to ignore this one..

“Ag no man” I say dismissively and quickly add

“So tell me, what’s been happening with you, please don’t lie” I say looking at her pleadingly

Thobile likes to act all macho and I hate it, I sometimes want to comfort her like she does me and being weak is needed at times

She looks down before she answers

“Nothing Que”

It’s hard to believe that especially because her eyes are now classy

“What’s wrong tee, talk to me my friend you know me I won’t judge you”

“It’s not so simple” that’s a start, Thobile I know would never admit that something is wrong

“I know Tee but talk to me maybe I can be able to help, and who knows it might not be as bad as you...”

I stop talking when I notice that something has

caught her attention

Following her gaze to the entrance of the mall I see
him

Shit this can't be happening

tears are already streaming down her beautiful face
before I could say anything

Shit....

it's Khaya.

He is walking with a pregnant woman and holding
what looks like a three year old boys hand

Thobile is out of the door before I can stop her, i
have no choice but to run after her.

I did say that Khaya was shady.

I'm running after Thobile whose screaming Khaya's
name across the mall everyone has stopped doing
whatever they were doing and now looking at us

I don't have time to be embarrassed all that's in my
head is Thobile and what's going through her mind
right now I can only pray that she doesn't do

anything drastic

“Khayaletu” she’s says breathless once she’s has reached Khaya and his wife, the big diamond ring on her finger is too big to be missed and I’m sure Thobile saw it too

I can’t explain the look on Khaya’s face but he mask it well with confusion

“Sorry do I know you” Khaya says unfazed

He deserves an Oscar award for being such a great actor I tell you

Anger has erupted from the pit of my stomach, how can he pretend not to know her. I’m furious so I can only imagine how Thobile feels like

“Khaya” she repeats, this time her voice is faint.

It’s like she can’t believe her eyes

She's hurt more than irate, she's even
hyperventilating

The Thobile I know would have thrown a tantrum by
now but not this time around, she's just
emotionless. Tears have managed to cascade down
her face though. I've never seen her like this.

“Sorry sisi I think you got me confused with
someone else, sorry but I don't know you” Khaya
continues to deny her

What?

Clap once....

“Hey wena, stop pretending as if you don't know
her” I shout angrily at him

Who does he think he is

“Baby what's happening” the wife asks looking

between Thobile and her husband if only she knew what kind of person this fool she calls a husband is

“I’ll tell you what’s happening, your husband here is acting as if he doesn’t know my friend” I’m burning with rage

“Ntombazana, I said I don’t know you so please go somewhere and bother guys your age, ain’t you and your friend too young to be dating guys my age”

What the fuck...

Does this fool know me

“Hey wena slima ndin, are you not the one that used to get Thobile everyday from school uh..” Thobiles soft touch stops me mid sentence

“It’s fine Qhamu, let’s just go” she says softly

She's just a mess, she's crying silently I can tell she's trying to suppress her tears but they are just failing uncontrollably and I'd be damned if I let this fool go without giving him my piece of mind

“You're pathetic yaz, is this what you do. Trap young girls then pretend not to know them”

“Que, let's just go” Tee says softly besides me I'm too fired up to listen to her so I continue shouting at Khaya

“nxa you're nauseating yaz, you're too old for all this. Don't you have res...”

Thobiles loud wail stops me, She leaves me there and runs to the restroom now I have no choice but to run after her, this fool better pray we don't meet

again. The little respect I had for him is gone.

[06/20, 18:03] Lynne: (Continuation)

I have to go through all the toilet cubicles before I find Thobile kneeling on the floor with her face hovering the toilet seat. I rush inside and lock the door. We've attracted too much attention as it is She's vomiting and crying at the same time

"Thobile" I say brushing her back.

Once she's done vomiting she flashes the toilet and sits flat on her bum and brings her knees to her chest and buried her face on her knees

God, she's a mess

"Thobile" I say again kneeling in-front of her

The cubicle space is not enough for the both of us

but what can I say

She's wailing painfully my tears are just a blink away.

"Shhh" I try to comfort her while still brushing her back

"Khaya is stupid" I say, I'm defeated really

She lifts her face from her knees

My poor Thobile, she's just a messy mess if there's such.

Her eyes are puffy and red, it's like she's been crying for days, it's time to pull my big girl panties on and console my friend. Khaya is proof enough that men are dogs

They've been dating for about six months now I'm just glad this happened now rather than later when

she's invested in the relationship I know it's not easy but imagine how hurt would she been had it been after a while remember how Thobile wanted to sleep with that fool

Pheew!

Thank god that didn't happen

“Thobile” words are about to fail me

“Khaya is not worth you tears” she presses her lips together trying to suppress her tears

“you will find someone who will love you” she starts wailing loudly again, what am I saying wrong?

I hug her as she continues to cry, my tears too are free falling I hate seeing my bubbly Thobile like this, heck I've never seen this girl shed a tear before and when she does it's because of some old moron shit

head nca

The fool is married and has a baby mama and failed to tell Thobile or maybe she knew but she wouldn't have dated him had she known

“Did you know that he is married”

My mouth and thoughts colliding against me yet again

She snaps her head away from my shoulder and gives me that look, you know that look that Say ‘how can you’

Yes how can I ask such it's obviously she didn't know

“Askies Tee you didn't know, he didn't tell you” I give her my remorseful look

She says nothing but buries her face in her knees

again still crying

“Shhh he’s not worth it, just be glad you found out now rather than later” I continue to give my consolations rubbing her back

She starts shaking her head while gagging she’s about to vomit again

I open the toilet seat for her to puke again

Once she’s done vomiting she flushed and looks at me blankly

What a mess...

“How are you feeling” emotionally she’s a wrack I know but I’m talking about her health right now she can’t keep vomiting like this she’ll end up puking her intestines out.

“Like hell” she says giving me a weak smile with her

teary eyes

“You’ll be fine” I return her weak smile

She sighs and wipes her tears with her back hand

“Nothing will ever be fine” she says after a while

I know it may seem so for now but eventually she all will be fine, she just sixteen, she still has plenty more heart-breaks to go through before she finds her true love.

I’m starting to sound like an old experienced woman right now

“Come on tee, you still young one day when you happy with your husband you’ll look back and laugh t this day. Look at us we seating in a small public toilet crying” I say laughing lightly at us

I'm trying to lighten the mood

She gives me weak chuckle as well shaking her head

“You don't understand Que, nothing will ever be right” she says trying to suppress her tears but failing

“It may seem so now but in time all will be fine” she continues to shakes her head

“tell you what let's get out of here and we will deal with this together”

She laugh but her tears have managed to find her cheeks again

I have never seen her this broken

“Lets get you out of here” I say standing

“Qhamuike I’m pregnant”

She has to rinse her mou....

wait what?

“What?” I need her to repeat what she said, did she say she’s pregnant?

She nods crying

“You pregnant” this is unbelievable

When, how, No Thobile is a virgin

“I don’t understand Thobile what do you mean you pregnant, you’re a virgin so stop talking nonsense”

She's just looking at me blankly

No she didn't

"You gave Khaya your virginity"

She nods lightly,

have I been too caught up in Mngqobi's world that I don't know what's happening in my friends life

"Thobile" is all I say

My hands are already covered over my mouth I'm shocked

"See what I mean, nothing will ever be aright" she's trying to calm herself

"Did you tell him"

The idiot has to know what he did

She shakes her head

“I’ve been meaning to tell him but I haven’t gotten the right time”

Right time? When is that? He knows the aftermath of unprotected sex so tell me when is the right time

“Right time Thobile, you’re pregnant that’s enough right time to tell him”

I’m still trying to phantom the bomb that she just uttered but hell..

“Well now is the right time don’t you think”

“I can’t tell him que, you saw him out there he has a family, I don’t know want to be a home wrecker” she says wailing

To hell with his family

He knew he had a family when he was courting her
so why is she being so considerate

“What? You can’t be serious Thobile, didn’t he know
he had a family when he was with you” she’s
starting to piss me off.

“Qhamukile you don’t understand, it’s one thing to
sleep around but with a married man, my parents oh
God my parents will be so ashamed”

I don’t even want to think about her father,
remember I told you he is very traditional and not
only that but he’s a pastor too

“You dont sleep around Thobile, you slept with him
and only him so he needs to play his part.

“Your parents will eventually forgive you”

Her mom maybe but her dad God what has she done, her father will definitely skin her alive before he disown her, I can't begin to imagine what she's going through

“Qhamukile you know how stubborn ubaba is he's going to send me packing” she manages to say through her tears

God khaya has to know what he has done.

I grab her phone in her jacket pocket and dial Khayas number

It goes unanswered the first time but he answers when I call again

“Thobile i can't talk right now” he says whispering

Oh so now he knows who she is...

“Hey wena slima ndin’ Thobile is pregnant and you busy....” Thobile snatches the phone and hangs up before I could say more

“Thobile yin, he has to know” I angrily say

“Do you know what you have done” she snickers at me

Hell why is she raising her voice at me, this stupid boyfriend of hers has to know.

A text comes through her phone as she was about to talk, she reads it and hands me her phone

It’s a text from him saying she must stay here he’ll come pick her up and that they need to talk.

I’m just glad he’s coming to deal with this I know I’m here for her but it’s not the same

We clean ourselves up and exit the restroom, I

forgot about my plastics so I'm so relieved when I find them where I left them at KFC

Khaya just texted and said he's at the parking lot I'm not about to let my friend face him alone.

He's leaning on the bonnet when we get to the parking lot with his head hanging low

"Thobile we need to talk, alone" he says looking at me

If he thinks I'm leaving her here then clearly he doesn't know me

"I'm sure you can say whatever you want to say in front of me" I say looking at him

He says nothing but looks at Thobile, she looks conflicted at first but I give her stern look she's not about to weak in front of him

“Yes, you can say whatever you have to say in front of her” she says softly

He almost rolls his eyes and gets in the car

Thobiles gets in the front seat and I in the back.

“Is it true” he asks as he drives out the mall

“Yes it’s true” I answer from the back

I know I should let them do the talking but I can’t seem to shut my mouth

“Yes” thobile says

“Ok” he continues to drive silently

The drive feels like eternity and I know he won’t talk whilst I’m still here but I’m not going anywhere

It’s a long silent drive i tell you atleast I’ve managed

to cool down a bit I'm not as angry as I was Thobile is still crying silently, Khaya is not even looking at her. What a bum.

THOBILE

Nothing is as painful as being cheated on well in this case I guess he cheated with me, Khaya has subjected me to being that side dish that every married woman hates. Imagine at sixteen years old i already have that title handing over my head.

It hurts..

I'm trying to control my breathing but it feels like air has been sucked right out of my lungs.

I don't know what to do or say anymore, tears are just free falling regardless how hard I try not to cry.

My heart feels empty. Had I known that he had a wife then I wouldn't have dated him but it's a little too late for regrets now.

Im pregnant.

Not only am I pregnant but with a married man's baby.

How did I get here?

I'm just mute as Khaya drives into Mvubukazi

He parks where he usually does when he comes to see me and kills the engine

The silence is killing me, I need to know what he's thinking

Does he think I'm trying to trap him with this baby?

I regret the day I laid eyes on him.

Qhamu told me to break things off with him but how was I to do that when I'm so in love with him and He knows I love him. I'm young, naive and vulnerable and I guess he used that against me.

I hear him sighs next to me, I can also feel him when he turns to face me but I don't have the strength nor will power to look at him so I continue to look out the window.

“Thobile” he says softly

I continue to disregard him, my heart yearns for his touch but I’m too broken to even talk to him

“Can we please talk, privately” he’s so softly spoken that you’d swear this is not the same person that was pretending not to know me

“Please” he begs

“Que I’ll be fine, I have to talk to Khaya. I’ll call you ok” I say after I’ve turned to Qhamukile

I can see her wanting to protest but she relents and gets out the car.

She’s more angry than myself.

To be continued

[06/20, 18:03] Lynne: (Continuation”

“Firstly I want to apologize for what happened earlier on” he looks very remorseful you’d swear he’s not the same Khaya that denied knowing me earlier on

“You married” I still can’t believe it

“I wanted to tell you baby but I couldn’t hurt you like that, you know that I love you baby so I just couldn’t tell you”

“Khaya you say you love me but how do I believe that when you have a wife”

I don’t know what nonsense he’s trying to feed me but I’m not trusting him right now

“I know I fucked up and I’m sorry” he says and takes both my hands in his

I want to snatch my hands away but something is
stopping me

And I don't want his sorries I want an explanation

“Why, why would you hide something like that” I'm
now crying softly

“Baby Phumeza and I were arranged so I had to do
right by my father and marry her but I chose you,
my heart chose you so it's different”

I don't believe that even for a second

“When where you going to tell me” I'm trying so
hard to restrain my tears

“I was waiting for the right time”

“Right time”

“Listen Thobile I know I hurt you and baby I’m sorry.
Yes I have a wife but that doesn’t mean I love you
any less” he says brushing my hands

I know he hurt me but my heart yearns for him, I
want him to hood me and tell me that everything
will be alright

“Do you love her” I don’t know why iam asking this
but I think maybe if I hear him say no then I’d feel
better

“Baby, i love you and that’s all that matters”

Ouch....

I just wanted to hear him say he doesn’t love her.

Am I that naive?

“So believe me when I say I’m sorry”

I don't know what to say, he says he loves me but hurts me.

How do you keep such secrets from someone you claim to love?

He is married...

My mind is just all over the place I can't even think straight

The man I love is married, he is someone else's husband I still can't believe it

I have no words for him so I turn my head and look outside

It goes dead silent for a while, I'm hurt tears are just streaming down my face, I don't know love could hurt like this.

"So you pregnant" he says after a while

I don't know what to say so I just nod

“How far along are you”

I shrug, I still don't trust my voice

“How sure are you that you pregnant”

“I took a pregnancy test” I finally say

my voice is shaking but I've managed to control my tears at last

“You do know that they can be inaccurate at times right” I know that but not in this case I've been ignoring morning sickness this past two weeks I'm just in denial, even my body feels different

“I took three and they all came out positive”

I had to make sure

I even went to the clinic

He nods and keeps quiet for a while

“I don’t understand baby, we only had sex once so how could you have fallen pregnant just after one sexual encounter”

I don’t know if he’s genuinely confused or what and I did tell him to use a condom but he assured me that nothing like this would happen and I believed him

Look where that got me now

Sigh

“I don’t know okay, all that I know is i’m pregnant and my parents are going to kill me” I say teary

The thought of my parents knowing about this kills me

“Shhh baby don’t cry” he says pulling me closer to him

I know I shouldn't be entertaining him but he's all I need right now, somehow my brain thinks he's the only one that will make all this right again

"Your parents don't have to know about this" he says brushing my back

I don't know what does that suppose to mean unless if he means that I should run away and never go back home but am I brave enough to do that and besides where will I go?

"How" my voice is muffled by his chest so it comes out softly

"Look" he says and cups both my cheeks with his hands and look me straight in the eyes

"What I'm saying is you not ready for such

responsibility, having a baby is no child play and we can't take that lightly, it's a life time responsibility love. you still young Thobs and I don't want you to have such a burden and not forgetting that you still in school so don't you think us having baby is not ideal at the moment" he pauses a bit

I can sense that what he's about to say is heavy

"As much as I hate saying this but baby don't you think it's best if maybe we can get rid of it"

What?

get rid of it?

It's an IT now?

I'm shocked to say the least

I snatch my hands away from his, tell me he's not suggesting abortion

"What?" I cant believe him right now

“Listen baby” he takes my hands again

“we still going to have plenty more babies in future but now it’s not the right time. You only sixteen love, you have a whole future ahead of you and a baby will just hinder that future”

I’m Shaking my head as he says all this, I don’t know how can he even think of such

“No i can’t do that” I say defensively

“Listen Baby” He lets out that exasperated breath

“J ust think about it ok” he says and answers his ringing phone

I’m still trying to process whatever he said

Get rid of it?

I'm crying uncontrollably I can't believe my life has taken such a drastic turn.

just weeks ago I was a care free teenager, today I have a life growing inside me and not only that the father wants me to get rid of this baby.

How did I get here?

I know I'm young but abortion goes against all my beliefs and morals

I constantly read about teenage pregnancy on magazines or watch shows regarding this pandemic issue but never have I ever thought it would happen to me.

Today Ive becomes part of teenage pregnancy statistics.

God, what have I done.

"I have to go" Khaya says once he's done with his call

My mouth is dry so I just nod in agreement

“Think about it ok” he says and pecks my lips

“I love you” he says and starts the car.

I’m left bewildered as he drives away.

MANQOBA

I know Mnqobi and I are identical.

When looking at him it’s like seeing my own reflection in the mirror that’s how much we look alike and because of that we have gotten away with a lot of mischief growing up, he would take the fall for my naughtiness at lot of times and for that I’ll forever be grateful.

Him and I are one yes but we so different in so

many ways he's very unruly and aggressive no wonder everybody thinks he's always at fault but he can be loving too, I'm afraid he's unable to show that side of him because he wants to be perceived as this hardcore macho man and I'm more settled and composed, though we different we the same in so many ways too so I can confidently say it will be easy pretending to be him we've done this before and a lot of people have fallen for it.

I am confident that Qhamukile will fall for it too but all this somehow feels so wrong.

This rivalry between us and them started way before my forefathers were born, it's been happening for years and years but I don't understand why should we keep on hating each other without reason.

Anyway I've got a mission to complete, I know better and going against Makhosini's instruction is not way to go.

I've been stalking Qhamu for a while now, observing how she behaves and carries herself

I must say she's a hard headed young lady.

Stubborn as a mule too.

I don't know whose car is it that she's just climbed out off but whoever that person is must have pissed her off

I can see her nose flaking from here, I'm afraid of her right now but again this could be a perfect opportunity, I know she hasn't seen Mngqobi in a while so maybe seeing "Mngqobi" is what she need right now.

I'm already walking to her

her strides are rushed so I've got no choice but to increase my pace as well

"Prin....Ntokazi" that was close

I know Mnqobi would never call her princess

She turns around and sees me

I see a smile creep in but it turns into a frown just
as quick

“Mnqobi” she says slowly

I can tell she’s unsure and this has never happened
before

“How are you” my voice is not as hoarse as
Mnqobi’s but it does the trick

“I’m good and you” she’s talking so slow looking at
me inquisitively

“I’m good, I missed you” I don’t know what game am
I playing here because I can clearly see that she’s

doubting me

“Missed me” I’m not sure if that’s a statement or a question

“Yes, ain’t you going to give your babe a hug” I’m trying my luck here

She steps closer slowly and gives me a very cold hug

I wonder what’s going through her mind right now

“You look different” she says after she breaks the hug

“Different” I’m shocked really, she’s the first person to ever be able to tell us apart

“Yes, you not Mnqobi are you” she says still
scrutinizing me

shit...

I’m busted

“What do mean”

“You look very different and you even sound
different too” she says walking around me

“Come on baby, it’s me” I say trying to pull her close
to me but she roughly pulls her hand away

“You’re Manqoba right” she’s got her eyebrow
raised daring me to lie

I let out a nervous chuckle

She got me

“Yes, you are Manqoba marn” she’s now laughing at me or herself I don’t really know

“You had me for a minute there” she’s still laughing softly

Her laughter is so melodic

“You got me, I’m Manqoba” I admit

It’s no use denying it now

“Yeses to two you look alike, anyway where is he”

“Around”

“Mmmm what brings you here” she says a little serious

“Mngobi sent me” I don’t know why I’m lying but that’s the first thing that came to mind

“He couldn’t come himself”

I just shrug

“I don’t want to hear whatever you have to say, he knows where to find me if he has something to tell me” she’s now angry

“He misses you”

that’s the truth he’s been miserable ever since Makhosini told him never to speak to her again

“Well he has a funny way of showing it, tell him I said he has until tonight to call me or else he can forget about ever seeing me” ok

what happened to the sweet Qhamu that was here a few minutes ago

I can see the defiance that Mngqobi was talking about

she's got that fire burning within her.

Part of me wants to tell her to forget about Mngqobi but I'm afraid that will break her heart.

She's angry right but I can see how her eyes sparkles when she says his name. She's in love with my brother.

“I'll pass on the message”

“Good.... please leave before any of my brother sees you. I don't want them to kill you” she says and walks away.

I know I shouldn't be here but I stand still looking at her until she turns around the corner.

I think I'm in love....

I'm having such a busy day but I still managed to write you guys an insert

Love you guys

[06/20, 18:03] Lynne: (Chapter nine)

MNQOBI

I know I've been selfish when it comes to this Nokhaya situation, it's time I let her go. It's not fair on her or on me. I'm in love with someone else and I can't ignore that any longer so ending this will be best for all parties, I can't even begin to imagine how hurt Qhamu will be should she find out about all this so ending this is the best thing to do.

I don't love Nokhaya but she's special in her kind of way

SMH...

I know I contradict myself at times but what do you expect I sometimes let my small head in between my legs do the thinking like Makhosini said but now that I've got my thoughts cleared I can safely say I know what I want and that is Qhamukile, so why string Nokhaya along.

I know it will be difficult staying without sex but I'll live.

I'm willing to wait for Qhamu until she's ready.

Yooh I never thought I'd hear myself say that, me Mngobi the playboy making such compromises, I must be growing up or is it love?

I see Nokhaya walking towards me slowly shaking her hips, her skin is so flawless she's just beautiful.

My penis is already pulsating just by seeing her.

No Mngobi use the head with brains I reprimand myself...

fuck

This is going to be harder than I thought.

It's after four pm, I chose to come see her during daytime because I can't risk seeing her when it's dark, I might just get tempted and pound on her in the car.

I need to learn more self control uh...

I'm leaning on my car thinking of the perfect words, I don't want break things off rudely but with Nokhaya you need to be a little hostile to get her to understand so you can understand my dilemma

She comes and stands next to me without saying anything. I know she's still angry for what I did the last time I was with her but I need to say whatever I have to say and leave.

"Hi" I greet to which she nods too

She's seriously mad

"How are you"

“Good” she says coldly

It’s now or never

“Nokhaya there’s something I want us to talk about”

I open the passenger door for her to get in, this is the first time I’ve ever done this for her but I always open the door for Qhamu.

Once she’s settled in I close the door and go to the driver seat

“So there’s no easy way to say this so I’m just going to go ahead and say it”

She’s looking at me with sad eyes, feeling sorry for her is not an option right now

“I want us to end whatever is going on here”

“What” the shock on her face... damn

“Yes, I’m done with this” I say with a straight face

“Mngobi you can’t break up with me, not after everything”

See what I mean

Her lack of understanding brings out the worst in me.

I wanted to do this peacefully and she knows very well that’s not me but I’m trying here.

can she not understand that I want out?

“Nokhaya I said what I needed to say, I’m done”

She lets out a loud wail

God help me

I don’t do well with tears

“Nokhaya just stop crying, you knew we were not in a relationship so just stop it ok” I’m bored more than anything

“But Mngqobi you cant break up with me”

I’m starting to get really impatient and when I get impatient I get really rude

I can see she’s hurting so I think it’s best if I just leave, Ive said whatever I wanted to say anyway

“Nokhaya I’m done here”

“I’m pregnant” she blurts out

You’ve got to be kidding me

“Oh” I don’t know what to say really

“Yes”

I don't know why is she telling me all this, it's not like it's mine

“Whose the father” that's the first question that comes to mind

She looks at me with teary eyes, don't tell me she thinks it's mine.

I've always been careful

“Is it mine” I know I'm being rude but she's crazy if she thinks I'm responsible for that pregnancy

“What, yes it's yours” she says crying

“WHAT???” This is crazy

I've always used protection and I mean always

Did it burst?

I could've felt it though

I know we've had lots of drunken sex before but I use a condom all the time or maybe not

Shit...

"Yes, I've been meaning to tell you but I didn't know how to" she's now crying hysterically

Fuck me...

this is not happening

I don't understand though, when did this happen?

"Are you sure" I don't know what to think

"What the hell Mngobi yes I'm sure" she says sniffling

"Ok, I have to go. This is too much to process I'll call

you later on” I say already starting the car

She climbs off still crying I don't really care right now

I don't know how that happened because I've always been super careful.

I don't remember ever sleeping with her without a condom but if she's really pregnant with my child then I have to do the right thing, I can't turn away from my own flesh and blood.

Qhamu...

fuck I can forget about her now I doubt she'll want to be with me and not forgetting that Nokhaya is too much to deal with

But I can't give up just yet, I'm going to fight for her.

I'm pissed off as I drive to Mvubukazi I don't care if her brothers see me I just want to talk to her.

I need her.

NOKHAYA

Fuck, fuck, fuck!!

What have i done?

When Mngqobi finds out I lied about being pregnant
I'm dead, he's going to skin me alive.

What was I suppose do to do though?

Desperate times calls for desperate measures

I just couldn't sit and let him break what we have, I
love him too much, I can't live without him.

So now I need to get pregnant really fast but whose
going to get me pregnant?

I take out my phone and call my gay friend Lucas,
I'm hoping he helps me

It rings for a couple of times before he answers

“Darlings” he’s forever bubbly

“Hey sugar, how are you” I’ve dried my crocodile tears and my voice is also back to normal

“I’m alright, what’s up. Are we going to that party later on”

He’s a life of a party, if I manage to sneak out then I’ll go. I need to distress anyway

“Obviously, Listen babe I need your help” I’m a nervous wreck

“I’m all ears”

God this is harder than I thought, I didn’t realize that I’m silent until Lucas cleared his throat

“Okay, this is going to sound crazy but just know that I’m desperate and I don’t really have much of a choice” I first say

I can’t see him but I bet he’s rolling his eyes

“Go on, I don’t have all day” he says

Ok, it’s now it never

“I want you to get me pregnant” I say as fast as I can

It goes dead silent

“Lucas” I can hear him breathing on the other line so he didn’t hang up

“Did I hear you right, you said you want me, I mean me gay Lucas to get you pregnant”

“Yes” I just want him to agree

“That’s absurd, you clearly losing your mind” he says laughing

“Please Lucas” I’m desperate

“You serious” he’s stopped laughing now, he knows I’m serious

“Yes”

“No Khaya that’s crazy, I don’t know what’s going on in that little head of yours but clearly you not sane”

“Please Lucas or else I’m going to lose Mnqobi forever”

“Nokhaya are you listen to yourself, I’ve told you this dozens of times Mngobi doesn’t love you. And if you think being pregnant is a way to go then clearly you’re crazy. This is an obsession my f you need help. This little plan won’t end well especially for you” I didn’t ask him to preach

I just need his sperms and that’s it

“Lucas I just need your sperm”

“Nokhaya, what’s happening to you. You might be crazy but I’m not”

Ag if he’s not going to help then I’ll get someone else I don’t need him anyway

“If you not going to help then fine” I say and hang up

I need to come up with a plan

Lucas wouldn't have worked anyway all Ngcobo's men look alike so it has to be one of them

Why did I say I'm pregnant?

Dammit I really dug my own grave there.

Think Nokhaya think...

Bingo...

[06/20, 18:04] Lynne: (Continuation)

I thank you all for your support

QHAMUKILE

I just received a call from Mngqobi saying he is

coming here, he sounded angry and very frantic I wonder what's wrong. I haven't spoken to him in a week and when he calls he makes demands

Eye roll

I can't help be worried, I just hope my brothers have nothing to do with his this

"I'm here" a text from him comes through

I've got no choice but go see him

Im just glad all my brothers are not home right now and I know they won't be home until later on

Mnqobi is parked just a few houses away from mine not far enough I think to myself as I walk to him

"Hey"

I say after I get in the car, he didn't even open the door for me, that's a first.

“Hi” he answers coldly

Okay...

His head is rested on the steering wheel and he's trying to steady his breathing. I have never seen Mngobi angry and I'm not liking this sight at all

The car is full of smoke as it is but he has a cigarette lit suffocating me, i can tell that's not his first cigarette, he had a few before this.

The little anger I had in me evades immediately and is replaced with worry

Mngobi doesn't behave this way

“What's wrong” clearly something is wrong

“Nothing”

he says and steps outside the car to light yet another cigarette

This must be really be serious

He's cursing inaudibly as he walks around kicking stones on the ground

I'm dying from worry but I'm trying not to panic at the same time which seems to be very difficult

How can I remain calm when he's behaving like this?

Once he's done polluting his lungs he steps back into the car

I don't know where to start so we both remain silent

"What's wrong" they say silence is golden but this silence is killing me

"Nothing baby" he says and roughly run both his hands on his head

So much for nothing and I don't believe there's ever nothing

nothing doesn't exist

"Talk to me baby" I say getting closer to him

The gear is making it difficult for me to be too close to him but I'll work with what I have

"Baby" he says softly

I'm waiting for him to talk but he goes silent again

I can't take this...

jumping over the gear I sit on top of him straddling him.

Thank god I'm thin or else this would've been impossible

"Talk to me" I say cupping his cheeks with both my hands and forcing him to look at him

He chuckles before he answers

“I love you baby” he says and kisses me

Can he talk already

“I know baby, so talk to me”

He looks at me long and unflinching that I start to see him doubt my love for him

“Mngobiwesizwe Ngcobo I love you and I’m sure whatever you have say won’t change that”

He flashes me a feeble smile

he likes it when I call him by his full name

“He smiles, my work here is done” I say smiling weakly too

He says that to me all the times when I’m angry or when he’s being his usual annoying self

“Qhamu, I love you so much” he says all serious

and hugs me tightly

“And baby I hope our love is strong enough survive all that's coming our way” he coos against my ear

I'm not sure what he's talking about but he has nothing to worry about I'm confident that we will trample against all obstacles

“Baby I love you more than anything, I doubt there's anything or anyone that will break us up” I assure him

I don't know what is it that I have to do or say to show Mngobi that I love him just as much and it hurts me that he doesn't believe in my love for him like I do his.

He breaks the hug to look at me

“You beautiful”

He says playing with my hair

God Mngobi can beat around the bush shem

“Thank you” I say blushing

“Ok, so I was ten when my father left home and never came back home I’ve told you this before” he says and kisses my forehead

I don’t want to disturb him so I’m just nodding besides I know this so I just want him to get to the point

“And you were eight when your was killed by Sgidi”

I don’t know what this has to do with anything but I remain silent anyway and let him continue

“God, I hope you don’t hate me after this” he says

and draws a deep breath

Why would I hate him, he has nothing to do with my
fathers death

“So I’ve been keeping a secret from you, but
promise me that you won’t break up with me after I
tell you this”

I hate where this is going but I nod anyway

“Words Qhamu, use words”

I’m very skeptic as I recite “I promise”

He nods and closes his eyes after I’ve said that

He takes a deep breath again

“Sgidi was my father” he says fast

“What” tears are already blurring my sights

In an instant my breath hitches, I'm hyperventilating.
I can't breath and my chest feels heavy

MNQOBI

“Breathe Qhamu, breath baby”

I don't really know what I'm doing here but I have to do something because she's struggling to breath, I'm panicking as I try to help her steady her breathing.

I had to tell her

I hat to, I'm trying to convince myself that I did the right thing

It was the right thing right?

The secret has been weighing too much on me and I just couldn't handle it plus there's that pregnancy issue now.

How many secrets can I bare to keep, me telling her about our fathers is the best test if we can survive this then we can survive anything.

About that Nokhaya pregnancy issue...

God

I don't believe her one bit but I'm going to investigate it further should I find out she's lying to me then she'll know the real Mngqobi.

"Breath baby, deep breath, deep breath" I say to her again

I need to focus on her and not think about anything else

She takes a few deep breath like I've instructed

Once her breathing has stabilized she starts crying

painfully

“Sorry I had to tell you” I say brushing her back

She still straddled on top of me and she’s holding on to me too tight as if she’s afraid that I’m going to leave her

She cries long and hard which breaks my heart I cant help shed a tear myself.

I’m holding her to tight that I don’t feel or see anything when someone grabs her forcibly by her hand and pulls her out the car

How come didn’t I even here him open the car.

“Qhamukile what did I say about this boy” that’s her brother Nqaba

I know I took a risk by coming here but I couldn’t stay away

“Nqaba” I say stepping outside the car

Qhamu is still crying and all that I want to do I get to her and hold her tight

“What did I say wena” he leaves Qhamu and charges towards me

His first punch lands directly on my chin then the second one my abdomen.

I don't know when or where the rest of the brother come from but now it's the three of them punching and kicking me.

I can hear Qhamu's painful cries as they continue to assault me, today's kicks are more powerful than the last time, they are seriously going to leave me with injuries, that's if I'm not dead by the time they're finished with me.

I don't know where Manqoba, Mcedisi and Zwelethu came from but I'm thrilled as I see them charging

towards the Buthelezi's brothers. It gets rowdier when Zwelethu pulls Nqaba away from me and throws his meanest punches

I know my brothers have been stalking me for the past few days under Langa's instructions. He wants to make sure that I'm not keeping touch with Qhamu.

I'm just happy they are here.

Manqoba is now fighting with Mondli and Mcedisi with Gcina so I'm now I'm free to get to Qhamu

I just want her to away from all this violence, I can't subject her to such. we will deal with each other as men.

"Qhamu go home" I shout as I see Gcina coming to me

He's managed to knock Mcedisi to the floor, that brother of mine is no fighter.

The Buthelezi's brothers are tough to beat I tell you and are they always together?

I don't know where Gcina pulled a gun from but a loud BANG is what I hear before it goes silent and they all stop fighting to look at Gcina whose holding a gun with shaking hands

I think he's shocked too that he has fired a gun what or who did he shoot?

I'm shocked when Qhamu shouts crying that "Mngobi you've been shoot"

What"

I inspect myself and I see blood on my shirt

And just like that it gets dark, darkness has consumed me.

[06/20, 18:04] Lynne: Chapter ten

QHAMUKILE

My ears are left tinnitus after that shot, I see everything that's happening but just like in the movies everything unfolds slowly.

We are all just standing unmoved looking at Gcina but not for long because I see when Mngqobi's brothers all rush to Gcina to beat him up, my brothers also run to them to get them off Gcina.

God.

It's just chaos...

I remain unmoved it's like my feet are glued to the ground

I can't hear anything that's been said because my ears are muffled with the buzzing sound but my brain starts to function when I see Mngqobi drops to the ground.

Oh God Mngqobi

No no no no no... I'm already in tears just by seeing that

He can't die.

No he can't die, I still have a lot to tell him

I want to tell him that I love him regardless of what his father did to mine.

I don't care about the past, we just need to moved on.

I just love him

I never pray mostly because I don't believe in this God, he claims to love us but let bad things to happen to us.

He has control of who dies so why did he let my mother die after giving birth to me, not only that he let my father die too so tell me where is the love there, but I find myself praying to this God anyway.

He can't take Mngobi away from me too, he just can't.

All his brothers stops fighting and run to him, I'm already kneeling next Mnqobi trying to get him to open his eyes.

I'm crying but I'm pressing his wound so he doesn't bleed out like in the movies

I know this is real life but I can't just let him die.

Im trying not panic just yet, his eyes are closed but atleast his chest is rising and falling meaning he is still breathing

God please save him.

"Fuck" Manqoba says crouching next to me

"I'm going to kill you" the other bother says charging towards Gcina again

I'm not sure which one though I'm still yet to learn to put the face to the name

I don't understand how can he be wanting to fight at a crucial time like this

"Let's get him to a hospital" I say to the one couching next to him

He looks a bit older so he should be more sensible

"Manqoba help me get him into the car" Manqoba does so as fast they can but careful not to hurt him.

The one that wanted to beat Gcina comes back and gets in the car too

I didn't realize that I was also in the car until Nqaba grabbed my hand

"Where the fuck do you think you're going" he shouts

“Nqaba just leave me alone” I shout back and yank my hand away from his hold

If he thinks I’m staying behind then he doesn’t know me

“Yes, get out of here” one of Mnqobi brother says to me

“I’m not going anywhere just get to damn hospital before he dies” I shout at him

I’m holding on to Mnqobi tightly he can’t die on me
And how can they even think I’m going to let them control me.

I don’t care if they are hating each other right now, I just want to make sure that Mnqobi is ok

“Qhamukile get out of that car” that’s Mondli

I'm too angry at them that I don't answer but just shut the door and instruct Manqoba whose on the driver seat to drive

Thank god he doesn't protest but drives away

MANQOBA

I'm driving like a maniac, I don't care about traffic lights or tickets at this moment I just want to get to the hospital.

Mnqobi is my half I won't be able to function without him, he's a brother and a friend in one.

Should something happen to him i swear I'm going to kill that Buthelezi boy.

He needs to make it through

He needs to live.

Qhamukile is crying hysterically in the back seat she's got Mngqobi head rested on her lap, i command that girls bravery, standing for what she wants like that.

I know her brothers won't take this lightly though I know for sure that they will come for her.

She keeps kissing Mngqobi forehead and begging him to open his eyes but snaps at him for not opening his eyes

Shaking my head...

I'd laugh if it was a different situation.

Thanks to my driving skills we get to the hospital in record time

I don't know who alerted the rest of my brothers but they are all standing at the entrance when we get to

the hospital

Makhosini is shouting, ordering all doctors to attend to Mngqobi

He has that authoritative demeanor naturally so a doctor attends to Mngqobi once he's taken out of the car and put to the hospital stretcher

“Bullet hit him on the chest, prepare him for theater”
one doctor instruct

I hate how calm doctors are, I'm panicking and scared to death but he's calmly giving instructions

Qhamu is pushed back by one of the nurses as she wants to go with Mngqobi

“Ntombazana wait out here, the doctor will do all that he can to save him” a nurse says to Qhamu
pushes her back

I can see she wants to protest so I go to her and take her hand

She's a mess, she's been crying since Mngobi got shot

her hands and t-shirt are bloody but I pull her to me anyway and engulfing her with a hug and let her cry on my chest.

We all standing in the waiting area so you can imagine the attention we have brought upon ourselves, now everyone is looking at us.

“What's happening here” that's Makhosini

“Bhuti” I say and let Qhamu go.

I totally forgot he's here

He totally disregard me and looks at Qhamu

“Ntombazana what are doing here” he asks her

I know he’s going to give me an earful later on, I’m not suppose to fall in love remember

“I’m here for Mngqobi” she says straight face after she wipes away her tears with the back of her hand

She doesn’t fear my big old bad brother Makhosini.

Damn I can’t help fall more in love

No one has ever spoken to Makhosini with a straight face looking at him in the eye

Damn Qhamu...

she’s your brother girlfriend I keep reminding myself and the fact that Mngqobi genuinely loves her is more reason for me to stay away but I can’t something keeps pulling me towards her, my feeling for her keeps on getting more and more

“You shouldn’t be here, go home” Makhosini says softly

This is a first

“With all due respect bhuti I’m not going anywhere until I’m sure that Mngqobi is alright” she says and takes a sit in one of the branches and buries her face on her hands

Tell me, how do I not fall in love with such feistiness?

All my brothers are left dumbfounded, it’s really unbelievable that someone has spoken to Makhosini like that.

Langa is shaking his head looking at Qhamukile unbelievably

“And then nina, what are you looking at” Makhosini

half shouts and we all look elsewhere but not him

I move to go sit next to Qhamu and let her rest her head on my lap

Few hours later

We still seated in the waiting area, no doctor has come to give us any feedback and the wait is killing me.

We have been here since five pm and it's now after nine pm and nothing...

I hear chaos erupts from the reception

I can here deep voices shouting and cursing I don't know who those voices belong to but it's not long

that all Qhamu's brother appear, I mean all of them.

"Where is she" the older one say looking around us
all

He's scary, Makhosini scary.

I shake Qhamu whose sleeping on my shoulder
lightly and she wakes up

"What" she says a little dazed from sleep

It's dead silent everyone is just looking at us

"Any news" she says softly rubbing her eyes

She managed to wash Mngobi's blood off her
hands but she's still wearing her bloody t-shirt

And I don't think she's conscious enough to notice
that her brothers are here

“Qhanukile” I say and look at her brothers

They are all so tall I don't know how can she
not see them

“Bhuti” she says shocked

her eyes are already teary

God this girl is a cry baby

“What the fuck are you doing here Qhamukile” it's
another brother

He's punctuating every word angrily

I know this one, if memory serves me well His name
is Gatsha i believe

“I...I'm... i'm....” Qhamu stutters

“I want you out of here this instant” the older one says again

He’s not shouting but the sternest in his voice is not to be missed.

“But bhuti...I ... I can’t, Mngobi is...” Qhamu tries to protest but she’s stopped mid sentence when her brother says

“I’m not going to repeat myself” with that said he walks towards Makhosini

I’m not sure if he wants to talk or fight but Makhosini has his hands folded into a fist preparing for whatever that’s about to happen

Qhamu stands and walks out slowly I restrain the urge to follow her, I don’t want to die just yet.

Her brothers are all looking at her intensively as she

walks out

Once she's out of ear shot her older brother throws
a mean punch at Makhosini

“Tell that brother of yours to stay the hell away from
her” he says throwing yet another punch

Now all my brothers are on their feet charging
towards the Buthelezi's.

God

In an instant we are all fight each other

it's just chaotic nje

nurses and some doctors keeps shouting that we
all stop but I guess we all too angry and charged up
to listen.

Nqaba has me pinned to the floor punching me on
my ribs

I don't even know when did he got to me

Shit he throws mean punches I tell you

Zwelethu manages to pull Nqaba away from me
and throws his own punches at him

Makhosi is faced head to head with Qhamu's older
brother and they are both on the floor fighting

Zwelethu is head on with Nqaba, Langa has Gatsha
pinned down on the floor too punching him

Mcedisi is fighting with Mondli

I manage to see Gcina standing and watching
everything, instantly it comes back

That fucker shot my brother

And I charge towards him but I'm held back by the
security guard before I could get to him.

Fuck...

I don't know when we're the police called but they
are already here restraining us all from fighting.

"Leave me" Zwelethu shouts at the police officer
that's restraining him

All doctors and nurses have come out from
wherever they were to look at all of us

This war between the two families will never end.

They shot my brother and instead of coming here to
apologize they fight us

I thought this I wasn't going to get involved in this
rivalry but what they did today showed me that I'm
wrong

I want revenge too.

I want them dead.

Its US versus THEM until the end of time

“You are all disturbing the peace, this is a hospital
not a tavern” one police officer says and cuff
Makhosini and soon we are all handcuffed and
thrown inside a police van.

What a day....

and we still don't know if Mngqobi made it or not.

[06/20, 18:04] Lynne: Chapter eleven

QHAMUKILE

“Sorry sisi” someone says shaking me awake

I slept at the hospital bench the whole night
because I refused to go home.

“You need to go home” the nurse that woke me says

It's a little after six am and she's caring her bags
ready to leave

she kept on begging me to go home last night she
even gave me taxi fare but I just couldn't, how was I
going to leave not knowing if Mngqobi is fine.

I swear I'm going to hate Gcina should Mngqobi die.

Family or what I'll hate him.

“I can’t leave until I know if he’ll be alright” I say
seating up straight

My body is stiff from sleeping on the hard bench
but I’ll live

She sits next to me shaking her head

“You’re a determined young lady” she says
chuckling lightly

She’s got a batch on written Nurse Margaret Ngidi

“But my child you slept here the whole night, I’m
sure you must be tired. tell you what give me your
number and I’ll call you should there be any
changes”

I’m too skeptical but I end up agreeing anyway and
give her my numbers and leave.

After all my brothers got arrested yesterday I came back to the hospital. The doctors kept on telling me that they are doing all that they could but at least they managed to removed the bullet. It missed his heart by an inch I'm just glad they managed to remove it though the doctor said he's not out of the woods as yet but they hoping that he will pull through.

I don't know what time did I sleep, all that I remember is praying I'm sure God is hella surprised, I've never prayed like that in my entire life.

Morning dew still lingers and it's a cold day today.

The taxi is almost full when I get to the rank so I get in and wait. it's not long that it's full and we in the road.

I sent Thobile an SMS briefing her about the latest events she's shocked to say the least but she promised to come see me later.

I know she's been going through a lot herself even more so now that Khaya has gone awol, he sent her three thousand rands and said it should help get rid of the "situation"

That guy is such a bum I tell you.

Thobile and I will be going to the clinic on Monday, she needs to know what's going on with the baby she can't ignore this issue any longer.

I'm hoping her parents won't chase her away once this comes to light.

The taxi doesn't take that long to get to Mvubukazi, so when I get home I bath and get ready to go to the police station.

Sigh

Regardless of everything that transpired last night they are my brothers and I love them dearly.

I don't know what I'm hoping to achieve by going to the police station but I hope those police men will

let me see them at least.

It's after eleven by the time I get to Pietermaritzburg police station, it's full with people who are here to report domestic violence cases

ladies why do we do this to ourselves though?

Your man claims to love you but lays a hand on you, what kind of love is that?

Love doesn't have to hurt like that and Let me give you a piece of advice.

love yourself.

If you love yourself more than you love the next person then you will know what's good for you and I bet you getting beat up everyday is not good for you, know your worth. Being in an abusive relationship is not healthy and in the end you will die, so tell me do you want to die?

I bet the answer is no.

Then do the right thing for you, not for your kids, not for your family but for you, it's your life at the end of the day. Look yourself in the mirror and tell yourself 'I love me' repeat if needs be, I just want you to believe it. Choose yourself before anything else and you'll be able to make the right choices.

anyway the officer at the front desk gives me attitude when I asked to see the guys which were brought in last night.

"Go sit over there, detective Gumbi will be here later on so you'll talk to him" she says and calls the next person.

Ag do they always have to be this rude.

I sit and wait for what feels like eternity, the God that is offered Gumbi appears after three o'clock, I'm tired and hungry from waiting.

He tells me all those guys have to wait until Monday for their release but he lets me see them.

“Bhuti” they are all in one cell

It's a police station so they are locked up in the back, it's not like in prison where there's a place to sit so I'm I'm seeing them through the steel gate and they are in the cell.

Misuzulu is the first one to raise his head to look at me

“Ntonto” He says and stands up

He called me Ntonto he's not angry at me

You should see my smile right now

“How are you” I say and run my eyes at all my brothers

“We’ll live” he says and chuckles

“The officer said you’ll be out of here on Monday”

I know they have to go to court first but they didn’t kill anyone so I’m sure they will be out

“Don’t worry about us” he says softly

“I’m sorry bhuti, I didn’t mean to be defiant. I’m sorry” I’m already teary

My emotions are just all over the place, my brothers are in a holding cell and my love is fighting for his life.

“Shhh don’t cry ok, it will be alright. We will be out of here and we will talk but Ntonto I don’t want you with that boy, he’s trouble. Promise me you won’t go back there” he says pleadingly

One thing you should know about my brother is that he doesn't ask he gives instructions so for the fact that he's asking me so nicely breaks my heart.

How do I stay away from someone I love though?

I say nothing but look down instead

“Promise me Ntonto”

Lord....

I nod with tears streaming down my face

Will I be able to live up to that promise?

Gumbi comes back as I'm still talking to the rest of my brothers, he tells me that my time is finished and that I have to leave

I first literally have to go on my knees for him to let me see the Ngcobo brothers but he finally agrees

after tears and a lot of begging from my side.

Sigh...

Manqoba is the first one to see me

“Qhamu, you came” he says all excitedly

None of the rest even acknowledges my presence

Ouch

“How are you” I ask him

“Ah I’ve been through worse” he says chuckling

“And how are you” he asks me

“I’m good” I actually came here to speak to
bhut’Makhosini

“Bhuti” I call him past Manqoba

He’s looking at wall you can clearly see that he’s thinking or trying to ignore me I don’t know which

“Bhut’Makhosini” I say again

“What” he say coldly without looking at me

Why am I even here....

“I spoke to the doctor” I start but stop to take a breath

“And” he says still not looking at me

“They’ve managed to remove the bullet he’s still in the intensive care unit but I know he’ll be fine” I say teary

God I need to stop with the water works

He totally ignores me after that

“I’ll go back to the hospital again to check on him” I
say and turn to to leave

“Thank you” I hear him say which stop me at my
tacks

He said thank you...

I smile and nod without turning his direction I can’t
see him but I feel his smile as I walk away.

Monday....

THOBILE

My palms are sweating, my heart is beating erratically, I can feel it beat against my chest. Scared can't even begin to describe how I'm feeling right now I know I'm pregnant but somehow I'm hoping that's not true.

I'm hanging on that little hope that when a nurse takes that pregnancy test it comes out negative.

Wishful thinking, I know.... but what can I do?

Im seated at the clinic bench with Qhamu by my side, she keeps telling me not to panic but how the hell does she expect me not to

We had to walk all the way to the neighboring location, Matsheni clinic because nurses from Mvubukazi don't respect patients privacy, they just talk too much and I know my visit to the clinic would find my parents ears so I had no choice but to come here.

Qhamukile is physically here with me but her mind is not here. I can tell she's trying to be strong but she's struggling.

God

I can't even begin to imagine what she's going through.

I hope and pray that Mngqobi pulls through.

She came back really late from the police station on Saturday and from there she had to go to the hospital, doctors said Mngqobi is on life support but they are hopeful.

I guess that's all that we can do at this stage, be hopeful....

I think she blames herself for everything that's happening, her brothers arrest too.

Speaking of those ones, they were released yesterday.

How?

cause I thought they were waiting for Monday to go to court.... well

I don't know but Nqaba said and I quote 'this is South Africa money talks bull shit walk'

Whatever that means.

I was expecting them to put Qhamu under a tight leash but it didn't happen I wonder what are they planning.

Anyway we both seating in a queue, my heart is beating right out of my chest from fear. I can already hear the judgements and name calling starting with the nurses to the community.

God.

"You'll be fine" Qhamu says holding both my hands

"I'm scared" I say tears already running down my

cheeks

“I know Tee but I’m here for you” she says and
wipes my tears

I’m next, so I stand, wipe the remains of my tears
and go inside the consultation room.

“Hello sisi, take a sit” a very good looking nurse
says

Her name tag is written nurse Thembisile Xulu, her
face is buried in whatever she’s busy writing on her
file.

She looks like she’s in her mid fifties

“What can I do for you my child” she says sweetly
now looking at me

“I....I’m....I” I’m crying before I could even begin my sentence

She hands me a box of tissues and let me cry until I’m able to contain myself

She gives me a glass of water once I’m calm

She hasn’t said anything throughout my dramatics. I’m calm now so I start my sentence again

“I’m pregnant” I blurt out

She says nothing but nods in understanding she’s looking at me with pitiful eyes

“Have you taken a pregnancy test” she asks after awhile

I’m afraid I’m going to cry should I speak so I nod instead

“Ok ke sisi lets make sure before we can do anything else” she says and hands me a cup

I know what to do, so i go the bathroom to do my business

I’m praying silently as I pee into the cup, I know I’m pregnant but part of me is in denial

Once I’m done I go back in the room and hand her the cup.

She already has the pregnancy test open, she dips it in my pee.

“Ok remember ke sisi that teenage pregnancy doesn’t mean that your life is over, you will still have the life you want though it will be different for you” she says sweetly

She’s more motherly than a nurse and I appreciate that

“So you were right you’re pregnant”

I’m crying hysterically as she tell me this you’d swear I didn’t know I’m pregnant

“Don’t cry mntanam” she says and comes to me side to hug me

I manage to calm myself after some time

“Does the father know” she’s so softly spoken

I nod

“What did he say”

I don’t even want to talk about him

“He gave me money for abortion” I tell her

Her faces changes to anger quickly but just as quick she manages to control herself

“What do you want to do”

Abortion is not an option

“I’m keeping the baby” I tell her

She smiles and nods

“Ok ke sisi, then we need to put you on prenatal care so that you can have a strong, healthy baby”

Pregnancy is such a lot of work

“We also need to do an HIV test just to be sure”

Shit there’s that too

Contracting HIV has never crossed my mind but I’m sure I’m clean, Khaya assures me that he’s clean and I believe him

I agree to it just for formality and get tested after a

long boring counseling session

“Remember being HIV positive doesn’t mean death sentence, you can still live a long healthy life” she says

I know I’m not positive but I can’t help feel afraid I’m also on the urge of my seat waiting for the nurse to tell me my results

She’s very slowly spoken causing me to be more nervous

I just need to know.

“Yes, yes” I agree impatiently

“Ok then, so one line means negative and two lines means positive”

God the wait is killing me....

She slowly shows me the test kit and I see two lines

Fuck...

“so it shows two line meaning you are HIV positive”

She sounds very afar as she says this.

It's like my world has come to a complete halt.

What???

“Wh...what”

That the last thing I say before close my eyes

Please don't hate me..

[06/20, 18:04] Lynne: (Continuation)

NOKHAYA

Fuck, my head is banging....

I love the night life, you know the alcohol and good music but the after affects are grisly. My head is banging and I'm nauseous too... now this part of alcohol I hate.

I'm dying from hangover plus my screaming aunt isn't helping.

I just came back this morning And i need my beauty sleep but here she is screaming at me.

God can't I catch a break

“Yaz Nokhaya you'll regret this life that you want to live, didn't you learn anything from your mother”

She continues to shout at me

I don't know why is she talking about my mom, she died from her own sicknesses can she not compared me to her.

“Aunty I have a headache, please” I say and cover myself with the duvet cover

I can't stand her right now

She's not anywhere in sight when I wake up

Thank the almighty for that..

I know my uncle went to work but my aunt is a house wife so she's alway home bickering at me but for now I'm just glad she's not here.

My phone is off so I charge it phone while bathing when I'm done I head to the kitchen to make food, I'm famished so I make a full on breakfast and throw the dishes in the sink when I'm done.

My phone is fully charged by the time I lay on my bed.

That Samsung whistle goes off and my phone comes to life

It's message after message from a number I don't recognize saying how nice last night was

I don't know who this person is so I've got no choice but to call back

"Hey sexy" a deep African voice says from the receiver

"Hi, whose this"

"Don't tell me you forgot me so soon, I had fun last night we need to do it again"

I don't remember the events of last night so I'm really baffled right now

“Do you mind reminding me your name”

“Ah baby girl don’t tell me you forgot your handsome Akin”

Fuck...the memories of last night all comes back flooding in like waterfall

Lucas, Nontombi and myself went to FBI lounge but it was a bit boring so we club hopped until we found a group of Nigerian guys in la Casa who were willing to spend on us so we chilled with them until I don’t know when

Fuck...from there I don’t really remember what happened but I woke up in my bed so that should count for something.

Right?

So please don’t tell me I slept with this guy

“Akin, yes I remember you” I blatantly lie

“Yes baby girl so tell your Akin when am I seeing you again, I can get over last night you were hot baby”

I don't remember the events of last night but it's clear it was rememberable to him

“Soon Akin soon”

I don't really want to meet him, Mngobi is the only man I want in my life but I agree to meet him anyway to get him off my back

I can't recall what happened last night with Akin and his crew but I'd feel discomfort if I had slept with right?

So why do I feel nothing?

Anyway after agreeing to seeing him later on i hang

up

My phone rings again this time it's Nontombi

“Mgani” I answer

“Did you hear Mnqobi has been shot” she says
frantic

what does she mean MY MAN has been shot

“What...what do you mean he was shot? I'm now the
frantic one

“Yes I just heard nami so apparently he was shot by
Qhamu's boyfriend”

I always knew she was a wolf in a sheep's clothing

Bitch

At least now Mnqobi will leave her and we will

finally be together

“What. Where is he now?” I’m seriously worried he can’t die we still have a life time together, he can’t leave me here all alone

“He’s still in hospital, bathi ku bad yaz, I just hope he doesn’t die phela he’s hot. imagine all that hotness dying at such a young age” I can hear her but I’m not listening

I just want to know if he’s ok and she needs to get over this little crush she has on Mngqobi he’s mine and mine alone

I say my goodbyes and hang up I need to get to Pietermaritzburg hospital.

QHAMUKILE

Im seated on the hospital bench when a nurse in the consultation room that Tee went in to comes out screaming for someone to help her

Everything happens so fast but I manage to hear her tell another nurse that the young lady she was helping has fainted

I abruptly stands and walk to them

“Sorry mama, the young lady that you talking about is my friend, what happened to her”

I’ll apologize for my rudeness later, right now I need to know if Tee is alright

“Oh my child Thobile fainted, Its shock more than anything but another nurse is helping getting her conscious don’t worry she’ll be fine”

the pitiful tone and the pitiful look plastered on her face is enough to get me into a panic mode

“Shock, what shock”

Thobile knew she’s pregnant so what could possibly be worse than that

“Let’s wait for her to wake up” she says

I’m left with wondering thoughts, I feel so helpless right now.

Everything is just going downhill

I break down and cry right there I don’t care whose looking I just want this heavy load that I’m carrying to be lifted from my shoulders it’s too much

God it’s just too much I can’t anymore, I can’t handle it.

The nurse that was assisting Thobile rushes to me and holds me before I could get to the floor, I’m just

crying a river.

“Shhh don’t cry sisi” she says and forces me to stand

Once I’ve got my balance she takes me to a room and sits me down

“Talk to me what’s troubling you sisi why you crying like this” she asks sweetly

I don’t usually talk about my issues but I end up telling her everything from witnessing my fathers death to seeing Mqobi getting shot by my brother, how much more do I have to take before I’m happy.

I’m tired of fighting, I’m tired of being strong.

By the time I finish telling her my story she’s in tears herself

“I’m sorry you had to go through all that at such

young age” she says wiping her tears

“It’s ok, I guess I’m not destined for happiness”

“That not true sisi, we all deserve happiness. Let me tell you a little story about me that I’ve never told anyone”

she pauses to look at me, I’ve managed to stop crying and just listening to her attentively

“I grew up in a poor abusing home so when I turned seventeen my father married me off to a old thug of man that his wife left with lots of kids so as you can imagine I was expected to care for those boys and love them like my own. I resented my father with everything in me I mean he sold me but ke my husband was not bad at all, he actually loved me, he treated me like an angel and as old as he was I leant to love him and i built a home with him, you

see that situation thought me that life is not as bad as we think”

I'm crying silently now at least I've got good memories of my father

“My husband later disappeared and never came back home, can you imagine how hurt I was not only that he left me pregnant. So now I had to deal with my lost husband, my pregnancy and I had to care for six boys imagine how hard that was for me”
my heart bleeds for her

“And now I have to deal with my son who got robbed and was shot so my dear don't worry about all these problems God will make a way”

I now feel better it's true when they say if you think you have problems wait till some tells you about theirs and you'll realize you have no problems at all.

Some people have it harder.

It takes Thobile an hour to wake up, I was worried sick but nurse Thembisile managed to calm me, I wish I had a mother like her, she's so sweet and motherly her kids needs to stop stressing her out though she tells me having boys it's no child's play
God bless her soul.

She refuses to let us go without adult supervision so we have no choice but to call Thobile's mothers who's breathing fire when she come in.

"Thobile what are you doing here" she asks furious
Thobile is just quite looking at her as she shouts

"I'm sick" I say

“Qhamukile don’t you dare lie for this one” she says
looking at me and pointing at Thobile

“I won’t ask again” she’s now looking at Thobile

I tried

She’s now on her own.

She’s so angry I wonder how is Thobile going to tell
her she’s pregnant

Nurse Thembisile manages to calm Thobile’s
mother down and we leave the clinic.

To be continued

[06/20, 18:07] Lynne: Chapter twelve

(I’m literally in tears as I write this chapter)

THOBILE

To say my mom is angry would be an understatement, she's livid, she's breathing fire i tell you

She's been cursing throughout the taxi ride id be embarrassed if I wasn't in the situation I'm faced with right now

we've just gotten off the taxi and walking home.

And I'm scared, I'm scared of what will happen when I get home.

She's walking really fast which is kind of funny because she's short but I guess it's not so funny because I'm crying instead

Qhamu and I have no choice but to follow behind her.

Today is the day, today I have to tell them the truth but how do I tell my parents that I'm pregnant at sixteen and not only that but I'm HIV positive too

God be with...

She opens the gate roughly and we all get it in
It's after five pm now so my father is home seating
on a couch watching the five o'clock news, he
doesn't understand isiTswati or isiNdebele but he
never misses these news

SMH.

“ho maBengu where are you coming from
breathing so heavy” he asks my mom a little
concerned

“What's gotten you so angry” he continues still
inspecting her

My father loves my mother too much, he'll catch a
grenade for her. it's this kind of love I want.

“Yaz' baba I was called by the clinic le eMats'heni
because Thobile fainted” she says breathing hard

He looks relieved that no one has angered the love of his life.

he doesn't even sound angry when he asks

“Yin iproblem, Thobile are you sick my child” I can tell he's concerned about me too

I pray that he remains this calm after I tell him what I have to say

“Ca baba I'm not sick” I answer him

“Then what was she doing at the clinic in the first place, yaz I've been in denial this whole time thinking my eyes were deceiving me but now that this happened I can't help wonder if I was right all along” my mother says

She's angry but she managed to ask Qhamu to

excuse us politely, that's so unlike her.

Qhamu gives me that sorry look before she leaves,
now I'm on my own

“Calm down maBengu and tell me what's wrong”
my father says to my mom as she continues to
shout incoherently

“Hai baba, wena Thobile What's wrong with you”

my mother is too angry for words

I bet you she's suspecting something but she wants
me to come clean.

she's being making remarks for the past two weeks
about me being pregnant but I've been telling her
not worry and assuring her that I'm not pregnant

I guess mothers know best.

“What is it Thobile” my father says softly

I’m crying now, I can’t tell them.

I can’t do this.

“Hey wena sit down and tells us what’s wrong with you, why you crying” my father says sternly just as I was standing to leave

The calmness in him is gone now I don’t know if he’s worried or angry

“Thobile what’s wrong” ” this time my father is half shouting

“I’m not going to ask again” he says when I don’t answer

“Thobile ukhulelwe yin” that’s my mother

World swallow me...

I don't answer but continue to cry

A hot slap finds my cheek before I could do or say anything

"I asked you a question" my mother again

"I'm sorry mama, I didn't mean to get pregnant" I say crying

It's like the world has stopped revolving after I've said that

"WHAT" my father says shouting to the top of his lung

"Oh God What did I do that's so wrong, God why are you punishing me like this" my mothers says crying

“Thobile have you forgotten how we do thing in this household, when did you get so loose”

My father is now the angry one and my mother the emotional one

She even threw herself on the floor crying

“Am I such a bad mother” she keeps repeating

“Thobile why are you embarrassing me like this, imagine what the congregation will say. Yazi you have ruined me” my father again

He already has a sjambok in his hand charging for me

I cry and beg him to stop but it's like I'm fueling his energy, he beats me up till I'm numb

I'm bleeding and I think I have laryngitis from crying out loud.

I beg him to stop through the little voice that's left
but it falls on deaf ears

He beats me up until I'm no longer crying now I'm
just taking each blow as it comes.

He's breathing heavily by the time he finishes me
with.

My mother has been crying blaming her parenting
skills throughout

I don't understand how can she sit and watch her
only child get beaten like that, I know I wronged
them but it's a mistake I never wanted to get
pregnant, I didn't ask for this.

“You're such an abomination, you nauseating me
nca I can't even believe that you're my child right
now” my father says and throws the sjambok on my
face and walks out

I never thought my own parents would hate me like
this.

It hurts

It hurts so bad.

I'm laying on the floor stolid, I'm just unemotional I can't believe my father said that

"Stand from my floor, I don't want to see you in my house when I come back. God I can't stand even stand you right now" my mother says through her tears

I don't wish this on my worst enemy, being hated by a parent is the most excruciating pain I've ever felt.

No amount of physical pain amounts to what I'm felling right now.

"I can't believe I gave birth to you" she says and walks out

her words are full of so much hatefulness.

Please forgive me I murmur after she has banged
the door

Tears that I've been holding in fall uncontrollably.

My parents have every right to be angry

I'm angry at me too, I'm such a loser

My mother should have never given birth to me I'm
worthless

I should've slept with Khaya and it's too late for
regrets

I'm now a sixteen year old with aids.

who is going to want me now?

whose going to love me if I can't love myself?

I despise myself, I loath myself.

I don't deserve to be alive

I can't help cry, I'm not crying because my father
beat, no I'm crying because of this hate I have
towards myself

I still have little energy left in me to stand from the floor and raid the kitchen cupboards, I know my mother keeps the rat poison somewhere in here

There we go.... I found it.

I'm crying and praying for God to accept my soul but I know hell awaits my soul

I can't live anymore

I'm nothing but a curse

I'm such a disgrace.

Lord please forgive me I ask for forgiveness one last time before I down the poison

I'm bleeding from the beating I got but that's the least of my worries right now.

I'm dying now, my parents will never have to feel embarrassed about me now, they will never have to feel what they are feeling right now.

They will never have to be disappointed by me ever again

I do believe heaven exist but I doubt I'll be going there I know hell awaits and I've made peace with it but can my baby at least make it to heaven.

I take a pen and paper thats on my dressing table and begin to say my last words

“Dear mama no baba

No amount of sorries can even begin to express how sorry I am for all my wrong doings.

Mama I don't want you to ever doubt your parenting skills, you are the best mother anyone can ever ask for nawe baba you've been nothing but a great father to me and for that I appreciate you both. I'm so sorry that this is how I say my last goodbyes but I wouldn't wait for you to come back, I saw how disappointed you were and I couldn't bare seeing that look on your faces again, I'm sorry.

I'm so sorry.

I pray that you find it in your hearts to forgive me and please don't blame yourself for my death.

It's my choice, my time in this world has come to an end and please I beg never blame yourselves for my choices in this life.

I'm sorry mama that I could not be the daughter you wanted me to be please forgive me.

I love you both so much.

To Qhamu

Ah my Que, my ride or die you've been a great best friend but most of all I found a sister in you and for that I'll forever cherish the memories we have created together, I know you're a cry baby ke wena but please don't despair I'll be fine wherever I'm going and I know you'll be fine too.

Hey Qhamu I said don't cry

Take good care of yourself and don't you dare cry. I love you Qhamukile. “

I'm in tears by the time I finish scribbling my last words to the people that means the world to me.

I can't leave a letter for Khaya but in my heart I know I forgave him

he made me feel whole, i want to tell him that I don't hate him for what he did to me I do believe that he didn't know too. I loved him with everything in me and because of that I chose to forgive him and wish all the best in life.

I know you might not understand why I forgave him but I don't want to enter hell carrying hatred towards the father of my baby.

I don't know if I'm hallucinating or what but I see my baby, it's a boy. A beautiful baby boy.

God did he have to take all his father's features, he looks so much like Khaya but he has my skin tone at least.

A lone tear escape my eye as I watch him smile at me

He's going to make such a beautiful angel.

"I forgive you mama" he says smiling

I can feel the poison doing what it supposed to, I'm getting weaker by the minute.

I'm laying on my bed looking at the ceiling.

God please accept Mxolisi, that's the name I've decided to name my baby, I choose that name because I want him to apologize to God for me, he is my redeemer.

he's going to make such a beautiful angel. Please keep him safe until I meet him again in Jesus name I pray. Amen.

I can feel my eyes getting heavy, so I close them and get ready for my departure

This is it.....

I'm gone.

[06/20, 18:08] Lynne: MANQOBA

I'm tired plus my body hurts from sleeping on those hard beds at the police station and now I'm seated again on the hard hospital bench.

How I miss my soft bed right now.

We were released from the holding cell this morning without having to go to court, it's always good having friends in high places.

It's Monday evening and we've been at the hospital since morning and no doctor has to given us an update yet so we just in the dark right now and it's killing me.

We all just worried sick, especially mom, she left an hour ago because there's one one to take care of my little brother S mangele but she'll be back again tomorrow morning.

She's a nurse at Mvubukazi clinic so she first go to

work and comes here around this time. I love that woman with my all she may not be my biological mother but she's more of a mother to me than the woman that gave birth to me.

She's very distraught that her son is fighting for his life but it is what it is.

We are all devastated by this.

We had to lie to her and say Mngqobi was shot when he was robbed, the truth could've done more damage than good so lying was the best thing to do under the circumstances because she hates this rivalry more than anything.

Have I told you how much I love her?

Lol...

We are all in the waiting area going out of our minds with stress, Makhosini keeps walking up and down and the rest of us are just seated, silently and patiently waiting.

it's been what, two days?

So as you can imagine the wait is killing us.

The nurses gave up telling us about visiting hours, Makhosi made it clear that we won't leave this hospital until a doctor talks to us.

Do make no mistake Makhosini means what he says.

He's stubborn like that.

Sigh

The stress that is Nokhaya is here too.

I need to breathe to calm myself down before I talk about her, she's purely and utterly nauseatingly annoying.

She's just exasperating.

She came here early in the morning in fact we found her here crying her eyes out.

I don't know if she really loves Mngqobi or if all that crying was to get our attention.

You should have seen how my mother looked at her

when she saw her. I don't think she likes her much and the fact that she was crying as if Mngobi died ticked her even more.

I swear if she was not so polite she would've kicked her out of the hospital.

Makhosini doesn't entertain nonsense so he didn't even acknowledge her presence, Zwelethu is rude so he's been making rude comments the whole day but she's still here.

“Mangoba why ain't the doctors coming to tell us anything, do you think he's dead” she says

Lord give me strength

“Hawu kahle wena” That's Mcedisi

He doesn't like her and he shows it

He can't pretend at all

“I just want to know if he’s ok” she’s says sniffing
I haven’t seen anyone with so much tears like her.
She can literally cry you a river.

“Baby girl don’t you have somewhere to be, what
are your parents saying kodwa, phela you’ve been
here the whole day suffocating us. Can you leave us
in peace” Langa says as condescending as he can
be

We’ve been really patient when it comes to her

“What is she doing here anyway” that’s Zwelethu

he’s not particularly friendly in fact he’s as rude as
Mcedisi and he made it clearly known that he
doesn’t like Nokhaya at all

Anyway she ignores him too and come to sit next to
me

I've been entertaining her the whole day I'm tired of her and her dramatic tears now so I stand up and leave her there

I need fresh air so I go outside

It's a little busy today at the emergency section, doctors are going up and down busy helping people, an ambulance comes speeding and the paramedics opens the back and pull out a stretcher

"Possible suicide attempt, she's not breathing but we have a pulse" one paramedic says as they put the poor young girl on the stretcher

"We need to drain all the poison" a doctors says rushing to her

I manage to see a glimpse of the girl as they are rushing her inside

She looks very familiar, I can't remember where I've seen her from but I know her face

I wonder why did she try to kill herself, I'm hoping she survives

It's a cold evening, the wind is blowing my face coolly, I'm just wearing a t-shirt so the air feels cold against my skin but I'm loving it at the same time

It's so refre....

That girl..... I know her.

I've seen her somewhere...

Oh snap...

I've seen her hanging with Qhamu before, what's her name again.... think Manqoba think..

oh yes...

Tee is it?

I've heard Qhamu call her that..

I take out my phone and call Qhamu immediately.

If you wondering where I got Qhamu's number from...

well keep wondering, my lips are sealed.

Her phone rings to voicemail the first time but she answer in her sluggish voice when I call the second time

"Hello" she sounds irritated

"Qhamu" I say softly

"Whose this" I just love how her voice sounds right now

I know she sounds annoyed but she sounds so... I don't know... sexy maybe?

I can't help it ok!

I just love her and everything about her I've tried to

ignore all these feeling I have for her but i can't deny
it any longer

“Hello”

She manages to startle me out of my thoughts

“It's Manqoba”

She's quiet for a second but I hear movements I'm
assuming she's sitting up straight

“Hi” she says softly

“Is Mnqobi fine” The worrisome in her voice doesn't
go unnoticed

I just hate how much she cares for Mnqobi why isn't
she asking if I'm okay.

I guess Mnqobi is her heartthrob

“Yes, he’s okay but that’s not why I called” I’m irritated now and I think she can sense it

“Oh” she says and keeps quiet

“Why did you call then” she asks after some time

“I just saw that friend of yours, she was here”

“Oh you mean Thobile, What is she doing there”

I’m hating how she’s totally disregarding me right now

I want to hate her but my heart doesn’t allow me to
I love her too much to hate her.

Fuck.. I hate the effect she has on me, she has this hold over me that I don’t know how to let go.

Mngobi is in love with her I keep reminding myself

but my love for her overpowers that reasoning.

I can't stay away I'm too in love.

“I don't know but the doctor said something about suicide, I think she tried killing hers...” I hear that beeping sound before I could finish

Did she really hand up on me?

QHAMUKILE

Do you know that feeling you get when something bad is about to happen?

Yes?

Well...I'm getting that feeling

I feel very terrified and I'm also scared.

I'm uneasy and unsettled right now I hope Thobile is fine.

when Manqoba told me Thobile is in hospital for suicide attempt I just died a thousand deaths right that second

What went wrong?

I know her mother can be very hurtful and say thing she doesn't mean and Thobile complains about it all the time but what did she say that drove her to a point of suicide this time around?

God please be with her.

Misuzulu is driving me to the hospital it's just after ten pm and today's events has gotten me tired-some but I can't rest until I know that Thobile is fine.

"Bhuti can you please drive faster" I say agitated from the back seat

He looks at me through the rear view mirror and shakes his head

Mis uzulu doesn't understand what I'm going through right now besides he's driving of a tortoise and I just want to get to the hospital.

We get there after the longest thirty minutes of my life.

I don't even wait for Mis uzulu to park right the way I'm so stressed, I rush inside the hospital and go to the casualty section

Thobile's mother is seated in a ball position crying her eyes out

"Ma how is Thobile" I shout before I could even get to her

"Oooh Qhamu I've killed my only child" she says crying some more

I can't help break down myself

What does she mean she killed Thobile

“Shhhhh maBengu she hasn’t passed on she’s still fighting for her life” Thobiles father says brushing her back

“What happened” I’m so overwrought right now

A doctor appears as she was about to narrate the story

He asks both Thobiles parents to join him in his office

I’m so worried that I don’t even noticed that I followed behind until the doctor stops me from entering his office

“It’s alright she’s the sister” bab’Miya say

That’s Thobile’s father Incase you wondering

We all go in and sit on the little couches he has in his office

“Do you know what poison did she take” he asks after he introduced himself as Dr Kumar

We all shake our heads

how can maBengu not know she’s the one who bought the poison

“I see, well she took one of the dangerous rat poison named black flag, it acts really fast and kills instantly, she’s very lucky to have survived this long”

I get hopeful as he says this

“it’s nerve toxins can actually kill an elephant” he stops to draw breath

There goes the little hope i had

There's just fraught silence, we all just listen to
what he is saying

I'm holding my breath as he continues

“The poison has managed to eat away Thobiles
organs, her body is deteriorating as we speak we
tried all that we could but I'm sorry there's nothing
more that we can do at this point. She's brain dead
and we just waiting for the body to follow”

By the time he finishes maBhengu is on the floor
crying hysterically

“I'll let you into her ward so you can say your last
goodbyes”

he sounds very far when he says all this

I'm just numb I'm not even crying

It's like this doctor is lying, I can't really phantom what he said.

"Please excuse me" I say politely as I can and walk out

I don't know what's happening to me but I think I'm losing my mind

I'm just walking I don't even know where I'm going but I don't want to be here anymore

Misuzulu stops me just as I was out to walk out of the hospital how I don't know I think my brain has switch off.

The doctor said my best friend is dying right?

"Bhuti just leave me alone" I say trying to free myself from him, my joints are weak I just don't have the strength to push him away

“Ntonto” He says and hugs me tightly

I can't breath I just want to be left alone, the pain is too much i just want to not feel anymore.

“Bhuti please” I say softly against his chest

I just want him to leave me alone

“Come let's go back inside, you need to say your goodbye to your friend” he says and drags me back inside the hospital

I've started to loath this place, it has done nothing but brought misery in my life

We find Thobile's mother on the floor crying

This is too painful

“Bhuti take me home please” I say and hold him just to balance myself I don't trust my leg muscle to be

strong enough to carry me right now

I don't want to say goodbye to the only person I have close enough to a sister. I just want to rest my head on a pillow right now.

I'm tired I just want to go home and drug myself with pain killers and sleep maybe when I wake up tomorrow all this will just be a bad dream.

[06/20, 18:08] Lynne: Chapter thirteen

QHAMUKILE

I'm in a very beautiful garden, the flowers have all bloomed so it's just pure magnificent, everything looks so perfect, I'm loving how the white lilies contrast with the lilac roses and the lavender plants. it's so colorful and lovely the air even feels light and it smells of honeysuckle and it taste so sweet. I could stay here forever.

I can't get over how beautiful it is.

I'm walking bare foot so the grass feels really soft against my feet I feel very light it's like my soul has been cleansed so I feel very free.

I've never been at peace like this before.

I see a lady carrying a baby in her arms, seating on a colorful picnic blanket she's looking at her baby so I can't really see her face but I feel like I know her and she looks familiar.

My feet can't help but walk closer to her

"Hello" I greet her softly

"Hello Que" she says softly

Her voice even sounds familiar too

"Do I know you" I had to ask

“yes, I’m your best friend” she says without looking at me

“Thobile” I say unsure

She lifts her face to look at me and yes it’s her, she looks very different, nice different, that little pimples she has on her forehead are gone, the scar she has on her chin which was caused by her cousin when we were young is gone, she just look radiant she’s just beautiful and she look like she’s at peace too.

“Thobile what are you doing here” I can’t help ask

She laughs softly before she answers

“This is my home now”

“Home, what are you talking about Tee” I ask
concerned

I know it’s nice here but we both need to leave

The sun rays have now turned reddish or orange it’s
a beautiful scenery but this means the sun is
setting and we need to leave and go home

“I forget you sometimes” she’s says and roll her
eyes

“This is my home now but you have to go home
now don’t worry once you ready you’ll join me” she
says and brush my hands lightly

“Thobile what are you talking about”

She rolls her eyes again before she answer

She’s starting to annoys me with this rolling of the
eyes business

“Listen to me, I want don’t want you to give up ok, fight till the end and just so you know Mngqobi will be fine and you two will be happy again”

“Tee” my mouth is dry, how does she know Mngqobi will be find

Is she God now?

“And my friend try not to Question God, he knows what’s best so go home and leave the best life you can”

I’m shaking my head as she says all this What’s happening to Thobile, she sounds like one of those philosophers I hate so much

“Storm is coming but I want you promise me that whatever you do you won’t give up, that you’ll stay strong and I promise you that you’ll be a conqueror, believe in the power that you hold. You’re powerful my friend, men will bow to you when the time

comes so just make sure that you stay afloat and never sink because it's going to get rough and remember to stay faithful at all times, Qhamukile a storm is brewing as we speak please hold Mngqobi's hand and walk with him because you two will need each the more than anything and never doubt him or the love he has for you"

She's speaking in parable and she know how much I hate it

"Tee you speaking in riddles right now"

She shakes her head and stands up

"Promise me that you won't give up on Mngqobi"

I don't know what does she mean but I promise her anyway

"Till we meet again my friend and remember that I might not be with you in my human form but I'll forever be with you in spirit" she's says and walks

away

“Tee wait” I say running after her

“What do you mean by that” she smiles at me and look at the baby she’s carrying

“Whose baby is that anyway”

“This is Mxolisi and don’t worry about him he’ll have someone to play with soon” she says and walks away

I’m left perplexed

I look at her until she disappears into some light

I’m woken up by my ringing phone

Fuck I was dreaming I’m already missing her

This dream felt so real, my body even feels very

light I can even smell the scent of those beautiful flowers

“Hello” I answer

my voice sounds very croaky right now

“Hello sisi” a voice I don’t recognize say

“Mmmm” I’m still a little nonplused because I just woke up

“It’s nurse Ngidi from Pietermaritzburg hospital”

I sit up straight and prepare myself for either the worst or best news

“Yes ma” my heart is jumping right out of my throat from nervousness

“Well I have good news for you” I’m already smiling ear to ear before she could finish

“What...what happened” I ask impatiently

“Well I’m calling to inform you that Mngqobi is awake”

I jump out of bed and literally dance with happiness

“He’s awake” I say unbelievably

This is the best news by far

“Yes, the doctor is still busy checking him right now I’ll update you if there’s any changes”

we say our goodbyes and she hangs up

I feel like climbing on the highest mountain and let the whole world know how happy I am this second

So there is a God after all.

I'm doing the worst gwara-gwara ever-seen I'm just too happy for words I wish Thobile was here but I guess God had better plans her.

And what was that dream all about but I'm too happy to think about incoherent dreams

I'm thanking all the Gods and the Ngcobo ancestors for bringing him back to me I can't even begin to imagine the life I'd live without him in it.

I'd be miserable.

I know Misuzulu is going to refuse to take me to the hospital so I'm smiling like a retard as i go back to bed.

MNQOBI

The excruciating pain on my chest forces me to wake up but the light is too bright for my eyes so I shut them again and reopen them slowly and adjust to the light. It's still bright but at-least this time I do open them fully

Where am I?

This place doesn't feel or look familiar plus I hate this heavy odor of pills

There's a white man dressed in a white coat with a clipboard next to me busy inspecting the heavy machines above me

"Who...." my voice sounds hoarser than it actually does so I clear my throat and ask again

"Who are you" it sounds better

“Mr Ngcobo, you’re awake” he says excitedly

“Who are you and where am I”

“I’m doctor McQueen and you’re in hospital” he says
looking at me

Oh yes I’m in hospital that explains the heavy
beeping machines

I don’t know how be it possible that I didn’t even feel
the big needle stuck to my arm

“Do you remember how you got get here” he says
scrutinizing me

it all comes back

I went to see Qhamu and her brothers attacked me,
my brothers came to my rescue but that little fucker
Gcina shot me

“I was shot” I say angrily

“Come down Mr Ngcobo you’re fine now, and the two guys that shot you were arrested so you have nothing to worry about”

“Wha..”

“you remember what happened so this means the brain is not affected, you do remember who you are and your life right”

I nod at him

He’s busy checking my eyes with the little light he has, he continues to inspect my whole body asking if I’m feeling any pains or any uncomfortableness

He refuses to give me heavy pain killers when I ask he says he doesn’t want me to be dependent on

pain killers

What kind of doctor is he?

I'm in pain here.

“Ah you healing faster than I had anticipated, in no time this incision will be healed and you'll be able to live your normal life again” he says after he checks the scar I have on my chest

It's going to leave a horrible scaring but I'm happy I'm alive

So that Fucker wanted to kill me.

“I'm going to get your brothers, they've been dying to see you” he says and walks out

What two guys is he talking about I was shot by Gcina

He comes back with Makhosini and Manqoba

I'm not in the mood to see anyone right now I just want my Qhamu with me here and no one else but I smile anyway they are my brothers after all

“Photo copy welcome to the world of the living”

Manqoba is here to irritate me I guess, he knows I hate it when I call he calls me that

“You had us worried there for a second” Makhosini says and pats my leg softly

“He had us all worried, your brother is one lucky oak, it's a miracle that he's still alive, I had given up that he'd live what I mean is I've never seen anyone survive such a gun shot” the doctors says and write something on his clipboard

“His vitals are strong, he should be out of here in no

time but he needs his rest so I'm allowing you guys five minutes and I want you out" he says and walks out

"Where is Qhamu" that's the first thing I ask

Makhosini clears his throat, I know he doesn't want me to talk about her but I can't help it

Manqoba says nothing but looks away

"Has something happened to her" now I'm frantic

"She's fine" Makhosini says sternly

That's him telling me to shut it

"Where is she" I can't help it

"Hawu kahle Mngqobi you just woke up from your death bed and she's the first you think about"

Makhosini can be.... well Makhosini

“Where is my phone” if they won’t tell him about her then I’ll find out for myself

“Hai maan Mnqobi you nearly died because of that girl, just stop it maan”

He’s now angry so i let it go

“How is ma” I ask after some time

I know how neurotic she can be

“She’ll be so trilled, let me call her” Manqoba says and walks out

“Listen here I want to stay away from that Buthelezi girl and I mean it Mnqobiwesizwe, you’re my brother and I wouldn’t want you to test me like that”

Makhosini says stern

I know how he can be so I nod, I want to stay away from her too I hate her family with everything I have in me but her, my heart won't just let me stay away. I hate but love how I feel for her Qhamu is just a breath of fresh air

I love her so much.

Nokhaya walks in just as we talking

“Baby” she says and rushes to hug me but Makhosini manages to stop her before she could touch me

“Hey don't” He says and stands up

“I was so worried about you I'm so glad you're fine, how was I going to raise....”

“Nokhaya I’m fine” I cut her short

Makhosini doesn’t have to know about her pregnancy, well for now at least

This is going to hurt Qhamu but I guess those are the repercussions of unprotected sex.

dammit how did I get myself in this situation

“I’m tired now” I just need to be on my own

“Ok rest I will come back tomorrow” Nokhaya says and kisses me on my cheek before she leave

Makhosini is just looking at her with disgust as she walk out

“Lose that girl, she’s trouble” he says before he leaves

I know that but how do I “lose” her if she’s carrying my child?

I may have my doubts that this pregnancy exist but if it does then no doubt it’s my child

Nokhaya may be forward but she’s loyal to me, I know for a fact that she hasn’t slept with anyone else besides me.

The doctor comes back and inject something on the drip, I feel drowsy the moments it kicks in

“It will help with the pain” I hear him say from afar then it’s lights out.

[06/20, 18:08] Lynne: NB: this insert entails some sexual scene some readers may find offensive.

NOKHAYA

A lot happened this past week from Mnqobi getting shot to that weird girl from school dying.

I just know she's Qhamukile's friend but personally I don't know her much so I'm not affected by her death at all.

I just wish she can be buried quicker so we can all move on with our lives, she's on everyone's lips these days and its started to get to me.

Yes, she died so what?

People die everyday.

I refuse to feel sorry for someone who committed suicide.

Look now I'm forced to attend her memorial service which will be held tomorrow at school and from there we will go to the cemetery to bury her.

Thank God.

I'm tired of hearing about her she's even on social media

Yoh I can't...

Anyway schools reopened on Wednesday, yoh I hate school I can't wait to finish.

it's Friday evening and I'm preparing to meet Akin, we have been seeing each other the past few days I hate his company but I'm loving his monies.

he spends a lot of money on me which i like but like I said I'm not in love with him.

Mnqobi is my man.

I'm just using Akin for his money.

He sends a driver to come pick me up at home whenever he wants to see me he makes me feel appreciated and wanted

he just treats me like a queen I'm telling you.

I lied to him about my age, I mean I couldn't tell him that I'm seventeen and in grade eleven so he believes I'm twenty one and in university.

Thank god my body has fully developed so I do actually look twenty one.

He bought me a very nice diamond necklace with matching earrings the other day so you see what I mean when I say he has been treating me like a queen

He told he's twenty eight but its hard to believe because he is a mountain of a man anyway I'm not so fixated with his physical attributes but his money.

He can look like a gorilla I wouldn't care.

And If you must know I slept with him that day when we first day meet.

Don't judge me I might just not tell you the whole story.

I might not remember the events of that day but he does, i must've really been drunk but he assured me that we used protection so I'm happy with that.

I haven't sleep with him again after that like you have concluded.

I'm not such a bitch after all uh.

He sent his driver again tonight to come pick me up I'm dressed in a tight black dress, it's perfect because it's hugging me well exposing my figure it's really short so it leaves no room for imagination to any man.

Just how Akin likes it.

I'm wearing it with gold open toe high heels that Akin bought. My hair is tied in a neat ponytail and I have applied minimal make up, I admit I look smoking hot.

Akin is talking myself and Nontombi out, she's as excited as I am.

We didn't tell Lucas because Akin said he look at him weird so I decided not to tell him about today besides when he's drunk he gets boring so not telling him saves me from a whole lot of nagging from him.

I hear a car hoot as I apply my lipstick

It must be Akins driver.

My aunt and uncle are not home tonight, they went to some church thing in Durban so the driver is able to get me at the gate unlike always where he has to wait a few houses away.

I take my clutch bag and leave

“You look beautiful” the driver says opening the door for me

I’m not allowed to talk to anyone in Akin’s circle so I nod and get into the car.

Those are Akin orders

The driver’s name is Samuel, he looks African too I know he’s not from Nigeria but he looks like he comes from Malawi or something

“How are you mam” he asks as he drives out of Matsheni

“Good” I say and take out my phone to text
Nontombi

She’s dressed in a short white hugging dress and black high heels she’s dating a rich older guy who affords to buy her expensive stuff so she’s rocking her long Peruvian hair. I envy her at times.

“Mgani” she says and steps in to the car

We making small talks as we drive to a secluded area. The driver parks outside a mansion of a house, everything looks so beautiful.

The drives shows us the door and we enter

I have never seen anything like this, beautiful doesn’t even begin to describe how this house is on the inside

“Hello Baby” Akin says coming to kiss me

He directs us to a room full of his friends, there’s a table full of expensive bottles of alcohol and champagnes, his friends are all seated on a white long couches smoking cigars.

“Gentlemen make them feel welcome” Akins says and opens a bottle of champagne of us

He introduces them to us, I didn’t get their names but one of them is Emmanuel his name is easy to recall.

He has troubles pronouncing my names so he calls me Noks and Nontombi just N.

Nontombi is already seated next to Emmanuel

“Come sit here baby” that’s Akin

I abide and go sit on his lap

I'm a little uncomfortable at first I mean I'm young for all this and Nontombi is twenty years, yes she's been failing so she's twenty and in grade eleven

She's used to such lifestyle her boyfriend takes her to such things all the time.

We are joined by three more ladies that look Nontombi's age you can tell they are used to these guys because they are comfortable and touchy touchy with the guys.

By the time the third bottle of champagne finishes I'm drunk, my legs are wanky and I'm in a mood to the dance so I join the ladies that are dancing on the table.

I'm swaying my hips left and right, I guess alcohol kicked my nerves away.

Akin calls me to give him a lap dance, I've never done it but I go to him anyway and do my thing by

the time the song finishes I'm tired and Akin's dick is rock solid.

"Come here" he says and picks me up

He rips my dress off my body before we can even reach the bedroom

He's kissing me very roughly. it actually hurts.

"Akin stop" I try to push him off me but he's too strong

"Come give your Akin some lovin'" he says before he throws me on top of the bed and takes off his t-shirt

His penis has tented his jeans and fuck it looks so big.

I swallow nothing as he takes off his jeans

God he's humongous...

I can't do this

"Come here" he pulls me to him just as I was getting off the bed

I'm in my bra and panty because he ripped my dress off me

He assaults my lips again with his kisses, he's running his hands everywhere on my body I want to protest but I don't want to anger him I've noticed he gets too aggressive when he's angry so instead I participate too.

My lips are swollen by the time he stops kissing me

"Give Akin junior some loving too" he says pushing my head down to his groin area

I do as I'm told and give him a blowjob.

His dick is too big so I gag when he shoves it in my mouth

He's holding my head from the back so I'm unable to stop him so I continue to gag as he thrust, tears are falling out, mucus too but he doesn't care he's just roughly fucking my mouth

He's groaning loudly I can tell he's enjoying himself but I'm not

"Fuck, open that mouth" he says increasing his hurried thrust I just want him to finish so I open my throat and let all of him in

He continues to thrust until he releases his juices in my mouth

I'm still trying to catch my breath when he pulls me up to him and says

“Come here” and roughly tear my underwear apart

He bends me over so I’m kneeling on the bed my upper body is flat on the bed my ass is in the air and he’s behind me.

I feel his manhood parting me apart when he enters I’m dry so it’s painful but he doesn’t care he just wants to fuck me.

“Fuck” he says pushing the rest of his dick in me I’m crying silently as he does all of this

“I want to fuck you” he says and plunges on

I’m trying to block all the groaning sounds he’s making but I can hear the smacking sounds when his balls hit my pussy, can he just finish already

“Fuck” he keeps saying on my ear as he thrust

In an instant he flips me over and he’s on top of me
I’m too tired and sore to complain so I just get him
in.

He’s holding my legs over his shoulders and just
thrusting

It hurts

“Fuck” I say

I can feel my body wanting to betray me

“Mmmm” I moan as I feel my pussy juices coming
out I think I’m coming

“I’m coming” I scream

He doesn’t stop but fucks me through my orgasm

You'd think I'm enjoying what's being done to me
but it's my body betraying me

I'm hating every minute of this sexual encounter

I don't know how does he switch position this fast
but I'm now on top I can literally feel his dick hitting
the tip of my womb

Crazy I know but it's hurts too much and yet my
body wants it.

"Baby girl right there" he says as I'm hopping up
and down on top of him.

He forces me to even do a reverse cow girl on him
by the time I get off him my legs are shaking
uncontrollably

I've never been fucked like that.

I protest when he wants us to do anal but Akin is
boss he always gets what he wants

I'm tired by the time he ejaculates in me I'm just

happy he's done.

“That was nice” he says and slap my ass

It doesn't take him long before he starts snoring.

I can't help cry

I know Mngqobi has never loved me but he has never made me feel so dirty and used

I hate Akin with everything I have in me, I'm even bleeding, he was just too rough

My bra and panty are scattered on floor along side his clothes I'm done here

I just want to get home

I take out my phone and call Mngqobi, I know he was only discharged from hospital yesterday but I need him more than anything right now

“Nokhaya what do you want” he answers

“Can you please come and get me, please I’m begging you” I’m crying now

He’s silents for a while

“Where are you” he asks after leasing a tired breath

I send him my location and take a shower while I wait for him to pick me

I feel dirty so I scrub myself to remove the remains of Akin, I hate him so much.

Right now I just want to feel safe and Mnqoni is the only person that can give me that safety I need.

MNQOBI

This pregnancy issue has been daunting me for a while now, I don't believe Nokhaya at all but I guess there's one way to find out.

I have a pregnancy test I bought in my pocket I'm ready to know the truth bitter sweet or not I need to know

I've just dropped off Qhamu that girl will be the reason to my death

Her brother shot me because of her and soon my brothers will kill me for her too.

But all that doesn't matter as long as I have her, I can die today knowing she's the girl I've ever truly loved and not only that but she loves me too.

Her friend death is really taking a toll on her but she's holding on

I love how emotionally strong she is, I just fall for her each day.

She's been coming to see me daily at the hospital without fail.

I know her brothers are trailing her but she's too stubborn for her own good.

But I couldn't have it any other way.

I'm on my way to get Nokhaya she sounded very distraught on the phone but I know that's just her being her dramatic self.

The location she sent me pins a secluded area just outside of Pietermaritzburg, tell me what was she doing here this time of the night.

She's sitting in the on the road crying her eye balls out

there we go..

"Nokhaya" I says bored

I told you she's dramatic

I don't even have the energy to come out of the car

She raises her head and sees me

“You came” she says crying painfully

I guess I was wrong she looks hurt

I’m forced to come out of the car

“What’s wrong” I say picking her up

I may not be in love with her but I care she might be
carrying my child after all

She’s crying in my paining chest

I get her into the back seat and let her cry from
there

The drive home is silent and she’s managed to
control her tears at last but she’s still sniffing

“Want to tell me what happened” i say and look at

her through the rear view mirror

“Not today” she says and close her eyes
suppressing her tears

I’ve never seen her this broken I actually feel sorry
for her

“alright, so what are you going to tell your aunt” I’m
seriously worried about her

“Can I please sleep at your place”

I feel sorry for her yes but that’s not happening

“Please Mngobi, I have nowhere to go and my aunt
won’t understand that I’m not ready to talk” she
says when I don’t answer

I’ve got no choice but to agree

“Just for tonight”

I was already driving her home so I turn and take the road to my home.

Qhamu will never know about this.

Everyone is sleeping by the time we get home but we still sneak into my back room

I can't risk waking up my mother

She's naked under the blanket she's wearing so I lend her my t-shirt to sleep in.

I thought seeing her naked body would have an effect on my penis but nothing.

Not even a little twitch...

it's either Qhamu has worked some black magic on me or i must have really learnt self control.

Whatever it is I'm loving it

I need my comfortable bed but I chose to sleep on the floor instead, I think she needs her space.

“Can you please come sleep here” I hear her say softly

“Please” her voice is breaking

Fuck..

Don't tell me she wants to cry again

The Nokhaya i know is annoying and a tough cookie so seeing her this broken not only worries me but I'm wondering what is it that happened tonight

I hope I won't regret this I think inwardly as I get in to bed her body is warm against mine

Stop it Mnqobi.... I just had to reprimand my thoughts

I can't entertain such thoughts I've got Qhamu to think about

"Please hold me" she says after a while

You're fucked Mnqobi

"Talk to me" I say wrapping my hand around her waist, I'm spooning her.

"Were you raped" I ask softly against her ear

She shakes her head crying I have no choice but to hold her close to me and let her cry and until she falls I sleep.

I don't know if its guilt or what but I send Qhamu an I love you text before asleep.

[06/20, 18:08] Lynne: Chapter fourteen

MNQOBI

I woke up early because of various reasons but more importantly I want Nokhaya to leave but not before she takes the pregnancy test

I'm dressed and prepared for the funeral service, I hate funeral but it's Qhamu's friend so I don't have much of a choice.

Nokhaya is sprawled on my bed sleeping comfortably, she slept really late night because she was crying, it was difficult for me because I don't do well with tears so I just let her cry to sleep.

I know I shouldn't have brought her here and I feel like shit right now, I didn't cheat on Qhamu and yet I feel so guilty.

Fuck this love thing is complicated...

I need to wake Nokhaya up, I know she didn't get much sleep and I hate to do this but it has to be done

"Nokhaya" I say shaking her softly

She groans before she opens her eyes

I need to be with Qhamu right now so I get on it

"I need you to take the pregnancy test" I'm so serious right now

She quickly removes the covers off her and just like that she's fully awake

"You mean now, like now" she say looking at me with glistening eyes

“No next year, of cause I mean now”

I don't know why I'm rude but I can't just help it
I think I'm angry at myself that I let her in my room
knowing very well that should this find Qhamu's
ears she'll be hurt

“Mnqobi can we not wait until next week maybe, I'm
not ready especially after what happened last night”
she says crying

Now those are fake tears I know her too well
besides I don't know what happened to her, she
refused to tell me so how do I feel sorry for
someone who doesn't want to come clean with the
truth

“Nokhaya I don't have all day and you need to leave
as well so the quicker you do this the better” this
one thinks I'm stupid

I even have a bucket for her to pee in.

I don't trust her at all.

Like i said I've always used protection with her so
I'm not buying this pregnancy issue

“Mngobi please..”

“Nokhaya I don't have all day”

I hand her the bucket and move to sit on the bed

“I don't have any pee”

I thought she might say something like that so I
came prepared

I show her the two liters bottle of water that's on top
of the table

She lets an exasperated breath out and take the

bucket

Thought so...

She's really anxious as she pees in the bucket so much for someone who didn't need to pee

She hands me the bucket once she's done

“That didn't kill you now did it”

I've already dipped the stick in to her pee

How long do I wait for?

five minutes?

Well it's the longest five minutes of my life

I'm shaking out of my boots as I look at the results

Fuck..

I see one line...

I think I forgot what this means so I re-read the

instruction paper again

Well fuck good god....

this bitch is not pregnant

“You are FUCKING not pregnant!!” I shout excitedly

I don't think I've been this happy in my life

“Wh... but I took a pregnancy test and it showed that I'm pregnant” she says scared

“Well Nokhaya you not fucking pregnant”

I thought I'd be pissed that she lied but I'm more relieved than anything

“Home pregnancy test can be inconclusive sometimes you know”

“Hey please don’t bore me, you better be gone by the time i get back”

I say and walk out

I’m too happy to be around Nokhaya she might just damper my mood.

I just need my Qhamu right now

It’s a little after eight am and the funeral services starts at nine at school then from there the body will be taken to church then home and finally to the cemetery

It’s going to be a long day.

I know Qhamu will be crying the whole day and I’m not ready for all of that, seeing her cry breaks me more than it does her.

I don’t know if her brother will attend the funeral but

I'm hoping not, I don't want drama today.

We decided to see each other at school because I'm afraid her brothers might actually succeed in killing me should I go anywhere near Mvubukazi

She's dressed in her school uniform looking all innocent and beautiful, her skirt is sitting so beautiful around her hips. she always complain that she lacks hips and buttocks but I'm loving her just the way she is.

"Hi" I says and kiss her forehead

"Not here Mngobi" she snickers at me and steps back

Im laughing inside as she does this, she can be so dramatic when she likes I mean no one is even looking at us, I stop myself from pulling her back to me.

Let me let her be..

“Come let’s go into the hall, the service is about to start”

she says and takes my hand in hers

Shaking my head...

I know she wants to hold me as much as I want to hold her but I guess she’s afraid of what people might say, that’s Qhamu.

She’s says it’s her reputation

Whatever she means by that

I don’t care much what people think.

Her eyes are puffy, I can tell she’s been crying and it kills me that I can’t take away her pain away. If it were up to I’d put her into a class away from everyone and everything that might hurt her, I don’t want her to see all the horrors of this world.

I just want her happy all the time but I guess that's not possible.

Does love always have to feel like this?

I just love her so much that it feels like I have taken my heart out and given it to her for safekeeping and I trust her with my all.

Anyway the service is about to start, the mood is just somber everyone is saddened by Thobile's death. I think this should be a leaning curve for all students here Teenage pregnancy and HIV are a pandemic that has either affected or affected us in some way but killing yourself is not an answer.

The principal is the first one to make a speech, Qhamu told me he's very fond of her. It must be because they have the same surname. He says a few words of encouragement too overall his speech

is sweet and short then Thobile's class teacher is next to also say a few words.

Her class mate too give speeches and I must say they all have good things to say about Thobile

Qhamu is next to speak as the program states

She's nervous I can tell she's looking at me so I can't help but wink at her and mime 'you go this' as she walks to the stage

"Good morning everyone" she starts

"I know some of you know me as Thobile's best friend but she was actually more than that to me, she was a sister more than anything, I'm going to miss her dearly" she's already crying

"I know where ever she is she's looking at me shaking her head because I'm crying, she hated it when I cry" she says chuckling and wiping her tears away

I just want to jump into that stage and hold her tightly

“Thobile I know you are in a better place right now and though you not physically with me i carry you in my heart, I know you’ll never forsake me i might not see you but I know you with me and because of that I’ll try not to miss you too much, I know you wouldn’t want me to anyway. I love you forever and always. I’m not good with words and you know this, there’s so much I want to tell you but there’s no words enough for me to use. I want you to Rest In Peace Until we meet again. Lala ngoxolo maMiya.” She says and steps away from the podium

I must command Qhamu, she’s stronger than I thought.

The funeral services proceeds like it should with no

drama I just hope it remain like that when we get to
Mvubukazi

NOKHAYA

Fuck Mngobi

I'm so tired of him treating me like I don't matter.

If he thinks he can hurt and get away away with it
he better think again.

He messed with the wrong girl, now that my
pregnancy plan has backfired it's time I move on

i accept defeat but it's not the end of it.

I'm going to hit him where it hurts the most he's so
in love with that Qhamu bitch I'm going to show him.

He'll know me.

Manqoba comes in just was I'm venting

I hope he didn't hear me

“And then, what are you doing here” he asks coming in

“What does it look like” I say angry

“Hai doll face I'm not Mngqobi phela don't talk to me like you falling from a tree”

“I was here with Mngqobi”

“Duh it's his room I asked what are you doing here”

“Well as you can see he left me”

“Let hope dear mama won't find you here, I'd hate to see that pretty little face all bruised up” he says

sarcastically

“Well Mngqobi left me and went to that bitch of his Qhamukile”

He has me by my throat before I can even finish
What the hell...

“If you ever call her that again you’ll know me” he says through gritted teeth

“I’m sorry” I say

I just want him to release me I’m even struggling to breathe

“Nxa” He says and let go of me

I'm coughing trying to catch my breath

What the hell...

why is he behaving like her boyfriend unless...

oh fuck...

Don't tell me Manqoba is also in love with
Qhamukile

"You in love with your brothers girlfriend" I say
standing up straight looking at him

His eyes are just running around not looking at me.
that's just the confirmation I wanted

"Oh God, you in love with Qhamukile"

This is unbelievable

I don't know why does this excite me this much but
I'm beaming with happiness right now

“That’s none of your business” he says defensively

“Well... well... well..... what do you know, twin brothers have fallen in love with one girl” I say and clap my hands

This is yet the best news I’ve received thus far

“If you dare breathe this to anyone about this I’m going...”

“Relax tiger your secret is safe with me” I cut him off

He needs to relax

He wants the girl and I the boy...

I think I’m speaking prematurely by saying

Manqoba and I might just be good acquaintances.

“You want Qhamukile and I want Mnqobi, how about we work together here”

I’m testing the waters here

He’s quiet for sometime, I need to get him on my side and fast

“I’ll help you get her” I hope that is enticingly convincing

“How”

And what do you know, he took the bait

Jackpot!

[06/20, 18:09] Lynne: (Continuation)

QHAMUKILE

I know death is inevitable but it's doesn't make it less painful when a loved one passes on, I'm struggling to comprehend why Thobile took her own life like that

She was just seventeen, she had her whole future ahead of her and she had so much more to live for.

I guess it's true when they say life is too short...

I'm crying as her body is lowered to the six feet hole that has now become her home, her grave.

Why.... why. Thobile, why... I keep questioning but she's not here to answer.

I don't know if I should be angry at her or what, is it even right to be angry at someone who has passed on?

I'm just frustrated and wish there was something I could do to bring her back to life.

Her mothers cries are too painful, she's broken, God please mend her broken heart.

She has been crying the whole week blaming herself for Thobile's suicide, losing a child is the worst thing to happen to any parent I can imagine no parent wants to bury their child but here she is burying her only child.

Sad....

I know she said some hurtful things to Thobile but maBengu loves her daughter and I believe everything she said was just out anger and not hatred it's sad seeing her so doleful

She's human too at the end of the day and is bound to make mistakes and the fact that she's blaming herself is punishment enough.

I pray that she find it in her heart to forgives herself and finds peace.

Bab'Miya has been stoic throughout but his woeful face shows that he's hurting too. I hope he too finds

peace and be able to move on.

“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.” The priest preaches on

But like i said I don't believed this God of yours exist if he did then why does he hate me so much, why is everyone I love dying like this, he doesn't exist but if he does the he doesn't love me.

I'm just numb, I don't want to feel anymore I just want to feel better, can someone please take away the pain I'm feeling, I need someone to make everything right again

What have I done in this world that's so bad, why is my happiness so short-lived?

I'm tired

I'm tired of all this sorrow and pain, I just want to be happy and right now the only happiness I know is Mngobi.

I need Mngobi.

I miss his touch, his miss I kisses, I just miss his whole being.

He too is here at the cemetery but he's keeping his distance, my brothers instructions.

Once the hole has been filled with sand the pastor says a few words and we all leave the grave yards and make our way to Thobile's homestead.

I'm quiet all the from the cemetery it's thinking about my happy times with Thobile

I'm driving with Batman and his side kick that's Misuzulu and Gatscha by the way, they have been watching me like a hawk the whole day making sure that I don't talk or cross path Mngobi

Can you believe I'm not even allowed to look at him?

How absurdly ridiculous is that?

Eye roll

My brothers are just dramatic for my soul

Anyway I have been abiding to this stupid rule because I just want a drama free day, this is a my friend's funeral after all.

Though Mngqobi and I are not allowed to talk I've caught him looking at me more times than I can count, he must miss me too.

I'm the first one to get off the car when we reach Thobile's homestead, my feet are paining from all the work I've been doing throughout the week but I'm hungry so I go into the tent to get food for me and Mngqobi

I respect my brothers dearly but Mngqobi needs to eat too right, he's been here since morning and I'm sure he's famished he wouldn't be here if it wasn't for me so Misuzulu and his Side kick can go ahead

and cause drama for all I care.

The queues are long but I'm like a daughter in this household so I manage to get two plates without standing in that long queue.

Mnqobi is seating inside the tent with some girls from Thobile's class and they are laughing at what he said.

I don't know why but I get this ping of jealousy, Mnqobi is mine.

"Baby" he says standing from his seat when he sees me

He pulled me close to him in a blink of an eye and gives me a quick peck.

I'm flushed with goosebumps how can he kiss me in front of people I mean there's elders here.

So disrespectful.....

Mnqobi can be such prick at times

I can't believe I still get those butterflies in my stomach whenever he's close to me.

“How are you” he whispers close to my ear and smells my hair

How weird is he?

“I got you food” I say and hand him the plate

He smiles and takes the plate and puts it on the chair he was sitting on

“Let's get out of here”

I know I said I want a drama free day but my feet are walking behind Mnqobi to the back of the house.

“I miss you” he says the moment we are out of eyes and ear shots.

He has me pressed against the wall kissing me before I could respond.

The kiss is sultry and slow.

I can't believe that whenever I kiss him it still feels like the first time his lips are still as lush and soft.

He's kissing me with so much passion he must've missed me like I missed him.

A throat clearing forces us to stop kissing and
FUCK.

“Bhuti” I say embarrassed

He doesn't even look at me instead he looks at

Mnqobi and signals for him to follow

“Bhuti I’m sorry. please remember I asked for a drama free da...”

“Qhamukile hawu kahle, this boy and I need to talk”
he says and leave me there

So much for a drama free day.

As for this boy..

“Please bhuti, don’t”

Misuzulu doesn’t even turn back to look at me he just continues to walk away until he turns around the corner

“Don’t worry I’ll be fine” Mnqobi says and follow

Misuzulu's tracks

I'm holding my breath as he too disappear around the corner

He said talk right? I'm sure there won't be any violence like the last time.

Right?

But these are my brothers i know them I guess I just never get what I want.

They still think I don't know that Sgidi, the man that killed my father is Mnqobi's father but I've made peace with the past. Mnqobi is not his father and he would never want to hurt me like that i know he loves me.

MNQOBI

Misuzulu said he wants to talk but I doubt it I know his type, he's too calm for someone whose just seen me kissing his sister.

I'll be very lucky if he doesn't kill me today.

He's walking slow but because he is tall his strides are long so I'm walking faster behind him.

There's a black BMW 320i waiting for him at the gate, he gets in and waits for me to get in.

I'm too skeptical so I stand outside

“Get in Ngcobo we not going to kill you just yet”
Gatsha who is in the drivers seat say

I don't know if I should be relieved or more terrified but I do get in the back anyway

I'm horrified by not knowing what they are going to do to me but I keep my emotions at bay I don't want

to show them that I'm scared so I'm just quiet observing their demeanor, the radio is playing some jazz and Gatscha is tapping his hands on the steering wheel in tune with the music, he looks happy. Misuzulu is just impassible I cant read any emotions from him he just phlegmatic.

I don't know where we going to but the drive is quite long, it's starting to get dark and that terrifies me further, bad things happen in the dark.

I text Qhamu to ensure her that I'm fine I know how she can be at times.

I don't know why I'm not texting any of my brothers and let them know of my whereabouts but I know they wont kill me, Qhamu saw that I left with her brothers so I know for sure that they are not going to hurt me.

I have suddenly developed confidence that I don't know where it comes from.

We drive until we get to secluded area, I don't know where this place is but I know for sure no one lives here anymore.

"We here" Gatsha says looking at me from the back

The little confidence I had is now gone and now scared but I'm keeping a neutral composure I don't want to give it away

"Let's go lover boy" Misizulu says stepping out of the car

His tone is very mocking but I do step out anyway and follow them into what used to be a rondavel

The structure of the building has now collapsed so it's no longer a house but they have managed to patch it up so there's a door, we don't enter but stand outside

“This used to be my great grandfathers house”
Misuzulu says walking around

“He died here, right on this spot” the spot that he’s
talking about is just in front of the house

I don’t know why is he telling me all this stories but I
guess I’ve got no choice but to listen

“Do you know who killed him” he asks looking at me

Like how am I suppose to know that.

I shake my head

“You don’t know your history I see but let me
enlighten you, he was killed by your grandfather” he
says calmly

Shit, I’m guessing they are here to kill me, they

came here to avenge his death

“Don’t be scared lover boy I’m not going to kill you, that would do more damage than good” I guess he can see right through me

“You see aba kwaNgcobo na ba kwaButhelezi have been at war for centuries now before we were born even before my great grandfather was born but here you are suddenly loving the enemy, now that doesn’t make sense to me but I’m in a good mood today so I’m going to give you a chance to explain yourself”

He’s been walking around, speaking slowly I don’t think he’s angry but his words carries so much hate

“Tell me Mngobiwesizwe what is it that you want from Qhamukile” he says and looks at me right in the eyes

I shudder under his grimace

My mouth is dry but I think telling the truth is the only way

“I love her” I tell him

Gatsha is the first one to burst out in laughter and soon Misuzulu follows as well, it's not a chuckle but a full on belly laughter.

“You funny” Gatsha says still laughing

“So Mngobiwesizwe, you say you love Qhamu tell me what is that you love about her” Misuzulu asks once he has composed himself you'd swear he was not laughing just moments ago with the he is so serious now

I clear my throat before I begin

“What do I love about Qhamu” i say and take a breath

“Id write a book of all the things I love about her but I’ll start with the simplest things I love how she flaps her eye lashes when she talks to me, i love how her hazel brown eyes twinkles when she look at me, when I’m around it’s like I’m the only thing she sees in this world, I love how her nose flickers when she’s angry and how she raise her eyebrow at me when she doesn’t agree with what I’m saying, I love how stubborn and opinionated she is, she drives me crazy at times but I love that too. I don’t know if you’ve seen this but she walk like you, I know you don’t believe me but I do love Qhamukile and I know the Ngcobo’s and the Buthelezi’s have been at it for years but I’m not going to let that stop me from being with Qhamu I love...”

“Nose flickering, raised eyebrows, her walk wow you should’ve been a poet” Gatscha says laughing

“It’s hard to believe you love my sister when you still busy with that girl what’s her name again” Gatsha says all serious again

“Nokhaya” Misuzulu says

“Oh yes Nokhaya, she slept at in your room last night right”

Fuck, I knew that would come bite me in the ass I just didn’t think it would be this soon

“Nothing happened” I say defensively

“Nothing happened alright” Gatsha says wiggling his eyes brows

“Don’t worry your little secret won’t get to Qhamu but only if you break up with her”

If they think that they can blackmail me then they clearly don’t know me

“I’m not going to do that”

“Oh yes you will.. tell me does Qhamu know that Nokhaya thought she was pregnant with your baby”

I’m going to kill whoever it is that gave these people that information

“She’s not pregnant” I say shouting

“Oh really now, do you think Qhamu is going to believe that after we show her these” Gatscha says handing me a couple of photos

It's photos from yesterday, there's one where I'm holding Nokhaya close to me, another one where I was carrying her to the car, and another one where she is laying on my bed and I'm holding her

“Where did you get these” I'm pissed beyond
I want to know who fucking took these pictures

“Don't raise your high blood Ngcobo you still young to die, you see if you can break up with Qhamu then these won't get to her” Gatsha says

I'm just pissed off now

“What did you say she does when she's angry, oh yes her nose flickers, so just imagine how much will it flicker once she sees these” Misuzulu says
chuckling

Im going to come clean to Qhamu about my situation with Nokhaya, I'll take whatever heat that comes after but I'm not breaking up with her.

“I'm not breaking up with Qhamu, you can show her those pictures I don't care”

“Brave ain't we” Misuzulu says shaking his head

“I thought you might say something like that, let me show you something” Misuzulu says and walks to the door of the rondavel

“Welcome” Gatscha says opening the door

It's dark inside so I can't really see what inside but I'm surprised when Nqaba lights the candle and I see a little boy who look about eight if not nine

years tied to a chair I can't see who it is because he has a paper bag covering his face but I can't help feel like I know him

“What's happening here” i ask

I'm trying to keep my composure but I have a bad feeling about this

Who's child is that?

What's he doing tied to a chair?

I'm afraid to ask so I keep my mouth shut

“Ngcobo” Nqaba greets nodding his head

Something is amiss here they are too nice

“Relax will you, we just want to demonstrate what happens when you don't listen to clear instructions”
Gatsha is too calm for my liking

“Wh...what do me” I’m even stammering because of fear

“What do we have here” Nqaba says removing the paper bag and I see the little boy

It’s ...

No they wouldn’t dare

“Please, please I’m begging you don’t hurt him please”

it’s my little brother s mangle he’s too young to be involved in this feud, he doesn’t know anything

“You know what to do” Nqaba says calmly

I don’t know what to do but breaking up with Qhamu is not an option and I’m afraid they are going to hurt

my little brother. Smangele is still a boy why are they doing this I can't even imagine what my mom is going through its late and I'm sure she's looking for Smangele God do they hate me that much that they would kidnap my brother just to get me to stay away from Qhamu

"I'm begging you, please don't hurt him" Smangele is just crying and that breaks my heart he doesn't know anything for gods sake

"You know what to do" Nqaba says

I take out my phone to call Qhamu but Gats ha snatches it away before I could press the green button

"Not today you fool, Qhamu is not stupid she'll know something happened today so you going to break up with her after three or four day and after that I

want you to go back to dating that bitch of yours and leave my sister alone” I can sense a bit of anger in Misuzulu’s tone.

“Three days Ngcobo, three days or else we will do more than just kidnap him next time” Nqaba says and unties sma from the chair

How can they be so evil.

Once smagele free he runs to me and holds on to me for dear life. I can’t let anything happen to him he’s a miracle baby.

When my step mother married my father she was young but she could not conceive I don’t know what was the problem I guess they (step mother and father) both made peace that they were not going to have a child of their own but a miracle happened, the day my father disappeared was the same day that my mother found out that she was pregnant

and by then she was too old to have even carried a baby so we named him smagele because he was a surprise baby so I can't imagine anything happening to him.

“Let me take you home boys” Misuzulu says patting me on the shoulder

I don't know if I'll be able to stay away from Qhamu but Smangele means the world to me and I doubt the Buthelezi's were just making idle threats.

The ride home is just daunting, Smagele is still crying softly next to me I don't know what lies am I going to tell my mother but the truth is not an option.

[06/20, 18:09] Lynne: Chapter fifteen

NOKHAYA

A month later...

I have been feeling under the weather these past few weeks, I don't know if it's something I ate or if it's my hormones playing tricks on me but I'm always moody and I snap a lot at my aunt at first I thought it was my periods but they never came so now I don't know.

My aunt says I'm pregnant because I retch whenever there's a smell of eggs but I told her I'm still a virgin so how can I be pregnant if I'm a virgin? She's just working on my nerves really.

I don't even know how can she think that if I'm still going to that stupid emhlangeni ceremony just to prove to her that I'm a virgin, she just needs to calm down and drink her high blood pills.

I don't know for how long am I going to keep with this virginity lie but I'll have to make a plan when I get there, I'm sure I can pay whoever will be checking me to lie.

For the record I know I'm not pregnant, I took a morning after pill after what happened with Akin,

speaking of Akin I haven't seen him after what he did to me but he sends me money every chance he gets. we have spoken on the phone too and he doesn't see anything wrong with what he did, he didn't apologize instead he told to get over it

At first I didn't understand as to how can he say that after he practically raped me but after I spoke Nontombi who told me that her boyfriend does that too, and that there's nothing wrong with it I got over it. She says these guys are just like that so I just need to satisfy Akin to make sure that he gives me money.

I know what you thinking and yes I want his money and because of that I'll continue sleeping with him.

My mother edified me from a young age that love doesn't pay the bills but I want both so I will have both, because Mngqobi can't provide the money then I want his love and the money I'll get from Akin, it's a win, win situation.

I'm preparing myself for school, it's morning but I'm

already tired I just want to go back to bed and sleep like I've been doing these past week.

I'm so close to quitting school I tell you.

I think the only reason I haven't quit as yet is because of my aunt the woman is relentless so she will nag me the whole day and I still respect her so I'll go until I can get enough money from Akin to be able to start my own salon and I'll be able to take care of myself while Mngobi goes to university.

You see, Mngobi and I used to be close before this Qhamukile tramp came into the picture and he told me he wants to be a doctor so I'm going to wait for him until he finish his studies then after that we going to be a happy family, I haven't deserted the idea of getting Mngobi to impregnate me, I will have Mngobi dark or blue he will be mine, getting pregnant is just to ensure that we have a bond that will tie us together forever so a baby is just perfect, Mngobi will be mine even if it means I have go use dark magic, he will be mine.

My aunt is in the kitchen making breakfast by the time I finish preparing for school, I'm not in the mood for her so I just take an apple and leave, I can hear her rambling about not greeting as I close the door, whatever woman.

I'm dog tired when I get to school I now have to walk from the bus stop to school because Mnqobi no longer gives me lift, I don't care much about that because I know he will soon be mine soon so I'll get limitless lifts. It should be sooner than anticipated because I now have Manqoba on my side so it should be easier than I thought it would be.

Manqoba is so fixated in getting Qhamu he seriously loves her, it's cute.

I see Qhamu getting off Mnqobi's car after she has given him a kiss, I stop myself from walking to her to drag her by that bushy hair of hers, I'm deranged just by seeing that.

I'm already stabbing her right in her heart with a dagger in my mind, God I hate her.

Calm down Nokhaya calm down I tell myself inwardly it's just a matter of time before I have what belongs to me.

Mnqobi is mine.

I'm even breathing in and out to calm myself, I can't believe they are still together.

She should enjoy those kisses while they last because this little honeymoon she's in will soon come to an end I think to myself as I walk to her once I've ensure that Mnqobi is out of sight, I can't risk him seeing me talking to his precious jewel, he'd kill me.

Eye roll.

I know he doesn't love her it's just infatuation, he loves me he just hasn't realized it yet.

"Hello Qhamu " I greet

I refrain myself from rolling my eyes, I've never

called her by her name, bitch is what I prefer to use.

She looks so miserable ever since that friend of hers killed herself.

This is going to be a lot of work, pretending has never been my forte but what can I say

“How have you been holding up” I hope I don’t sound too fictitious

You know that saying “keep your friends close but your enemies closer?” Well that’s what I’m doing right now.

“Hello Nokhaya” She sounds surprised

“I’m good and you” she asks still perplexed

“I’m good too, I just wanted to say sorry about your friend. I can imagine how painful it is for you to lose a friend like that”

I can even hear the fake sincerity in my voice

“Tha..n..ks” she looks really flummox

“I know I have been really mean to you so I just want to apologize”

“Oh..k” I think I’ve pushed too hard now I need to back off

“Yeah I’ll see you around” I say and leave her standing there.

Phase one activated now I just need her to think I’m sincere, I need her to trust me and what better way than to befriend her, she’s a loner after all.

MNQOBI

I've just dropped Qhamu off and I'm on my way to school, I'm miss her already.

I'm crazy right?

What, you agree with me?

Well that I know but I'm crazily in love.

I'm more crazy I know ok, especially because I was with her a couple of minutes ago but I do miss her.

Crucify me for loving my girlfriend ke...

Anyway It's Wednesday which means I have soccer practice, I want to skip it so I can have more time with Qhamu but I won't hear the end of it, Mr Jacobs always says I'm the best and if I keep

playing as good as I do then I might make it professionally but I don't think I want to do that, I just want a simple life with Qhamu and our kids.

Kids....

Who thought I would think about having kids.

Shaking my head...

I don't know how am I expected to break up with Qhamu when I'm so in love with her.

Her brothers are crazy to even think I'd do that, I guess them kidnaping Smagele was just an idle threats because it's a month and nothing has happened, they just wanted to scare me with the whole kidnapping thing.

My mother was so worried that day, she was about to call the South African army when I got home with Sma, I had to lie of-cause, yes I lied not a big deal.

I told her Smagele was with me and that I couldn't call her because my phone battery died.

lying is wrong I know but imagine how heartbreaking the truth is.

She doesn't know that I'm dating an arch enemy and it better this way, she wants peace so she would force me to breakup with Qhamu like how my brothers have been doing ever since I've started dating her.

Her brothers a crazy though, these people kidnapped my brother, a nine year old boy. Who does that?

I know they loath me but to get to such lengths yoh hai shem that's very low of them.

That's just pure looney if you ask

Remember they gave me three days to break up with Qhamu?

Well.... it's a month now and Qhamu and I are still together loving each stronger than the previous day.

I'm relieved that they haven't tried any of their tricks

so far maybe they do realized that I'm not going to break up with her and they let me be....

LOL... why am I behaving like I don't know the Buthelezi's boys, they will never let me be if I'm still with their sister I know that for sure but for now I'm just happy they backed off, well for now at least.

I'm hoping my brothers will too back off and stop stalking me, Qhamu and i need to be together peacefully without any of our brothers trying to break us up.

I know that's a wish that will never come to pass but I'm hopeful anyway.

Sigh...

I get to school in time, my first period is maths then my second love after Qhamu which is biology. I just love school unlike most of schoolers I just love learning that's all.

I haven't decided which university I want to go to but I've been accepted in at least six universities but

they are all not around KZN, well I didn't apply in any university in KZN because I wanted to be as far away from everyone as possible but now that I have Qhamu in my life I know that being away from her is not an option.

I'm changing into my soccer gear when I get a call from Manqoba, I let it ring until it stops.

He has changed these days but I can't pin point what changed but he has changed for sure, his attitude towards me has changed too which is unlike him.

He hardly even talks to me nowadays but when he does he asks about Qhamu.

I know he had a ridiculous crush on Qhamu but he assured me that he doesn't love her like that and that he's over her so I'm guessing he just really cares about her.

I should stop being so paranoid, I know Manqoba would never do that to me, I'm his brother for goodness sake.

I must admit though I hate the way he always ask about her but Im also joyful to know that he too loves Qhamu but who wouldn't Qhamu is the best and she sees the best in everyone. Manqoba has a soft spot for her I'm just hoping all my brothers can be so understanding like Manqoba but I guess time will tell.

I put my phone on silence after it stops ringing and put it in my locker and hit the grounds.

It's cold which makes the soccer practice more enjoyable, I sometimes forget how much I love playing, maybe I might just consider playing professionally but only if Qhamu supports it.

I'm tired from running around when practice finishes.

I have a cold shower which leaves me refreshed, it's now after four pm which means it's time I go see my woman, I kiss her luscious lips.

I have six missed call from Manqoba and two from Makhosini and one from Langa when I check my phone, I even have one from mom I wonder what happened this time, I know how dramatic my family can be.

I call mom first but her phone rings until it takes me to her voicemail, she must be busy I think to myself I now return Makhosini's call

“Where are you” he asks

I don't know if he's angry or what but that worries me Makhosini never I mean never shows any emotions

“School what's happening bafo” I am too sounding frantic now

“Smagele is in hospital...”

“Hospital, what do you mean he’s in hospital” I cut him

Sma can not be in hospital. He just can’t. I’m trying to remain calm by not letting my thoughts escalate

“He was bumped by a car, get to the hospital ASAP” he shouts and hang up.

Bumped? Something doesn’t feel right.

[06/20, 18:09] Lynne: (Continuation)

MNQOBI

I’m panicking as I’m speeding all the way to the hospital I can’t believe Smagele has been bumped my mind is overthinking everything, how badly injured is he? I go as far as asking myself if he’s dead?

No he can’t be, He’s not dead dammit Mngobi keep

it together.

I can't think about that possibility, he's fine, he will be fine.

I can't help wonder if this could be the Buthelezi's brothers doings, have they finally lived up to their threat or was it just an accident, but it has been a month now I doubt they would do something like this right?

My mind is overthinking again and I can't help it, it's possible that they did this.

I get to the hospital in ample time and rush to where my family is.

“What happened” I ask once I see them

“He was hit on his way from school” Langa answers

“Who did this?”

I’m berserk

I need to know who did this

They all look clueless but anger is plastered on their faces

“I’m going to kill whoever did this” Makhosini says standing from his seat and roughly running both his hands on his face, he’s not only angry but he’s frustrated too.

“The lady that brought him here says she didn’t see anything, she just found him lying on the side of the road” Mcedisi says, he is too saddened by this.

Some people are just too evil, who bumps a child and leaves him there to die?

Rest assured we will find whoever did this and they

are will pay.

They will feel the wrath of the Ngcobo brothers.

“What If its the Buthelezi’s” Manqoba

I thought of that possibility but I could not say it out loud

“Possible” Makhosini says

He’s thinking hard I can see from the frown lines he has on his forehead

“But why” Langa

I’m think I’m sweating, I need water I’m hot all of a sudden.

I know why they would do this but I can’t tell my

brothers unless if I want to die, imagine what they will do to me should they know that not only Sma was almost killed but he was also kidnapped because of me.

They too like my mother don't know that Sma was kidnapped imagine what will they do me should they learn the truth.

They will do more damage to me than the Buthelezi brothers I tell you.

“It might not be them you know” I don't know what am I hopping for but I just had to say that

“Of course you'd think that, they are your in laws ag'thi” Mcedisi say sarcastically

I'd roll my eyes if I was Qhamu so instead I just look at him with a bored facial expression

“If it’s them then we have to avenge this, they can’t get away with this” Langa

I forget how violent he can be, he’s craving for blood that’s why he’s saying this

“And I know how” Manqoba says

What?

I’m a little bemused that he would say something like that

Him of all people?

I know he’s still angry that I got shot but he’s not one to come up with ideas especially ones that involve violence, that’s Langa’s department.

We all listen to him anyway

“We can kidnap Qhamu” Manqoba says shocking all of us

What the hell..

He’s so fond of Qhamu or at least I thought so, why would he even think of such nonsense.

“WHAT!!” Now all eyes are on me

“NO” I shout

That’s totally out of the question and unacceptable

“No one and I mean no one is kidnaping her”

I seriously thought Manqoba loves Qhamu

This plan is just preposterous I can’t let it happen

“Shh keep you voice down” Mcedisi says reprimanding me

I don't care much about who hears me, they are not kidnaping her and that's final.

"Let's discuss this when we get out of here"
Makhosini says lowering his voice

"We are not disc..." I'm cut short by my mother
when she says

"What is it that you are discussing"

we didn't see her emerging from the passage with
the doctor behind her

We all get tongue tied and just look at her

"Hey talk Nina, what are you up to now" she knows
us too well

“Nothing maNgidi we were just discussing
Smagele’s accident”

Makhosini comes to the rescue

Him and Langa are the only ones who call her
maNgidi to the rest of us she’s ma.

She runs her eyes on all of us before she shifts her
attention to the doctor

I know she will ask about this later, she’s too qualm
to let this go.

“Tell them doctor”

The doctor first shakes her head, chuckling before
he delivers the news to us

I’m already expecting the worst.

“Well your brother is fine, he’s a tough young man. His arm is fractured but that’s just about it, we still checking for any internal injuries but it doesn’t look like he suffered any, once we sure he’s fine then you can take him home”

I let out breath that I hadn’t realized I was holding, he’s fine and that’s all that matters.

“So no broken bones right” Zwelethu
He’s been too quiet.

“Nope, not a single bone” the doctor says smiling

We are all relieved from hearing that
I’m just happy he’s not injured at all.

An sms comes as we still listening to the doctor
speak

“Just a warning Ngcobo” it reads

What the hell..

My heart beat is now erratic what the hell does this mean I’m even looking around to as if the person that sent this sms is here.

This can only be the Buthelezi brothers, so they tried killing my brother.

“And then wena, you look like you’ve seen a ghost”
Mangoba says next to me

“Who? Me no I’m fine” I say with so much conviction

“Come on lets see” he says trying to take my phone but I sway his hand away before he could reach it.

“Manqoba just leave me alone maan” I say and leave them there

I try to call the number once I’m outside but it says the number doesn’t exist.

Another sms “tick-tock” it reads

If I had any doubts that the Buthelezi tried killing my brother this just confirmed it all.

How can they do this.

I call Qhamu after I tried to call the number that sent that sms but it still says the number does not exist which I weird because I just received an sms from the same number

“Hello” she answers after some time

“Hey baby how are you”

“I’m good, you didn’t come today” she sounds a little sad.

“I know baby and I’m sorry, Sma is in hospital so I had to rush to him” I say softly.

Qhamu is the only person whose able to calm me down without even trying, her voice has that power over me.

“Hospital what happened to him” she sounds panicked

“Don’t worry he’s fine, he was gazed by a car but the doctor assured us that he’s fine no broken bones, nothing serious he will be out of here tomorrow”

I can hear her letting out a relieved breath

“That’s good, hows your mom though”

I just love how she cares about everyone in my family

“She’s ok”

There’s that silence

“Qhamukile I need to talk to you” I say after a while.

“sounds serious, what about” she sounds trepidation

I’m now apprehensive too

“I need to see you” I don’t know if I’ll be able to do this but I can’t let her brothers hurt Sma

I don’t really care about me they can kill me for all I care but not Sma

“Ok, I’ll see you tomorrow then”

I know she doesn’t want to wait until tomorrow, she’s too perturbed but she doesn’t want to be selfish by saying tonight

I love her selflessness.

“I’ll come later, do you think you’ll be able to sneak out”

I’m going to miss those nights were she would sneak out and we would just lay on the bonnet of my car and look at the stars

I’m going to miss her goofiness too

“Ok I’ll see you later then” she says

We both don’t hang up but we breathing through the phone. I don’t want to hang up it feels like if I hang up I’ll be breaking her heart but this is nothing compared to what I’ll do later on, my hearts bleeds from just the thought of it.

“Mngobiwesizwe I love you” she says after some time

I can’t bring myself to say those three words back so I hang up and go back inside the hospital

QHAMUKILE

Today has been a weird day to say the least, it started with Nokhaya being all nice to me and now it's Mngobi phone call. I don't know what's wrong but something is just off, I just have a bad feeling, it must be what happened to Sma.

I'm just glad he's not injured.

Misuzulu is home and I've been meaning to talk to him.

"Bhuti" I say to him

he's watching soccer repeats

"Mmmhh" his concentration is all on the tv screen

"I've been meaning to talk to you" I start

“Ok talk” he doesn’t even look at me when he says that

“It’s about ubaba” that manages to get his attention

he turns his head to look at me

I can’t read his facial expression I don’t know if he’s shocked or worried

He lowers the volume and gives me his full attention

“Ok” he says

“I know who killed him” I get on it.

There’s no need to for me beat around the bush

“Oh”

“Yes I know that it’s Sdigi that killed him” I stop to draw some breath

he’s just looking at me stoically I’m unsure if I should continue or let him talk

“I also know that Sgidi is Mngqobi’s father”

I’m nervous as I say this my voice even sounds timorous

He’s quiet for a while then he clears his throat and says

“Good, now you know why I want you to stay away from that boy” he’s so coolly

Can he stop calling him boy...

“Bhuti i don’t mean any disrespect to you but that doesn’t change how I feel”

I wanted to add “I love Mngqobi” but that would be disrespecting my brother beyond he may not tell me what to do but he still older than me

“I see” he’s too calm

“Kodwa ke Ntombazana I want you to stay away from that boy” he says now sternly

“But bhuti please understand I’m..”

“Qhamukile I said what i had to and you going to be a good girl that you’ve always been and listen, we have rules in this household and you going to abide no matter what. I said stay away from that boy and I never want to tell you this again”

The calmness has now vacated and he's a little angry

“Bhuti I understand you hate the idea of us being together but there's nothing that you can do that will stop me from seeing him” I say too sternly.

I don't know where does this little bravery come from but I need to stand up for myself

“Qhamukile” He says rebukingly

“Read my lips, You are forbidden to see that boy” he's angry now

“Bhuti I love him”

tell me why did I say that

I might as well have dug my own grave

He snickers bitterly before he says

“You have lost you mind I see”

I think he’s still trying to process what I said, I just bluntly said I love Mngobi in his face and that’s too much to take in even for him

“I see you have lost respect but don’t worry I’ll enforce it back” he says and goes to his room

I don’t know what does that mean but I can’t stand here and wait for him to show me what he means so I attempt to leave but he manages to stops me before I could step outside the house.

He has a belt in his hand, he sway it at me and it lands on my legs.

The pain is aching but that's the least of my worries right now.

None of my brothers have ever walloped me with a belt before so his is a surprise

I think he shock himself too because he doesn't beat me for long.

“what I say goes in this household and I'm telling you to stop seeing that boy or else” he stops to take a labored breath

I'm not crying I'm just angry at him now

“Or else what” I say looking at him

I don't even get uncomfortable when he returns my stare so we look at each other without shifting our eyes

“what”

he doesn't believe that I've just hurled at him

“Are you going to kill him too” both my hands fly to my mouth

Why did i say that but I'm afraid he'll do just that, he has killed people before so what would stop him now?

He looks so shocked, his eyes are all out and his mouth is also gaping

“What” he even sounds appalled

Misuzulu thinks I don't know about his escapades

I think I was about eleven years when he came home bloodied one night, I'm sure he thought I was asleep because him and Gatsha discussed what transpired that night so apparently Misuzulu and his friends hijack a transit full of cash but something went wrong and he had to shoot and kill one of the drivers.

I forgot all about it until it happened more frequently, Gatsha too joined, they've been discreet about it though so I'm unsure if they are still into this gangsterism or not.

"Yes bhuti I know you have killed someone" I say softly

"Are you calling me a killer Qhamukile" he sounds so hurt

“No bhuti but please”

“And I said no” he says and leaves me

“You can’t tell me what to do, you’re not my father” I shout before he exit the door

He stop at his tracks and turn to look at me

“You’re right I’m not your father, your father was killed brutally in front of your eyes by the man whose blood runs through the veins of the boy you claim to love”

With that he’s gone.

Tears I’ve been suppressing comes down flooding.

He's right I can't be with Mngobi, being with him hurts my family, being with him has made my own brothers to hate me, being with him has done nothing but brought heartache look at me I've now become disrespectful to my own brother.

I love Mngobi but I can't be with him.

[06/20, 18:09] Lynne: UNKNOWN

“The packages are ready for shipping, are they ready”

A deep voice says

“No, not yet I need to do more convincing you know how they are” another deep voice says puffing a cigar

“Well I don't have all year do whatever you have to do to get this right, there's a lot at stake here and you know I don't like losing business because of your stupidity”

“Relax will you, I’ve got this”

“You better or else you’ll meet your ancestors sooner than you anticipate”

The room is full of smoke from the cigars they have been smoking, it also reeks of alcohol and sex.

There’s naked girls walking around everywhere around the room just like how the two men like it.

“Like I said you’ve got nothing to worry about I’ve got everything under control” he says and gulp the rest of his cognac

“If you say so”

“Alright then” the two men then shakes hands and

the other one leaves

He's a little worried about his business associates he knows he means business so he's under pressure to speed things up, time is not in his side and he too has a lot at stake and he needs the money more than anything.

He takes out his phone and send an sms to one of his workers giving him clear instructions, he needs to get the ball rolling now.

QHAMUKILE

I've managed to sneak out unseen like always I'm now a master at this. The moon is shining so brightly that I'm not even scared of walking to the

bamboo tree where Mngobi is waiting.

I've come to break up with him I can't be with him anymore, our union has caused too much hatred and heartache, I can't continue hurting the people I love I've decided to stop being selfish and do what's right for everyone and I know for sure that Mngobi brothers will be thrilled too.

Just like always he's parked under the tree and he's leaning on the car.

"hi" I greet and join him to lean on the car too

"Hi" he reciprocates without even looking at me

Ouch

"How's Sma"

“He’s good, he will be discharged tomorrow, thank you for asking”

I can’t read him but he looks like he has a lot that he needs to offload

“So how are you”

“Good” ok, one word answer

“So..” we both say in unison and laugh

“You go first”

“I actually came here to break up with you” he says chuckling

I don’t know if I should laugh too to be sad

“I actually came here for that too”

We both laugh at ourselves

“So are we breaking up” I’m unsure

“Fuck no, I don’t know about you but I’m not ending this”

“I actually had this huge fight with Misuzulu earlier and I was so sure that it was the end of us, but now that you are here I don’t think I can do it”

“Good, now come give your man a kiss” he says pulling me close to him

“So we need a plan, our brothers can’t know that we still together” he says after he breaks the kiss

“What are we going to do” I don’t know how are we going to do that but I’m for whatever that will work, we both need to convince our brothers that we no longer dating

“I don’t know yet but I’ll think of something”

Mnqobi is too cheesy when he wants to be, he has a blanket with him so we lay it on the grass and lay on it. It’s cold but he keeping me warm

I’m laying on his chest and we counting stars

“I love you” I tell him

He kisses my forehead and pulls me closer to his chest before he tells me he loves me too.

Now this is what completes me, this is what I want.

“I love you more” he says and kisses me deep.

The kiss leaves me breathless

“You won’t believe who was nice to me today” I’m still shocked actually

“Who”

“Nokhaya” he shifts uncontrollably next to me

“I want you to stay the hell away from her” he says angrily

“Relax babe, I’m not intending to be her friend, I was just surprised”

“Mmm”

He says they are just friends but I think there’s more but I’m not going to ruin this beautiful moment by

speaking about Nokhaya

“Kiss me” does Mngqobi have to always be so demanding

Anyway I kiss him, the kiss start slow at first but it gets hot as we continue to kiss.

His hands are running up and down my body I'm feeling things I've never felt before and I'm loving it.

I get this tingly feeling when he kisses my neck.

Mmmm it feels so good

He unzips my jacket and puts his hands under my t-shirt I don't have the strength to protest so I let him.

His hands feels cold against my nipple but I'm loving it, I'm enjoying every moment of it.

I'm running my hands on his body too and he keeps moaning in my mouth, I can feel his goin area growing, he has it pressed again me so I can feel it. Its hardening asvwe continue to kiss

“Fuck” he says against my lips

“We need to stop” he says slowly

My body is too hot for me to stop

“No talking, just kiss me” I say against his lips too

He doesn't protest but kiss me hungrily

His lips taste like mint and so does his breath
disguising that nicotine smell, I hate the smell of
nicotine but on him it smells like strawberries and
flowers, I'm sure you think I'm crazy.

His hand is now playing softly with my boobs, I'm
enjoying every second of it.

“Qhamu” he says softly

I thought I said no talking so I shut him up with a deep kiss, our tongues are dancing together as my hands continue to run all over his body.

“We need to stop” his body is contradicting with his words though

“Shhh”

“I don’t want to do something I won’t regret” he says softly against my ear

“I won’t regret it” I don’t know if it’s me talking or my hormones doing the talking for me

“Baby” he protest

My hand is already inside his t-shirt bushing him softly

“I want this” I tell him

I can't see his face but I can tell he is smiling

“Really” he even sounds happy

“Yes now kiss me please”

He obliges and kisses me while touching me all over my body again.

My jacket is the first clothing item he takes off, I help take off his as well.

It's cold but I'm so hot right now.

He's kissing me slowly as he removes my t-shirt

“Are you sure” he asks before he pulls it over my head

I nod, I'm sure about all this

“Words Qhamu use words baby” he says kissing my shoulder blades

“Yes, yes I’m sure” I say breathless and I lean in to capture his lips

“Fuck Qhamu” he says and deepen the kiss. I don’t know when did he remove his t-shirt but he’s not wearing it now, I’m enjoying every moment.

This is not how I pictured my first time to be like but it’s even better because I’m with the boy I love.

I know I won’t regret this

I hold on to him tight as he takes my boob in his mouth, my nipples have erected and they are hard.

The sensation I get as he sucks on both my breast is unexplainable.

A deep voice startle us as he was about to undo my jeans

“Isn’t this cosy”

We are forced to look at whoever that is
And fuck....

[06/20, 18:10] Lynne: (Continuation)

MNQOBI

“Sex under the moonlight how romantic” he says
sarcastically

I’ve managed to cover Qhamu’s breast and I’m now
on my feet looking at this fool

There’s two of them.

“Leave us alone” I tell him

“How old is she, fifteen, sixteen”

“I said leave us alone” I’m oblivious to the nine millimeter he’s holding in his hand

“I don’t really care about her age, what’s important is that she’s going to make me money, lots and lots of money” he says smiling

If he thinks I’m going to let him take Qhamu then he better think again

“Stand up” he says looking past me to look at Qhamu

She stands behind me really fast I don’t know when or how but she has managed to get fully dressed.

“Boss what do I do with him” the other guy ask

Today is really not our day firstly my brother was hit by a car and Qhamu had a fight with her brother now this..

Is the whole universe against this union?

Come on...

“I don’t care what you do with him but her” he points at Qhamu

“I want you to put her with the rest, tonight has been very productive.”

“Sure, sure boss”

Qhamu is screaming as both man take her, she’s kicking and screaming begging them to leave her alone but they don’t even flinch when she scratches them.

I’m also fighting them to leave her alone but one guy manages to hit me with the back of the gun, the hard blow leaves a daze and almost unconscious but I manage to see them put Qhamu inside their

car and drive away.

Fuck

I don't have the luxury of time to nurse my wound so I take out my phone and call Makhosini, it rings a couple of times before he answers in a sleepy tone

"Did you take Qhamu" I say before he says anything

"Are you drunk Mngqobi" his voice is so raspy

"Makhosini someone just took Qhamu so I want to know if it's not you" I'm going out of my mind with worry

"I don't know what you talking about" I believe him

"Well two guys took her, we need to get her back" I

was angry thinking it was my brothers but now I'm more worried because I don't know those guys are or what they might do to her

“We”

“Please Makhosini, how are you going to get your revenge if she's gone” I need to say anything that will persuade him to help get her back

Where do I even start looking?

I don't know those guys but I'm sure Makhosini might know something he has eyes and ears everywhere

“Mnqobi I need my beauty sleep” he says and hangs up

Fuck.

I've got no choice but to go to the Buthelezi's homestead

I'm driving like crazy I don't care about the dongas messing up my car I just wanna get there and get them to help. I know they'll kill me before they do but I don't care.

It's clear these people wanted her why would they not try and kill me or take the car instead

The gate is locked so I jump over the fence and run to the door of the main house. I bang on it hard I don't care about the repercussions I just want them to wake up

Misuzulu opens the door with a gun in his hand

I expected that so I'm not even frenzied

“Ufunani la wena (What do you want)” he asks angrily

I don't have time for pleasantries so I get on it

“They took Qhamukile”

He looks muddled so I repeat

“Some guys took Qhamu”

My voice is breaking

God I can't cry I need to be strong

“what are you talking about wena”

“Qhamukile was taken by two guys”

“What's happening here” Gatsha says emerging from the back room with the rest of the brothers holding a gun too.

I'm good as dead

Misuzulu leaves us there and goes back into the house I'm assuming he is going to check Qhamu

“Ngcobo you’ve got guts boy, you just threw yourself in a lions den” Nqaba says charging for me

he throws a mean punch at me but I don’t have the energy to fight back so I just let him fight me.

Nqaba has some serious anger issues I tell you.

He gives me a few more punches before Gatsha manages to restrain him my nose is left bleeding after that but that’s the least of my worries, Qhamu is all that’s playing in my head right now.

I remain unmoved until Misuzulu comes back breathing fire

“Start talking” He says coming for me.

I don’t run.

He unleashes his anger at me too, his punches are more painful but I don't even try to fight back

"Talk" he says once he is satisfied

I narrate the whole story leaving out the part where his sister and I almost had sex, I don't want to die just yet.

They are all deranged when I tell them what the guy said about Qhamu making him money.

"He said that" Nqaba asks

I nod

Im just hoping she's ok wherever she is.

"Fuck" Nqaba says holding his head

I've never seen any of them this angry.

They all blame me of cause, I bet you I'd be dead if Misuzulu wasn't here.

"Did you see them" the older brother asks

I shake my head they were wearing balaclavas

Misizulu goes back to the house and comes wearing dark clothes.

I like that he's not panicking like the rest us. He instructs Gatsha and Nqaba to follow him and they do without protesting

I can hear Mondli and Gcina cursing as we go to his car

He takes out his phone the moment we get in to the car

“Qhamukile was taken tonight I need more eyes and ears” he says and hangs up

“Are you sure that’s what they said” Nqaba asks

He’s asking about what those men said, why would I lie anyway they took someone I love.

“Yes, I’m hundred percent sure”

We are both seated in the backseat

“I think I know who took her” he says and runs his hands over his head

“Start talking” I say to him

We need to get her back and alive so we need to spend less time talking and more time going after the people that took her

“Bafo it’s the Ntshangase” he tells Misuzulu

The car comes to a complete halt and Misuzulu and Gatscha both shout “what” in unison

“Yes they are back in business” he says frustrated

“So it can only be them” he says again and gets out of the car.

I follow him and light my cigarette

We have a clue that’s better than nothing

“We need to get her back” I say puffing I have never smoked this fast in my life

“Yes, if it’s them then won’t be easy and we need to get her back as in yesterday”

“Get in nina Ngcobo we taking you home, your car will be brought tomorrow right now I need to find Qhamu” Misuzulu says to Nqaba and I

We both get in and Misuzulu starts the car.

He refuse when I tell him not to take me home

“it’s partially my fault that Qhamu was taken so I need to help to” I try and reason with him

“You’ve done enough as it is, if it wasn’t for you, she would be asleep right now”

That I know but it’s no use pointing here fingers

“I know but I’m not going anywhere until I find her” I say austere

He can do what he wants but I'm not going anywhere before we find her but because Misuzulu is hard headed we spend another thirty minutes arguing until he bends the knee, I am too relentless just like him.

NOKHAYA

Nontombi can be such a bore at times, she bought me a pregnancy test.

why?

I don't know because I told her I drank the morning after pill.

what a waist of money.

I'm tired of arguing with her about this so I've agreed to take the stupid test.

Lucas laughs at me as I grab it from her hand.

“Let’s make a bet” Lucas says

He’s such a con, he’ll do anything to get himself extra bucks

“No I’m not betting on anything here, I said I’m not pregnant but Ive agreed to take the test just get you guys off my back” I say rolling my eyes and go to the bathroom

This pregnancy thing is starting to work on my nerves, at first it was my aunt and now it’s these two.

They both get in while I’m busy peeing

So much for privacy.

“Haibo What happened to privacy na”

Lucas is the first one to roll his eyes Nontombi bluntly ignores me and waits patiently

“Let’s see” She says grabbing the stick once I’m done

I roll my eyes at that

“Shouldn’t you wait for like five minutes or something” I say and leave them there

We were all chilling in Nontombi’s room talking about tomorrow plans before they forced the pregnancy test on me.

Im chatting to Manqoba on the phone when they both get in, I continue with what I’m doing and pay no attention to them.

So I'm meeting up with Mangoba later on, we need to put our plan into action.

He's a little hesitant but i know what I'll do just to get him fully on board with this, I can't just let that bitch have Mngobi.

He told me the plan to kidnap her backfired as Mngobi was against it so the rest of his brother never spoke about it

Urg and I had to think hard of that idea.

He also told me about this feud that's going on between them and Qhamukile's brother so I'm planning on using that to my advantage as how the hell does Mangoba think he will date Qhamikule with so much bad blood going on between two families beats me, but that's not my business I only want Mngobi and I will get Mngobi.

Akin...

sigh

That's a very complicated story, so he's back in my life in more ways than one. I was actually with last night I don't feel entirely comfortable around him but I'll get over it soon.

He gave me around eight hundred rands just to splurge, it's a lot of money so I'm happy I mean who can just give you that kind of money.

I mentioned to him that I want to quit school the reason why I told him is because I want him to continue giving me money until I'm old enough to open my own salon. He likes the idea so he's coming tonight to talk more, he said he wants me to do something for him that will make both us money so I'm open to the idea, see you don't need school to get by in life.

The two rats barge in startling me

“It’s positive” They both shout in unison

WHAT?

Did I hear right they said positive

“What” I say and grab the stick

There’s two lines

“Impossible” I say unbelievably

“Well it says five weeks” Lucas says shrugging his shoulders

This is impossible

“I took the morning after pill” tears are already falling out

They both come to comfort me, I don't know what am I going to do.

God

I can't be pregnant, abortion is the first option that poops into my mind

I first need to tell Akin about this, it's his baby anyway.... wait a minute

Akin doesn't have to know any of this.

I can use this stupid pregnancy to get Mngobi and I know how.

I'm not crazy I know he forced me to take that pregnancy test that came out negative I'll guess I'll have to get him so sleep with me and I know he's sexually deprived in that relationship he's in right now besides Mngobi can't resist me.

"Guys I need to go" I say and wipe my tears

I don't even wait for them to reply before I leave

I'm trying to control my tears as I walk down the road to catch a taxi to Manqoba house crying won't help the situation I need to come up with a concrete plan and Manqoba is the only person whose going to help me.

This is an opportunity I need to make use of to ensure that I get Mnqobi back and this time around I'm going to make sure I don't flop.

Mnqobi will be mine come hell or high waters. He will be mine.

[06/20, 18:10] Lynne: Chapter sixteen

MNQOBI

It's been over eighteen hours since Qhamu was taken and I'm scared out of my wits. The brothers have been making calls but nothing, no leads, no clues just a big fat nothing. I also tried talking to Makhosini to assist but he just hangs up on me

whenever I call him, my brother is just like that, heartless.

It's Thursday meaning I should be at school but I don't think school is of importance right now. Qhamu has to be found.

I've been with Nqaba all day driving around looking for something or someone who might know something that might be helpful but that hasn't been fruitful either, I'm not giving though.

Nqaba is rude I tell you but I have to tolerate him just like he has to tolerate me.

I know if circumstances were different I'd be long dead but finding Qhamu is more important than the feud that's going on between us.

I'm not sure of the whereabouts of Misuzulu and the rest of the brothers but I know they are also looking.

They all forced me to go home until they gave up,

like I said I'm not going anywhere until Qhamu is found.

It's around one pm, I'm hungry and tired too but the thought of Qhamu lying dead somewhere in a ditch motivates me to keep my head above water, we will find her, we have to find her, alive and well.

Nqaba's phone rings as we drive into town.

He answers and listens to whoever that is.

"Anything" I ask after he hangs up

He ignores me and put his phone back in his ear

See what I've been dealing with all day?

"Mis uzulu I got something" he says

Mis uzulu replies and he hangs up after that

I'm now more hopeful

“What do you have” I ask excitedly

He looks at me once and back at the road, I thought I was stubborn but hai Nqaba takes the crown

“Nqaba quit being an ass and just tell me” he might be older but that doesn’t mean I’m scared of him

“Ngcobo musa ukuba isicefe (stop annoying me)” he says and lean back in his seat.

the disrespect.

Imagine this one, he’s in my car but I’m the one annoying him.

Yoh...

“Nqaba I don’t like you too you know but if this is about Qhamu then I need to know” things I have to

deal with.

“Ey relax you’ll know soon, turn left on that corner Misuzulu should be waiting there”

I’ve been dealing with rude Nqaba all day so I’m not bothered at all.

Misuzulu is with Gatsha at Big Joe’s garage, it looks weird but Nqaba and I go in away.

“This is a surprise, Buthelezi you rolling with the Ngcobo’s now, have you all kissed and made up”

A guy big as a mountain say chuckling, his Zulu is off I’m guessing he’s from somewhere in Africa

“Not now Joe” Misuzulu says and signals for Nqaba to starts talking

“I got a call from Mandla confirming that the Ntshangase’s are now working with the Nigerians”

Nqaba says but

“what does that have to do with Qhamu”

The look I get from Nqaba is enough to shut me up

“The Nigerians are into human trafficking so the Ntshangase abduct girls for them so they might have taken Qhamu” he finishes off

“The Nigerians never take the once’s from villages though what happened” big Joe asks

Nqaba: “that I don’t know” he say shrugging

“We have to get Qhamu then” I say

They just figured out who has possibly taken

Qhamu then what are we still doing standing here

They all ignore me

“Let me make some calls if its the Ntshangase that took her then they’ll bring her back” big J oe and and makes the call

He signals for Misuzulu and Gatscha to follow him and they all go outside

Nqaba and I are left arguing until the three men comes back

“Hai nawe Buthelezi do you have to be enemies with everyone” big J oe says shaking his head

I guess that didn’t go so well

“So this is the situation Nkanyezi says the girls will be taken to the Nigerians tonight and after that we won’t be able to her back but I don’t know how are

we going to talk to the Ntshangase's seeing that they are in some war with Misuzulu and the only person who can help talk to them is Makhosini, he's friends with them I hear" Joe says

I've tried to get Makhosini to help but he refused
"Let me call him" I say and walk out

Let's hope this time he will listen

He doesn't answer his phone the first two times but he answers when I call for the third time

I've never begged anyone for anything in my life but I spend a whole twenty minutes begging Makhosini to help he doesn't agree but says he's coming to talk to Misuzulu face to face, that scares me but I don't have much of a choice but to agree

It takes him under less than ten minutes to get here

After pleasantries are exchanged Makhosini and Misuzulu excuse themselves and go outside.

They haven't killed each other yet so that's a plus I guess.

They've been outside for a while now I'm guessing they are not coming to any agreement.

The wait is killing me so I end up going to them

“Bafo if you can help I promise to stay away from her, I'll never talk or even look at her again I promise you. Just do this one thing for me please” I beg

They are both just looking at me, I'm not sure but I think I'm crying

“Don't it for them, I don't care about them too but do it for me, for your brother just this one thing please I promise you bhuti I'll never I mean never look at her again”

This time tears are just streaming down my face

I'm hurting and I'm tired of being strong and behaving as if I'm ok.

I blame myself for what happened to Qhamu if it wasn't for me she would be here with her brothers but because I'm selfish I got her into trouble, just look where we are now.

"I'll stay away, but bhuti I won't be able to live with myself should something happen to her"

The quilt is killing me.

"Please"

"Fine, I'll help I'm not doing this for you Misuzulu, this is for him and wena you better live up to your promises. I don't ever want to see you with her ever again"

I just want her safe even if it means not being with

her.

I know it's short my good people I'm just so tired tonight.

[06/20, 18:10] Lynne: (Continuation)

MANQOBA

Nokhaya has been pestering me all day with phone calls so I've resorted to switching my phone off.

I agreed into this whole plan of hers but that doesn't make us best of friends.

She seriously needs to take it down a notch, I might be in love with Qhamu but Mngqobi is my brother and betraying him is not easy, he's my twin for gods sake and I'm planning on stubbing him in the back, how evil can a pers on be.

No Manqoba stop it, you love Qhamu too much i remind myself.

Sometimes I feel like there's two Manqobas inside me, it's not split personalities or something like that I'm not a psycho if that's what you thinking, it's just me and myself in conflict.

One knows the right things but the evil me always overpowers the good me, look at me now selfish Manqoba has taken over and doesn't care about Mnqobi or anyone else for that matter. I want Qhamu and I don't care how I'll get her but I want her even if it means hurting the once's I hold dearly to me.

I guess the demonic Manqoba always wins.

Makhosini comes in looking all angry, I wonder what has Mnqobi done now

“And then”

“And then? Is that how you talk to me now” he's pissed

“I’m sorry, what’s wrong”

“Yaz uMnqobi thinks we are all in love like him, that brother of yours is starting to seriously work on my nerves”

I don’t know what he means by that but from the way he’s pacing around Mnqobi must’ve done something seriously wrong this time.

“Where is langa”

“In his room” he leaves me there wondering.

I haven’t see Mnqobi all day I bet he is with Qhamu.

I’m forced to switch my phone on again to call him but messages from Nokhaya comes in flooding

Lord what have I gotten myself into I think to myself as I call her back, this is the only way I’ll be able to get her off my back

“Manqoba I’ve got a brilliant plan” she says excitedly

“Oh”

“Meet me around six at our usual place, you going

to love this plan”

I’m angry at myself that I actually allowed this pest into my life but I’m too desperate to get Qhamu and she’s too desperate to get Mngqobi so what choice do I have.

It’s love...

It’s windy today so I grab a jacket and go meet her.

I find her already smiling to herself

This plan must really be good.

This is the secret place just outside Matsheni, there’s big rocks so we get to chill and plan without disturbance

“Nokhaya what’s the big plan” I ask her after we exchange pleasantries

“So I spoke to Mngqobi earlier and he mentioned Qhamu was kidnapped”

“What, What do you mean kidnapped” I say shouting

She can’t be

“Calm down, we can use this to our advantage”

“How Nokhaya just how will that help me here” I’m seriously angered by her lack of compassion

She rolls her eyes before she speaks

“I can be there for Mngqobi you know, help him deal with this and once your babie doll is found you’ll do the same too” she’s excited

“Are you for real” I can’t believe her right now

“Yes I’m sure her brothers will find her man, they’ve been running around looking for her so I’m sure she’s fine” if maybe her facial expression resonated with her words then maybe I’d believe her but she doesn’t care about Qhamu

“I need to go”

“Oh you haven’t heard the half of it, I need to get pregnant” she’s insane

“Don’t look at me like that, I have to seduce Mngqobi and get him to impregnate me. Think about it Qhamukile will never want him if he gets me pregnant. It’s a win, win situation”

That's it..

“That's the dumbest plan I've ever heard” I say and leave her there

Nokhaya is crazier than I thought.

I try to call Mngqobi once I get home but his phone rings to voicemail.

Dammit

Makhosini and Langa are arguing about something that has to do with the Ntshangase family.

That family is known to be notoriously dangerous and they are feared by many but why are my brothers arguing about them as far as I know they have a good relationship with them.

Makhosini gets my attention when I hear him shout that Qhamukile was taken by them and that Mngqobi promised to break up with her once she's found.

Langa argues that this has nothing to do with us but Makhosini tells him that Misuzulu threatened to kill Mngqobi should they not find Qhamu in one piece so they are forced to get involved

Langa is stubborn and not easily convinced so they continue arguing until Makhosini relents and leave.

“What happened to Qhamukile” I ask langa

“Ey she was taken by some traffickers and now Makhosini wants us to save her, I don’t understand why is he agreeing to all this she’s a Buthelezi too and just because she’s busy with Mngqobi doesn’t change that. Yaz what pisses me off is that stupid Mngqobi is still with those Buthelezi fuckers. Mngqobi is weak maan” he says and walks out

Why would Mngqobi be with the Buthelezi’s?

They want to kill him for goodness sake but wait....
if he is dead I’ll be able to replace him in Qhamu’s heart.

I quickly call Makhosini he takes a while to answer but he finally does just as I was about to hang up.

He refuses when I ask to help look for Qhamu, I guess I have to wait until she’s found but what I’m going to tell you is that she’s going to fall in love

with me.

QHAMUKILE

“Hey wake up, this is not your mothers house” a man with a deep voice says shaking me violently

I don't have a choice but to wake, Ive been sleeping on this hard sofa for hours now and my body hurts not only from that but from the beating I got earlier too, my defiance will get me killed one day.

I don't know when or how did I manage to sleep with everything that's happening but I'm thinking whatever they injected me with put me to sleep in fact I'm still drowsy but i manage to open my eyes slowly and look at the guy that just woke me.

He looks young maybe in his twenties, I don't understand as to how can a good looking guy like him be involved in such evilness.

“It’s time”

he says and pulls my jeans down and inject me on my thigh. I don’t have the strength to fight him so he does it with ease, once he’s done he moves on to inject the girl next to me without pulling my jeans back up so I struggle until the girl helps me, we both don’t have the strength to zip it up so we leave it as it is.

There are about ten of us in here and we are all tired from fighting these men.

I tried running away but that was a bad move because I’m now tied to the sofa with chains, it’s painful because it’s digging into my flesh.

I don’t know how long has it been since I was taken but it feels like I’ve been here for years.

What ever that he injected me with starts to kick in after a couple of minutes and I find myself lump again.

I always read about girls being abducted everyday but I never thought even for once that I’d be one of them I guess it’s true when they never say never

I can feel the drug running through my veins and my eyes close involuntarily

It takes me a couple of minutes before I start hallucinating again, at first i saw Thobile, I don't know if it's the the drugs or what but she told me to never give up. I think it's my mind playing tricks on me I mean Thobile died, I was there when she was buried I must be seriously loosing my mind and what puzzles me most is that when I opened my eyes she was gone so how do I not give up when she did.

As if seeing Thobile was not enough now I'm seeing two old men that I've never seen before, I don't know what are they squabbling about but they are fighting like cat and dog.

They stop once they notice me.

I know I'm dreaming but it feels so real

“Look at her” the one with a hoarse voice says

“And its all our fault” the other says

His voice is deep and authoritative

“Who are you”

“Don’t worry Ntonto, you will be fine my child” the one with the deep voice say

“Who are you” I ask again

“Stay strong my child, this turmoil too shall pass remember to stay strong” and just like that they disappear

I can vaguely hear commotion erupting somewhere but I’m too high to understand what’s being said.

I’m still lump but I feel it when someone removes the chains from my angles, he picks me up like a sag of potatoes and throws me over his shoulder the strength this person has tells me it’s a man

Have mercy on me I don’t know if I said that out loud or just in my head.

My eyes are too heavy to open so I don’t know

whats going on but I'm dangling in this man's arms
I'm roughly put down, everything sounds so far
away but I hear a roar of an engine coming to life
I think we traveling now because I can here the car
moving.

Lord I ask for you to protect me I pray silently I even
call on the Buthelezi ancestors to protect me.

The car comes to a halt and I'm taken out of the car.

I think we entered a house because it's noisy and
there's a strong smell of alcohol.

"Put her in the back with the rest" a deep African
voice says

"Not yet I still want to have a taste before she's
shipped" the man carrying me says and takes me to
some room

"Hey wena what are you doing" another voice

"What does it look like" I hear a sound of a belt
unbuckling

"Are you just going to stand there or you next" he

says chuckling

He forcefully pulls my jean down my legs

“Fuck, she looks fresh. I’m next”

That’s all I hear before I fully pass out.

I had to type this insert twice because I deleted the first one by mistake

I’m sorry my readers but today you only getting one insert

[06/20, 18:10] Lynne: Chapter seventeen

MNQOBI

Dammit my brother can be annoying at times I don't understand how can he not let me tag along with them it's my fault that Qhamu was taken in the first place but no him and Misuzulu bluntly refused that I come along and now I'm left with rude Nqaba and angry Mondli who is not talking to me not that I care anyway.

They've been trying to get me to leave but they are just waisting their breaths if you ask me I made it clear that I'm not going anywhere until I see Qhamu here, safe. So

they can rant all they want, they don't faze me, not even one bit.

Makhosini, Misuzulu and Gatscha have now been gone for hours and nothing, I'm anxiously waiting and my stomach is in knots with worry, my wild imagination is not helping calm me down either I've been doing nothing but thinking, thinking, thinking and more thinking like what if they are too late?

what if she's sold already?

she may be dead this moment right?

No?

Well those possibilities drive me crazy, but I guess I have to stay positive.

She's not dead... like I said positive thoughts.

Guilt is eating me alive, Qhamu would've been safe if it wasn't for me, I could've just stayed away.

I'm just a bundle of nerves but I know she's fine I convince myself again

“Ey sit down marn, you making me dizzy”

Sigh..

I stop pacing and look at him

“Nqaba kahle kahle what's your problem” He's worked on my nerves for far too long

“you're my problem”

God...

“Incase you haven’t noticed I’m worried about Qhamu just as much”

“Incase you haven’t noticed we wouldn’t be in this mess if it wasn’t for you”

How can one person be this annoying?

“And I know that, do you actually think I’m enjoying this, I don’t marn. I don’t like being here much more that you do besides I’d rather be doing something to get Qhamu back than look at your ugly face all day but I’m here so deal with it”

I say and sit next to him

He shakes his head before he speaks “Couldn’t you just stay away from her, huh, you know very well what’s going on with our families but no you had to”

I get it but I love Qhamu, what's so difficult to understand there

“Nqaba I didn't ask to fall in love with your sister ok, I'd give anything to fall out of love with her but I can't I love her, there's just nothing I can do about it”

Lord give me strength....

“Ngcobo If you love her like you say you do then I'd suggest you stay away from her”

I've made that promise already, as hard as that is I will stay true to my word

“look what kind of sticky situation we find ourselves in because of 'you love' for Qhamu”

he air quotes

“Nqaba I’m not expecting you to understand” I say
and sigh

I’m drained, I haven’t gotten any sleep but I doubt I’ll
be able to sleep anyway

“Hai marn you two stop bickering, Qhamu is what’s
important here not this rival going on between us
all” Mondli says reprimanding us

“Wena you’re as good as dead should Qhamu not
be found” Nqaba says and grabs a packet of
cigarettes that’s on the hand rest.

My cigarettes.

Imagine

“Let’s go smoke” he says and walks out

I seriously want to laugh but the situation I’m faced
with doesn’t permit me to, Nqaba is one crazy

mother fucker I tell you but I need a smoke anyway
so i follow behind.

I find him already smoking so I light my cigarette
and smoke too, we just standing in awkward silence
partly because I'm tired of Nqaba's rude remarks

“So what is it that you love about her” he says
puffing the smoke out of his nostrils

“Everything” I seriously love everything about her

“Even when she's being stubborn” he says
chuckling

“I love her even more when she's been the hard
headed Qhamukile” I chuckle too.

“Mmmh but I mean it Ngcobo, stay away from her”

I got it.

NARRATED

Misuzulu is very anxious as him, his brother as well as his enemy drive to the location which was provided by Makhosini's intel, Nkanyezi who works for the Ntshangase. The GPRS states that they are five kilometers away but to Misuzulu it feels like miles and miles away. No one is talking in the car they are all just worried and as much as Makhosini hates the Buthelezi brothers his brother loves their sister and he acknowledges that even though the hatred between the two families is too rife to let them be and date.

He can't allow it, Misuzulu can't allow it.

He won't allow it, Misuzulu won't allow it.

Qhamu and Mngqobi need to make peace that they

are not meant to be.

Makhosini is just helping out of guilt and fear.

Guilt that it is Mngqobi's fault Qhamu was taken in the first place and he fear of what Misuzulu said to him and I quote : "should we not find Qhamukile, I promise you Ngcobo your brother will beg for death by the time I finish with him"

Misuzulu was serious as a heart-attach, and he never make idle threats.

Those words keeps replaying in Makhosini's mind as he drives he knows how evil Misuzulu can be and he fears for his brother's life.

Mngqobi you're so stupid he thinks to himself as he continues to drives like a maniac.

"We here" Makhosini says slowing the car

He stops next to a big building that looks like an old abundant factory, he knows that something bad is about to happen but they go in anyway after parking the car.

The Ntshangase family knows Makhosini, they've done business dealing prior to this so he is allowed in without any hustle, him and Misuzulu are taken to Zithulele offices which is in the far end of the factory

Gatsha is refused entry so he remains outside

“Ngcobo” Zithulele says

Zithulele is the first born in the Ntshangase family and he is highly respected in this type of business

“Zithulele” Makhosini says replying

“I see you now rolling with the enemy”

Zithulele is seating in a black leather couch drinking his expensive whiskey

“We come in peace, I’m just here for my sister and I’ll be out of here” Misuzulu says

Him and Zithulele have a bitter sweet history, that’s rather a topic for another day but just know there’s bad blood between them.

Seeing that Gatscha is not allowed into the office he has no choice but to look around, there are three guys playing a game of poker and drinking beers, they are drunk so he can easily scan and walk around unnoticed, he’s too worried about finding his only sister, anger is brewing inside him as he looks around seeing all these guy happily when all they do is take young girls and turn them into sex slaves and drug mules.

Another drunk guy comes down the stairs laughing
“Ey Qophelo is having his way with merchandise
upstairs”

Qophelo is the youngest in the Ntshangase family,
he is very unruly and never listens to instructions,
his father told him a long time ago never to sleep
with the girls they kidnap but it comes in one ear
and out the other.

They all shake their heads laughing

“But damn she’s hot, you should see that dark
chocolate skin, I’m next” the guy continues

That catches Gatsha’s attention, he knows how
everyone likes to say Qhamu has chocolate skin.

He’s already running upstairs before the guys can
stop him, he’s fuming with anger this Qophela
person can’t be having his way with his sister.

Misuzulu Who is in Zithulele office hears the commotion and he too runs out to see what happening, Zithulele knows that his brother already had his way with Qhamukile so he doesn't even run upstairs instead he smiles and lay back comfortably in his chair.

Makhosini shakes his head and follow in Misuzulu tracks by the time they both get into a room where the commotion comes from Gatsha has some guy on the floor punching him with all the power he has in him

Makhosini and Misuzulu are still trying to process what's going when Makhosini sees Qhamukile on the bed naked and Qophelo standing next to her with his pants down to his angles, anger erupts in him as he sees the sly smirk on Qophelo's face.

BANG!!!

That manages to startle everyone

Zithulele is still downstairs in his office with his right hand man Nkanyezi. He smiles when he hears the gun shot, he thinks his brother shot one of them. He instructs Nkanyezi so go see what's happening up there, the drunk guys are upstairs too but they remain unmoved with shock when they see who got shot

“Fuck” Makhosini says

The gun in his hand is hot and smoky from the shot he just fired.

“Oh fuck” Qophelo says holding his genitals

Oh fuck

Makhosini shot him in his genitals, his penis is on the floor and he is now bleeding,he's screaming and crying for help. He is not strong enough to stand so he falls on top of the unconscious Qhamukile

“We need to leave, now” Makhosini says and rush to pick Qhamu up from the bed.

Nkanyezi comes in as they were about to come out

“Shit Makhosini you’re dead” he says when he sees the dead Qophelo laying on the bed

“We need to get out of here” Misuzulu says

Nkanyezi shows them a quick way out of the factory and they manage to escape

Once Nkanyazu is sure that Makhosini and his people are out he runs into Zithulele office to tell him what just happened that’s when Zithulele abruptly stands and frantically run around looking for guns but it’s already too late because Makhosini and his crew are on the road driving to the hospital. Zithulele’s runs upstairs and goes demented when

he sees his dead brother and demands that they go after Makhosini and his people.

MNQOBI

We got a call from Gatsha saying they were rushing Qhamu to the hospital, I died a million deaths right there, hospital means she's hurt and I won't be able to live with myself if she's hurt in any way.

Nqaba, Mondli, Gcina and myself are standing outside the hospital frenetically waiting for Qhamu's arrival.

It doesn't take long that I see Misuzulu's car coming in speeding my heart is literally on my throat as I see Gatsha coming out of the car carrying an unconscious, naked and bloodied Qhamu in his arms

Tears find my cheeks before I can stop them, this is

my fault, no one but me. I did this.

My feet are glued to floor as they run inside with her, my hands automatically go to my head and I let out a loud wail.

What have I gotten Qhamu into, she has blood on her thighs, God she was raped.

I go on my knees and cry out loud, I might as well die, What quality of life is Qhamu going to have now, will she even be able to move on.

Will she ever forgive me?

I should've stayed away from her, I should've listened to Makhosini.

Why why why huh?

Why her? Couldn't they take me instead?

A hot slap finds my cheek

“Why are crying wena, let's go inside” I can't believe Nqaba just slapped me

He pulls me inside to where the rest of the guys are.

Misuzulu and Makhosini are arguing that he shouldn't have shot i don't know who because now the Ntshangase are coming after them, I leave them there and go sit in the bench in the waiting area.

I'm just thinking about Qhamu and how much I love her, leaving her is going to be the most difficult thing I'd ever have to do but it needs to be done.

A doctor comes as the two continues to argue

“Kamukile buthelezi” She says and we all stand

It's funny how she pronounces her name any she's a little frightening seeing all these man here but what can we do

“We her brother” Mondli says and the doctor nods

“How's she” Makhosini asks

“She will be fine, we still draining the drugs out of

her body, there will be side effects after this so please ensure that she's not exposed to any form of drugs when she goes home. We still don't know if she's addicted so we can't take any risk. She's a strong young lady I'll tell you that, she's not physically hurt so when she wakes up I'll get a psychologist to speak to her to see where she's emotionally and mentally but for now don't worry she's in good hands"

"W.. was she raped" it takes all the strength in me to ask

She smiles before she answers

"There's no indication of any forced penetration so no"

I can hear us all as we exhale breaths that we've been holding

“I need to see other patients, oh the police were called so you need to speak to them, it’s just protocol since she was a victim of human trafficking like you mentioned but she will be fine”

“Can I see her”

I can see she wants to say no so I give her my puppy eyes, Qhamu would actually be laughing at me if she were here

She always says my I make the worst puppy eyes

“I’ll allow just one of you but for only five minutes”

I look at Misuzulu and mime please to which he nods

I’m walking behind the doctor as she walks to Qhamu’s ward, I didn’t know my legs were strong enough to carry me this far.

“Five minutes” she says and leaves me

Qhamu has tubes going in and out of her nose, needles in her arms and her face looks hurts, I'm sure she tried running away.

I take her hand in mine and kiss her forehead

“Baby I'm so sorry you had to go through all that because of me, I should've have persuaded you in the first place, I put you in danger and for that I'm sorry.

You know when I first saw you I thought i was going to make you fall in love with me and then drop you like a hot potato but dammit you are too amazing and I fell deeply in love with you. I didn't plan on it, It just happened I just fell in love, I fell in love with your smile, your walk, those beautiful eyes of yours I know you can't here me but I imagine you'd be rolling them just now. I love you Qhamukile, too much to see you hurt because of me, that's why I've decided to let you go. I'm sorry but loving you is just not enough, our families hate each other, look what happened to you and its all on me I don't want to be

selfish anymore I'm letting you go Qhamu, I can't put your life in danger like I have anymore. Please take care of yourself baby and please never doubt my love for you, you're the best thing that's ever happened in my life Qhamukile and I'll forever cherish the moments we shared. I love you"

Tears are streaming down my face but I can't cry anymore I need to toughen up, I'm a man and men don't cry so I wipe my tears away and kiss her nose

"I love you, now and forever more" I kiss her dry lips for the last time and stand up

"Maybe we will reunite in the next life time and who knows maybe we will get married and have lots of kids, I love you maShenge wam omuhle" I say and walk out

That's it, that's the end of me and Qhamukile.

There won't be anymore narrated inserts good people.

[06/20, 18:11] Lynne: (Continues)

QHAMUKILE

I heard very little of what Mngqobi said, I open my eyes as he walks out and tears fill my eyes it pains me that he thinks all that happened is his fault I wanted to wake up and hold him tight and assure him that he shouldn't blame himself but I couldn't, as much as it is painful being apart is for the best, it's for the best for everyone. I love him and that will never change but us being together brings misery

so we can't be, we won't be together.

A doctor comes in and disturbs my trail of thoughts

"Oh you're awake" she says and check the drip in my hand

"How are you feeling" I don't have strength and I'm tired but I tell her I'm fine anyway

I just want to go home and be with my brothers.

"Your brothers are outside should I let them in"

I nod

After a couple of minutes all five of my brothers walk in, seeing them makes me so emotional

Gatsha comes to my side and gives me a bone crushing hug and that's what I need right now, I need to feel their love.

"Shhhh We are here Ntonto, nothing bad happened sweetie you're safe now" he says brushing my back

"I'm sorry Bhuti, I'm so sorry for everything" I say crying

He breaks the hug to wipe my tears but they are just

falling

“Bhuti” I say looking at Misuzulu

“I’m here Ntonto don’t cry” he too comes and give me a bone crushing hug

“I’m sorry bhuti, I’m sorry I disrespected you I’ll never do it again I’m sorry” I’m crying on his chest

“It’s ok, I’m here now” I’m a mess

“Please forgive, i promise I’ll never see Mnqobi again” as hard as that is I mean it.

Once I’ve calm down we all sit and talk about fun times, it’s good to be surrounded by such loving brothers and I would never exchange them for anything. Nqaba is being his crazy self, Gcina has been quiet throughout I don’t know why, he seems so far away I’ll talk to him once we are alone.

Mondli is worried about my state of mind so it takes me an hour trying to convince him that I’m fine, I don’t need a shrink really I’m fine and safe. The doctors forces them to leave after three hours of their visit it takes some serious threats from the doctor until they relent and leave. I just love them.

I'm forced to spend another hour with a psychiatrist, I know I'm fine so this is all just a waste of my time and I'm not addicted into drugs everyone just need to stop fussing I'm fine.

NOKHAYA

I don't understand how can Manqoba not buy into my plan it's a great plan, he wants Qhamu so he needs to be prepared to do whatever it takes to get her, I hear she was found. Eye roll.

Urg why so soon?

I was planning on being there for Mnqobi and use his vulnerability to my advantage but I guess I have to come up with another plan but not now, for now I'm getting ready to meet Akin, he's taking me out again.

God bless his hustle.

I'm wearing a jean today I don't want to risk the repetition of what happened the other day so I'm wearing a jean with a lace crop top that Nontombi borrowed me and a nice pair of heels I look like a million dollar If you ask me.

My uncle is working night shift so I don't have to sneak out. I leave my aunt shouting that I'm going to regret this life I've chosen, urg she'll die of stress if she keeps this up.

The driver greets me like always and opens the door for me.

Eish look at me I forgot to throw away that pregnancy test, it's still in my bag because I can't risk my aunt seeing it, I'll throw it away when I get off the car.

The car stops at the Hilton hotel so Akin wants me to spend the night, I know the sex will hurt but the money I'll get should compensate that. Akin is waiting at the entrance so he takes my hand once I've exited the car

“Baby” he says and gives me a breath taking kiss, I get a little embarrassed because everyone is looking at us

He takes my hand and we go inside.

The hotel is very posh, very high class mind you I’m not used to these things so I’m beaming inside.

The elevator takes us to the fifteenth floor, his hand is rested on my waist and he’s holding me too close to him, Akin is not so bad after all.

He booked a suit, it’s beautiful. It has a master bedroom and we have a beautiful view overlooking the whole of Pietermaritzburg.

it’s going to be a beautiful night I can tell.

There are about five of his friend looking all nice drinking expensive whiskey. It’s not the same guys I’ve meet before these once are more monied and good looking too.

“You did good here” one of them say to Akin and

shakes his hand

“I told you I wouldn’t disappoint” Akins replays

“Excuse me” I say

I need to powder my nose.

My bag is on my lap so it falls and everything inside sprawls on the floor, god why am I so clumsy in front of these man

Oh Fuck..

I quickly hide the pregnancy test before anyone can see it, once I’ve put everything back in my bag I make my way to the bathroom and do my business.

Akins friends are all gone when I come out, I’m glad they understand privacy.

“Bab...”

“Nokhaya are you pregnant” Akins cuts me short

Fuck he saw it.

“No I’m not pregnant”

“Stop lying to me you bitch gives that bag”

he grabs it roughly and spill everything that's inside
on the floor

“What the fuck this” he says waiving the pregnancy
test in the air

I'm crying now, I'm scared of Akin.

“Talk you bitch are you pregnant” I nod crying

“Fuck whose is it”

Did he forget he raped me

“I'm not going to ask again”

“Yours” I say softly

“You bitch” his slap leave me dizzy

“We getting rid of it” he says and takes out his phone to make a call

“I’m on my way” he says and hangs up

He’s angry, too angry.

He doesn’t even wait for the driver to open the door, he yanks it and push me inside my heart is beating right out of my chest.

Where are going, Akin looks so scary right now.

We drive to an old looking building, he pushes me out again and we walk upstairs.

We are welcomed by a Nigeria guy who introduces himself as Dr Akusha

“Get rid of it” Akins says to him

“Akin please, don’t do this. I’ll take care of the baby

please” I beg

This is my only hope in getting Mnqobi back

“I want you to get rid of that thing she’s carrying” he totally ignore me

“I’m not going to have an abortion Akin” I say sternly

I’m not going to allow him to dictate me

He takes out his gun without saying anything

“I’d do whatever he says if I were you” the doctor say and hand me a pill, I’ve got no choice but to drink it. I’m a crying mess as the doctor shove another pill up my vagina.

After about thirty minutes Akin and the doctor force me to open my legs I don’t know what the doctor is doing but it feels like he is digging me up, the pain is excruciating I can feel when he pulls out the fetus,

I've never felt this kind of pain before I can't even explain it.

After what feels like eternity the docs removes his latex gloves and says

“Done”

The pain I feel when he removing the tools he used to open me up with is just as much.

“See, that was simple” Akin says wiping the sweat from my forehead

I'm just mute I want to go home and sleep.

I'm quiet in the car as Akin drives me home, he's busy telling me he did this for me and that this was for the best.

I bang the door once I get off, I hate Akin. He can keep his money I don't ever want to see him again ever again.

My aunt is sitting watching tv when I get into the house

“Nokhaya what's wrong” she asks but I ignore her and walk straight to my room

My womb is painfully so I take three painkillers and cry myself to sleep.

[06/20, 18:11] Lynne: (Continues)

Few days later.....

NOKHAYA

I've been feeling this pain on my abdomen these past few days, it doesn't want to go away regardless of how many painkillers I drink, I'm actually in my bed right now dying from the pain, it's just too much.

My aunt is really worried but how do I tell her what happened?

Ouch the pains again, it comes and goes, I'm crying, the pain is just too much I feel like my stomach is been slit into two

I need a doctor.

I take out my phone and text Mngqobi but he doesn't respond so I call him, it rings for a while before he answers

“What do you want Nokhaya” he answers

Rude much...

“Mngqobi I need you help...”

“Nokhaya I've got my own problems that I'm dealing with”

With that he hangs up

I call him again but it rings unanswered

Dammit I've got no choice but to call his brother, Manqoba.

“Nokhaya Makeyiza What can I do for you”

What's with these two today

Me: Manqoba I need you help

“I’m busy Nokhaya” he says and hangs up

Yoh...

I guess I’ll sleep the pain off, I drink two more painkillers and sleep.

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Hours later.....

I wake up to a beeping sound, I don’t know what’s happening because I remember sleeping so what am I doing in a hospital bed.

A doctor comes in while I’m still wondering

“What am I doing here” I ask him

He looks very young

“Oh hey there, you’re awake” he says softly

“Why am I here”

“So you remember what happened before you came here”

I hate it when my questions are unanswered

“Yes I was sleeping at home”

“Yes your mother brought you here
because you were bleeding”

Fuck I’m sure she knows what’s going on now

“You almost bleed to death, do you mind telling me what happened”

My crocodile tears starts

“You can talk to me dear, I know you had an abortion I just want to find out why, you could’ve died”

I’m crying hysterically thinking of what to say.

He waits for me to calm down before he continues

“The doctor that performed the procedure didn’t do it right and I’m afraid your womb was damaged in the process, there’s a very little chance that you will be able to conceive in future”

I start again with my water works, I’m not crying because of what happened I’m just crying because now I might never give Mnqobi any kids.

He gives me water when I start to get hiccups, I’m

crying genuinely this time. How will Mngqobi stay with me if I can't give him kids

“Do you want to tell me who got you pregnant”

I shake my head

“Do you remember where this doctor is, he needs to be reported to the police so we can help young girls like you”

Do I look like mother Teresa to this doctor I don't care about other people or what they go through for that matter I'm worried about not being able to give Mngqobi kids

“Please don't tell my aunt”

She doesn't need to know about this

“It is my duty to tell her seeing that you're a minor and your still under her care”

I cry all over again

“No please you don’t understand”

Can these tears work

“Why dear, she has to know”

“No, please she’ll never forgive me”

Him: it’s ok my dear I’ll talk to her

“Doctor please I’m begging, I was raped and I don’t want her to know”

Lying seems to be the only way out of this

“Now it has become a criminal case, do you know who did this to you”

I remain silent, god can he leave me alone

“You need to speak to the police”

“No I was raped by my uncle so my aunt can’t know please”

I say and cry

Fuck

I’m shocked, I don’t believe I just said my uncle raped me, I’m definitely going to hell.

The doctor nods and inject me with something that puts me sleep after a couple of minutes.

MNQOBI

I’m seriously tired of Nokhaya, she needs to delete my numbers and let me be, I don’t need anyone at

the moment I'm just over relationships after what I've experienced with Qhamu, it's seriously hard not being with someone your heart wants but what can I say but for now I'm done with relationships

My mothers comes in with Smagele, he's growing up really fast soon he'll step into my role of being Matsheni's handsome bachelor, I can't wait for all the drama that will follow him.

He is a Ngcobo after all.

"Boy-boy" my mother says greeting

"Ah ma, I'm eighteen now. Please stop with boy boy" I say shyly

She'll never accept that I've grown

"Whatever Mngobi, you're my baby and it ends there" she says and sits next to me.

She looks tired I can imagine how it is dealing with people all day.

“Should I make you tea”

She looks at me surprise, I hate making tea no wonder she’s astonished

“Who are you and what did you do with my boy” she claps once

“Ma please stop, one cup of rooibos coming right up”

She likes her tea with lemon and no sugar, it takes me two attempts to get it right but I do eventually.

“It’s made out of love” I say and hand it to her

I’m not so sure if it taste like tea

“Talk to me” sh says sipping

“About”

“About what’s bothering you, I’ve noticed how you’re always sad talk you your father I might help”

I chuckle at that, she always says she’s a mother and a father in one so I guess now I’m talking to a father...

my mother is funny at times

“It’s nothing ma”

“Hey what did I say, you talking to you father now, so talk”

I actually laugh this time, isn’t she just crazy?

“Is it a girl”

I look away shyly, she knows I hate talking about my relationships especially with her or him..lol..

“So what has she done”

I guess we having this conversation

“Nothing, it’s just that we can’t be together”

She nods and let’s me explain

“I like her but there’s just a lot that’s happening that’s preventing us to be together”

I stop to draw a breath

“I’ve been fighting ever since I’ve started dating her but I’m tired now I guess we just not meant to be”

“Do I know her”

I’m not telling her that

“Is she the reason you didn’t go to school last week

Thursday and Friday”

I nod

“Mmmh I see, now I know what your brain tells you
but what does your heart say”

I smile before I answer

“She makes me happy, I like her. I seriously like her”

She’s smiling too when I finish

“I see...does she feel the same way”

I nod again smiling

“She loves me a lot”

Her: then what’s stopping you two to be together

“A lot of things ma, her family, my family. It’s just

complicated” I let out an exasperated breath

“Oh Mngobiwesizwe my child, is it that beautiful girl wa kwaButhelezi”

I shake my head she can't know it's her

“Let me tell you something, this feud has gone for far too long now but you say its not her but if you love her like you say you do then i'd fight for her if I were you, I can tell you love her so why not fight for your love. I didn't teach you to give up on what you want. Nothing in life comes easy that's why you need to always be firm and fight boy-boy. I hope you two find you way back to each other”

I just love this woman

“It's not easy ma, what if people die”

“People died long before you two were born my

child, maybe you two will stop this feud” she says
and stands up

“You know what you want and you know what to do
to get it” she says walking away

I guess she’s no fool, she knows I’m talking about
that girl wa kwaButhelezi, Qhamukile isithandwa
Sam

“But Mngobi I don’t want any babies I’m still too
young to be a grandmother please” she says
laughing and disappears into her bedroom

I wonder how does she do it, she knows when to be
a mother, a father, a brother or a sister. This woman
is a mother to me in more ways than one and I just
love her but Qhamu is a no go area I’ve made peace
with that, I just need to move on with my life.

I take out my phone and delete her numbers what’s
left is for me to forget about her.

Sorry for playing with you guys like that

I love you guys so much

[06/20, 18:11] Lynne: Chapter eighteen

QHAMUKILE

It's been three months since Mngobi and I broke up I must say it's still feels like yesterday, some days are better than others though and I'm finally eating better so i'm gaining the weight I've lost back slowly. A few weeks after the break up I'd call Mngobi and just listen to him breathing over the phone without saying anything funny how he would do the same imagine we would do that for like five minutes without hanging up. crazy I know. Recently I call but hang up before he answers... I'm still learning to live

without him but it's difficult, I still miss the sound of his voice, I miss his cool minty scent, I miss the smell of camel switch nicotine on him dammit I even miss how his skin feels on mine.

I'm sure you must think I'm crazy.

I miss him a lot but I've learnt to overcome the urge of calling him

I've come a long way.

As much as I still love Mngqobi I want nothing that has to do with him especially now that he's dating Nokhaya, yes you heard me right Nokhaya told me they are back together. I've been telling myself for the past three months that I don't love or need him but my heart yearns for him, my body longs for his touch and the more I try to forget him it's the more I miss him.

I need to be strong and move on.

I recently changed my numbers too as part of the healing process I guess, I no longer wet my pillow with tears every night like I used so that's progress right I'm slowly but surely getting there.

I haven't seen him since the day he came to the hospital and that's for the best, I think he too need to heal that's if he's even hurting, I mean he has never not even once came to my school or tried calling me I guess he no longer loves me.

Sigh

Nokhaya has been bragging every chance she gets that he's so in love with her I don't want to lie it hurts hearing her say that.

I used to hate her so much but now I feel so sorry for her, getting raped is painful imagine being raped by your uncle, she must be going through the most.

Her and I are not friends but we talk, she stopped being an ass I think what happened to her changed her I just hate how she talk of Mngqobi, Mngqobi is mine in my head but i pretend like Im fine wherever she starts telling me her stories can you imagine she even asked if I was ok with the two of them dating

What was she thinking though?

Of course I'm not okay with it but I didn't want to sound like a jealous ex girlfriend so I told her to go ahead and date him, see why I'm saying he's not missing me, he just moved on so fast and here I am still picking up the pieces.

Though Nokhaya has told me so much about the two of them I have not seen them together but like I said I haven't seen Mngobi since that day at the hospital I wish him and Nokhaya all the best.

I'm glad he moved on.

Tell me why am I crying now, I quickly wipe my tears and wake up.

Schools are closed for December holidays oh I passed so next year I'm going to grade eleven remember how I was planning on visiting my aunt in June but never did, well I've decided to visit, I need a breathe of fresh air anyway, with everything that has happened these past few month I seriously need a break. My best friend died, I got kidnapped, I broke up with the love of my life, that's a lot even for

me so Durban here I come.

I packed by bags last night so I'm ready for the road my brothers got me a few more clothes and swimsuits so I'm ready for the beach. Lol...

Nqaba is driving me to Durban. Eye roll.

I asked Gatsha but he's busy so I don't have a choice but to let Nqaba take me. did I tell you I'm still angry at him?

remember how he went berserk when he first found out about me and Mngobi and he said I'll go to emhlangeni well Nqaba is a man of his words, I was forced to attend but it was not so bad, I'm just happy he's off my back with that.

He comes in while I'm having breakfast

“Ntonto we need to leave now, I have things I need to do when I get back”

He says and takes the bread on my plate

He's still annoying just Incase you're wondering
I'm forced to eat as fast as I can, my bags are
already in the car when I finish washing my plate.

What's with the rush dude it's only nine am.

Anyway I get in the car and we leave.

We both silent, I have my earphones on listening to
music I don't want to talk to him

“Ntonto” I hear him say but pretend as if i don't

Nqaba is a bully so he roughly removes my
headsets

“I'm talking to you”

It takes all the strength in me to refrain from rolling
my eyes

“Bhuti”

Him: how have you been, I know you've been hurt

since you broke up with that boy so how are you

Me: I'm good bhuti, I'm over him now. He has moved on so I'm fine

I suppress my tears as much as I can, I don't want him knowing I'm hurting over an enemy

I just hate talking about Mnqobi

Him: I see

A lone tear manages to fall out but I quickly wipe it before Nqaba sees it, I hate Mnqobi for moving on this quick while I'm still so hung up on him.

Nqaba is a man of few words when he wants to be so he doesn't say much throughout our journey all that he does is glance at me once in a while thinking I'm not seeing him, I can tell he wants to ask more but I guess he hates talking about Mnqobi like I do.

It takes us just over an hour to get to my aunts house, remember I told you she's the richest family member I have, so you can imagine her house. It's

over looking a beautiful Mountain View, words can't even describe how beautiful it is. After pleasantries are exchanged Ngaba leaves, how rude is he, couldn't he stay for even thirty minutes?

Shaking my head....

“You have grown so much since the last time I saw you” my aunt says

Of course I have grown, you last saw me when we were burying my father but I don't say it out loud instead I just smile as her.

We are sitting in the lounge area drinking hundred percent juice, remember I told you about this too. Everything is so beautiful around this house I'm even afraid of being comfortable on these white couches I'll stain them somehow.

Some people live large I tell you.

Nomcebo, my cousin will be joining us later, she lives at res so she was not home, I'm excited mostly

because I'll be going to the beach.

I'm shown to my room, it's even bigger than the house I come from. The bed is in the center of the room with white puffy duvet covers with matching curtains

I feel like royalty.

I get comfortable and send a message to all my brothers informing them that I've arrived safely and that I'm loving it here.

I spend the rest of the day shopping with My shopaholic of an aunt, we first go clothes shopping need I remind you again that she's rich so she only shops at these expensive shops, I'm happy with the expensive clothes she buys me after that we go grocery shopping I'm dead tired by the time we get home so I go straight to my room and take a nap.

Nomcebo is home when I wake up I'm so excited seeing her, she looks so different from the last time

I saw her she even looks way older than she does.
I'm loving the weave she's has on and her make up
is on fleek she just look beautiful

“Qhamu I'm so jealous of you right now, don't you
gain weight like the rest of us” she says hugging me

Is she mocking me or what, she's slim as well
maybe just a size if not two above mine but she
looks hot

“Oh come on Nomcebo you don't have any fat in
your bones” I say chuckling

“No look at you, can we please exchange bodies”

I laugh at her.

I'm loving her already, shes so different to the
young self centered Nomcebo I know, I guess
growing up has changed her, she no longer makes

remarks about how rich her mother is she's free spirited and fun to be around now.

supper is served by a chef, so the rich have chefs huh I thought it was only in tv's.

Im so used eating pap so these salads are not filling at all so I end up making a sandwich I can't sleep on a hungry stomach

My aunt refuses when I offer to wash dishes and says there's a domestic worker whose going to do all that.

Isn't this heaven?

So all that I have to do is wake up and everything will be done for me, I'm going to love it here.

Nomcebo and I make plans to go out tomorrow, she says my hair makes me look like I'm twelve so she's getting me a weave, you should see me jumping up and down with joy.

I'm still smiling when I get to bed, this is actually the first time I spend the day without thinking about

Mnqobi I even sleep happily instead of crying like I've been doing these past few months.

I'm loving Durban.

MNQOBI

“The number you have dialed is not available” the white woman say

I laugh and hang up.

I've been trying to call Qhamu for the past three weeks and that all that I get, I've tried moving on but i haven't been succeeding, I just miss her so much.

I hope she is as miserable as I am, yes I'm that selfish I don't want her to be happy without me, I want her to feel this emptiness I'm feeling too, I hope she cries every night before she sleeps like I've been doing. I want to hate her but my heart

won't let me. I stoped myself from going to her school so many times I don't want to see her that will hurt me even more.

“Still miserable” Mncedisi says sitting next to me but I ignore him

“Come on Ndoda you need to snap out of it now, we going out later on don't you want to join us” I haven't been out in three months maybe this is what I need

“Sure where to”

“We thinking chisa nyana but we'll see later on” he says and pat my shoulder and walks out

I try calling her again but it takes me to voicemail

just like the hundred times before.

Fuck, Qhamu is gone Mngqobi you need to move on I shout at myself inwardly I seriously need to move one

I go to my room and clean and after that I take a long bath and shave my stubble I've been living like a hobo for far too long

By the time I finish it's after six pm, I'm wearing my mandela shirt I know Qhamu thinks they are ridiculous but I love them, I pair it up with a pair of black jeans and sneakers.

I'm looking like my old self when I look in the mirror

"Mngqobi the player is back" I tell my reflection on the mirror

Mncedisi and Zwelethu waltz into my room as I spray my cologne

"Haibo, my boy has snapped out of his pity party" Zwelethu says dancing

I ignore that remark and brush my hair

“Let’s go boys, Mngqobi has a bird to catch tonight” I say walking out

They are happily whistling and patting my shoulder saying the feel sorry for whoever I’ll come home with tonight and hell yes I need some pussy tonight I’ve sexual deprived myself for far too long.

We get to the chisa nyama after seven, it’s not packed as yet there’s just a few guys hanging around with their ladies. I don’t drink at all, don’t ask why I just hate alcohol.

I just smoke but I enjoy the rowdiness of the chisa nyama.

It’s gets full after nine, the music is pumping and ladies are dancing the night away.

It’s festive so everyone has come out to play, I’ve noticed a thick yellow bone has been looking at me so I walk to her and introduce myself

She's blushing flapping her fake eyelashes at me, that's a turn off but I need to get laid so I'm forced to entertain her

"I'm Nelisiwe" she introduces herself

"And I'm Mnqobi" this should be easy she smiling at me like a retard

"How about we get out here" why waste time

She refuses at first, playing hard to get I know the game so I play along until she relents and we leave Zwelethu is angry cause I took the car keys but he understands

Nelisiwe is telling me about her matric banquet as we drive home, I'm not listen to her all that I'm thinking about is feeling my dick inside her.

Manqoba is standing with Nokhaya at the gate when I get home, I don't bother asking what's going

on between them so I pass after greeting, they've gotten really close these past few months I wonder what's up.

My mother is not home tonight, she now works at a hospital in town so she's working night shift so Nelisiwe and I go into my room freely.

The chivalrous in me is gone so I undress her the moment we get in, her body feels soft and she's meaty just how I like my ladies to be.

I'm too hungry for her so I skip the for-play and get on with it.

She's screaming scratching my back as I pound hard on her, it doesn't take me long until I release, she's left panting when I'm done, I remove the condom and lay on my back.

Quilt comes rushing like a banshee Qhamu fills my thoughts, I loath what I just did and it feels like I've cheated to her

Mnqobi you two broke up, you no longer with her I remind myself but that doesn't do the trick

“Wanna go another round” Nelisiwe says jolting me out of my thoughts

“Yeah sure”

She’s slowly takes Mapholoba into her mouth and does her thing, I’m breathing heavily with each stroke, she’s talented I’ll tell you that.

“Ah fuck” I moan as she continue to slide it in and out of her mouth

I want to be inside her right now

After sliding the condom down my length she climbs on top of me

“Fuck”

she slowly slides it in and humps slowly

I’m loving how flexible she is, her pussy feels so hot

I'm loving every minute of it

"Ah Qhamu" I moan

She's so good

Fuck why is she stopping now

I'm forced to open my eyes to look at her

"And then" I'm running out of patience I was so close

she looks down with eyes full of tears

What have I done now?

"Yin" I half shout

Blue balls ain't no fun and I've been dying from lack of sex so my patience is running low.

I still need to fuck, I want to fuck hard maybe that will help me forget about Qhamu.

“What is it now” like I said the chivalry in me left when Qhamu left so my tone is not so gentlemanly

“You called me Qhamu, I’m Nelisiwe” she says and jump off the bed

I don’t owe her any explanations so I let her get dressed, she’s pissed off but I’m more pissed off that Qhamu has managed to ruin this moment for me

“Let me take you home” that’s the least I can do

“I’ll find my way home” she says and bangs the door

Ok... that happened.

I actually laugh at myself before cleaning up.

Did I seriously call her Qhamu?

I take out my phone to dial Qhamu's number, it's voicemail again so I do what I do which is to listen to her voice until it beeps for me to record my message that's where I hang up.

I have one picture of her where she's looking out the window in my car, she was angry as something I said I don't even remember what happened that day but I just love the picture, it's the only picture I didn't delete when I deleted the rest of her pictures.

Moving on seems so hard when you still in love.

I smile looking at the picture one last time before I sleep.

[06/20, 18:12] Lynne: (Continues)

The following weekend

QHAMUKILE

Nomcebo is such a lot of work, I'm so tired from

running around town all day shopping I just need of a good bath and that comfortable bed but I guess that won't be happening any time soon because we are at some restaurant with three of her friends who introduced themselves as Nandipha, Matshidiso and Liyana, they are so beautiful I feel very small surrounded by all these beautiful ladies. They are Nomcebo's age which is twenty two but they look older too it must be the weaves and thick make up they have on too.

Nomcebo took me to some salon earlier so I got my afro relaxed, my hair is longer so I'm loving it.

It's the sixteenth of December today so it's quite a busy day for everyone even Nomcebo has plans for later I'm not sure where she's going but she mentioned something about a chillas at the beach, speaking of the beach, it's amazing, I just love how the sand feels underneath my feet I don't know how to swim so I never go beyond the shallow of the sea but I love it.

I got to wear my swim suit and they all looked fabulous on me if I can say so myself, I've taken so

many pictures, for memories. If only Thobile was here to share all this with me.

“So Que will you be joining us later” Matshidiso cant deal with clique of my name so she has resorted to calling me Que

That was my thing with Tee but i let her because I don't want to sound like a bitch.

“Nah I don't think so, I just need a bed I'm so tired” I declined

“Oh come one, you'll have one hot story to share with your friends when you get to your rural area, it will be fun” Nomcebo has been begging me the whole day

They all annoy me until I give in and agree, I'm not going to drink though I'm planning to stay for a couple of minutes, thirty to be precise then I'll go

back home.

They converse until we leave which is around seven in the evening, it's already dark when we get home the party we going to starts at nine so we have plenty of time to get ready.

“I'm going to take a nap, please wake me up after an hour so I can get ready” I tell Nomcebo who is looking for an outfit

“Hey what nap, we have just under two hours to get ready”

“That's plenty of time Nom...or not”

Yoh then look she gives me is enough to make me forget about my nap

“Don't bore me please, go take a bath we need to get ready”

I actually roll my eyes at her, she's such a drama queen

two hours is more than enough time to get ready

Urg I go take a bath, she's not done by the time I finish dressing up. I'm wearing a blue jean, gold sandals and a white t-shirt and I've combed my hair back, I look different with relaxed hair. Im so used to my afro that I feel like this hairstyle doesn't suite me I guess I just need to get used to it I don't know what changed because i was loving it earlier on.

I guess I just need to get used to the change

Im long done when Nomcebo waltz in with a towel wrapped around her body and a make up bag in her hands

Tell me this is a joke.

“Ah Nomcebo, you not even dressed” I say frustrated

“I was still soaking in the bath and wena, you

speaking as if you done. What are you wearing to the party anyway”

Haibo what’s wrong with this girl

“This”

You should see her face

“No no no you not going anywhere with me looking like that, we going to a party not a tuck shop around the corner”

I’m offended but I mask it with laughter

“What do you mean, I look nice” I say chuckling

She really messed up with my confidence there

“If you were going to a park maybe but not where we are going. Follow me I have a perfect dress for you”

I follow behind like a lost puppy.

She hands me a black short, I mean really short dress, I can't wear this

“Hai hai Nomcebo I'm not wearing this, it's too short”

“Don't bore me please besides you have a body for it and we need to do something about that hair it's makes you look younger than you are and believe me no bouncer will let you in looking like that”

She says and throws me a weave

I'm excited that I'm finally going to wear a weave.

I look nothing younger than twenty when she's done baking my face with make up. I even look different.

I'm wearing that short dress with a pair of heels, I look very hot.

She's wearing a short leather skirt and a crop top with gladiator high heel sandal, she looks beautiful

her outfit is just to die for plus I'm loving the tattoo she has on her lower back.

She request an Uber and we off.

Her friends are already waiting when we to get Cubana, I thought they said we going to the beach i must've heard wrong

The friends are chilling with about five more guys and the table is filled with drinks

"I'll have a comso, what are you having Que"

Nomcebo

I don't know these drinks so I opt for coke

"Ag I forget you can be such a party pooper at times, Mongezi she'll have what

I'm having" she tells a guy next to her I guess he's Mongezi seeing that we haven't been properly introduced.

The Mongezi guy comes back with two classes of

colorful drinks, at least its juice.

It's not so bad and I'm enjoying it, it taste a bit funny though but I'm not complaining.

A guy whose been with us comes next to me and introduces himself as Lungelo, he's originally from Madadeni and he is in his final year of varsity. I tell him more about myself too but lie and say I'm in college, he already thinks I'm in varsity so why tell him the truth.

He's so different from Mnqobi, he's the type that mixes Zulu and English when he speaks, he's so eloquently spoken though he's a little bit arrogant he argues that he's confident, besides that he's a cool guy, conversation is following that we end us exchanging numbers.

The more drink I drink the more I start to feel funny as the night progress, I'm feeling a little dizzy and my knees feel wanly I'm not sure why cause I've been drinking juice.

Nomcebo has left with Mongezi, not sure where

they went to but I want to go home now, and the fact that my eyes are getting drowsy only makes me feel worse guess.

Instead of seating and waiting I agree when Lungelo suggest we dance.

The music is loud so adrenaline rushes through my body that I'm swaying my hips in no time. Lungelo is behind me rubbing his body against mine I don't know why I'm uncomfortable it's not like the guy will do something we in public after all.

His hands move to my hips and we both dance, I didn't know I'm such a good dancer.

I'm feeling hot when the dj changes into a new song and the dance floor is full too. I signal for Lungelo to go outside with me.

"It's so hot in there" I tell him once we outside, I just need air

He gives a bottle of water, he's such a gentleman

right.

“I think I’m ready to go home, can you call Nomcebo for me” I left my phone at home

“Why you leaving so soon, the night is still young”
he say laughing

“I’m not feeling so well and I don’t know why cause I’ve been drinking juice all night” I think I’m going to vomit

“J uice” he chuckles a bit

“You’ve been drinking cocktails”

I laugh with him when he laughs, I can’t believe it I thought I was drinking juice no wonder it tasted funny.

“You’re fun to be around”

“You not bad yourself”

He half laughs and get close to me

“I’d love to see you again” he says softly

“You have my number”

He nods and bite on his lower lip, I hate it when guys do that, it’s not charming at all but he looks so good doing it

I think I like him

“Can I kiss you” what a gentleman

Mngobi just ordered me to kiss him

I nod anyway and he brings his lips close to mine and we lock lips.

He kisses differently to Mngobi and he doesn’t smell any mint or nicotine but I continue kissing

him anyway.

His lips are not lush, urg let me stop comparing him to Mngobi.

He's not Mngobi.

We kiss for a while that I start to enjoy it, all that I had to do was forget about Mngobi. He nibbles on my lower lip that I moan against his lips

“Mmmmh”

A rough hand pulls me away from the kiss

Who the hell...

“What the....”

I sober up immediately

FUCK..

I'm dead...

What's he doing here?

“Mngobi” I say softly

“What the hell are you doing here Qhamukile” he’s trying to control his anger but failing

“I...i...”

“Bra, she’s with me” Lungelo says in his eloquent tone

Mnqobi hates snobs so that just ticks him off even more

I can see his frown lines forming in his forehead

“Hey wena I’m not you bra”

Mnqobi is already pushing Lungelo

Lungelo pushes him back and chaos erupts, it takes just a second before I see fists flying, Mnqobi is just a hot head I’m screaming for him to stop punching Lungelo but he’s too fired up so he’s throwing punch after punch.

Three guys that are on the side of the road run to us

and two of them restrains Mngobi while one is holding Lungelo back

I don't know why I'm crying but I am.

The two guys let go of Mngobi once he's calm down

“Wena follow me” he says pointing at me

I'm in deep shit

I follow running behind him, these heels are killing me but I've got no choice

“Is this how you behave now huh” he's fuming

How did he know I was here anyway

“Incase you forgot you're my girlfriend and My girlfriend would never behaves like you did” he says and bangs my door

Mngobi is angry but he still opens the door for me I'd find it sweet if he wasn't this livid

“What’s that in you head, remove it before I cut it off your head”

I remove the weave as quick as lightning

I’m so scared right now

“What the hell is that on you face huh. Usucobisa udaka manje wena”

Mud? The disrespect

Nomcebo would be so hurt would she hear this, imagine her expensive make up called mud.

I don’t dare say anything cause I can’t exactly remove my make up now.

He’s speeding, I’m just afraid that he might cause an accident

I’m even getting nauseous from the speed

“Mngobi slow down” he just speed through a red

robot

“Please Mngobi” he glance at me once and look ahead on the road without slowing down

I can feel vomit coming up from the pit of my stomach

“Mngobi I’m going to vomit” I think I threw up in my mouth

He stops and I quickly open the door and vomit right there.

It feels like I’m vomiting my intestines out

He’s just looking at me with disgust as I vomit

“It serves you right” he says angrily but hands me a bottle of water once I’m done, I rinse my mouth and close the door.

At least that got him to decrease the speed.

I'm hungry but dare not say it I'm just crying silently
as he drive

We get to Mats heni after midnight, it literally took
him thirty minutes to get here.

The wind feels cold against my bare skin but I
guess I'm in no liberty to complain so I follow him
inside

He's still angry.

He throws me a t-shirt once we get in his room, can
you believe he swatches off the light and gets into
bed while I'm still standing in the middle to the room.

"Hey switch off that light, I want to sleep in peace"
he says when I switch it back on

God help me.

I manage to change into the t-shirt in the dark and
get next to him

"I don't want to see those paints on your face when

I wake up”

J esus....

I’m forced to wake up again and wash my face in the dark

Mnqobi is something, I don’t even know why he’s behaving like this, him and I broke up right?

I get back to back once I’m done

“You reek of alcohol” he says and turns to face the other direction.

To be continued

I tried to fulfill my promise

[06/20, 18:12] Lynne: (Continues)

MNQOBI

I was so furious yesterday, in fact I'm still angry at her for being so irresponsible, She's been in Durban for two minutes and she's already drinking and partying, yes I don't even want to imagine what could have happened had I not showed up when I did.

I'm a guy and I know what goes through guys minds when they see a drunk girl, nca uyang'casula uQhamukile, my anger is building up again as i imagine the possibilities of what could've happened, that guy could be a serial killer for all I know, and she has the decency to kiss him, just imagine in public nje busy exchanging tongues "nca" this time I actually do click my tongue out loud. Qhamu is irresponsible man but seeing her beautiful face and feeling her body so close to mine calms me down, the beauty she possesses becomes my weakness.

Her eyes brows are curved really beautifully she

doesn't need to do anything to them, I want to kiss her pouted lips so much but I'm afraid that will wake her, she's so cute snoring.

I don't know if I'm crazy or what but her soft snores sounds like music to me.

Shaking my head....

i think I'm losing it now, who finds snoring cute?

She's snuggling so close to me as if I'm going to leave her and loving every minute of it, her skin feels so hot against my own skin, I've never felt anything like for anyone not even Nokhaya.

Qhamu just makes me fall in love with her without even trying, she's just so easy to love.

The t-shirt I gave her last night is loose on her so it has rolled up exposing her nipple.

Breath in and out Mngqobi.....

I close my eyes to stop myself from touching, I'm imagining the things I can do to her right now. I want to touch so badly but I refrain myself, her

breast look so perfect i miss touching them I know how perfectly they fit into my hands it's like they were made for my hands.

Self control Mngobi, self control

I open my eyes to look at her round perfect boob again, HELL this sight alone gets Mapholopha hard, he's twitching as I continue to stare at her perfect circle of her dark areola.

What is Qhamu doing to me.

I'm not proud to say this but I have been stalking her for a while now, like I said not my proudest moments, love will make you do crazy things I'm telling you but I'm also glad that I did, anyway when her cousin tagged her on a picture they took together on Facebook, they were at a beach I think but I went berserk so flew to Durban, it took me just thirty minutes to get there thats how fast I was driving but when I got there they were gone, you can imagine my relief when Nomcebo tagged her again when they where at that club, urg I don't even want

to mention what happened from there, my high blood pressure rises from just the thought of it.

Qhamu moans softly and stretches her body I think she's about to wake up so I close my eyes and pretend to be asleep.

QHAMUKILE

I can feel his eyes on me but I'm afraid to open my eyes just in case he's still angry. My eyes are closed but I feel his smile I want to smiles too but I stop myself.

I'm so glad he came, it was not my plan to kiss Lungelo but I just wanted to forget about Mngqobi and I thought maybe if I kiss someone else then I'll forget

Crazy as that may sound I believe it

I open my eyes to look at him, urg he's asleep, my sixth sense threw me off the radar there I really felt him looking at me. He looks so cute sleeping, his nose flares when he breathes out, I wonder how did he find me.

I've got a headache from all the crying I did last night and a hangover from the alcohol, see me drink alcohol kill me.

He pulls me closer to him when I attempt to jump off the bed and he opens his eyes and gives me his dimple smiles.

God I love him.

He's giving me that smile that's only reserved for me, the one that Ive missed, the one that I love so much and his eyes are glistening with love. Tell me how do I not fall in love with Mngobi when he is so perfect?

How do i unloved him when I've fallen so deeply in

love with him.

“Baby” I greet and he continues to smile at me

I thought he’d be angry from the events of last night so I’m a little surprised when I see him smiling at me like this

I missed him so much, I lay back of his chest and listen to his heartbeat.

“I’m sorry” I tell him

“Shhh” he says and kisses my temple

“You here now” he says and pulls me closer to him

His chest feels warm so I end up taking a nap

I wake up to him looking at me fondly, I don’t know how long did I nap for but I feel better than I did before, the headache is gone but I still smell of

alcohol

“Hey” he says and plants a soft kiss on my lips

I guess he doesn't care about my morning breath

“Hi” I say against his lips

His lips taste minty

Today marks yet the best day of my life, I feel safer in his arms, I know he loves me and I him but I know this moment won't last forever so instead of talking about the future and the what if's I kiss him.

The kiss is sultry and his lips feel cold and wet against my own lips. I just want this moment to last eternally but I know that's not going to happen, not when both our families are fighting like they are.

Regardless of how much I kiss him the fear of us being apart is lingering in the back of my mind but right now, right this moment I want nothing but to feel his love.

No one matters right now, not my family not his his family it's just us communicating through our bodies

I'm touching every part of his body and he's also running his hands all over my body.

Have I told you I love him?

We kiss each other hungrily I think somehow we both know this is the last time we together like this, we both know what's on our hearts.

Im trailing my hands on his bare back I just want to feel his warm body close to mine.

“Qhamu”

I shut him up with a deep kiss I don't want to talk I feel it talking will take away this moment

he's hesitant at first to reciprocate but he senses the emotions I'm pouring out through this kiss so he kiss me just as deep.

Im holding on to him for dear life I'm just loving how warm he feels against me.

We kiss for what feels like forever before he breaks the kiss

“Baby I can't continue”

I know why

He's member is rigid and poking me but I don't care about that In fact that's what I want I want to feel all of him

"Please" i say and kiss him

He's weak so he kisses me back.

My region area starts to twitch as he continues to suck on my lower lip I'm loving how his breath smell a hint of nicotine and mint.

His hand travels inside the t-shirt I'm wearing and he plays with my nipples, they are sensitive so I get that pain and pleasure feeling when he takes my nipples

In-between his fingers and tug at it

"Mnqobi" I moan his name

He leaves my mouth to kiss me on my neck I don't know when did he get on top of me but he has one

hand on the back of my neck and the other playing with my breast

He so slow in removing the shirt I'm wearing so I help him

"Mmmmh" he hums when he sees my bare chest

He takes one boob into his mouth and sucks on it, I can't explain how I'm feeling but my body is hot and I just want him to touch me all over my body

He leaves my breast to give me a wet kiss on my lip I'm still enjoying the kiss when he pulls back and bite on my nipple softly

God

"Babe" I moan again as he leaves a trail of wet kisses down my neck, my chest, my stomach until he reaches my groin area and he kisses my lady parts I can feel my panties getting moist just by feeling his hot breath against my groin

"Mnqobi" I say softly

God I'm loving this....

"Mmmmh" that vibrating sensation hits my clit

instantly and it's start to twitch

“Please”

I don't know what am I asking for but I continue to beg for it

“Please” I say again

“Please what” he's smiling against my v bone

“Please Mngobi” I pull him up to kiss me

“We need to stop Qhamu”

Stop? Please no...

“No... please I'm ready” I tell him softly

“You not Qhamu” he says and kisses me

I know what my body wants and that is to fully give myself to him.

If he doesn't believe me then I'll show him

I kiss him deep and go down to remove his underwear, he doesn't protest when I push it down is legs

I don't want to look at his penis because I'm afraid
I'll change my mind should I see the size I just want
to feel it so I grab onto it softly

It's feels perfect.

"Qhamu no baby please" I can see he's trying to
fight it but he's too in too deep to hold back so I
used that to my advantage and stroke his length
slowly.

I'm seriously amazed by my confidence, I thought
I'd be scared to even touch it but here playing it like
flute

God forgive me.....

I don't know when did I manage to remove my panty
but I'm now naked underneath him so I slightly
open my legs to let him in

"Are you sure"

I nod

"I want to here you say it"

“I’m sure” I say and kiss him

His shaft is hard and it’s just in the entrance of my lady part but he is not pushing in

“Baby please” I can’t believe I’m the one begging for this

He pushes in slowly causing me to jump

It’s painful

“You not ready” he says against my ear but I hold on to him and tell him not to stop

I feel pain again when he pushes in and out slowly, it’s bearable pain and I’m moaning as he continues to push in

“Damm” he says once he is fully in.

The pain I’m feeling is nothing compared to what I’m feeling inside I’m blowing up with emotions I just want this moment to last forever

He starts to move in and out of me, the pain is there

but i ignore it and focus on the pleasure and soon
the pain fades as he moves in and out of me slowly

That being done a couple of time I start to enjoy and
I hold onto him tight

“Mnqobi” I moan

I’m filling up with emotions, I’m going to cry I just
want to be one with him.

It feels like my soul is bare and I’m giving him all
that I am

I fail to suppress my tears so they just fall freely.

I’m and out, in and out he goes, I’m holding on to his
bum as he thrust

I’m just loving how slow his movements are, I can
feel his breathe as it hit my shoulder

Can this moment to last forever.

His thrusts are not labored at all, he’s slowly digging
me up I can’t help cry silently, I’m not crying
because its painful in fact I’m enjoying it but I’m
crying because it feels like a goodbye.

I know it's a goodbye.

He holds on tightly to me when he notices that I'm crying but he doesn't stop instead he pounds on me harder

I can feel that electrifying feeling ensue from my core and I moan, he's also groaning I'm sure he's feeling what I'm feeling

I lament softly as that feeling rapture through my body and I'm left shaking

Mngobi groans louder too when an orgasm hits him hard and he follow pursuit and comes.

We both panting trying to steady our breathing, he's still on top of me and I'm still holding on to him when those emotions comes back and I cry again.

He holds me closer to his chest and lets me cry, I think he's also crying because I can feel his shoulders moving

"I love you" he says kissing my hair

I'm still crying so I can't tell him how much I love

him but I know he knows just how much I love him.

“I love you too much” he says again

This is it, this is the end of me and Mngqobi I can feel it and my heart knows it

“And that's why it's breaks my heart to say this” he pauses and draws a long breath

“we can't be together” his voice is breaking as he says this

“I'm tired of fighting baby” can he say it already

“Wits accepted me, I'm leaving to joburg” he finally say and I cry more

I know what he means, I'm tired of fighting too.

I quickly wipe my tears and look at him

“I know” I tell him with glassy eyes

“I wish you all the best” I say and kiss him softly

This is goodbye.

My heart knows it.

This is the end.

[06/20, 18:12] Lynne: Chapter nineteen

To moving on.

QHAMUKILE

Three moths later.....

You know that saying when life gives you lemons make lemonade? Well my lemonade has been bitter sweet to say the least I'm actually looking at my reflection in the mirror and hating everything I see, I look nothing like myself, I'm looking at someone I've never seen before I look very sick, my lips are dry, my eyes are red and puffy, my cheek bones are out due to all the weight I've lost.

I lost myself to the pain of losing Mngqobi that I've sank deeply into this dark hole and I don't know how to climb back up to the light.

I just hate how my eyes don't light up anymore, my skin is so dull that I don't even recognize myself that's why I've decided to snap out of this little self pity party I've been in, I'm seventeen for God's sake.... yes, you had right, my birthday was on the eighth of Jan but because then I was still sulking over Mngqobi I didn't celebrate it besides Tee is not here to celebrate it with me, don't even think of my brothers those once's don't even wish me a happy birthday they just suck at these things I guess anyway I'm done crying over Mngqobi, I'm letting him go today.

I'm finally moving on.

These past three months have been long and hard, I spend everyday doing nothing but crying all day and night.

My brothers are all worried about me and I hate how I'm hurting them but I'm done now, I've hurt them

for far too long.

Saying goodbye to someone you love wholeheartedly is saddening and heart breaking even more so when that choice is forced upon you but I guess it's all good and well at the end

I quickly wipe my tears and smile at my reflection. I'm moving on, it's time.

I'm turning a new leaf

I look at Gatsha's shaving machine that's besides my dressing table, this is it, this is me moving on.

I'm crying as my hair falls to the ground but this time I'm not crying because Mngobi and I are over, I'm crying because I'm happy that I finally have the courage to move on, every hair represents the love I have for Mngobi and it's all coming down, I'd miss my afro if I still had it but now that I've relaxed my hair I'm not going to miss anything.

My head looks very small when I'm done shaving all my hair, this is a new me.

I smile at myself one last time before walking out of

my bedroom.

“What happened to your hair” Gcina is the first one to notice my new hair-do

They are all seated around the table having breakfast

“I shaved my hair” I say joyfully and sit next to him with a plate full of food

I need to gain my weight back and what better way to do that than to stuff myself with bread and lots of eggs

They all look so shocked seeing me this hippy and out of my misery but I think my bald head is more shocking than anything else

“Ntonto” Mondli is half smiling

Well dear brother I’m back, I feel like singing and dancing right now

“Bhuti wam whom I love so much” I love my brothers and I hate how I’ve been worrying them these past few months

“Are you good” Nqaba asks looking all confused

“Never been better” I say and stand to give them all kisses on the cheeks

They are all shocked by my sudden affection, it’s not everyday that I kiss any of them so I’m not shocked by their response

“I love you all so much” I say and go back to my seat

“Oh...whats happening” Gatsha was sure I’m in the verge of committing suicide

“It’s a new day bhuti, the sun is shining, the birds are chipping and I’m happy to be alive” I tell him

Misuzulu is not bothered by my sudden happy mood but he joins the rest of them when they shake their heads and go back to eating.

I’m finally moving on I tell my self inwardly and dig in.

It’s Saturday morning so as per the Buthelezi ritual we are all seated around the table and having breakfast together, I understand that during the week it gets busy and we don’t have time to catch up Misuzulu and Gatscha have to work, Mondli has college to attend and Nqaba and Gcina have some hustling to do and I school so you can understand but ever Saturday morning we do this, I’m sure my father is smiling at us wherever he is, all his kids have made it this far and we still practice the teaching he has bestowed in us.

After breakfast I quickly wash the dishes with the help of Nqaba.

I'm shocked. Nqaba wash dishes?

I guess it's true when they say there's a first time for everything.

My instinct tells me there's more I just hope he doesn't want to talk about Mnqobi. He keeps looking at me inquisitively as he wipes the plates, hey Nqaba is too much for my soul.

"This new hairstyle suits you"

I run my hand on my bold head and smile at him

He's just being modest, i look like an ugly version of me i mean one would mistaken me for Gcina that's how boyish I look.

"What do you want bhuti"

He wants something so I'll save him the trouble to beating around the bush

"Hai can't a brother help without wanting anything"

I'd roll my eyes if he wasn't looking at me

I fix my eyes at him, I'm not buying it

“Ok, ok ke i just want to know if you're really over Mngobi”

Eye roll and Hey he finally acknowledged his name, he has been calling him boy

“Bhuti just know that I'm moving on, I'm tired of fighting with all of you over this so I just want to move on and be happy again”

I can't believe that I'm not even teary right now, I must be really moving on.

“Mmmm that good then” he says and throw the dish cloths on the table and walks out

Thought as much, he never helps with any house chores.

I finish the rest of the dishes singing and dancing to

no music.

.....

I'm actually meeting Nokhaya, she's been sweet to me these past few months, she has seriously changed from who she was. Her uncle is in prison, he deserves it shem, how can you rape your niece?

He's such a shame to all male species nca I hope he suffers in there.

Urg let me finish up getting ready before my high blood rises, I'm forced to wearing dresses because none of my jeans fit, I've lost an enormous amount of weight so nope, no jeans for me until I gain the weight back.

Nokhaya is already waiting for me when I get to the shopping center, she looks beautiful in her blue jeans and yellow t-shirt, it blend well with her skin tone.

“Hi” I greet

“Mgani that hairstyle looks so good on you”

Mgani?

That’s a first, I guess I’ve been upgraded to a friend now.

Now I feel so bad for sleeping with Mngqobi while they are together.

“Thanks, I thought I should start over you know”

Her: I totally understand.

We spend the whole day at the movies and we ended up having lunch at spur, I don’t know where does she get the money from but she’s loaded i tell you.

“So how is Lungelo”

I totally forgot that I even told her about him, don’t

you dare judge me. I had to lie and tell her I'm dating him, she just wouldn't stop blabbing about Mngobi so I just to tell her I have a boyfriend.

“He's good hey, he'll come this side during the Easter holidays” that's in a months time so I have to cook up a lie when that times comes.

“I can't believe you dating such a hottie, I so can't wait to meet him”

I just showed her a picture of some hot guy from the internet, how desperate am I though?

After the lunch date we part ways. You know I haven't spoken to Lungelo since that incident that happened in December, imagine Nomcebo left me to shag with Mongezi... shaking my head.... like who does me that but I'm not one to judge I slept with someone who was not even my boyfriend that nights.

I take out my phone and scrawl until I get to the the name of the person I'm calling

It rings a couple of times before he answers in his forever eloquent voice

“Hello” I remain silent

“Hello Qhamu”

Fuck he still has my number

“Lungelo” I say softly

“I'm so sorry about what happened that day”

Imagine I apologize after three full months

“I called”

He called multiple times but could not find the courage to answer not after what Mnqobi did to him

“I know and I'm sorry” we both remain quiet for

some time

“So how have you been” I ask when the silence get too uncomfortable

Only Mnqobi can remain silent but never get uncomfortable

“Good, good and you”

“I’m good too” that awkward silence again

“Look Qhamu I’m glad you safe I was so worried about you that day”

I can understand Mnqobi was so furious

Urg why am i mention his name?

“Thank you” that’s all I say

“I’d like to see you again, look I’m not going to beat around the bush I like you and couldn’t stop thinking about you from the day I first saw you. How about we meet huh. I’ll be in PMB in two weeks time and I’d love to see you”

I’m not sure if that a great idea especially because I’ve just let go of Mngqobi but I agree anyway, what harm would that do?

I’ll just be seeing him and that’s all right?

NOKHAYA

I’m so sad that Mngqobi is leaving to joburg especially because we’ve grown so close after he officially broke up with Qhamukile.

Eye roll...

that girl thinks the world revolves around her, she

was mopping all these months because of Mnqobi, I know this because Mnqobi have been doing the same thing too and today she shows up looking all smiley yoh and that bald head It actually took all the power in me to restrain myself from laughing, she looks like a boy nje.

I've been making advances at Mnqobi but he's too fixated at this break up that he doesn't even notice me.

I'm actually with him right now helping him to pack, I still can't believe he chose a university miles and miles away but again it's for the best, he won't ever see Qhamukile again.

Speaking of which

"I saw Qhamu today you know" his face lights up just by mentioning her name

Lord help me.

"Oh where" he's trying to down play it but I can tell

he's excited

Well let me break his little heart

“In town, she looked so happy with her boyfriend, hey kodwa she needs to stop kissing him in public there were old people looking you know” I look at him from the corner of my eyes

His nose is flaring and he has those frown lines on his forehead, he's angry.

“I see” he's trying to control his anger

“They looked so good together shem and he looks like he has money yaz, I never thought she could be someone thats after money besides she's still so young to be dating guys that old”

“Mmmh”

“Anyway I’m glad you too are over imagine nje ukuthi what sexual transmitted disease does that guy have and she was going to infect you too”

I think I went to far because he turns around to look at me with fury

I messed up

“Nokhaya I don’t want to fucken hear about Qhamukile and her boyfriend ok, what are you even doing here anyway I told you I know how to pack my bags. J ust leave I’ll do it myself maan yaz I’m so glad I’m leaving all this life behind me”

I stand still, I want to calm him down and maybe just maybe I’ll give myself to him and he will agree to us dating

“What are still doing here I said leave” he’s serious furious

“Mnqobi haibo I didn’t do anything mina, I’m not the one who said Qhamukile should date so please don’t take out your frustration at me” I’m already teary

“And I’ve done nothing but be there for you and this is how you thank me, wow Mnqobi just wow, so much for being a friend”

I say crying

He’s just looking at me not saying anything so I turn to leave

Inside in praying he pulls me back

“Eish Nokhaya look im sorry ok, let’s just not talk about her”

That’s good enough apology for me turn around

I’m sniffing and wiping my crocodile tears with the back of my hand

“I get it but you’ve been mean to me Mngqobi and I’ve done nothing but love you”

He comes and hugs me tightly, just what I wanted.

“Shhh I’m sorry I know you’ve been here and I’ve been an arse to you please forgive”

I nod and look at him

Our faces are so close to each other so I close my eyes before leaning in to kiss him

I’m surprised when his lips don’t meet mine so I open my eyes to him looking at me

“Nokhaya I’m sorry but I told you this ain’t happening, you and I are nothing more than friends, I don’t want to hurt you more than I already have please understand” he says and walks to pack the rest of his clothes

I’m so hurt that real tears find my cheeks I guess

Mnqobi will never love me even after all I've done for him. I walk out of his room with a tail in between my legs I'm so ashamed and embarrassed.

Manqoba is in his room so instead of going home I go in and cry in his arms.

[06/20, 18:13] Lynne: continues

MNQOBI

“Welcome to Johannesburg young blood” Langa says patting my shoulder

he's too exuberant.

I've just arrived from PMB and I must say I'm going to love Jo'burg, It's vibrant and so full of life unlike the small location I come from in PMB but as you know home is home so I'm going to miss Matsheni and it's annoying people that I love so much I'm not even going to mention how I'm going to miss my brother's rowdiness and controlling ways but I

guess we all have to grow up at some point besides time flies so in no time I'll be back home.

Just seven years right...

I know seven years sounds like a long time but it will be over before I know it and I'll be going back home. I'm just here to get my doctorate and I'll be going back to KZN, that's my home, that's where my heart is, kula inkaba yam yafihlelwa khona.

It's my home.

My roots.

I've always wanted to be a neurosurgeon for as long as I can remember, there's just something about neuroscience that has always fascinated me so here I am, about to take the first step in being the neurosurgeon that I've always wanted to be.

The woman who holds my heart startles me when she says:

“oh boy-boy, you have grown so much”

my mother has been emotional ever since she learnt that I've chosen to study here instead of Durban, it breaks my heart seeing her so teary but what can I say

She will just have to be strong...

she insisted on coming, she could not stay behind not when her boy-boy is coming to stay on his own, like I said before she treats me like I'm the same age as Sma.

She called me boy-boy again

“ma please what if...”

“oh relax no one heard me” if I didn't know her I'd say she's rolling her eyes and when will she stop with this boy-boy thing its annoying and not only that but come on I'm an eighteen-year tall man, I'm not longer a boy.

she should be calling Sma that not me.

“this is it huh” Makhosini says looking around the room and we all stop talking to look around

It feels so surreal

The apartment is small ... No, let me rather say intimate but I'm not sharing so that's good and its fully furnished so that's a plus.

The apartment is situated in the heart of

Johannesburg, South point in braamfontein.

remember I once told you not only am I street smart but I'm academically gifted too so the nine distinctions I got managed to secure a bursary that covers everything including spending money, hard work pays guys I can attest to it.

“yes this is it” I say too and look around for the last time

this is it indeed.

“you're now a man my boy, I want you to take care of yourself and please Mngobiwes is we no babies,

stay focused on the reason you came here. I trust that you can take care of yourself” she sniffs

here I comes the tears

saying goodbye is always hard I still can't believe I'm here on my own, away from my other half Manqoba. Saying goodbye to him was the hardest thing I had to do, he's my brother and best friend and what makes it worse is that I've never been away from him this is the first time, he will actually be working this year, he already got himself a scholarship with one of the major bank in south Africa so he will be doing that until he is permanently employed I'm so happy for him I was worried about him but i guess he's good now.

“I love you boy-boy take care of yourself ne” my mother says and gives a kiss
this woman though, is she trying to embarrass me or what? I can
see Langa laughing silently as my mother continue

to give me thousands of kisses
I thank the all mighty we indoors.

“Oh boy-boy take care” Langa says mockingly

“yes, don’t disappoint us man” Makhosini says
impatiently

he’s in such a rush if it were up to him, they would
have left a long time ago.

He said he has stuff to take care of back home so
without wasting anymore of his time they leave
after long speeches of how I should not let girls shit
my focus and all that, I’m a little emotional seeing
them leave but I’m more excited about this journey
I’m about to partake in.
I’m going to miss them.

They left me with three thousand rands so my
pockets are loaded.

I need to get a few things but first thing is first I

need a smoke.

“sorry baba where do I find a store here” I ask the security guard

“I’m actually on my way to pick ‘n pay” some guy says in deep Swati before the guard response

“I’m Simphiwe”

I too introduce myself as we walk, by the time we get to pnp I’ve learnt that he’s originally from Swaziland, doing his second year in Accounting.

We have that little bit of communication barrier because he’s full on speaking Swati but I manage, I too tell him about where I come from and we talk about other things in between.

After getting the cigarettes he suggests to shows me around a bit and I'm happy with that.

We chilling with some of his friends who introduced themselves as Tumisang, Thulani and Eric when I get an update from my mother saying they are just three hours away, Makhosini must be driving really fast.

It's a little after seven in the evening when Simphiwe and come back.

He looks like a cool guy.

I'm in my room looking outside through the window seeing how beautiful this town is, I love all the tall buildings and the sound of the evening rush, I'm even looking the sound of taxi hooters.

“Well this Jo'burg. The City of gold” I say as I puff out the smoke through my nostrils

To meeting new people

To new memories

To new begins.

QHAMUKILE

It's just after midnight and I can hear my brothers talking outside so I quickly rush to the window and peep, it's dark but the little light coming from the front door light is bright enough to shine upon Misuzulu, Gatsha and Makh...wait that's Makhosini Ngcobo.

What's he doing here?

One thing I know my brothers hate the Ngcobo's with everything in them so why is bhuti Makhosini here, I know he helped during my kidnapping episode but I know they made a deal never to talk again which is why I'm so baffled by him being here

“Zithulele will never...” that’s all I hear Gatscha say before Makhosini signals him to lower his voice dammit marn Makhosini... And who is Zithulele? I just hope they are not planning on doing anything illegal

Langa joins them after some time, he’s panting it’s like he has been running.
OK something is definitely wrong, there’s two Ngcobo’s brothers standing on Buthelezi’s grounds, no, never, my eyes must be fooling me

“Nkanyezi tells me Zithulele is planning on attacking soon” Langa says angrily he is not low spoken so I can hear him.

“uyabona, I did say that he’s planning something, ey nawe Makhosini did you have to kill Qophelo though” Gatscha sounds irritated

“haibo in case you forgot he was helping you here”
Langa shouts angrily

“and whose fault was it” I think Gats ha and Langa
are close to beating each other up.

“you’re not going to blame Mnqobi here, she came
out of the house willingly”

don’t tell me this is about Mnqobi and I, we broke up
shouldn’t that make everyone happy.

“he better be gone forever because should I see I
him I promise to put a bullet between his eyes”

the hatred in Gats ha’s words is rife.

I guess these two families will hate each other till
kingdom comes.

Langa angrily rushed to Gatsha and punch him hard before Makhosini and Misuzulu can restrain them

“hai maan nina stop bickering like school girls and focus, let’s deal with Zithulele and we will kill each other after” Makhosini is not angry but he sounds stern as he reprimands Langa and Gatsha

“he is right, Zithulele wants us all dead so let’s deal with him before he can deal with us” I just love how calm my older brother is.

So they are still into illegal things and now they’ve involved the Ngcobo’s into this, I’m so confused its not even funny so let me get this right they still hate each other but they are working together?

That doesn’t make sense even to my own ears not only that why is this Zithelele guy after them?

I’m not sure what really happened that night they came to rescue me but by the look of things something big went down and now they are forced

to working together.

Now this I have to see.

“so what’s the plan” Langa is trying to control his anger but his voice gives it away, he hates every minute of this, he hates being around my brothers and it shows

“let’s get in here” Misuzulu says opening the door to his backroom and they all go in.

Alright that happened.

The Ngcobo’s and the Bythelezi’s in one room, like in one room?

now this I have never seen the world must be coming to an end sooner than I thought.

My mind is still wondering what the hell is going on but I have school tomorrow so I go back to bed and sleep.

It's so short it looked so long I'll post again in the day

[06/20, 18:13] Lynne: Chapter twenty

QHAMUKILE

The Ngcobo brothers have been coming and going for the past two weeks now, At first I thought it was nothing serious but I started dreaming those two old men again warning me about death, they don't specify whose death is it though but remember they are always speaking in riddles and not forgetting that they argue all the time so their messages comes across incoherent and vague all the time.

I don't understand why do they even bother coming to me because it's clear they don't know how to communicate and one thing you should know about me is that I don't take dreams and all things

spiritual serious but for some reason this worries me, I'm afraid of some close to me dying.

God please not any of my brothers, I've lost too many people in my life as it is, I can't afford to lose anymore.

It's after midnight and this is the time when these meetings starts. I peep through the curtain to check and nothing, they must be late today.

Nqaba and Zwelethu have recently joined the crew that's how serious these meetings are.

I don't mean to be noisy or to even eavesdrop on them but it really baffles me that these two families are now buddy-buddy after so many years of being enemies. I'm not convinced that they have suddenly put their their differences aside and are now working together, never, that would never happen. In the next life time maybe but definitely not in this one and let's not forget that those two men said death is nearing.

I huff frustrated and peep again but still nothing.

I'm actually chatting to Lungelo, he's coming to see me the following weekend and to be honest I don't know if I'm excited or what, I just have mixed feelings regarding this whole thing. I'm still healing from Mngobi so I don't want to complicate my life even further but he has been a gentleman.

He is twenty one years even though he looks a bit older, I like how well mannered he is.

I like him as a friend and nothing more.

I hear voices shouting from outside as I was about to respond to Lungelo's text so

I throw my phone on the bed and I run to the window to peep.

They are all rushed today so instead of standing outside like they usually do, they go inside the room carrying someone, I can't make out who it is

because they are so fast, once they are all inside they shut the door close.

Dammit now my brains starts with the What's if's and I'm also stricken with worry, what if they are carrying one of my brothers, what if he's hurt, what's if he's dead...

oh no..

Death is nearing... memories of what the two old men said come flooding in and I quickly run to the backroom

I don't even knock, I just open and throw myself in.

What the hell, they are all pointing guns at me I mean all of of them including my brothers I don't know if it's fear I'm sensing from all of them

“Shit” Nqaba says lowering his gun

My eyes are about to fall out of their sockets from

fear

They all put their guns away when they notices it me.

“Qhamukile do you want to get your self killed”

Langa shouts

I'd roll my eyes if I wasn't this scared

“B..hu...ti” I'm stammering from fear

I think this is the real near death experience not when Mnqobi nearly bumped me, this is the real deal

“What are you doing here” Gatsha shouts at me too

I don't answer instead my eyes travel to the bed and I see Makhosini lying there unmoved.

I quickly run to him and shake him

“Bhuti” wake up

I shake him again and I see him open his eyes faintly and smiles feebly before he closes his eyes again

“Bhuti hang in there” he’s struggling to breath

He can’t die, not now.

He has bullet wounds on his stomach and it’s oozing blood, whoever shot him wanted to kill him, I don’t even know how many times has he been shot.

Tears fall from my eyes before I can stop them

“Why ain’t you talking him to the hospital” I shout at all of them

How can they all be this stupid, why bring him here and not the hospital

“He’s not dead, just take him to the hospital now” I shout again when they all remain clued to the ground.

“Come help me” if I had the strength I’d pick him up myself

Zwelethu is the first one to help then the rest follow and rush him into the car they came in.

“Qhamukile uyasala (you not going)” Misuzulu says sternly as I was about to get into the car

“But bhuti...” his look shuts me up immediately

I’m defeated really, I go back into the house and wash the blood of my hands and go back to bed.

Death..

were the old men talking about the death of a Ngcobo?

Please lord not Makhosini, he's my favorite Ngcobo brother after Mngqobi.

We may have bad blood between us all but no, I don't want him to die, the guy helped when I was kidnapped.

My tears are just free falling now I'm seriously saddened by this.

If he dies then the rest of them will blame my brothers and I can just forget about the families ever having peace I know there will be more blood.

His death will bring nothing but blood, blood and more blood.

I get on my knees and pray

“Father lord please don't let Makhosini die please please, I know I only come to you when I need something but I'm asking this one last favor, don't take him please. Amen”

I suck at praying because it's something I never do but I'm sure God heard my prayers.

I'm contemplating calling Mnqobi, I'm not sure if I should be the one telling him that his brother got shot but again I'm sure his brothers will let him know.

I only have two hours left to sleep before I wake up so after telling Lungelo the latest events I drift to sleep.

MNQOBI

“The young man took all you ugliness I see” I’m not sure who this man is but he is tall and his voice is bold and firm

“Look whose talking” the one with the hoarse voice is tall too and very commanding

“Blood line ruined, imagine what my grandchild will look like with your ugliness”

“Hai you the last person to talk about ugliness, just look in the mirror”

I can’t help feel more connected to this one.

I don’t know him, I’ve never seen him before but I somehow feel like I know him from somewhere.

Weird I know.

“Who are you” I ask and they stop to look at me

“He even sound just like you” the bold one says
throwing his hands in the air

“don’t listen to this fool, you’re very handsome”

“Who are you” I ask again

“All will be reveled soon, I just want you to remain
strong and remember everything happens for a
reason, don’t lose hope, just trust in yourself and all
will be fine”

I seriously hate it when people speak in riddles

I shake my head as they continue to argue, yoh I
can’t deal with this

“I asked who are you and what do you want”

“Hey wena young man who are you raising your voice at, what happened to respect”

“Yes you don’t dare talk to us like that and we just said all will be reveled, just stay strong” the one with a croaky voice adds and they disappear

Okay that happened

I actually chuckle at what just happened.

I’m abruptly woken up from my very confusing dream by my ringing phone.

“Mnqobi Makhosini was shot tonight” Zwelethu says fast after I answer

“What” I must still be dreaming he didn’t say Makhosini is shot.

He can't be...

"He's in hospital right now and we are all just waiting, the doctor said it's not looking good at all but we hopeful" he says

I can tell he has been crying

"I'm coming" I hang up after that

I'm running around looking for clothes to wear and in between I'm booking for a flight online.

A bus will only waste my time and I need to get to Pietermaritzburg now.

To my luck there's a seat available on the six o'clock flight.

I can't afford to waste any time so I request an Uber to park station and from there I take the gautrain to the airport. I'm a mess when I get into the plane.

An hour later I'm lending and it's another Uber ride to the hospital.

Ubers are convenient but I'm charged a leg and a half when the driver ends the trip anyway I pay him with the last cash I have in my name and run inside the hospital.

my family is sitting in the waiting area when I get there, I rush to hug my crying mother before I could greet

At first it was me now it's Makhosini, I can only imagine what that does to a mother.

A doctor comes while I'm still comforting her

"Makhosini Ngcobo" and we all stand, including the Buthelezi brothers

I just hate how we and the Buthelezi's end up in hospitals all together. They were once here for me, then it was Qhamu now again we all here for Makhosini, hating has become difficult when they

are always in my face.

“We’ve managed to remove four bullets and the last one is just an inch away his spinal cord so there’s a chance he might never walk again”

We are all just quiet I personally don’t know what to say

“But if we don’t remove the bullet he will have severe health issues”

“Don’t remove it” Mncedis i says

“Did you hear what he just said, makhosini will have health issues, remove it doctor” Zwelethu is too angry, in fact we are a angry

“He said he might never walk again and do you think Makhosini will want that” Mncedis i again

“And if they don’t he will die” they both have points
I don’t want neither of these odds, I want my brother
to be healthy and walk too.

“I’ll give you sometime to decide” the doctor says
and walk away

Mncedisi and Zwelethu continues arguing until my
mother shouts at them

“Hey nina, Makhosini is my child and I’ll decide” she
says and walks away crying

I’m just angry that this happened, who the hell shot
my brother like that huh, five bullets, five?

This is war, who ever did this will get what’s coming
to them no one messes with a Ngcobo and gets
away with it.

“Who shot him” I ask angrily

They all keep quiet and look at me blankly

“Not here Ngcobo” Nqaba says and pats my shoulder

“You look like you need a smoke, let’s go” it’s funny how I haven’t even thought of smoking till now

It frustrates me that I’m standing in the same hospital again after six months, I hate this place, I hate this hospital with everything in me.

It’s funny how we hate the Buthelezi’s but they are forever here with us.

A good smoke is what I need right now so I follow Nqaba out.

I might just post another one later

[06/20, 18:13] Lynne: Continuation

QHAMUKILE

It's been week and a couple of days since Makhosini was shot and I haven't heard anything and it's killing me.

It's Friday after school and I couldn't be happier, it's been a long week full of turmoil so I'm glad my weekend is about to start.

I don't know what's happening with me these past few days but I'm constantly tired and sleepy all the time, I blame it on not getting enough sleep as those two old men have been coming to me everyday since Makhosini got shot and they always

say how I have the power to save him.

Sighs

I don't know what to do really, I'm considering of telling my brothers about these men but I doubt they will believe me I mean who will believe me when I tell them that I have powers to save Makhosini, that sound absurd even to me.

I decided to go to the hospital just to see him instead.

It's a little after three when I get to the hospital, after the receptionist tells where to find Makhosini ward i go there. I find Langa with Mngqobi when I get to the ward after getting lost a couple of times.

"Good afternoon" I greet the both of them

Langa is the only who responds and Mngqobi takes a glance at me and look back at the lifeless Makhonis i on the bed.

He is connected to a lot of machines and tubes

which just breaks my heart.

“What re you doing here” Mngqobi asks rudely

Ok.. I don't know why he's been so hostile towards me but seeing him brings back all those feelings I've learnt to suppress.

He looks broken and lost I just want to run into his arms and assure him that Makhosini will pull through.

I just want to hold him tight and never let go but I know that won't do us any good.

I can't believe it's been three months and two weeks since he broke my virginity, don't get me wrong I don't have any regrets but I wish he'd stop being so rude to me, we can't be together and I get it which is why I don't understand why these feelings are coming back now but I ignore what I'm feeling and close my eyes to reverse the tears.

“I'm here to see bhuti Makhosini” I tell him after I

open my eyes

He doesn't even look at me.

“Well as you can see he hasn't woken up” he says
and walks out

His coldness towards me breaks my heart into
thousand pieces but what can I say.

“Don't mind him but he is right, you shouldn't be
here” Langa says after watching Mngqobi walk out
I don't even know why I'm here myself

“I know but I just wanted to see him” my tears are
just a blink away, I'm not sure if I'm getting
emotional over how Mngqobi is behaving towards
me or if it's the sight before me, Makhosini looks
like he is dying .

“Thanks Qhamukile for coming” I guess that means

I should leave so after wishing Makhosini a speedy recovery I leave.

Mnqobi is outside smoking when I walk out of the hospital, part of me wants to talk to him but I choose to walk away instead

“Have I done something wrong”

I couldn't walk away, I just couldn't.

Even though Mnqobi and I can't be together that doesn't mean I don't care about him.

He bluntly ignores me and continue to smoke

“Mnqobi I'm talking to you” my voice sounds a bit firm without indenting it to I guess Mnqobi just ticks me off

“Hey Qhamukile can’t you not see that I don’t want to talk to you”

That hurts

“Mngobi I’m sorry for what happened to bhuti Makhosini but that doesn’t mean you need to be rude” my voice is softer now.

I think he’s too angry at what happened to his brother so I’ll excuse his rudeness and vileness.

“Qhamukile my brother wouldn’t have gotten shot if it wasn’t for me, this is all my fault so please just leave me alone” he half shouts and leaves me standing there

I’m hurt by all this but I don’t have a choice but to let him be.

I get home a little after four and seeing that I’m

exhausted I climb on my bed and sleep.

MNQOBI

Crucify me for being rude to Qhamukile but her and I are to blame for being in this situation, we were warned so many times but we didn't stop so look where that got us now.

I'm angry at myself for falling in love with Qhamu more than anything, I drifted from my mission and I fell in love with the enemy and now my brother lies in a hospital bed with bullet holes on his body because of me and my stupidity. I wish I could turn back the hands of time and do things differently, I wish I could unlove Qhamukile just as quick as how I fell in love with her.

I need to move on with my life like she has, I'm jealous of this Lungelo guy she's now dating and I

know I don't have the right to be but I can't help how I feel.

I want to say he must treat her badly so she could be single again but I want her to be happy at the same time so I seriously hope that he loves her genuinely and never takes her for granted.

I love Qhamu but can't be with her, I just need to move on.

I chuckle softly before I throw the cigarette butt in the bin and walk back into the ward.

I'm hopeful that Makhosini will be fine.

Nurses and doctors are busy going in and out of Makhosini's ward when I return and the machines are beeping loudly

"What's going on" I ask Langa panicked he is standing outside the ward looking all worried

“I don’t know after you and Qhamukile left the machines just started beeping”

He’s trying to be strong but I can hear how scared he is from his voice

I’m already thinking of the worst and I don’t know what to do

I take out my phone and call Qhamu but it takes me to voicemail, I don’t know why do I want to talk to her but I just need her.

I wouldn’t answer you if you had to ask why I’m calling her.

Langa and I are both pacing up and down when Makhosini’s doctor comes out of the ward with a faint smile

“Is he still alive” that’s the first thing Langalibalele

asks

I'm too scared to ask what's happening but my heart jumps to my throat as we wait for the doctor

The doctor smiles before she answers

“Yes he's still alive”

I'm relieved

“So what happened” I ask

“We not sure what happened there but are monitoring everything, his body just went into total shock but he has calm down now. Whatever that you said to him must've had an effect on him because he reacted which is good cause it shows that his brain still functions well” the doctor says softly

“I can’t allow you to go back in because he needs to rest now” she says and walks away

I exhale slowly, I thought she was going to be the bearer of bad news

Langa and I have no choice but go home now.

I’m laying on my bed thinking about The events that took place today when Nokhaya walks into my room without knocking.

“Mnqobi” she greets and comes to lay next to me

She’s been here for me ever since Makhosini got shot and that just shows how much of a good person she is

“How are you” I turn to look at her

“I’m good, how is he today”

I tell her what the doctor said and after that we lay quietly.

I’ve been so selfish when it comes to Nokhaya and she’s been with me through out, I hurt her countless times and she’s still here.

She seriously love me which is why I thought long and hard about what I’m going to say to her

“Nokhaya” I start

I’m not sure if this is a good time to say this but I have to say it

“I’m sorry that I hurt you before, you don’t deserve how I’ve been treating you and I’m sorry”

She’s getting teary now, it’s genuine tears.

“I’ve been treating you like you don’t matter but in fact you do matter to me and I’m willing to give us a chance if you still interested. I don’t know how we going to this with me being so far away but I want to give us a try”

She’s on top of me before I can even blink.

“Thank you, that’s all I’ve ever wanted, we will make it work” she says and gives me a hot kiss

I just want to forget about Makhosini and Qhamu so I kiss her hard, Nokhaya just knows how to make me forget.

Soon we both panting as i make love to her and for the first time I’m actually satisfying her needs. She screaming my name as I thrust in and out of her sweet pussy.

“Fuck” I’m close now.

She holds to me tightly as I come, I love every

minute of it, this time it's different I don't know what changed but it's just good different you know maybe it's because for once I actually cherished Nokhaya's body and thought of only her she's still trying to catch her breath when she smiles to me, she's beautiful and looks so hot with her yellow skin I'm not sure how I'm going to make this work but I'm willing to put the effort.

“That was nice” she says wiping herself

I smile at her

It was seriously nice.

“I need to leave, my aunt is all alone now” she says dressing up

Wow she has changed, I never thought I'd hear her think of someone else.

She's always been selfish when it came to her aunt, I'm loving this new Nokhaya.

“Ok baby, let me take you home” I say and give her a longing kiss.

I’m not in love as yet but I’m open to that possibility.

QHAMUKILE

“Don’t despair my child for we will forever be here for you and don’t lose hope” I’m seriously tired of these old men now

“Mkhuku can you please stop coming to me, I can’t do this anymore please stop”

“You both need us my child, he’s lost without you and you too are just as lost, we here to guide you both but we will not force you into doing anything so we are going to respect your wishes my child”

He looks kind of hurt but I don't care I'm tired of them now

"I just have have one request" I don't know their names and they refuse to tell me so I call the one with a hoarse voice "trouty"

I want to roll my eyes back but I refrain myself.

"Okay baba" I say respectfully

"We want you to help Makhosini not to cross the river, and only you can do that"

God enough with the riddles already

"Mkhulu how am I going to do that, he's in a hospital bed, how do I tell him not to cross the river"

I'm seriously baffled by this request

“He’s preparing himself to cross over and once he’s on the other side he won’t be able to come back” the one I’ve named Rambo says

“Yes, and time is running out” trouty says and the begin to walk away

“How do I tell him not to cross the river”

I shout as they walk away

“That you need to figure out on you own, and remember you don’t have much time” they both say in unison and disappear.

I wake up abruptly from my dream, I’m even sweating, I hate how real these dreams feels.

I’ve been taking these dreams lightly but now I’m scared, how will I help Makhosini I don’t have such powers, I’m not God so how I do I even begin to help.

I seriously want to help but I don't know where to start so instead of worrying about this all night I take out my phone and check the time, nine twenty five it reads, my nap was longer than anticipated.

I stop myself from calling Mngqobi.

There's a reason why I changed my numbers so why ruin that.

I'm still trying to process what those two old man said, but seriously how do I stop Makhosini from crossing the river?

They are crazy.

Shaking my head..

I've decided not to stress over things I can't control.

They said they will respect my wishes and stay away and that makes me happy so why should I bother myself with trying to unlock their riddles.

I'm too tired to let my brain do much thinking so Makhosini can cross this river that I don't know.

I missed a call from Lungelo so I send him a call back request which he returns in a heart beat. I enjoy talking to him, he just knows how to bring me back to a happy place so we end up having a long conversation.

After about two hours I hang up and sleep with a smile on my face.

2k likes and another insert will be posted.

Goodnight

[06/20, 18:14] Lynne: Continue

NOKHAYA

Someone please pinch me, this is unbelievable, I Nokhaya Makeyiza is dating Mngobiwesizwe Ngcobo?

Finally!

It's still feels surreal, had I known I'd end with him then I would have never went out with Akin, speaking of Akin, he sent me three thousand rands and told me to get ready for tonight.

Sighs

I seriously want out but he told me blankly that he's not going anywhere and that he's here until he says otherwise so right now I have no choice but to get ready.

This is exasperating, I'm tired of Akin and his demanding ways, I can't do this anymore Im not in the mood for his friends or lavish outings, in fact I want to cuddle with Mngobi and have sex all day but I have Akin to see right? Eye roll.

I'm not wearing anything fancy, in fact I don't want to show any skin so I'm wearing a jean and a long sleeve t-shirt and a cap I've got no reason to look nice.

My aunt is in the kitchen cooking supper when I come out of my room.

These past few months have been hard on her, she blames herself that I was “raped” by her husband.

It’s even worse now that there no longer any income coming into the house, I try and help when Akin sends money but it’s never enough

It’s my fault she’s suffering like this but I don’t know how to tell the truth.

I don’t know how to fix all this and make it right by her but i pray for her every night

She wipes away her tears when she sees me

“I didn’t see you there” she says softly after sniffing

“I’ll be back auntie I’m just going to meet up with Nontombi” I tell her

Seeing her like this breaks my heart but I had to do what I had to, I just couldn't allow people to know the truth imagine the judgements, I just couldn't.

“Ok, take care of yourself ke” she says and sits down

“Aunty I'm sorry that umalume is in jail” I haven't spoken to her about this

“It's not your fault Nokhaya, I'm sorry it had to happen to you” her eyes are glassy

“I know but I'm sorry” I say and walk out
I'm afraid if I stay a minute longer I'd end up confessing

Akin decided to come himself and not send his driver like always

“Baby girl” he greet once I’m inside the car

“Hello Akin” is serious tired of this guy now

“I sent you money to get yourself something small and nice so why are you wearing this” he says sizing me up but like I said I’m not here to impress

“Akin I’m not feeling well today so I can’t be wearing short things”

I hope he believes me

“Talk to me, what’s wrong” is he serious

“Akin have you forgotten that you forced me to abort our baby, I don’t know about you but that still haunts me, I can’t sleep thinking about the child I

killed, it maybe easy for you to move but it's not for me ok" I'm now angry

"Ah you still there, I thought we moved on from that besides I told you I'm not ready for a child, we will have kids but not now ok"

"No it's like you don't care at all, you even had the decency to pull out a gun for me" I'm now teary

I didn't think talking about this would affect me this much

"Nokhaya what do you want me to do huh, I've been sending you money hoping this would make things better"

He didn't...

"Akin money won't make me forget what you put me through ok" I shout

“Hey don’t raise your voice at me you stupid girl, if you want to forget then I’ll help you forget but never raise your voice at me, mxm” he shouts back and starts the car

I don’t know where we’re going but I’m a little scared now, I don’t like angry Akin at all, I can hear my phone vibrating but I don’t even look at it just in case it’s Mngobi.

Akin would kill me right here should he find out that I’m dating someone else so I’m just going to ignore it.

We drive until we get to some abandoned warehouse or factory looking kind of building.

I’m scared to even ask where we are but I follow behind as he walks inside

“Ah Zithulele my man” he greets some guy seated in a chair smoking

It's funny how he pronounce Zithulele

“The one and only Mr Okafor”

the guy I assume Is Zithulele stands from his chair
and embrace Akin with a manly hug

“How have you been my old friend” Akin

“I've been alright just the pressure from the old man,
you know he's a very impatient man” Zithulele says
shaking his head

“Enough about me, who is this hot lady you have
here” now all the attention is on me

“Ah baby meet Zithulele a business associate of
mine and Zee my man meet Nokhaya my lovely lady
here”

Zithulele extends his hand for a hand shake
He has a very dark aura but I shake his hand
anyway

“What a beauty” he even kisses the back of my
hand

“She is, isn’t she”

They exchange looks

Whatever is happening here gives me cold chills,
I’m scared but I smile instead

“Ntombi emhlophe how are you”

I smile and tell him I’m good

There’s just something about this guy that I don’t
quite get.

“She’s actually the reason I came here” Akin says

and pulls me closer to him

“Oh yeah”

“Yes, she needs some of your good stuff,
something strong” I don’t know what he’s talking
about

“Then you came to right please”

Zithulele calls some guy and instructs him to bring
in the stuff.

The guy comes back after a while holding a syringe

“There we go” Zithulele hands it to Akin

“This will help you forget everything bad little
things” Akins has my top rolled up to before I could
protest and injects me on my arm

It takes a while before it kicks in, I'm no fool I know he injected me with drugs so once the drug has fully kicked in I start feeling light, it's like I'm on top of the world I'm loving how it's makes me feel.

I can see Akin handing Zithulele a roll of money and he gives him a bag, I'm so high that I feel like I'm walking on a rainbow.

The last thing I remember is getting into Akins car from there it was lights out.

I wake up to a really comfortable bed with white bedding, I admit I feel better than I did before, it's like tons of weight has been lifted off my shoulder.

This issue with my uncle has been weighing on me

and I'm glad that drug helped me forget about my little guilt

I don't know when did I get naked but I'm not wearing anything, not even my panty, Akin must've have undressed me.

"You awake" he says coming out from the bathroom in his birthday suite

My eyes can't help trail down to his manhood and he is hard.

"Loving what you see" he says giving me his mischievous smile

I love Mngobi with everything in me but this sight before me makes me lose all senses and I smile at him too

"You undressed me"

“Yes, I had to see that sexy body”

I smile and walk to him and give him a kiss

“Where are we” I’m loving the view

“Scottsville, this is one of my properties”

It’s breath taking

“It’s really nice”

I’m happy with all this but I can’t help worry about the drug he gave me earlier

“What was that thing you gave me earlier” I say against his lips

I like how petite I feel when I’m in his arms

“It’s was good wasn’t it”

I nod

“I have something else, bring my bag here”

He spanks my ass when I walk to take his bag

“Ah there we go” he has a bag of some white powder in his hands

I know it’s cocaine and I’ve heard stories about how addictive it is

“No Akin I can’t smoke that”

“Come one baby girl, it will make you feel good and you’ll be able to perform for me”

He says stroking his hard shaft

I’m scared of Akin, I know what he’s capable of so I sniff a line without arguing and it gets me high

instantly.

“Now let me fuck you”

He already has me bent over, thrusting hard.

Im doing this for the last time after here I'm going to leave Akin and focus on my relationship with Mngobi.

QHAMUKILE

I don't know what I'm hoping to archive by doing this but here I am, on my way to the hospital.

I'm not going to lie and say I know what I'm doing because I'm so clueless, I think the only reason I'm doing this is because I've been feeling so guilty.

I don't want to blame myself should something

happen to Makhosini so here I am.

I'm not sure how to help but I've decided to visit him and talk to him.. maybe that will help I don't know.

lol that sounds crazy even to me, like how do I tell him not to cross the river?

Will he even here me?

The things I do to please those two old man.

Shaking my head..

I'm hoping whatever I say will be sufficient enough for Makhosini not to cross over.

I have my speech ready in my head, I've been reciting what I'm going to say all morning, if what I have to say doesn't wake him up then I don't know.

Lol... I so hope this works because if it doesn't then it will confirm just how crazy I am.

“Yaz I don't understand why you doing this, I get that he helped us but what are you going to do huh,

it's not like you going to bring him back" irritated
Nqaba says

I gilt tripped him into taking me to the hospital, I'm
broke so I could not use the taxi.

It's a Sunday so let's hope this will work, God has to
hear my prayers right.

"I told you bhuti I just want to see him and thank
him for all that he did for me"

My patience is running out, I can't take anymore of
his complains

"Hai let's hope this is not some plot to see that boy"

Eye roll

"Hey I saw that, I mean it Qhamu I don't want you
near that boy"

I'd roll my eyes again if he wasn't looking at me

“I promise you bhuti I’m not going there for Mnqobi I just want to see bhuti Makhosini” I say and give him my innocent smile

He shakes his head and continues driving until we get to the hospital.

It’s during visiting hours so it’s full anyway I go inside while Nqaba smokes

Mnqobi, Mncedisi, Manqoba and Zwelethu are inside when I get to the ward

“Sanibonani” I greet

I hate how Manqoba is looking at me, I can’t explain it but I’m hating it

They all respond except for Mnqobi, that stings a bit but I smile and pretend like I’m not affected by his hostility.

“What brings you here” Mncedisi

I’m not sure if I find that rude or what

“I’m here to see bhuti Makhosini” I answer him
anyway

“See him, he’s not dancing is he” this confirms it,
Mncedisi is rude

“Mncedisi i wouldn’t be here if it was not important,
you might not understand this but please can you
give some space to talk to him”

“Habe uyayi baca ke manje, why do you want
privacy huh, angithi your brothers got him shot
manje you want to finish him” that breaks my heart,
I never thought Zwelethu could be this rude
especially to me but again I’m a Buthelezi I expect

nothing but for them to react this way

“I’m not going to explain why I’m here, but I’m not leaving until I talk to him, alone” I say and sit next to Mngobi

He’s looking at me with a serious face but I can feel his smile plus his eyes are glistening with love that I only know.

I’m smiling inside, I know he won’t be rude today like how his brother have been

“Let’s just give her space”

They all want to attach Manqoba after he said that

“And then” Ngaba asks when he see them all attaching Manqoba

“Yin na all the Buthelezi got lost today, what are you doing here wena ke” Mncedisi asks annoyed

“Madoda ingabe imutu uya lingwa yin la, nayi
Ingulube izong’nonela”

I’d laugh if I wasn’t annoyed by all this chaos here
Nqaba doesn’t take rudeness likely

“I’m here with Qhamu, she wants to talk to
Makhosini and she will do so before we leave this
place, so if I were you I’d give her the space she
needs”

I’m loving my big brother right now

“What?... who do you think you are wena” Zwelethu
shouts and they all stand up and attack Nqaba with
words

Nqaba is not one to back down so they continue
arguing I don’t have the energy for stop them so I
just let them be.

What I know is If they continue to act like hooligans

then we will all be chased out of here and I can't afford that, I've got two old men to impress.

They continue to argue but Mngobi is the only one quiet just observing the madness before him

I'm tired of all this

"Hai man" they all stop talking to look at me

"ain't you all tired of fighting huh because I am tired of all this bickering between us and quite frankly it's useless because we all fighting for things we don't know. If you guys ain't tired of all the blood that has been spilled because of this little feud then you seriously are crazy Im tired of people dying, I'm tired of having to fight all the time. I broke up with Mngobi because of all of you and you still fighting, I might as well get back together with him because you still fighting"

I can't believe myself right now i just screamed at

them, I try to control my breathing but looking at them just fuels me up, I'm seriously tired of all this.

“Look at us, we fighting and bhuti Makhosini is laying on a hospital bed fighting for his life, if you guys don't care about that, I do, I'm not here for all of this. I'm here for ubhuti ca, can you please let me see him and say whatever I need to say then you can all continue fighting, but do it outside he doesn't need you all fighting here”

I'm angry now, I'm not here for any of this fighting. it's dead quiet, they are just looking at me blankly

“Like I said I'm here to see bhuti Makhosini whether you like it or not, so I'm not going anywhere until I have a moment with him”

I say respectfully and sit down they remain silence for a while until Mnqobi says

“Let’s give her a moment” and they all stand and follow him out.

Thank goodness, my hands are sweaty from fear I’ve never thought I’d shout to any of them like that.

To be continued

[06/20, 18:14] Lynne: Continues

NB: not edited because I had to write it so fast

QHAMUKILE

Once the noise dies down I move to sit on the chair next to Makhosini and hold his hand

Sighs

I don't know what to say but I guess I have to say something right

“Bhuti” I stop to take a deep breath

“I don't know why am I here, but I was sent to tell you not to cross the river, I'm not sure if you understand that because I don't”

I chuckle at how stupid I look

“Bhuti Mngobi and I asked what you asked and broke up and that broke him as much as it broke my heart but you dying will break him beyond so I'm asking you to please come back to him, they are all torn without you so I'm asking you please come back to them”

I'm getting teary now

“Bhuti I'm begging you to please not cross the river,

I don't know if you can hear me but please don't let the darkness overpower you please fight and don't worry you'll never have to see any Buthelezi once you're awake, I'll make sure we stay far away from you and the rest of the brothers if you can just wake up and come back to us" I'm full on crying now

"I heard that you might never wake because they removed the bullet but I know you will recover and walk again I believe in you and I want you to believe in yourself, you going to be live a fulfilled life I don't care what the doctor says, the Ngcobo ancestors are watching over you and you will wake up"

That was nothing I had in mind but I hope is all I needed to say to get him to wake up.

I wait for about twenty minutes hoping for some kind of miracle but when thirty minutes pass and nothing happens, I start to lose the little faith I had in me.

I did say this is ridiculous.

I stand and wipe my tears, kiss his hand and tell him I believe in him.

Manqoba, Zwelethu and mncedisi are waiting outside when I walk out. I pass them without even taking a glance at them, they annoy me to the core.

Nqaba is smoking with Mngobi outside

Imagine I'm not allowed to even look at Mngobi and Nqaba is smoking with him.. imihlola...

I pass them standing there and walk to the main road to get a taxi but it clicks just as I was about to flag a taxi that I don't have any cash, so i have to walk back shamefully into the hospital parking.

They are still standing smoking when I get into the car...

I seriously can't believe Nqaba, how hypocritical can he be?

Once they are done polluting their lungs Nqaba walks back to the car and Mnqobi back to the hospital.

Nqaba is annoying me so I put my headsets and pretend to be listening to music until I get home.

I'm in a mood to cook so I end up cooking a storm.

MNQOBI

If I thought I was over Qhamu then clearly I was hell wrong, I love her so much and the fact that she just shut us all like that shows that she possesses this power that's beyond me, hell I'd never raise at my voice at Zwelethu like that and she just did it so easy, she surprised all of us include Nqaba himself, that one I don't understand he always wants to smoke with me but he never says anything so imagine we just smoke silently....

crazy but I enjoy it....

Qhamu, Qhamu, Qhamu.... that girl drives me crazy, I love the sound of her voice, I love how she carries herself. I tried so hard to let go of her but it seems like the more I try to move on, the more I fall deeply for her.

God I need help.

Manqoba and the rest of my brothers are outside the ward with their eyes open widely, now that scares me.

“What’s wrong what happened” I’m panicking

“We don’t know, machines started beeping just after princess walked out”

I swear I’m going to punch Manqoba if he continues whaling Qhamu princess

“What do mean” I’ll ignore him for now

“We don’t know bafo, we waiting too”

After about ten minutes of total misery the doc comes out smiling

That hopeful

“What happened to him” Zwelethu asks frenetic

“Well he has one of his episodes but it’s nothing to worry about we have brain activity and that’s a good thing, I’d advice you go home and come back tomorrow” she says and walks away

I’m a little disappointed that he’s not awake but that’s something right and I’m very hopeful that he’ll wake up soon.

I've been here for three weeks and I'm missing a lot of school work, I'm worried about but what can I do? Makhosini needs me more than anything right now, he's more important than school.

Sma is playing outside when we get home he runs to me when he sees us.

"Bhuti" he greets I love how close we've gotten these past few days

"Where is bhut'Makhosini, is he fine, he'll be fine right" the questions I can't handle

"He's he is fine, he will be home soon"

"Yes I know that, he told me he'll come home soon"
kids and their imaginations

I smile at him and walk into the house.

My mother is preparing for her night shift so she's running around the house because she's late

"Mngqobi you need to go back to jo'burg, I'll call you should Makho wake up. I'm worried that you missing out on a lot" she still has time to remind me that i need to go back to joburg

"Yes ma, I'll go once Makhosini wakes up"

She almost rolls her eyes and take her hand bag.

"I want you in jo'burg first thing Wednesday morning"

My mother though isn't she tired of saying that?

I'll catch up with school work besides I won't be able to focus knowing that Makhosini is hospital still unconscious.

It's a little after nine when I go to bed with Sma, he sleep with me nowadays not that I'm complaining.

I first call Qhamu but her phone takes me to voicemail so I end up calling Nokhaya but her phone rings to voicemail which is odd because she always answers my phone calls.

I have to tell two bedtime stories to Sma before he finally sleeps and I follow soon after.

QHAMUKILE

Have I mentioned how much of a gentleman Lungelo is? Well he's the best.

I've been speaking to him for the past hour and I enjoyed every minute of it, he's such a breath of fresh air really, he knows how to make me forget

about this miserable life of mine.

I was down because I thought talking to Makhosini would help but it didn't, so Lungelo just helped me realize that something are not in our control so the best we can do is to do all that's in our power and if it fails it's also fine because we tried and gave our all.

I thought I'd be sad by how everything turned out today but instead i'm happy knowing I did all that I could to help even though I find the task I was given ridiculous.

I send Lungelo a goodnight text before going to sleep.

I'm in that beautiful garden again, I forgot tranquil it is here. The breeze is cool against my soft skin, the sun is about to set just like when i was with Thobile. I even forgot how the grass feels so fresh

against my feet

God I could stay here forever.

“Find him” the voice in my head says

God please not the old men again

“Before it’s too late” the voice says again

Looks like I will never find peace

I start looking for “him”, I don’t know whose this him that I’m looking for but I look anyway.

It feels like I’ve been looking forever when I see a figure seating by the bridge and I walk closer, for some odd reason I’m not fearing anything, my bravery is the only thing that’s scaring me.

“Hello” I greet

I’m looking at Makhosini

“Bhuti” I say excitedly

“Qhamukile, what are you doing here” he says
unbelievably

“I’m here to get you, you need to come back home”

“I’m happy here though, can’t you see how beautiful
it is around here” he says looking around

“I know it’s beautiful bhuti but you don’t belong here,
we still need you out there”

He looks at me long before he answers

“You know, my father always told me how how your
grandfather killed his father in front of him and I
vowed to always hate the Buthelezi’s with

everything I had in me”

Hearing him say this breaks my heart, I don't want to know about the past

“And you came along” he stops to look at me again and smile

“Why can I not hate you”

I don't know why am I crying but I'm crying a river

“I don't know how to hate you Qhamukile Buthelezi no matter how much I try and believe me I want to hate you” He lets out a soft chuckle

“Thank you for coming Qhamukile but I need to be in my own now”

I'm not leaving here without him

“Bhuti I’m not leaving this place without you, and I know you want to hate me but I don’t care about that I just want you to go back to your brothers. Mnqobi is torn, he hasn’t been to school in weeks now and I know you don’t want that so I want you to come with me so you can tell him to go back to school yourself” I really hate how this is weighing on him

“Qhamu What life am I going to have if I can’t walk” this is going to be harder than I thought

“Bhuti I believe in you and I know you going to walk again, you just need to trust in your abilities and have faith, I know you will walk but that’s won’t come to pass if you don’t believe so”

“When did you get so wise, just yesterday you were a naughty girl running after Mnqobi” I smile at that

“You love him huh”

“More than anything but I’m willing to let him go if it will bring peace amongst us all, I’ve let him go” I say teary

He says nothing but nods

“I heard you maShenge, but I don’t believe I’ll ever walk again and because of that I don’t want to come back so please don’t waste your time trying to convince me my mind is made up” he says and walks towards the following river

God no...

“Bhuti please, I’m begging you, please”

“Go home Qhamu, take care of Mnqobi because he’ll need you more than anything”

I'm crying as I beg him not to go into the river, I don't know what to do now I'm on my knees begging him, he can't do this, he can't just give up like that. I'm crying as he put one foot in the water

“Qhamukile” someone says shaking me vigorously

“It's a nightmare Ntonto, don't cry” Mondli engulf me with a warm hug but my tears don't stop falling How can Makhosini do this, how can he choose death.

“Shhhh” Mondli says still holding me

All my brothers are standing tall in my bedroom looking scared and I'm just crying hysterically

Maybe if they didn't wake me then maybe I was going to save Makhosini.

I'm crying hard as I think about him dying, Mondli holds me tight until I drift back to sleep.

Going forward it will be 2k and 150 comments

Goodnight good people

[06/20, 18:14] Lynne: Chapter twenty one

QHAMUKILE

I don't know when did I finally sleep last night after all that crying but it looks like I did. I just woke up and my heart feels heavy, I don't know what did I do that's so wrong, why couldn't bhut'Makhosini listen to me?

I feel like crying all over again, all this is too much

for me, I just want to be a normal teenager again, i don't want all this, it's too much.

I don't want to go to school but the show has to go on, life doesn't stop just because I had a bad dream or that there's two men haunting me.

I quickly finish up for school in ample time, my eyes are very red, puffy and heavy, I'm really not in the mood for school but I don't want to worry my brothers more than I have.

They didn't go to sleep I don't know till when cause I slept while they were still in my room, I hate how I've worried them but what was I supposed to do?

I'll have to sit them down soon and explain what has been happening to me but again I'm afraid they might not believe or worse think I've lost my mind.

They are all waiting in the seating area when I emerge from my bedroom, they look so intense sitting quietly waiting for me.

“What’s wrong Ntonto” Gatsha asks after we’ve exchanged greetings

I can feel tears forming behind my eyes but I blink them away and maintain a normal voice

“Nothing Bhuti it was just a bad dream”

I can tell from the way they are looking at me that they don’t believe me, they know it’s more than just a bad dream

“Ntonto we are here to help, please talk to us” I can sense a bit of begging from Misuzulu which is not like him at all, I hate how worried they all look.

Gcina is looking at me with sadness in his eyes.

“Please” I’m sure Mondli didn’t get a wink of sleep. his eyes are red too, from lack of sleep I presume.

“Can I talk to you when I come back from school”
they all look at me with sorry eyes

“Please, I promise to tell you everything when I
come back” I can see they want to protest but they
let go.

I don't have any appetite so I refuse breakfast when
they offer, I'll make it up to them soon.

I'm a little late but bab'Mkhize, my guarding angel is
waiting for me”

Bab'Mkhize is going to heaven I tell you.

I take a sit behind him after greeting, he keeps on
looking at me through the rear view mirror

“Nkosazana what’s troubling you this morning” he asks softly

I love how he always notices when I’m not good

“I’m good baba nothing is wrong” I say without looking at him

I’m afraid he will see right through me

“Where is that young man”

I’d roll my eyes if I didn’t have this much respect for him

He can be so noisy...

“I don’t know Mkhulu”

He looks at me and smiles

“Then what’s bothering you Nkosazana enhle”

He’s so manipulative.

he knows once's he starts with his cheesy words I
won't stop talking but not today

“Nothing Mkhulu, I promise”

I actually want to laugh

“Yaz I've lived in this life for sixty seven years so
believe me, I know when you good. So talk to
mkhulu tell me what's wrong”

Bab'Mkhize has become a father that I never had

“It's nothing, I promise you” I repeat

He needs to let this go.

I ain't talking.

“Ok ke Ntombi yam, you'll come to me when you
ready” he says and look ahead on the road

“Mkhulu I have this friend of mine who keeps having weird dreams about two old men and she doesn't know what to do because whatever those two men say comes to pass, now she's scared that something is wrong with her”

He remains quiet for some time

“Does she know these old men”

I shake my head because he's looking at me through the mirror again

“So you say unesipho sokuboniswa ”

I'm not sure if I should yes or no because I have never looked at it like that

“I'm not sure about that Mkhulu but she's afraid that bad things might happen and she doesn't know how to stop them from happening”

“I hear you Nkosazana, Has this friend told anyone about this”

I'm afraid this will make me sound like I'm crazy
should I tell anyone

“No I haven't told any one, I mean she hasn't told anyone as yet, she's afraid people will think she's crazy”

That was so close

“Mmmmh, id advice her to talk to her parents about this, they would know what to do”

“But she doesn't have parents”

“Then she should talk to an elder in the family, I'm sure they will be able to clarify this for her”

I've arrived at my destination so after saying my goodbyes to bab'Mkhize I exit the bus.

Mr Buthelezi is standing at the gate when I get to school, not sure why because there's still ten more minutes before school starts

"maShenge" he manages to see me through the crowd

Eish... next time I should do better in trying to hide away from him

"Baba" He stopped me a while back from calling him sir

You can imagine how everyone looks at me when I call the school principal baba

I'm starting to think he likes it when I'm the least liked person here.

“I hear you’ve been slacking at your school work, what’s wrong”

He’s not shouting at me but his voice is not soft either

My school work has dropped a bit ever since I broke up with Mngqobi, it was easier then because he would tutor me but now that he’s gone I’ve got no one to help me out

“It’s nothing sir, I’ll do better I even enrolled in extra glasses to help out”

I sometimes forget that I have to call him baba

“I hope so Qhamukile, use the school resources that are made available to you phela I’m expecting distinctions from you next year”

Gosh the pedestals that this man has put me on...

I'm so afraid of failing him, he believes in me more than I believe in myself.

"Yes sir"

I'm saved by the bell, literally.

First period is business studies, urgh Mrs Ndaba hasn't changed one bit and I still don't like her but anyway my day progresses very well and I try and grasp as much as I can, I need to focus more on my school work if I want good grades.

I'm so tired by the time the extra glass ends.

It's a little after four so the bus is long gone this time so I'm using a taxi like I've been doing this past few months.

I'm not in the mood for music so I'm just walking slowly to the taxi stop when a very familiar mustard

corolla stops too close to me.

What the hell...

this feels like Deja vu, my heart is beating erratically, my hands are sweating from fear I'm so scared right now.

I turn around angrily preparing myself to scream at the fool that nearly killed me.

My anger vacate when my eyes meet his, I still love how they shine when he looks at me, I can see the hazel brown irises and just as fast I'm calm, only he has that calming effect.

Mnqobi giving me that smiling that's only reserved for me, tell me how do I stay angry at that?

I can't help smile back

"You still scare easily I see" he says after he rolled down the window

My eyes roll back involuntarily before I answer

“And you still drive like you bought that license I see”

Its good seeing him

“Oho one day those big beautiful eyes will never roll back I’m telling” he says chuckling softly

I missed the sound of his voice

And I still say I don’t have big eyes but I’m tired of arguing that point with him, it has proven to be futile in the past

“Come let me take you home”

I give him the look

“Or maybe not, we are both still to young to die”

he laughs at that and I soon join him and we have a

full blown laughter

It feels good to laugh

He steps out and goes to open the passenger door for me

“Can the beautiful lady please accept me to chauffeur her to the tree” he says smiling sweetly

I actually laugh at that too.

I miss those days where we would sit under our bamboo tree and have nice conversations about everything and anything

“Of course, a lady could never say no to a gentleman” I says and get in.

The trip to our favorite spot silent, I think we both just processing the fact that we together at this moment.

This is all so priceless.

he keeps looking at me and smiling to himself and though I hate to admit I'm smiling too.

We both get out of the car once we get to the tree, it feels like yesterday when I was under the same tree wanting to give myself to him.

I love how he's looking at me.

He kisses my temple before he plucks out a yellow perennial flower that has just grown just around the tree and plucks it nicely on my hair

“A beautiful flower for a beautiful lady” he coos

I'm blushing like crazy.

I'm also happy my afro is growing beautifully after that dramatic haircut I got.

“Thank you” I'm blushing hard, I forgot how cheesy Mngobi can be

“How have you been” He pulls me close to him and

let's me rest my head on his chest

I feel so complete right now

“Lost without you” that’s the naked truth

“I know because I’m lost without you too”

I can feel his heart beat and it’s beating rhythmically with mine.

“How’s joburg”

Listening to his heart beat makes me emotional so I need some distraction

“Not the same without you” I can feel my tears running down my cheeks

I can’t help it, this is just too much for me.

“Shhh don’t cry baby please you breaking my heart”

He says and wipes my tears

“So short hair looks horrible on you” I laugh without intending to, Mngqobi can be too honest

“Ah she laughs, my work here is done”

he say patting himself on the shoulder

If I wasn't laughing now I'm definitely doing so.

Mngqobi is probably the only person that can make me cry and laugh all at once.

We sit under the tree for hours just reminiscing about the past, I must say being with Mngqobi is what I need, I feel free and I feel like myself again.

I'm happy with Mngqobi so now I have to learn to be happy without Mngqobi.

I'll forever cherish these little moments we shared together, it's true when they say life is not measured by the number of breaths you take but by the

number of moments that take your breath away so me being here with him is all I need.

I want to hold him tightly and never let go but I know that's not possible all that I can do I enjoy this precious moment given to us.

My phone rings while he's telling me about his new found friend in Joburg, I'm so proud of Mngqobi. He's proof that you can make it in life no matter the circumstance and that motivates me to better myself and to do well in my school work.

Eish... Lungelo's name flashes on my screen, I'm contemplating answering when I catch Mngqobi looking at the screen. I can see his face hardening and all the happiness gone.

I don't know why do I feel like I'm cheating on him because we no longer together.

His phone too rings when mine stops ringing, My

eyes involuntarily looks at his screen and it reads my love, with a beating heart next to it.

My heart instantly sinks seeing that.

I remember how he saved his contacts just like that on my phone.

Lol... Mondli was ready to kill that day.

“What, I’m on my way right now” he sounds really frenetic

He’s already starting the car before I can ask what’s going on

“Mngobi what’s wrong, you scaring me”

“We have to get to the hospital” he says and speeds there.

At the hospital....

We've been waiting for the doctor for close to an hour now and she hasn't said anything since we got here

Mnqobi looks like he's about to have a heart attach and I'm pacing too, the wait is just too much, it's killing us.

Can the doctor come back already.

I'm praying silently for Makhosini, I'm just hoping he didn't cross that stupid river.

I know I sound stupid to even think of that river right now but I'm just hanging on to that little thread of hope, I don't know what to believe in right now so if believing in my stupid dreams will give me the faith I need then so be it.

I pray again silently as I see the doctor approach.

Im standing with Mnqobi besides me and he's holding my hand tightly, Zwelethu and Langa are here too looking frantic.

We are all just looking at the doctor with wide eyes waiting impatiently for her to deliver what would either be the best news yet or the worst...

“I’ve got good news” she says smiling

My heart jumps for joy just hearing that

We all let out that breaths we’ve been holding

“Mr Ngcobo is now conscious and looking better, we still running test to see if there’s any damage to his organs but everything seems good so far”

I feel like jumping and shouting hallelujah and praise those two old men

I thought we would be hearing sad news

Mngqobi and the rest of his brothers are teary just hearing that, I’m sure they too had that little hope.

My love is actually his mother, what a relief that is....

She could not come right now because she's starting her shift in a couple of hours so she'll be able to see Makhosini when she gets here and I'm not sure as to where the rest of the brothers are.

Mnqobi engulfs me in a warm hug, surprising me, I love how warm he feels.

"Thank you" he whispers softly against my ear

I'm so happy right now.

I'm with Mnqobi

Makhosini is awake.

What more could a girl ask for.

Next insert will be posted on Thursday

Let me study now

[06/20, 18:15] Lynne: (Continuation)

MNQOBI

I know holding Qhamu's hand is unacceptable and may seem obscene to my brothers, more especially now that Mncedisi and Manqoba have joined us but I don't care I want to feel her warmth. I'm tired of all this fighting it's quite enervating if you ask me.

Langalibalele sneers when he notices how hard I'm clinging on Qhamu, I'm just happy he's not causing any scene.

We all silently walk to Makhosini's ward after the doctor gave us the green light.

Qhamu is reluctant to go in but I'm holding on her

tightly so she has no choice but to follow behind me.

I need her more than she realizes.

It's heartbreaking seeing Makhosini just laying there unmoved, he blinks a few times when he sees us, I think he's happy though his showing no emotion. He is just stoic.

“Bhuti” Langalibalele starts

It's the first time I hear him address Makhosini as Bhuti, it has always been bafo.

He ignores us all but smiles when his eyes meets Qhamu's.

Qhamu is a cry baby so her eyes are full of tears, with just a blink her tears wil come down pouring.

Ah shame my baby is so sweet.

“maShenge” he greets her

This I have never seen.

We are all utterly astonished by Makhosini, what's happening to my brother?

He called Qhamu with her clan name, I'm still

gobsmacked

“Bhuti you’re awake” she says and wipes a tear that has managed to fall

Makhosini nods his head at her, I’m loving this moment here, I wish I could record it so I could replay it in future and I’m also loving how we are all just watching silently without causing any scene

My brothers must be maturing.

“Bafo how are you feeling” I spoke to soon huh

Zwelethu had to just ruin the moment for me.

“I’m good” he says but his words doesn’t resonate with his facial expression.

He looks I don’t know, down

“Don’t worry you will be fine, you’ll be yourself again” Qhamu says confusing all us

We are just wondering what the hell are they talking about

“Thank you” Makhosini says smiling

I have never seen him smile so genuinely, his smile

reaches his eyes.

Whatever Qhamu must've said to him is big.

In no time the rowdiness erupts from the rest of my brother wanting to know how he is and all, I'm just saddened by the fact that he can't feel his legs.

My mother told the doctor to remove the bullet so we all knew that this was possibility but we still remained hopeful so this is just heart breaking.

The happy moment is interrupted by Qhamu's phone, Nqaba is blowing up her phone angrily, that guy is just too much for one to handle anyway Qhamu cannot stay long and rejoice with us cause I have to take her home before all her brothers come here with guns blazing, believe me when I say with them anything is possible.

We driving silently as I take her to Mvubukazi. how I'd love to hate that place. It's has nothing but bad memories, I got shot there, I got beaten up there but it's also where the girl I'm in love with comes from so do you see what I mean when I say I'd love to

hate it.

I'm parked just a few house away from hers, this reminds of the first day I actually parked here, Nqaba and Gcina gave me mean punches.

Lol thinking about it now seems quite funny.

I turn on my seat to look at the beautiful angel before me.

“Uhm this is it” she says softly

“I guess, this is it” it's been fun today but that's just it.

“I guess I'll see you around”

“I'm leaving on Wednesday” I tell her

Now that Makhosini is awake I've got no reason to be here besides my studies awaits

“Oh” her faces drops breaking my heart, I hate making her sad.

“I guess I'll see you whenever then” she coos

“I want to thank you for everything, for talking to Makhosini it looks like you spoke some sense to him” I say and chuckle

“It was nothing, I was just doing as instructed”

Instructed?

“By who?”

“Ah don’t worry about that, so you leaving huh”

She’s talking the topic

“Yes and I haven’t thanked you for giving the most precious gift, I’m so grateful and thankful that I’m the guy you chose to be worthy to be your first”

I want to be her last too but I guess that’s impossible

She blushes and look down

“I’m happy you were my first”

Wow I’m happy she’s not regretting it because I’m not, I’d do it all over again.

We remain quiet for sometime, I think we are both just trying to process the fact that our family history

has yet again forced us to be apart.

I have something that has been bothering me for a while and I just want to come clean to Qhamu, I don't want her hearing this from someone else and I know it's not the right time seeing that we've just discussed the fact that we slept together but I have to say this

I clear my throat before I start

“Uhm I have to tell you something, I don't want you hearing it from someone else” I say nervously, my hands are even sweating but I have to tell her about Nokhaya.

As much as I love Qhamu I've accepted that I can't be with her and that's ok, I've made peace with it.

She holds my shaking hands and look me straight in the eyes

If I wasn't nervous now I am.

“I've recently started dating Nokhaya” I can finally breath

She smiles with her eyes full of tears

“I know and I wish you all the best. I’m happy you’re moving on”

I can’t tell if she’s genuine or if it’s just an ego talking

“Are you sure”

“Of course I’m sure, Mngqobi’s as much as we love each other, we can’t be together and I understand that, I can’t expect you to hold on to me forever, you have to find your happiness because I can’t give that to you so believe me when I say I’m happy for you” I just feel in love with her thousands times deeper

She’s so selfless.

But unfortunately I can’t share the same sentiment with her, I don’t want her to move on. I want her to love only me even when we can’t be together but I’m too selfish to let go, I don’t want her giving herself to anybody else than me. I want her body only to know me.

Yes, continue with the judgements but I want her to hold on to this idea of her and I happy and freely in

love.

Is it too much to want her to believe in the Cinderella love story and I'm the prince?

Sighs

How I wish circumstances were different.

I don't know how will I ever be fine knowing she's with someone else even though I'm with someone else. I can't explain it but I just want her for me and me only.

"I'm so sorry Qhamu but I want your heart only to belong to me, is that too selfish of me?"

This is making me so emotional

She chuckles sweetly before she answers

"No, you not selfish you just want what you can't have and for that I can't say it's selfishness but I know we will both be fine"

"Whose Lungelo" I find myself blabbing out

The idea of her dating this guy rubs me off in the wrong way.

How much more hypocritical can I get... Mngqobi you dating Nokhaya, you need to let go of Qhamukile I tell myself inwardly but my soul is not alright with all this

“Is he your boyfriend”

“No, he’s a friend. I’m not looking for any relationship at the moment I just want to find myself again and be happy in my own before I can date so no, Lungelo is just a good friend”

I don’t know do I suddenly feel guilty for moving on too fast, could I be replacing this emptiness Qhamu has left with Nokhaya?

“For now” she finishes off

For now? Why does hearing that hurt this much again I thought they were dating so I’ve got no reason to feel this way. she said for now meaning she’s hoping for something more in future and as much as that hurts I swallow my pride and wish her well.

“And thank you for being there for me today, I don’t know what I could’ve have done without you”

“That’s what friends are for right”

Friends?

I guess we’ve become friends now and I’m happy with that, having her as a friend is better than not having her at all in my life so I’ll work with that

“To friendship” I extend my hand for a handshake

She laughs shaking her head before she shakes my hand.

She leaves when Mondli starts blowing up her phone.

I’m sure Nqaba, Mondli and Gcina are together, those three are inseparable I just love the bond they have.

I look at her until she disappears around the corner.

Have I mentioned how I love her long legs, I just love watching take her long strides she does it with precision, I’m starting to sound like I’m demented now, Qhamu will do that to a person.

I take out my phone before starting the car, I just want to send her that last goodbye text... oh Shit.... I

forgot to get her new numbers, I guess I'll see her when the universe decides.

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A week later....

QHAMUKILE

For the first time in months I've had a drama free week, I'm finally free to be a teenager again.

I've had no dreams about old men telling me to rescue someone, I guess they chose to be true me to their word, that's such an honorable thing to do. I haven't fought with any of my brothers about the Ngcobo family so I'm truly blessed this week.

The last I heard Makhosini was being discharged from the hospital.

Langalibalele came once to my homestead and never again, I guess that's a good thing, now the Buthelezi's and the Ngcobo's can live happy lives separately.

I know we still hate each other but the world is too big for us to coexist in it so as long as we stay out of each other's way we should be fine.

I'm happy that there's won't be any blood shed of fights between us.

Mnqobi, well him and I are finally over and I've accepted. I'm free and I definitely feel free as well, all is well with my soul but I'm a little worried about the fact that we didn't use protection. I know I'm not pregnant because I'm on my periods but I'm worried about STD's and STI's that I could have contracted, I can't believe I was that stupid and naive he said he's clean and all but I can't just take his word for it, look at what happened to Thobile, Khaya did the same thing to her and as a result she was left pregnant and sick and I don't want that for myself

May her souls continue to Rest In Peace.

I'm planning on going to the clinic one of the good days just to make sure everything is fine, as much as I want to believe Mngqobi I can't, I have to take care of myself Anyway It's a Saturday and Lungelo is in town.

So as you can imagine I'm excited that we finally meeting after all those late night phone calls and early morning text.

We've agreed to meet in town, mainlands mall, I'm not looking for a relationship and Lungelo knows this and he's happy being just friends, like I said before Lungelo is a gentleman, he's been vary supportive these past few weeks and for that I'll forever be.

I'm just a few minutes away from the mall and I'm quite excited, it's been a while since I've been out, the last times I was actually with Nokhaya whom I haven't seen in a while and she no longer comes to school anymore, I should actually remember to

calm her, she's hasn't been the same ever since that rape thing.

Her and I are not best friends but I'm open to us being friends she's not so bad to hang with.

Lungelo is wearing a dark blue jeans with a white polo gold t-shirt and white sneakers, a totally different wardrobe to Mngobi's inspired Mandela shirts.

Lungelo envelops me with a warm hug after we've exchanged pleasantries.

"You smell so nice" he says sweetly

I always find it weird when people say that and I never know how to respond so I just smile at him

We planned to watch a movie then have lunch after.

We spend the first ten minutes arguing about which movie to watch but he finally relents and we watch a comedy chick flick to his misery because he was bored throughout. once we done we head to Macd for lunch, don't look at me like that, I'm in grade

eleven and he's doing his post grad in media studies so we both can't afford expensive restaurant.

He actually came to Pietermaritzburg for his cousin's twenty first party which will be starting later, he invited me but I declined because I don't want to die as yet but I'm also not in the mood for parties and a large crowd.

I'm looking forward to watching tv and a good night sleep.

I'm enjoying how my conversation with Lungelo differs from my conversation last with Mngqobi.

Mngqobi only wants to talk about me and us, our life together and everything that involve the both of us while with Lungelo is all about him, he talks his favorite music, movies, his career, his inspiration and not for once have we discussed me but I'm happy with that, for once I'm not the center of attention.

To someone else Lungelo would be perceived as a narcissist and selfish but I enjoy this, we talking

about him, him and him and I couldn't have it any other way.

“Are you sure you don't want to join later, remember I don't know anyone here”

He's been trying to convince me to come to the party but my mind is made up.

I just want to go back to that boring old me.

“I'd love to but I can't remember I told you my big brother is hitler now imagine him with the rest of his solders”

We both laugh at that, he finds it so funny when I make my brothers sound like they are the worst people ever.

“Come on, I'm sure you can come up with a story”

I'm done trying to convince him so I give him that sorry look

“Okay okay” he says raising his hands up high

“But you owe me, how about another lunch date before I leave”

That's not so bad so I agree

“How's next week say same time”

“It's a date”

Lungelo is just a breath of fresh air and this is just a start to a long lasting friendship.

I go home just after four pm, my brothers are not home so I cook and watch tv.

My life is finally what it was before Thobiles death, before falling in love with Mnqobi, before having weird dreams about two old men, I'm back to being that Qhamu that worries about nothing but not being late for school.

Life is just beautiful.

To new beginnings.

I'm trying to write longer inserts now.

[06/20, 18:15] Lynne: Chapter twenty two

(Not edited)

NOKHAYA

Finally, I've quit school and what a exhilarating feeling it is, I failed grade eleven so I'm not prepared to go through another year in the same grade besides I'm eighteen now so I'm free to do whatever I want, I'm satisfied with my life choices and I don't need you judging me too, I've made so far and I'm happy with.

I haven't told Mngobi, my future husband about this I'm just afraid of what he'll say. He left two weeks ago but it feels like he's been gone forever, our relationship is not the best because he ignore my calls most of the time and when he answers he lashed out at me, it's like he doesn't want to speak to me at times urg listen to me doubting the love he

has for me.

I know he loves me, it's just school pressure and everything that's been happening in his life so I refuse to worry myself about us not communicating like lovers do.

I know what you thinking and no I'm not delusional I know he loves me. OKAY!!

Let me see, you're already judging me, right?

Well... news flash, I'm not going to try and be something I'm not just to make you like me, no honey!

Firstly, I'm in love with Mngqobi and I know I'm going to get married to him once he's finished with his studies and secondly I know quitting school is best decision i have ever made.

I don't care what you think or what my aunt thinks.

My aunt...

oh God that woman can be annoying at times, it actually baffles me that I felt sorry for her. I have

suddenly developed this hate towards her that I don't know where it comes from and the fact that she keeps pointing out as to how I'm going to regret this pisses me off, who is she to tell me how to live my life?

I have everything I need, expensive clothes, expensive hair, I eat at expensive restaurant so What suffering is she talking about?

I even have seven thousand rands in my name unlike her, she has nothing but enough about her she doesn't matter to me so I won't even bother telling you about her, now here's something to talk about.

Qhamu called me all concerned. rolling my eyes.

That one thinks life has a manual, she still believes in that boy meets girl, guy falls in love and they get to live happily ever after.. lol I'd like to sit her down and explain the real world to her but that's a topic for another day anyway I'm meeting her on Friday and I'll be accompanying her to the clinic, we didn't get too much into detail as why she's going there,

that girl can be dramatic yoh I don't even know why did I agree to all this I mean I have no reason to be friends with her now, Mngqobi is mine now so really she's just dragging my reputation to the slumps that she comes from. Imagine if Akin can see me with her, yoh that would be disastrous.

I guess after Friday I have to cut her lose.

I don't know why do I keep trailing and talking about people that don't matter like this, just like my aunt she doesn't matter to me so back to important matters now, Akin is the one who convinced me to quit school, he assured me that he'll take care of me and I'm content with that. I'm actually at his house in boughton, I don't know what does Akin do for a living but he is living large I tell you. This house is magnificent, it's overlooking the botanical gardens being here is so refresh I could get used to this life. My aunt is still angry that I left but like I said I don't care, I'm sorry i'm never mentioning her again.

Akin emerges from the bathroom in his nakedness, his penis is dangling between his legs, if it were any other day I'd be loving this view but not today I'm

not aroused at all. I'm actually surprised I managed to wake up this early after how he rummaged my vagina last night, that man is a beast.

I'm still sore from last night, he seriously did a number on my lady parts, I'm swollen as I'm talking to you, he was so rough as per usual and what makes it worse is that he doesn't use any protection unlike Mngobi, he says condoms are for small boys and not men like him.

sex with a Akin always leave me doubting my worth because of the things he always want me to do, just last night he invaded my anus and after that he wanted me to give him head as disgusting as that is I did it, I prefer happy Akin more than angry Akin so I'll do whatever that makes him happy. I thought I'd be out of his life by now but he keeps on throwing me with more money than I can count and because of that I find myself deep in Akins world. I've accepted that he doesn't want to use protection besides it's not like I'm going to fall pregnant so what am I protecting, it's not like he's sick or something.

“Baby girl”

He already has a packet of white powder in his hands.

I’ve been snorting cocaine for about two weeks now and I’m loving it, it gives me that urge, I love how it makes me feel. Less judgmental please...

The drug helps me forget.

When I’m high I think less about my dead mother or my abusive childhood and as you know my poor uncle is rotting in a prison cell because of me so the drug helps ease my conscious a bit, I’m not as “heartless” as you think I am.

“Ahh” I say when the white powder reaches my nostrils nerves and I’m instantly energized.

“That it baby” Akins says sweetly next to me

I hate how he doesn’t smoke frequent, like last night he didn’t smoke anything and he’s accuse was that he’s driving and doesn’t like driving high, like really now... eye roll, whatever Akin.

“It feel so good” I tell him and wrap my hands

around him.

His penis is pocking my stomach making me horny instantly but I ignore the twitching clitoris and kiss him, I can't take anymore of Akin's huge dick yoh haikona!

“One last line” he says with his thick Nigerian accent playing with my boob

He knows I easily obey him so I snort another line without protesting, I can feel my pupils dilating and my rose gets runny.

“Oh God that's so good”

I'm loving this feeling I'm feelings, it's like I'm floating up in the clouds.

“That's it baby” he says running thick hands all around my body.

Like I said my lady parts are swollen but Akin always gets what he wants so in the end he's on top of me huffing and puffing with my legs dangling in the air.

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Later...

I'm so tired all that I want to do is sleep, sleep and sleep but Akin wants us to go out, just imagine it's a Tuesday and he eats us to go out, who does that?

I don't understand how can he be wanting us to out after all the sex we had earlier, does he not get tired? but as you know what Akin wants, Akin gets so here I am dressed in my white short dress and heels.

Sighs

I'm mastering make up so I look very fleek right now you wouldn't even tell I'm eighteen plus my big buttocks and big boobs do a good job in disguising my age very well.

Today he's driving in his BMW, I don't know cars very well but it's written M8 and it looks expensive.

He's listening to his Nigerian music until we get to the royal hotel, I shouldn't have put too much effort in looking so fly had I known we coming to chill here, I thought we were going to a club.

The receptionist knows him so we make our way swiftly to the elevators and it takes us to the fifteenth floor.

There's a group of man including that South African guy I once meet at that warehouse I forgot his name, he looks so different in his black charcoal gray suite. They all looking serious smoking expensive cigars, drinking expensive whiskeys with naked ladies all around the suit.

"Akin my man, how good of you to join us" A man twice Akin's size says standing up and giving Akin a manly hug

"Mr Chikoze" Akin replies respectfully

Well that's a first, Akin is always cooky so it's surprising seeing him so respectful.

"What a beauty" chikoze guy says kissing the back of my hand.

I've met Akin's friends before but not him, he's tall, dark and ugly, yoh whoever that's sleeping with him has very high tolerance in life, I'm having difficulty in trying to differentiate him from a baboon, that's how ugly he is.

I want to decline when Chikoze orders me to sit next to me but Akin looks says it all so I'm forced to sit next to the baboon.

His hand goes to my thighs and he brushes them softly.

My skin... lord, it feels like a construction worker is touching me.

"I like her" he tells Akin

"I never disappoint" Akin replies after he downs his drink

I'm offered champagne by Mr Chikoze himself, I must be special for him to like me like this, you can tell he's the boss with the way all these men look at him, he oozes that power you know.

"And the ward shall not be disappointing" he says

and raise his glass high to Akin smiling.

See what I mean,I've long concluded he's the boss.

They are speaking in their foreign language so I don't understand anything, the South African, Zithulele I remember him now, he too know the language. They sometimes switch to English when they want to include me in their conversation like now

"I want see to her" he says after some time.

Akin stands and takes my hand and directs me to a private room.

On our way to the room we pass two ladies kissing and the one had her fingers inside the other ones pussy.

God I've never do that.

"Look Mr Ujoli is my boss" he says closes the door

"Ujoli?"

"Yes that guy, he's the one that bought me all these cars and everything I know"

Ok but what does that have to do with me

“So how do I say this, he wants you and I can’t deny him you”

“What” I shout

“Listen, if you don’t do this for us then he will take all these cars and you won’t have that salon that you want. Just be with him for tonight plus he’s going to give you money, lots of money”

I seriously don’t believe Akin right now

“No Akin I’m not going to sleep with that man”

“Nokhaya” id laugh at how he’s pronouncing my name if I were not in this predicament

“You don’t have a choice, did you see him. He gets what he wants and he wants you so if you’re not willing I don’t know what will happen to you”

He says sounding exasperated

“What do you mean” I’m scared now

“He’s going to kill you, unless if you can get naked right now and who knows he might not even want to

sleep with you”

My head it still on that kill part... what have I gotten myself into.

“So you need to get naked and go sit on his lap when you done” he says and walks out.

I’m left bewildered, I don’t want to do this but I might get killed should I not I guess I’ve got no choice.

Tears are streaming down my face as I get naked, I hold my clothes neatly and place them on top of the bed.

I have redo my make up before I exit the bedroom

“Ah look at that” Chikoze says playing with my butt I’m cringing on the inside.

“So fresh” he says touching my boobs after I sit in his lap.

All guys sit there oblivious to the fact that I’m naked sitting with them.

They continue with their conversation while the

baboon is busy touching me all over and he occasionally stuck his finger inside me.

I want to cry but I have to be a big girl right now.

“Gentlemen it’s always a pleasure doing business with you” he says and all of the stand including Akin, I want to stand too but Akin looks tells me not to so I stay glued to this ones lap.

“Ladies join us” He says once all the other men have left.

The two ladies that were kissing each other joins us. I really don’t know how to respond when they start touching me and playing with my boobs.

“This one is mine” he says when one girls tries to finger me

I need Akins coke right now, I need something that’s going to take my mind off what’s happening right now so you can imagine my relief when the baboon takes out a packet of the white powder.

I’m the first one to inhale a few lines and the rest of the girls follow but he didn’t take any.

I don't know when did he get naked but he's now fully naked I can't help but look at his dick.

lord..

Clearly I wasn't wrong about Akin's dick being huge, this i have never seen before.

"Come here" he says pulling me to climb on top of him

Please god no..

"It's yours to ride" he's sitting on a couch so I straddle him and insert his humongous dick in me.

"Ouch" it's so painful.

I can feel tears forming from the back of my eyes as he pounds on me, he keeps pinching me when I slow my pace so I've got no choice but to be fast.

I let me tears fall when he takes me from the back, I've never felt so much pain in my life.

I have never imagined my life like this, I'm just eighteen for goodness sake this is not the life I want for myself, I just want to be happy with Mngobi by my side not this

“Fuck” he says adjusting himself and continue thrusting

I’m trying to block everything that’s happening but I snap out of my trance when he spans no slaps my ass.

“Ahh” he screams and I feel his warmth inside me, yes he didn’t use a condom.

He moves aside and calls the other call and does the same thing to her.

I just want something to numb the pain and there lots and lots of coke to do just that so I indulge on it throughout the night as the baboon continues to change fucking all three of us. When he takes me for the third time I’m just numb and I’m not even conscious enough to see what sex position is he doing. Thoughts are just running through my head as he continues to go in out of my vagina.

How did I find myself here?

I’m just eighteen, why is the world so cruel to me?

What did I do to deserve this?

I'm so young to be sold like this. Akin soled me to the highest bidder and look at me right now.

I just want to die.

Manqobawethu's POV next, it's been so long since we've heard from him.

Maybe just maybe I'll post again later

[06/20, 18:15] Lynne: (Continuation)

NARRATED

Gatsha and Misuzulu have been worried about Makhosini, they heard from the grapevine that he might not be able to walk again and they know very well it's their fault, for one Makhosini shot Qophelo

because he thought he had raped Qhamukile, their sister, and secondly they went to attack the Ntshangase's which resulted in Makhosini being shot multiple times and Gatsha was the one who was supposed to be on the lookout so it's actually his fault that Makhosini was almost killed.

The thought of swallowing their prides and go see Makhosini is killing them on the inside but somethings are bigger than their egos and this feud going on and they both know it.

Misuzulu scratches his head and throws away the match stick he's been chewing on, he eats on match sticks when he's in deep thoughts.

Him and Gatsha are sitting quietly absent minded at the taxi rank, they might be quiet but thoughts are running through both their minds.

What baffles the most was that they all had a solid plan so what went wrong during that shot out?

Zithulele and his father saw them coming but how?

Could the trusted Nkanyezi be the traitor?

Nothing makes sense

“Bafo we have to go see him” Misuzulu finally speaks

Gatsha remains quiet for a second processing what his older brother has just said.

“I know” he says flatly

he hates all the Ngcobo brothers but he knows his brother is right and it took a lot in him to finally admit that they have to go see Makhosini

“Yes before he start formulating a plot for revenge, you know they do blame us so I wouldn’t be surprised if they are planning on killing us all”

Misuzulu knows what he’s talking about, he’s seen the blood shed, the ruthless killings, he was young yes but he saw it all so he doesn’t want to expose his brothers to all that. The Ngcobos are heartless and ruthless human beings and they don’t fear death at all and he doesn’t want any of his sibling die.

“So we doing this later I guess”

They both agree on that.

Makhosini knows he will walk again but it's just frustrating that he's on a wheelchair and is unable to live life like he knows.

Everyone has been very supportive and he's grateful but he just hates that he's dependent on others.

“Bafo do you need anything” Manqoba asks, irritating him.

“No Manqonbawethu how many times must I tell you guys I'm fine” he snaps surprising Manqoba

“Ngiyaxolis a bhuti” manqoba says pitifully.

Makhosini wants to shout at him for feeling sorry for him but he refrains himself he knows it comes from a good place it took all the strength in him not to shout again though.

“What's happening with you these days Manqoba, you hardly home” he noticed this for a while now but he decided not to say anything until now.

He doesn't want Zithulele getting to any of his family member trying to revenge his brother but manqoba is making it hard for Makhosini to protect him because he keeps disappearing.

Makhosini might be on a wheelchair but he's too resourceful, all his family members are guarded well at all times he can't afford any of them dying.

Manqoba decided to take a gap year unlike his twin brother but he's planning on going to a collage around Pietermaritzburg the following year. He's not as clever as Mnqobi but he gets good grades.

Makhosini and Langalibalele went berserk when he told them that he wants to be a DJ . Makhosini is not so supportive of that career in fact all of them are not so he told him to think about what he wants to do with his life for this year because next year he's going to school whether he likes it or not. Makhosini gives no one a chance, his word is final when it comes to his brothers, his word is the rule and they all have to abide.

“What do you mean, I'm alway here” Manqoba can't

even look at his brother in the eyes which cause Makhosini to doubt him, he knows there's something that his young brother is hiding.

“Manqoba im asking for the last time, what's going on with you” Makhosinis voice is now a little harder, he might be in a wheelchair but all his younger brother knows whose older and they don't respect him any less.

“Ehh.. it's no... I mean... it's “he's saved by Makhosini's ringing phone.

“Bafo” he answers leaving his younger brother there.

He makes it clear that just because he's in a wheelchair that doesn't mean they need to respect him less.

He has that electricity wheelchair so it's not difficult getting around plus maNgidi also ensured that the house is friendly for Makhosini to move around freely, it cost her a lot but there's nothing that she wouldn't do for her sons.

“Bafo, Mawela says the Buthelezi's wants to see you” Langalibalele is on the other side of the call

Makhosini doesn't know what to say so he remains quiet for a while

“Bafo can you here me”

“Yes, yes did he say what do they want” he's still asking himself what could they possibly want

He doesn't know that Qhamu is the one that brought him back to life but he gets this strange feeling when she around, he's very much aware that Qhamu is a Buthelezi but she melts his heart, he can't help but want to protect her all times.

He just loves how he feels when Qhamu is around, like when she came to the hospital he felt Qhamu's powerful aura and something in him told him he'll be fine that he'll be able to walk again but what's frustrating him is time, when will be walk again?

“I'll see them but get all the guys ready I don't want any mistakes”

He still has reservations, he can't just trust that they come in peace, there's too much hated between them for him to just be careless.

They hang up after they've agreed on a venue.

It's already after seven pm so Langalibalele has just over an hour to get all the guys ready just in case, he knows that the Buthelezi's said they want to talk but they need to be careful.

It takes Langalibalele just twenty minutes to organize a few guys to be on the look out not aware that the Buthelezi brothers are also doing the same, as much as both families now have a common enemy and they have worked together in trying to take Zithulele and his father down they still don't trust each other. How bizarre is that?

At nine o'clock all bothers from both families meet at what used to be a school just outside of Mvubukazi.

"Mapholoba" Misuzulu is the first one to greet.

He thought he wouldn't feel anything seeing Makhosini in a wheelchair but seeing him right here breaks his heart

"Buthelezi" Makhosini respond, his voice is as commanding your swear he's not in a handicapped

man right now

Both these families hate each other but they respect each other too. I don't know how do they do it but they hate respect each other if there's such.

"I heard the bad news" Misuzulu doesn't know where to begin to express how sorry he is but for some reason Makhosini knows that he's sorry.

Misuzulu wants to apologize but he's not sure if it's his ego or what but he just can't find the right words and the fact that he's not a man of many words isn't helping either

"I have you to thank" Makhosini says looking at him right in the eyes but Misuzulu stares right back unflinching

"When are we killing Zithulele and his father"
Gatsha asks

He knows they both won't relent, they are both too proud.

"We" Makhosini asks looking away from Misuzulu

"Ngcobo I know you hate me and I hate you too but

I'm not thrilled watching you sitting in that chair right so are we killing Zithulele or is he killing us” Misuzulu’s patience is running low

“Once this is done Buthelezi I never want to see you again and I mean it”

Makhosini hates the idea of working with the Buthelezi’s, they are enemies after all but he knows that teaming up with then Buthelezi’s is the only way to survival. separately they are nothing to Zithulele, he will squash them like cockroaches but together they are stronger and they stand a chance against Zithulele.

“I wouldn’t want anything less” Misuzulu says walking away

“Oh I can’t wait for you to start walking again, I want it to be fair when I whip your ass” Misuzulu says chuckling before he gets in his car followed by his brothers Gatsha and Nqaba.

It’s a miracle that Nqaba remained quiet throughout. I guess he knows when to talk and when to shut up.

Makhosini is left chuckling too, he too can’t wait to

start walking.

All families are happy that for once they were able to talk without fighting or blood being spilled.

I'm still leaning to write the narrated parts, they are a little difficult for me.

Goodnight

[06/20, 18:15] Lynne: Chapter twenty three

QHAMUKILE

I was planning to telling my brothers about those two old men but I've decided against it seeing that I haven't had any dreams about them recently but I'm not complaining I get to have peaceful sleeps and

as proof I'm no longer as exhausted as I was so why would I complain.

It's Friday after school and as usual it's full of school pupils from different schools, for some reason I look around hoping to see Mngqobi with his ridiculous shirts but I know that just me being too hopeful anyway remember Nokhaya promised to accompany me to the clinic.

We agreed that she wait for me out here but she's no where in sight when I exit the gate, she must have forgotten then.

I take out my phone and dial her number but it rings to voicemail.

She answers when I call for the third time. I'm relentless huh... part of me longs for a friendship and she's the only one that has been close to me so maybe that the reason why I'm calling her so many times.

Ever since Thobile died I've been a loner until Nokhaya came along.

“Qhamukile what do you want”

Yoh rude much

“Haibo where are you? You promised to go with me to the clinic remember”

I actually want to roll my eyes at her and I’m not offended at all

I’m slowly getting to know her and she’ll never stop being entirely rude.

“I too have my problems you know, go to that stupid clinic alone” she screams and hang up

Okay! I guess the Nokhaya I know is back.

I’m left bewildered by Nokhaya, I know she’s rude but something is definitely wrong with her I know when she’s being rude Nokhay and when she’s being rude because she’s hurt. I’ll call her back later on.

I’m walking to the bus stop direction when I see a very familiar blue vw polo parked just across the street. I young girl I’ve seen around school gets in and kisses the driver seeing all that gets furious immediately.

What the hell is he doing here?

Yeses!!

I can't breath properly because of my anger but I've managed to walk towards the car

I don't waste any time I bang his window really hard startling both of them but I don't care I'm too angry to care anyway

"What the fuck are you doing here" I'm not one to use profanity but this nincompoop just knows how to press my buttons

I hate him so much

I have never hated anyone as much as I hate this guy right here.

God... I loath him so much.

He steps out of the car fusiously when he sees me

"Hey wena slima are you trying to break my window"

his anger is nothing compared to mine

"Don't you think you've ruined enough lives already,

it's not enough that my friend is six feet under because of you now you want to ruin another young life huh, you're so disgusting yaz khaya"

Seeing him evoke so many emotions inside of me
Wasn't Thobiles death enough.

The poor girl is now out of the car too looking at me and khaya as we continue to exchange words

I look at her and shout, I don't understand what's with young girls and these stupid guys

"Uyafa lo, don't see him walking around like this une aids, he killed my friend and he want to kill you too"
I can see confusion on her face but I don't have time to explain all this to me

She just needs to stay away from Kahaylethu.

"Hey it's not my fault she decided to kill herself"

Oh he didn't...

That forces me to bring my attention back to him

"Ini, you have no shame yaz. You're such an abomination to this nation wena, your mother

could've just killed you”

He comes to me huffing with his chest all out, if he thinks he scares me then he's so wrong

I remain standing where I am not flinching at all.

“Uthini”

“I said your mother should've abort...”

I see him swing his open hand and a hot slap lands on my cheek before I could finish my sentences

Wait....

Khaya slapped me, me?

Qhamukile Buthelezi?

“You bastard” that's what I say as I return the slap

I'm not going to let this pig slap me and get away with it

“Wenzani wena (what are doing)”

What does it look like, I just slapped you.

Now everyone has come to look at us, I don't care about that I've got so much anger and hate towards

Khaya that I don't know what to do with myself right now

“Thobile killed herself because you gave her aids and now you want to kill her too, yaz uyinja wena”

This time he actually punches me but if he thinks that will shut me up then he's clearly mistaken

“Hit me, angithi you're not a man enough so beating up woman makes you think ukuthi that small penis between your legs has grown, continue hit me” I say stepping towards him

I want him to hit me

He slaps me again and kicks me so hard that I crouch down

“You'll regret the day you were born” I scream as he continues to hit me

I don't know where did Zwelethu come from but I just see him throwing Khaya on the floor punching him.

Everyone keeps screaming for him to stop because he's just ready to kill him not that I care.

He doesn't deserve to live anyway.

Zwelethu continues to punch him until some of the teachers comes to his rescue

“Stand up and fight me like a man wena” Zwelethu shouts trying to get out of the two manly teachers holding him.

I haven't shed even one tear, I'm also screaming begging this teachers to let go of Zwelethu, I want him to kill Khaya.

“Stop it maan” I didn't even see when Mr Buthelezi came

“Take all three of them to my office”

The two teachers drag the irate Zwelethu inside the school and I follow behind.

I'm just burning with fire.

I didn't think its possible to loath anyone like hate Khaya.

The principal comes in with the staggering and bleeding Khaya, I must say Zwelethu did an impressive job in rearranging his his with the little

time he beat him up in.

I so wish Khaya has broken bones.

“What the hell is happening here” Mr Buthelezi shouts looking at me

I know I’ll say something vile and disrespectful should I open my mouth so out of respect I keep quiet

“Qhamukile I asked you a question” he’s never shouted me like this before

My nose is bleeding so why is he asking me all this, can’t he see I’ve been man handled

“I’m not going to ask again” Zwelethu is ready to kill Khaya, he’s looking at him with fury in his eyes

“Baba Khaya started it all” I tell him

“Hey wena you the one that came to me”

“Stop winning like a bitch wena you were beating her out there” Zwelethu says

I’m sure he forgot there’s elders in this room

“Uthini (what did you say” Khaya bucks

“This is not over wena, you’ll know me well once we go out of here” Zwelethu

“Hey stop it you two, what are you two doing here anyway you both way too old to be hanging around school children”

“Clearly Khaya doesn’t know his peers all this knows to infecting young girls with his aids”

The look I get from Mr Buthelezi shuts me up immediately

“What were you doing here” he repeats

“I was here to pick up my sister” does Khaya have to lie all the time

“The same sister you were kissing?” I seriously hate this guy

“Qhamukile” Mr Buthelezi says sternly

“And wena”

“I transport some of the leaners here” I haven’t seen him here before.

He must have started this recently

Mr Buthelezi nods at him.

I'm so glad he came when he did I don't even want to know what Khaya could've done to me.

"I don't ever want to see the both of you here and wena" Mr Buthelezi says and points at Khaya

"If I ever see you with young girls I'm going to do more damage than what he's done"

I can't believe he's letting Khaya go just like that.

"You two get out of my sight and wena Qhamukile call your brother to come here"

Oh shit...

I'm not ready to deal with Misuzulu yet but I've got no choice but to call him

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NOKHAYA

We all have problems you know, Qhamukile needs to deal with her own stuff and leave me out of it. I've got bigger fish to fry here and I can't help her.

My body is still hurting from the events of Tuesday, my vagina is not any better in fact I think baboon teared me up, it's paining so much. He sent his driver to drop me off yesterday morning so when I got home I just took a long bath. I have never scrubbed myself so hard before I thought maybe if I scrubbed all the parts he touched then maybe I'd feel clean somehow, I'm broken I can't even look myself in the mirror without repulsing, that's how much I disgust myself.

I hate Akin with everything in me.

I spent the whole of yesterday in bed and I want nothing more than to spend the rest of today mopping around feeling sorry for myself again but I've got something to do first.

It's blazing hot but i'm oblivious to the heat I'm wearing my baggy tracksuits and a hat I'm trying to

hide away my body, it's my curves and big butt that got me here in the first place. I'm also trying to hide my scars, I know wearing tracksuit will not hide any scars because they are imbedded in the inside but my delusional mind somehow believes that me dressing up like this will make me invincible to everyone.

I know I've done some pretty shady things in the past and I know some of you don't even feel sorry for me I don't care about that but I've decided to do the right thing, not for me but for the person that means the world to me, my aunt.

I take a deep breath before walking into Matshani's police station.

There's a lady in the front desk talking on the phone.

"Hello" I greet her but she looks at me once and continue with her conversation

She shows me a chair and I sit and wait.

I'm doing the right thing I repeat that line over and over again in my head.

Part of me wants to leave this place and never look back but I know better, I've learnt my lesson so I remain glued to my seat until the lady finishes with her phone call

"What can I do for you" she says rudely

I guess I deserve every little bad thing happening to me.

"Uhm..." I take a deep breath

This is hard for me.

"I don't have all day"

"Can I please speak to detective Msomi"

I say softly

Tears are just a blink away

"He's on a late shift so you can come back later or you can say whatever you have to say"

I guess I deserve that.

It's now or never.

"I've got a confession to make" you

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QHAMUKILE

Misuzulu is the first one to come in followed by Mondli I'm not sure why isn't Mondli at school but I'm glad to see him, remember I said once told you he's a voice of reason.

I know Misuzulu will bite my head off once he hears the whole story.

They all hate it when I start fights, they always tell me I'm not one of the boys so I should stop fighting.

I know fighting is wrong but Khaya just brings out that violence in me.

"What's happened here" Misuzulu's anger is not missed, he didn't even greet

I'm sure him seeing these bruises on my face

angered him

“Sawubona ndodana” Mr Buthelezi extends his hand

my big angry brothers shakes his hand out of respect but he’s patience is running low

“Qhamukile what happened to you” now distraught Mondli asks angrily too

“She had a fight with some guy here” Mr Mabas o say.

He is one of the teachers that were restraining Zwelethu.

“What, whose that guy, where is he” Misuzulu is beyond angry now

I can see why the principal let Khaya go, he knows my brothers very well.

“Calm down son, I had to let him go” the principal says softly

“Let him go, how, why” Mondli is also angry

I can’t wait to get out of here so I can tell them what

Khaya did to me

I know they are going to hunt him down and beat his ass, this reminds me of when I was about twelve I think so Thobile's cousins from Ulundi were visiting during December holidays and I was playing with one of the boys who nearly broke my arm

Yoh, my brothers were all ready to kill poor Njabulo imagine nje four grown boys wanting to kill a twelve year old boy.

Let me not trail with past stories I'm sitting quietly looking at both my bother going crazy with worry.

Seeing them all fired up gets me emotional that I feel my tears erupting in the back of my eyes.

I'm forced to narrate the whole story to them and I'm crying hard when I finish I know they are going to be mad at me for all this

“Qhamukile what did we say huh, you fighting guys wena manje” and here I thought Mondli was the reasonable one

“Uyadina maan, are you aware that Khaya could've

hurt you had it not been for Zwelethu” Mondli is angry at me now

Misuzulu is just quietly watching as Mondli unleash his anger at me.

Im taken back by Mondli he’s never the one to reprimand me in fact he’s calms everyone down when it gets heated but not today I guess

“Look at yourself now” he’s talking about my bruises

“and it’s worse cause you went to him, why didn’t you ignore him huh”

I’ll never leave Khaya alone, he’ll feel my wrath whenever I see him but I dare not say that out loud

“You can’t be fighting people, these girls made their choices so wena ungenaphi lapho, are you dating this Khaya”

“No” I say fast

How dare he think that

“Then who he dates should not be your business”

I'm afraid of Mondli

Everyone is just quietly listening to Mondli as he continues to lash out at me

“Stop trying to be mother Teresa maan, you can't save everyone” he says and storms out angrily

I think this has nothing to do with me fighting Khaya but everything to do with the fact that Zwelethu, another Ngcobo came to my rescue yet again.

I'm crying hysterically as he bangs the door I seriously thought he'd be on my side.

Misuzulu is left talking to Mr Buthelezi when I walk out of the office, now I'm forced to go to the car and wait for Misuzulu with angry Mondli, he's seating in the driver seat.

Is it advisable for him to drive as angry as he is?

God I'm scared.

He clicks his tongue when I enter.

Yoh!

Misuzulu joins us after a couple of minutes and we

drive home.

[06/20, 18:16] Lynne: (Continuation)

QHAMUKILE

Mondli is speeding, he doesn't even slow down when we enter Mvubukazi's untarred roads.

Misuzulu is just looking at him from the corner of his eyes shaking his head, he's finding all this amusing because I can tell he's trying so hard to suppress his laughter.

This is not funny of all.

Im not sure why isn't he telling his brother to slow down.

I'm too scared to even say a word I'm just eager to get home and get out of this car.

"Ouch" my head hits the roof of the car when he hits a donga.

God..

They don't even look at me when I scream in pain.

I endure Five more minutes of Mondli horrible driving before we get home.

Thank God!

All my brothers are waiting outside just when we all get off

“What happened” Nqaba shouts before I can even get out of the car

I wonder who told him

I ignore all of them and walk towards the main house

“What happened to her” I can hear him asking as I disappear into the house

I'm just tired and hurt, not hurt physically but inside. Seeing Khaya has managed to evoke emotions I thought I buried.

I don't have a sister today and it all because of him.

how can he even show his face to the world after what he's done to Thobile.

Nqaba pushes my bedroom door as I wipe my tears away

“Whose this Khaya that did this to you” I’m too emotional right now so I just cry loudly

“Ntonto talk to me” he comes to hug me.

“Thobiles boyfriend” I say in between my sobs

“Thobile? Your friend that died?” He asked a little confused

I nod my answer

“Shhh don’t cry” I’m surprised he’s the one comforting me right now, it’s always Mondli doing this when they all lash out at me but today my sweet favorite brother is the one that’s shouting at me.

“Hai maan Nqaba you now the one babying her let her be, she fights men yena angithi” Gcina shouts coming in as well and in no time my room is filled with all the Buthelezi’s testosterone.

“Yes and now we have yet another Ngcobo to thank, hai man must you always attract trouble” Mondli

again.

They all look at him amazed, Mondli has never raised his voice at me.

This is the very first time I'm seeing him so angry at me.

why is Misuzulu and Gatscha just looking at these two attack me like this though?

They are not even fazed by my tears.

“Which Ngcobo, what are you talking about” Nqaba Lord... now he too will know that Zwelethu helped me.

“Ask her” Mondli says and walks out

“What is Mondli talking about, didn't I tell you to stay away from that Ngcobo boy”

I'm not sure if Nqaba is now angry or what but he's no longer as calm as he was a minute ago

I'm just looking at them with tears streaming down my face

“Hey khuluma maan” Gcina

I don't know what is he still doing here, Mondli left
can he follow him please

“Zwelethu helped when Khaya was attaching me” I
say softly

“Zwelethu, Zwelethu, Zwelethu Ngcbobo” he says
calmly and yet angrily, I'm not sure if that
combination is possible but that's what I'm seeing
here

“Yes” that comes out as a whisper

“Ini (What)” He's bemused by my revelations

“Qhamukile it was that boy now it's his brother,
what do we have to do for you to stay the hell away
from the Ngcobo's huh, tell me must we all die
before you leave them alone” gone is the concerned
Nqaba now he's replaced with the Nqaba that hates
the Ngcobo's.

Doesn't anyone care that I was attached?

Is Zwelethu helping me more important than my
bruised face?

I thought I matter more than this little ridiculous

feud but clearly I was wrong.

A Ngcobo helped me and that's what matters.

I'm just crying as Nqaba continues to shout at me

“You do know that their father killed yours right” I sense sadness in his voice but it is disguised by the anger brewing inside of him

“They could never love you Qhamu, they just want to ...”

“Ok enough now, you two out” Nqaba is cut short by Gatsha

It took him a while, he's been standing there watching as Nqaba shouts at me.

I understand the enormity towards the Ngcobo and I'm not asking any of my brother to suddenly love them but Zwelethu was there for me today and that proves how they've let go of this stupid rivalry.

“Wena” Nqaba points at me and storms out

“Ntonto enough with the tears now, tell me exactly what happened”

Misuzulu is now serious so I quickly wipe my tears and narrate the story from the beginning

“Thobile was dating Khaya and he impregnated and infected her with HIV then from there he left her” that’s as brief as I can be besides I want them to understand my anger and why I reacted the way I did.

“Kodwa wena ungenaphi lapho (but how is that any of you business)”

“bhuti Thobile was a sister to me, she’s been my best friend since I was six and I know she dated Khaya out of her own free will but bhuti Khaya is married and didn’t tell her I’m sorry I started a fight with him but I didn’t know what to do, he just makes me angry, bhuti my bruises are nothing compared to what I feel, I blame him for everything he took the one thing I had close to a sister”

I’m trying to restrain my tears.

Misuzulu and Gatscha are just looking at me unemotional, I’m not sure if they see my point or believe what I’m saying but I continue anyway

“So please forgive for fighting in Thobile’s honor” I say and let tears I’ve been suppressing fall

“Don’t cry we understand but please Ntonto stay away from the Ngcobo family” Gatscha says and hugs me.

He lets me cry until I’m calm

“Where does this Khaya come from” Misuzulu asks clenching his teeth, I’m not sure if he’s angry or what I’m just happy he’s letting this Ngcobo thing go and focusing on the real reason why Zwelethu has to interject in the first place.

“I’m not sure but he works at Liberty shopping center I think”

They both look at each other and nod, I’m not sure what that means but I know when not to question my brothers.

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MNQOBI

I've just come out of class and I'm walking out of campus with Simphiwe, we've gotten quite close since I moved in here.

I'm loving J o'burg more than I thought I would , I love the vibe and the ladies are not too bad either.

I chuckle just as I think about it.

I'm not dating anyone yet I'm just taking my time you know getting to know the town first but mostly I'm still trying to forget about Qhamu and move on.

I've never taken such a long time trying to get over someone in fact I've never needed to move on from a lover because I've never loved before so thank you very much Qhamu...

Simphiwe has tried to hook me up with a few girls, he says I need to get laid but I don't care much about that besides as I've mentioned I'm not interested . There's one girl I've gotten to be good friends with, Thozama. She's a really cool girl and I

love that she is not wild like some of the girls I've seen here.

Her actions tells me she like me but I straight up told her about my reservations about entering into a real and she understood.

She's a beauty hey.

My phone rings for the hundredth time today, I know it's Nokhaya so I ignore it and continue my conversation with Simphiwe

“So you coming right” he's invited to some party this weekend and he's been persuading me to join him but as you know I'm not much of a party person so I've been giving him vague answers

“Come on it's going to be fun and who knows you might get to bang some hot thing there” Simphiwe loves ladies I should tell you.

“Sure I'll join” I finally give in

I know he's not going to let go so I might as well go with him

“Ao zwe ke”

He's excited

I guess a night out won't hurt plus I've got to unwind a little before I start with mid year exams

My phone rings again and Nokhaya's name pops up

"Just answer her bro" I've told him briefly about my situation with Nokhaya

God give me strength I say a silent prayer before I answer

"Nokhaya" I say exasperated

I don't know why do I not love her like I love Qhamu and to make matters worse I'm the one who agreed to this sham of a relationship.

No Mngobi, don't be a hypocrite I reprimand myself inwardly

Nokhaya has been great to me.

"How are you" I ask when she remains quiet

"Mngobi I'm so sorry" she says softly, her voice is breaking

“Sorry?” She’s baffling me

“I’m so sorry Mngqobi, i can’t explain right now but I’m sorry” she says crying and hangs up

Nokhaya can be too dramatic for my liking

I’m sure this is some plot to get my attention but I’m not going to fall for it this time around.

“And then”

“Ah she hung up” I tell him and put my phone back into my pocket

We walking to our flat and so I’m hungry I’ve been surviving on take outs and noodles ever since I’ve been here so you can imagine how happy I am to see Thozama carrying a lunch tin waiting at the entrance of the flat

“I come barring gifts” she’s say sweetly

I love how benign she is

“Lucky bastard” Simphiwe says jokingly

Thozama is very innocent and loving and that’s the reason why I’m not persuading any relationship

with her. My mind and heart are not in the right place and I don't want to hurt her at all.

“Don't be jealous”

We all go to my apartment and chill until Simphiwe leaves myself and Thozama alone.

We sitting on a couch watching a movie

“Thank you very much for the food”

She cooked rice and stew, her food somehow remind me of my mother's cooking, this is one of the reason I'm not dating Thozama, she's too good to date a broken Mngobi that's why I'm fixing myself so that when I start dating her I fully give my heart to her.

“It's my pleasure” she's says looking at me fondly

I hate how much her eyes sparkle when she looks at me

“Mngobi” I know what she's going to say next

She's admitted in loving me but...

“Tho Tho” that's what I call her

I smile and look at her, she's got a beautiful smile

"You know I'm not ready for a relationship and I don't want our friendship to end because of something as fribble as that" i seriously don't want to hurt her.

Thozama has been loving me since she meet me and in as much as I want to date her i can't date her well at least not right now.

I just want to focus on my school work and unlove Qhamu and maybe after that I'll love her like she deserves

"I'm willing to wait until you ready"

See why I say she's a good person

"I'd love that a lot" I'm so looking forward to loving her but first I want to entirely be over Qhamu in that way I'll entirely give my heart to her.

We spend the rest of the day watching movies and talking about our childhood.

I enjoy every moment I get to spend with Thozama.

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It would be so good if I can at least get to 3k likes for each insert going forward.

Imagine how that would motivate me to write more.

goodnight

[06/20, 18:16] Lynne: (Continuation)

NARRATED

Zwelethu is still furious by what Khaya did to Qhamukile when he finally goes home.

Khaya managed to run from him immediately when they were leas ed by the principal and Zwelethu is angered by the fact that he was unable to catch him.

He's huffing and panting when he walks into the house.

"nca" he clicks his tongue out loud before enters the house.

He finds Makhosini watching television seating in his wheelchair

He too hasn't told anyone that he can now feel his legs.

He knows how excited his mother will be so he doesn't want to say anything as yet just Incase it's his mind playing tricks on him, the thought of him walking again excites him too but he's not ready to let his family know as yet.

Makhosini is startled by an angry Zwelethu

"And then" he asks concerned while observing his younger brother

"Yaz Bafo some guys have no shame, imagine nje a grown ass man beating up a defenceless young girl" Zwelethu scoffs after saying that

"Quit the dramatics Zwelethu and tell me what

happened”

If Makhosini wasn't as manly he is he could've rolled his eyes at his brother

“Qhamukile was beaten up by some guy, if I wasn't there the guy couldn't probably killed her”

The scene replays again in his mind causing him to get angry all over again

Makhosini's anger too erupts from hearing that, he doesn't understand why he has a need to always protect Qhamukile, she is a Buthelezi so him reacting this way really baffles him.

“Men who beat up woman repulse me” Zwelethu says and sits on the couch

Zwelethu's reaction to this whole thing is solemnly motivated by his hate for men who beats woman, he's seen his father do it over and over again to his mother so seeing a man beat up a woman evoke memories he has managed to suppress somewhere in the back of his brain. He would have the same way even if it was not Qhamukile being beaten up.

“And why are you alone, where is Manqoba” he

asks irritated

Makhosini should not be left alone at all and
Manqoba knows it.

“Couldn’t he wait for me to come back?”

Makhosini’s mind is still processing that someone
beat up Qhamukile, he doesn’t care much about
Manqoba’s disappearing acts he used to it now.

“What do mean someone hurt Qhamu” he asks
worried

He hates the fact that he can’t stop worrying about
a Buthelezi.

“Ey Manqoba knows very well that he should never
leave you alone here maan” Zwelethu is now
angered by the fact that Makhosini is all alone

“How is she?”

“Let me call him” it’s quite funny that they are
talking to each other but not with each other

“Ey maan Zwelethu stop worrying about me, I’m
fine” he shouts

Zwelethu is puzzled by his brother's outburst

“Who is that guy?”

“Which guy”

“Hey maan Zwelethu, the guy that beat Qhamukile”

Zwelethu shrugs

“I don't know him, it's some punk ass named Khaya”

Zwelethu stands up to go to the kitchen but stops midway to look at his brother inquisitively

“And then” Makhosini asks coolly

“What is it to you anyway?”

“Nothing, nothing I'm just asking” Makhosini answers fast

Zwelethu nods and continues to walk to the kitchen to make himself and Makhosini something to eat.

Makhosini already has his phone out before Zwelethu can disappear

“Mzilikazi I need you to find me someone”

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NOKHAYA

I've been here at the police station all day waiting for officer Msomi to take my statement.

As soon as I said I've got a confession to make that rude lady instructed me to sit and wait for officer Msomi and six hours I'm still waiting.

Part of me wants to go home and never look but my stone cold heart won't let me, I'm tired and hungry from sitting here and not forgetting that I'm a mess. I've been crying ever since I got here.

Detective Msomi enters just as I was about to tell you about the call I had with Mnqobi.

He was so rude to me and I'm his suppose girlfriend.

I guess I deserve all it.

“Ah Nombi emhlophe, sawubona” at first I'd be so

delighted by him calling me that but now I hate this light skin I have maybe if I was darker I wouldn't have thought I was beautiful, maybe I wouldn't have thought everyone who is darker is beneath me. Let me not bore you with my hate for my skin colour I'm actually seated in an interrogation room about to confess to my crimes.

"Hello officer" I greet softly

"Offer Mbele tells me you have something that you want us to talk about" he says sitting on the opposite side

I don't understand his demeanor but I'm not hear for that

"Yes, uhm" I stop to take a deep breath

"Relax Beautiful, I'm here to service you today, take your time" I don't like that sound of that at all

"I lied" I start to which he nods to

"I lied about my uncle raping me" I says after exhaling breath I've been holding

"You lied" he's not really surprised by this

“Yes” I say nodding

“I lied, I was just so afraid of my aunt finding out I was no longer a virgin so I lied , I’m so sorry officer I know lying is a serious offense it’s just that I was so scared to tell the truth especially after what Akin did to me. Officer I’m so sorry I just want my uncle out of prison, my aunt is hurting and that’s all because of me. Please release him” i managed to say through my tears

“Calm down sis i” he hands me a bottled water which I down instantly

“So you lied about your uncle raping you, but why and whose this Akin that you are talking about” he asks once he’s sure that I’m calm

“Yes and im sorry about that. Akin is a Nigerian guy I know who..who.. Let’s just say he’s a bad guy officer” I can’t even say out loud that Akin forced me to abort our baby

I know I didn’t want that child too but he made a choice for me by getting rid of it but that’s not what pains me most.

He sold me to a monster and that's what breaks me beyond repair

"I see"

He goes on to tell me about the repercussions of lying in court. My mind is just blocking out everything he's saying I just want him to tell me that my uncle will be freed, I don't care about me or what happens to me I deserve every little bad thing that's happening to me.

"You could possibly face three to four years in jail for this"

Wait what?

"Four years" I say shocked

I thought I'd get a slap in the wrist seeing that this is my first offense but now Msomi is talking about four years?

Four bloody years in a prison cell, no!

"But four years it's a long time"

"Yes it is but" he stops to look at me very expectantly

“Unless” I ask agog

He stands and walk around the table to my side and runs his hand on top of mine

“Unless if you do something for me” he says and licks his lips

Lord please, this can't be happening to me.

“I can help you stay out of prison and you can help me in some other ways that can only make a man like myself happy”

“What do you mean by that” I'm crossing fingers hoping he doesn't mean what I think he means

“What I'm saying is your uncle will be released from incarceration and I'll also make sure nothing happens to you but you know everything has a price” he moves back to his seat

“How much” I still have that seven thousand Akin gave me so it should be enough

“I don't want your money” he says casually

“What do you want?”

Please lord I pray silently

“You’re a grown woman, figure it out. Here’s my number call me when you ready” he winks at me and gives me a piece of paper

I feel so dirty right now

Why is that I’m always subjected to such dirtiness?

Even behind these baggy tracksuits my body still manages to make men lust for me.

“I’d love to see what’s underneath that” with that said he stands up

“I’ll wait to here from you soon”

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QHAMUKILE

It’s after four pm and I want nothing more than a

good bath and sleep after the events of today but Gatsha insists I see a doctor for my bruises.

I'm fine I keep telling him but he won't listen in fact we actually on our way to see a doctor.

Gatsha is too much for my soul to keep up I mean which doctor is open this time of the day?

I understand my brother is not so clued up when it comes to these kind of things and I keep telling him that no doctor is open and that I'm fine but my plea fall on deaf ears.

He's driving really fast but not Mondli fast, I'm just sitting in the back irked by Gatsha's over protectiveness.

We are both just silent

"Bhuti can I ask" the silence is not doing me any good

"What is it Ntonto" he asks while looking ahead on the road

"What happened, where did this rivalry start from"

I seriously need to know

He turns his head to look at me briefly and look back on the road again

“Why do you want to know?”

My eyes are rolling back right

Qhamu STOP IT, I reprimand myself inwardly

“I want to know why you guys hate the Ngcobo so much, maybe I’ll understand” I lean in on the space between the front seats

I have a feeling this is going to be a lengthy conversation

“Qhamukile this feud started a long time ago” that I know but why

“I heard stories when I was young about how it all started but nothing certain, but my little sister that’s not the only reason why we hate the Ngcobo’s like this”

Can he just get to the point?

“Bad things happened, people died because of what’s going on I was too young when it all happened but Misuzulu can tell you all about it, he

has scars because of this war I'm in no liberty to tell you what happened to him but I'm advising you to stay away from the Ngcobo's"

What scars is he talking about?

"Are you talking about the scar that's on his rib" I always thought he got that scar from falling or something

"That's one of many, Ntonto we not telling you anything because we trying to protect you"

One of many huh

"Bhuti please tell me what happened to Misuzulu I promise I won't say anything"

He shakes his head chucking

"I know you like the back of my hand Qhamu and whatever you do, do not I repeat do not ask him about his scars" he says all serious

"We just want to move forward from the past but we won't be able to do that with you busy running to the Ngcobo's" He stops the car

Eish I didn't even realize we've arrived, much to

Gatsha's relief, the doors are still open.

This conversation is not over, I want to know what happened to my brother.

We hurriedly go in...I don't want to be here really but I guess I've got no choice.

The signs that shows that the doctor closes at six. What kind of doctor is this?

I'm next

"Hello" the sweet doctors greets once I'm seated in the consultation room

"What can I help with today?"

Duh, I've got bruises on my face.

"I had a fight earlier so my brother is just afraid I might have serious injuries" I want to roll my eyes just thinking about how dramatic Gatsha is, it's no use being here at all but seeing that I've been wanting to go to the clinic I might as well address my issues with the doctor so I do so once she's checked that I'm fine.

"You will be fine, the swelling on your ribs will come

down in a few days, just don't fight again"

I make no promises because I know I'll react the same way again should my path cross with Khayaletu, I hate that guy.

"Yes I won't fight anymore" I tell her smiling

Let me quickly ask...

"Doctor you know, a while back I had unprotected sex and I'm afraid I might have contracted some STI's" talking about this is so embarrassing.

"Why do you think that, do you feel any discomfort in your genitals?"

I shake my head

"I'm just worried that's all"

She first tells me about the consequences of unprotected sex before she checks me. I'm relieved to know that I'm not sick in anyway, she further test me for a pregnancy and just as expected the test comes out with one line. I knew I wasn't pregnant and she just confirmed it.

She gives me pain medication and Gatscha and

myself go back home.

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I managed to write that today because I was not so busy at work.

I'm not promising any insert until I'm finished with exams

[06/20, 18:16] Lynne: chapter twenty four

Unedited...

QHAMUKILE

A few weeks later..

Do you know that feeling you get when someone is watching you?

Well that's how I've been feeling these past few weeks. I've tried ignoring it thinking I'm being overly paranoid but I can't help feel like I'm being stalked, I know I sound dramatic right now so let me rather say watched.

I glance around when the uneasy feeling comes back but nothing, I'm not seeing anything irregular, it's just a few leaners going on about their businesses.

My mind must be playing tricks on me.

I actually laugh at myself thinking how crazy I am to think someone is stalking me.

It's two days before school closes for the first term, I'm excited and sad at the same time, I've leaned to love it here plus I'm doing so great at my school work I kicked ass on the maths paper I've just written today. I'm telling you these extra glasses are helping a lot and let me not forget to mention

Lungelo as well, he's been very helpful and it's not easy because he helps me out through the phone. Mr Buthelezi is happier than myself, god bless that man's heart he came to my homestead the following day after that Khaya's scene just to check on me. I once said I'm like a daughter she never had, I bet you if his sons were all not married and younger I'm sure he's organize that I marry one. I love him too much though.

My bruises have healed so I'm back at being the Qhamu I know and love, did I mention my Afro is growing?

Soon it will be big and puffy like it used to be.

It's actually Friday after school and I'm walking the bus stop

I never use my headsets now because of this uneasy feeling I get so I don't have my headsets on I'm just walking slowly.

"Hi" a soft voice greets behind me

I stop and turn

“Hi” I greet back

It's Khaya's girlfriend.

I can only hope she's no longer with him.

“I just want to thank you for what you did the other day, if it wasn't for you I don't know what could've happened to me” she says nervously

“It was nothing”

I didn't do it for her, I did all that in honor of my late friend.

I don't care what you think about how I reacted but I'll always go berserk when I see that paedophile, I hate him so much.

“Thank you anyway”

Ok go away now.

I just hate it when young girls date guys like Khaya, older married with kids..

she should just focus on her studies and date her peers.

“I'm Ntombizanele by the way but you can call me

Zane”

“And I’m Qhamukile”

We both continue to walk to the bus stop.

“I’m actually waiting for my gay brother to come and get me but I’ll wait with you” I actually want to roll my eyes but I stop myself before I could.

I want to be left alone but because I never get what I want I now have to talk to this girl and did she have to mention that her brother is gay?

Some people.

“And I’m sorry about your friend, I heard what happened to her”

I hate talking about Thobile so I just nod

“So how are the exams”

I’ve concluded, she talks a lot.

By the time her brother arrives I’ve heard all her life story.

I know you’re interested but I’ll tell you anyway

She moved this side to stay with her father and the rest of her siblings. She's from Nkandla where she used to stay with her maternal grandmother she doesn't mention where her mom is though.

She's in grade ten.

"Hello ladies" the brother greets

He looks very familiar, I think I've seen him hanging around with Nokhaya and Nontombi

"Qhamu this is my brother Lucas and this is Qhamu" Zane introduces us

"Hi Qhamukile, how are you" the bubbly Lucas asks

I wonder how does he know my full name

"I'm good and you"

"Good, where is Mngqobi I haven't seen him in a while"

Okay, he definitely knows me

"How do you know him"

"Don't you know me, I'm Nokhaya's friend and I know him because they used to date or something

but he left her for you”

I guess talking too much runs in the family

“Oh Mngobi left, he’s in joburg”

I can’t help feel hurt by saying that, it’s been so long since I spoke about him.

“Alright, see you around” with that he drives away

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NOKHAYA

The whole process of my uncle getting released has been finalized so I’m expecting him to come through those doors anytime from now. I’m scared to know what he’ll do to me once he gets here my aunt hasn’t been talking to me not that I’m expecting her to, I’m the reason her husband was falsely imprisoned in the first place. I know she

hates me just as much as he hates me too and I should be hating myself too.

I am really ashamed to admit that I gave in and slept with officer Ms omi, I know you are judging me but what was I supposed to do?

Spend four years of my life in prison?

I don't think so.

I called him two days back and told him I'm ready to do anything, he was delighted at that because he came to me same day. The deed was done in his car and I'm happy to say he used protection and he was also gentle unlike the baboon and Akin.

Speaking of Akin and his baboon I haven't seen or heard from them since I was forced me to sleep with Chikoze not that I want to see them but I need that little powder Akin always has, I can't cope with everything that's happening to me. it's just too much and I'm too much of a coward to kill myself so I'll use the one that makes me forget.

I take out my phone and text Akin, I can't control this urge anymore I need it, I need to escape the horrors of my reality.

“hi I need to see you” I text him
a minute late he texts back “I’m on my way”
I’m not too thrilled that he’ll be here soon but I need
what he can give me and that’s an escape.

It takes him four hours before he sends me a text
telling me he is outside.

my hair looks like I’ve been hit by a tornado and
these Betty clothes I’m wearing ain’t helping my
image either. I haven’t bathed since I slept with
Msomi so I smell of sex, sweat and my mouth
smells too but I couldn’t care-less.

What’s the use of bathing when I feel this dirty on
the inside, no amount of baths will make me feel
clean so why bother myself huh?

My aunt is sitting in the lounge area watching tv
when I emerge from my bedroom

She switches off the tv when she sees me

“Nokhaya uDumisani is coming home today and he
said he doesn’t want to find you here so I’d suggest
to back you bags, I don’t know or care where you go
I just want you out of my house” she says and
walks out

“Aunty” I run after her crying
I know I wronged her but I have nowhere to go.

“I’m sorry Aunty, please forgive”

She doesn’t even look back, she goes into her
bedroom and slams the door in my face.

A text from Akin comes through from Akin telling
me he doesn’t have all day so I quickly stand from
the floor wipe my tears and go to my room to pack
my clothes.

Akin is parked just across the street waiting
impatiently, he is driving a new Mercedes today.

“Hi” I greet and put my suitcase in the back seat and
go to sit in the passenger seat.

The car even has that new car smell.

“And that, what’s with the bags”

No hello just that rude comment from him

I quickly wipe my tears away and look at him with a
straight face

“Akin my aunt chased me away so I’m moving in
with you” I say and fold my arms

“What, you’re crazy to even think that. You’re not moving in with me, I’ve got a wife and kids Nokhaya what do you think my wife will say huh” he’s furious.

“A wife Akin, you didn’t bother think about her when you were in between my thighs so I don’t care”

“I said you are not moving in with me” I know if I continue arguing with him it won’t end well for me so I sit quietly and try to block out all the horrible things he says as he curse at me

bitch, whore, rubbish, useless...he says them all but it’s nothing new. I’m used to him saying all these things to me.

He starts the car once he realises I’m not going anywhere and drives us to some small house just outside the city.

“Do you have it” I ask the moment we enter the house

I need to feel good and coke is the only thing that’s able to do that

He throws me packet and I smoke, in a few minutes I’m high and I forget all about my sour life.

We bang before he leaves, I know Akin will never get over me, my pussy is the bomb and he loves it.

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QHAMU

I'm with Misuzulu and we've just had super, I'm actually surprised he's here. It's a Friday after all.

"That was good" he says putting the plate on the table and changes the tv channel to SABC one for the seven thirty news

News? How boring I was actually waiting for Scandal.

"Thank you bhuti, I know stew is your favorite" I actually want to ask him about his scars but I don't know where to start

"Do you need water or juice" let me soften him up

first

He looks at me questionably and nods

“Water”

I stand up and get him a glass of water which he downs on one go

“So how are the exams”

“Good, all is good. I was wondering if I can go to Durban for the Esther holidays”

“Are you asking or telling me Qhamukile”

God...

“Asking Bhuti, please” part of the reason I want to go to there is to see Lungelo, I promised that I'd visit besides I miss him.

“As long as Aunty has no problem then you can go”

I'm happy with that because I know my aunt will never have a problem with that.

Now back to the boiling issue

“Bhuti can I ask” I'm suddenly nervous

“What is it Ntonto I’m watching news and you’re disturbing me” I ignore that and continue to ask
“I’ve just been wondering how you got that scar below your ribs” my hands are sweating from nerves

I know Gatscha told me not to ask but I just couldn’t resist. I

want to know what really happened to him I doubt he’ll tell me, not with the way he’s looking at me. I’m not sure if he’s angry but he doesn’t look thrilled either

I quickly look down because I can’t take his stare anymore

“I got it long time ago”
ok we talking that’s good sign...

“I know Bhuti but what happened” he shifts his whole body to face me

“Why are you interested”

His grimace makes me wants to dig a whole and hide in it

I know when to push and when not to when it

comes to Misuzulu.

“I just want to know that’s all”

“Mmm I see” he remains silent for a while

“I was eleven when I got it” he pauses and look at me, his hand involuntarily brushes to where his scar is

I give him my innocent smile and just look at him admirably.

All my brothers can’t resist my smile and just as I thought he shakes his head and continues

“Qhamukile what do you want to know” his voice is a little hard but I wasn’t expecting him to smile besides this is as sweet as Misuzulu can be.

“nothing in particular”

“is this about the Ngcobo’s” I shake my head I’m too scared to say anything. He’s on to me.

“I know you Qhamukile, you’re too curious for you own good besides Gatsha did say you might ask”

“I’m sorry bhuti I just need to know to understand” fingers cross..

I say a silent prayer and wait for him to response

“okay” he says and looks back at the tv

I guess he's not telling...

"As you know dad owned taxi's and taverns" I nod

"So I would sometimes help out with cleaning the taverns just to make extra cash but on that day Ma refused, Baba tried talking to her to let me go with him but he failed. Your stubbornness reminds me of her sometimes" he pauses and chuckles

he misses her, I can hear from the sadness in his voice.

"baba tried hey but she was adamant and I knew she wouldn't let me go so I snuck out instead and hid in the back seat of baba's car"

I'm sure it's the very same car that's outside but now it has been burnt so only the decaying body remains

"No one saw that I left until we got to one of dad's taverns and that's when ubaba saw me, there was a huge fight that night so he instructed me to stay in the car. I became the obedient son and remained in the car. I don't know what happened but there were guns fired and out of worry I ran inside to see if baba was not hurt but I was taken before I could even get to inside the tavern."

“taken?”

“yes, taken by Sgidi and Makhosini, Qhamukile somethings you’ll never understands and they are better off left in the past”

he’s told me this so far so I can’t just let him leave me hanging

“what was Makhosini doing there and why did his father take you and you said there was a fight I don’t understand bhuti”

he shake his head and scoffs

“the fight was started by one of Ngcobo’s goon to get ubaba to go there, the Ngcobo’s planned to kill him that night so I’m guessing that’s why Makhosini was there too”

“Anyway Makhosini and his father took me to the river bends of Umgeni”

Makhosini was young himself so ...

“Makhosini shot me right here and pushed me into the river”

what?

“what? What do you mean he shot you”

“I’m saying Makhosini shot me after him and his father beat me half to death and he threw me in the

river to die” I can hear the anger in his voice
“what if he was forced by his father” I can’t believe
I’m saying this

“yes he was forced by his father but the hatred in
his eyes was not forced by anyone besides that
doesn’t change the fact that he wanted to kill me”

“how did you survive”

“ubaba came just in time”

now I understand why Misuzulu hates Makhosini
but I think we all need to sit down and talk about
this I’m sure Makhosini didn’t intent to do kill him

“don’t you think you guys need to all sit down and
talk I mean ...” I regret saying those words before I
can finish my sentence

Misuzlu’s face has changed from soft to hard
instantly.

His eyes even turned red

“are you out of your mind, are you too in love with
that boy that you’d think there’ll ever be peace
between us. I hat...”

“A man identified as Khayaletu Zwane was found
dead near Umgeni river.” We both look at the TV and
a picture of Khaya is displayed on the Tv screen

“The investigating officer Manqele from Pietermaritzburg police station said he was shot three times in the head” the reporter continues

“eh the deceased was castrated before he was killed. We suspect he was killed by someone who practise sorcery because his testicles were hanged around his neck when we found him, no arrest has been made as yet but we are doing everything we can to find the culprits who did this” a very fat detective says

“No” my hand involuntarily goes to my mouth

“Bhuti did you do this”

“Hey wena Qhamukile, am I a murder now” I’ve infuriated Misuzulu even more

I quickly look at him to see if I’ll be able to see any fraction of truth in his eyes but nothing.

“you heard the police he was killed by someone who practise witchcraft ” my overly thoughts have me thinking my brothers killed Khaya

“tell me you didn’t kill him, please”

“I don’t have time for this” he says and stands up

I know I hated Khaya but I didn't want him to die, he has two kids and a wife that still needs him.

I look at my brother again wanting to see any truth in what he just said but his face is just hard, Misuzulu is just hard to read.

"Bhuti please tell me the truth" I feel so guilty it's my fault that Khaya is dead

"Qhamukile ufuna ukungicasula ke manje (you want to piss me off), I said I didn't kill him" he doesn't shout but his voice is stern

I didn't know I'm crying until I feel my tears running down my face

"Ei sisi wipe those tears right now, I told you I didn't kill him. I don't know what are you crying for now"

I'm surprised he hasn't left me here; he hates it when I cry.

"are you not the one that said you want him to die" he shakes his head

"he's dead, you should be happy instead you're crying" that confirms it.

My brother killed him.

I'm crying as he continues

“I don't kill people and throw people into river”

wait...he just told me Makhosini threw him into the river but why would Makhosini kill Khaya I doubt he knew him.

“You didn't kill him” I look at him one last time and search his eyes

“he deserved it” he says and shrugs nonchalantly

I can't believe Misuzulu right now.

What happened to my protective brother, who always shielded me from seeing such things?

The Misuzulu I know would have changed the channel as soon as the news reporter mentioned Khaya's name but instead he let me see it on purpose.

“why, bhuti why did you let me see it” I ask through my tears

“I've tried so hard to keep you away from all this Qhamu, you are way too young to know about these things but you forcing me to show you the horror of life. Ntonto you're too stubborn for your own good stop asking questions about things you don't need

to know. I hope you've learnt now" with that said he stands up

don't tell me he's using Khaya's murder to get me to stop asking questions about this rivalry between us, if that's so then I'm done.

I'm done trying to search and trying to understand why they hate each other like this.

I'm done with the Ngcobo's.

"wipe those tears Qhamukile" he says and walks out.

What's happening to my brother?

When did he become so heartless

I want to believe that he didn't kill Khaya but in my heart I know he did. I cry hard just thinking that it's my fault Khaya died.

I killed him.

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Don't forget to like..comment and share.....I'm hoping we can get over 3k likes

[06/20, 18:17] Lynne: Chapter 25

MNQOBI

I miss home so much that the only thing that reminds me of Matsheni is the loud Maskhandi music blasting through my speakers. Mfiliseni Magubane is causing misery to my next door neighbors because I know how much some of them hate the maskhandi music but I miss my brothers so much and mfiliseni's music is what makes me feel closer to all my them, I haven't spoken to my half in a while so I take out my phone and call him.

"Photo copy" he answers

Tell me why did I call him

He knows how much I hate when he calls me his copy and he knows it. I bet you he's doing it just to annoy me.

I chuckle before I answer him

“wele lam (my twin) how are you”

“I’m good, I see you missing your older brother” I shake my head at that

he’s older by what?

A minute?

Can you believe i spent half of my child arguing that a minute makes no difference but I’m tired now.

I’ve accepted that he is older.

“How’s everyone at home” I miss them so much

“We all good, hows joburg treating you”

“Good, good” I try and say convincingly

To tell you the truth I doubt I’ll be coming back here next year, don’t get me wrong joburg is nice and all but home is where the heart is and my heart is taken by someone whose back home.

Don’t look at me like that, you know very well that she has my heart in the palm of her hands.

“How is Sma” I miss him more

“He’s good too, ey Mncedisi wants to tal..”

I can hear as Mncedisi grabs the phone from
Manqoba

I’m tempted to laugh, i actually do laugh that’s up
until he says

“Bafo Zwelethu tells me Qhamukile was attacked by
some punk”

“What”

I can feel anger erupting inside me

“Ey did you have to tell him” Manqoba shouts from
the back ground.

“What do you mean attacked, who the hell has guts
to do that”

I’m now furious

How I wish I can fly to Mvubukazi right now

“Don’t worry, the punk died. Someone got to him
before he could do that to anyone else”

I don't know if I'm relieved or what..

“how the hell does he die before I could get to him”

I want to bring him back to life just to kill him again.

“What kind of a man beats up a young girl like Qhamu” My breath heaves

“Relax Ntwana he's dead”

He gives the phone back to Manqoba

“Ey uyaphapha lo, princess is fine. Her brothers took her to the doctor so she's fine”

I wonder how does he know that because I know damn well Qhamu would never tell him that I'm fact I'm sure her brothers makes sure she's doesn't cross path with a Ngcobo and he called her princess

Sigh

Breath Mnqobi breath..

I'm too worried about Qhamu to entertain Manqoba's little crush anyway

“Are you sure she's fine”

“Yes she’s hundred percent fine but your girlfriend is not”

I’d roll my eyes but that’s not me so I ask him agitated

“What girlfriend” I know very well who he’s referring to

“Weee you forgot you have a girlfriend”

“What happened to Nokhaya” let me ask so we can move on

“Ey her family chased her out because she lied about her uncle raping her or something”

“What” I left so much drama in Matsheni.

I’m so glad I’m not there..

I know I should feel something for Nokhaya and I do but love is not it.

I’m a hypocrite I know.

“Yes, So you need to call her and check if she’s fine you know, play the boyfriend role like you should be”

“Manqoba you know Nokhaya and I wouldn’t have worked out” this is true, I really tried to love her but my heart won’t let me.

Why would it if it belongs to someone else, my subconscious self reminds me.

“I don’t know that” manqoba is starting to bore me now.

I thought me leaving would somehow change his attitude towards me but clearly I was wrong I miss the old Manqoba, not this mean someone I hardly recognize

“anyway call Makhosini he’s been wanting to speak to you”

“Shap, greet everyone for me”

“Shap oh and don’t worry about princess” with that said he hangs up

My little anger comes back, why is Manqoba so fond of my girlfriend.. not my girlfriend but you know what I mean.

I need to talk to Manqoba about this, I know he’s not

in love with Qhamu heck he would never be and that I know it must be my kind playing tricks on me yet again.

I need to calm down.

I grab my phone on top of the bed and dial her number, speaking about her has made me realize just how much I miss her.

I know she changed her cell number but I call anyway and just as expected it takes me straight to voicemail but hearing her voice soothes me somehow.

I once told you that only she can calm me down without even trying. I hang up just after the beed sound, I'm not going to leave any messages, it would be stupid of me right.

I know look like a fool right now but I call again anyway just like I've been doing for the past months and hang up after the beeb.

Crazy...

I laugh at my myself and throw my phone on the

bed, increase the speakers volume and Imis ho by
blaq diamond comes to life “Ehh mangi phenqa
wonke lama bhuku

Kubhaliwe wooh, Kubhaliwe wooh, kubhaliwe

Kugcwele yonke imis ho lena

Kugcwele yonke imis ho lena

Kubhaliwe wooh, Kubhaliwe wooh” I put on repeat
and light my Camel switch...

It’s Saturday, the night of the party is finally here
and instead of sitting and mopping around
pondering about a girl I can’t have I take a long
needed shower after I finish my cigarette. By the
time I walk out of the bathroom it’s after five pm
and Simphiwe said the party starts around six so
I’ve got an hour to get ready.

I wrap a towel around my waist and light a cigarette.

Qhamu once said I’m a heavy smoker...

“Ah Mngobi why do you like polluting your lungs like
this” Qhamu words replays in my head

Ive made peace that I’ll never get over that girl and

the craziest thing is I can actually hear the sound of her sweet voice each time i think of her.

Shaking my head... I'm doomed.

I light another cigarette just to further calm myself and once I'm done "polluting" my lungs I get ready, seeing that I'm missing Qhamu this much I choose to wear one of her favorite black and gold "ridiculous" shirt like she calls them.

She loves these shirts just as much though she won't admit anyway I pair it with a simple black shorts, she would love my choice of wardrobe tonight.

SMH.

My hair is neatly shaven in a fade cut, if only you could see me. I look blazing hot... lol let me stop.

Thozama sends me a text just as I'm about to put my shoe on.

I had to beg her to join me.

she's always locked up in her room so I just thought a night out would do her good beside we need to

unwind a bit, in just a month we will be writing mid year exams.

I quickly put my sneakers on and rush to the boom-gate to open for her

“Haibo Mngqobi what are you wearing” she asks as soon as she sees me.

“What’s wrong with what wearing” I ask inspecting myself

I don’t see anything wrong with my outfit we going to a house slash pool party anyway and unlike her I’m dressed for the occasion.

“Yoh hai you can’t be seriously going to Katlego’s party looking like that”

Ok..

I wasn’t expecting that from her out of all people, Katlego is one of those rich kids, his father is a magistrate and has private businesses too so he’s balling in the monies.

“What does that supposed to mean” I fix my eyes at her

She frowns at me before she says

“What I mean is you don’t look good, let’s go” she takes my hand and walk up stairs

I’m not sure how I feel about her saying that, Qhamu loves these shirts.

“Actually, I am” I tell her once we inside my apartment

She rolls her eyes and goes to my wardrobe, she rampages through it until she manages to find a simple white t-shirt and hands it to me.

She really hates my shirts, I don’t know why does that damper my mood. These shirts have sentimental value to me, I’ll tel you about it someday for now let me deal with this one.

“I’m not changing Thozama”

She frowns and look at me

“Mnqobi come on, you changing”

Ain’t we bossy...

I chuckle and let her be

I know Qhamu would have just laughed it off and told me how ridiculous I look but she would never go to an extent of actually looking for something to change into. for peace sake I change and we leave.

Simphiwe is with two girls I don't know, we Uber to Northcliff, that's where the party is at.

It's a little after nine when we arrive and that's because we had to get one other girl from the other side of town not forgetting the beers.

Simphiwe and his people...

Thozama is clinging on to me not that I mind. The party is buzzing in no time, there's booze everywhere, ladies in bikinis looking all sorts of hot. I'm not much of a drinker but tonight I'm holding a bottle of heineken, this is actually my sixth bottle to be exact. After the eighth bottles, I start to feel a little drunk which means I need to get home besides Thozama is drunk herself, she's been drinking those benini ciders all night.

I'm not sure where Simphiwe is but I know I have to get home. I send him a text and request Uber.

“Thozama lets go” I pull her out of a group of girls dancing, I’m not leaving her here.

There’s too many hungry vultures ready to divulge on drunk innocent girls like Thozama.

I bump into the man of the party himself when i exit the house

“Yoh you leaving dude” Katlego is a snob, he twangs and speaks English all the time and that’s not my kind of people, we just don’t gel.

Don’t get me wrong, I don’t have a problem with that but I choose not to associate myself with them.

“Yes, I need to get her home” I tell him in my deep Zulu

“Mmmh I see you can’t wait man, don’t forget to wrap it up” he says and gives me a manly hug

Ok he’s drunk.

Thozama and I get to my flat after one am, I’m tired and all that I want to do is get into bed and sleep.

“I’m coming with you” Thozama is already out of he car before I could protest

She's too drunk for words so I help her climb the stairs. She throws herself on top of the bed once we in.

I'm too tired and too tipsy to mind so instead I take a blanket and sleep on the couch.

I don't know when did I dose off but I wake up after seven am, my head is throbbing but I ignore it and look at the sleeping Thozama, she looks so peaceful in my bed looking all innocent.

I admire her beauty, she has fair skin, beautiful lips not forgetting that she has a beautiful soul too.

"Staring is rude you know" she says and opens her eyes

"I'm just looking at this beauty before me" I tell her, she's really beautiful.

She sits up straight and fixes her eyes at me I don't know if her head is throbbing like mine but I get her a glass of water and hand it to her anyway

"Thanks" she says softly

"Come here" I move to sit next to her in the bed

She makes me look at her before she tells me
“Mngobi I love you”

I say nothing but bring my lips closer to hers and
kiss her like life depends on it.

I can tell she pouring her heart out to me but I can't
my heart belong to Qhamukile Buthelezi but I kiss
her anyway.

The kiss is not as sultry as Qhamu's kisses, her lips
are not as soft as Qhamu's and her tongue doesn't
feel like Qhamu's.

I pull out just as I feel my region area growing, I
don't want to anything I'll regret.

“Please don't stop” she pulls me back into the kiss

I don't want to hurt her by rejecting her so I kiss her
as well.

I don't know how or when but her t-shirt is already
off her body and she's left with her bra on,
mapholoba throbs just by seeing her two babies.

I move my hand to touch but they don't fit into my
hands like how Qhamu twins fit.

Mngqobi stop, just stop comparing her to Qhamu, maybe sleeping with her will help you forget about Qhamu I tell myself as I continue to suck on her lips.

“Mmm” she moans into my mouth and wraps her arms around my neck

Mapholoba is a little impatient, it been long right?

I remove my T-shirt and my short, soon her jeans follows as well.

“Nooooo.... stop” I say softly

I know I’m just doing this to get over Qhamu and it’s wrong.

“Shhh” she gushed me softly and directs my hand to the inside of her panties

I guess this is happening.

I waste no time and remove them now she’s in her nakedness.

I remove my underwear and get on top of her..

Qhamu’s face appears as I kiss her causing mapholoba to go soft on me.

Like what the hell..

I kiss her deeply but nothing, I can actually here Qhamu's cries and her begging me to stop..

fuck, like I said I'm doomed.

I think Qhamu bewitched me, this is not normal at all.

"Qhamu"

"What"

I said that out loud huh, how many more girls am I going to call Qhamu while trying to have sex with them.

"Fuck, Thozama just go home I can't do this" I say and abruptly get off her and walk to the bathroom

Dammit, I look myself in the mirror "what the hell is wrong with you" I ask my reflection.

I slap myself a few times just make sure I'm still the same Mngobi, the player I know, not this weakling I've become.

"Fuck" I say one last time and step into the shower.

The cold water cascading down my body helps me clear my mind, I did the right thing right?

I know the little head in between my legs agrees because he's soft as sponge right now but the man in me refuses, who says no to sex, with a hotty like Thozama for that matter.

I'm so angry at my uncomfortable thought right now.

Thozama is gone by the time I finish my shower, I'm not sure if I'm saddened or relieved by that, how was I going to even start explaining what happened?

“Hey it's not you baby my dick decided to get soft while trying to have sex because I was thinking about a girl I'm in love with”

Huh

Not so good.. I have to think of something else.

My phone rings just as I was about to send an apology text to Thozama, it's a number I don't recognize but I answer anyway

“Mngobi hello”

“Hello” I repeat again

The line goes dead quiet but I can hear the person's shallow breathes.

“Hello” I repeat again.

I know this might sound crazy if not cliché but have you ever been in love with someone so much that you can actually tell it's them just from the sound of their breathing..

Don't worry it sounds even more crazier now that I told you about it I swear it sounded less crazy in my head.

Say I'm cheesy all you want but my heart knows it. I can see you rolling your eyes at me, lol I can actually imagine what you thinking right this moment but I guess you've never been in love like I have or else you'd know this.

“Qhamukile” I say softly

“Sthandwa Sam (my love)” that angelic voice.

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Apologies for my late delivery

[06/20, 18:17] Lynne: (Continuation)

QHAMUKILE

Sigh

Yes I have to start by sighing, this is just too much to take in. Death.. death..death when will it stop?

People die everyday but when it someone close to you it hurts. I'm with Lungelo and I don't know how to comfort him, His brother in law might have not been close to him but that doesn't mean he's not hurting, his sister lost a husband, his nephew and niece lost a father and that's painful even to me and I don't even know this brother in law. Lungelo and his family had to drive from Mandeni to Pietermaritzburg yesterday because of this sudden death of his sisters husband. I can only imagine what they are all going through.

He looks tired but he insisted on seeing me today, I know he should be with the family but I guess he needs me.

“Hey” I greet after giving him a hug

I don't know whose car he is driving but he is parked away from Mvubukazi, I don't want any of my brothers seeing me.

Yoh just imagine..

Once the pleasantries have been exchanged he tells me about how hurt his sister is.

“Mbaliyothando is a mess, and it hurts because I don't know how to help her” I can see that frustrates him

“They got married five years ago after she got pregnant and what makes matters worse is that their second child is not even six months old” he runs his hands in his head

This is painful.

“The guy was a total ass but she loved him you

know and I accepted him”

I don't know what to say

“What happened to him” I ask

“He got shot”

The world is such a cruel place I tell you.

I like that Lungelo wears his heart on his sleeves,
that very admirable.

I can tell that he's really hurt by this.

Oh remember my Durban trip?

Well I won't be going anymore seeing that this
happened.

The whole reason I was going there in the first
place was to spend some time with Lungelo but i
don't think it's a good idea now, so I decided not to
go.

Lungelo lets out a tired breath and looks at me

smiling

“How were the exams” his spirit is down but I also don’t know how to comfort him.

“Good... I’m sorry about your brother in law, I can’t imagine what your sister is going through”

she has to be a widow at such a young age

“Are there any leads, what are the police saying about all this I mean whoever did this needs to rot in jail” crime in South Africa is rife

“Ah don’t mention those ones, they are just useless. They haven’t found anything” he says and hits his head against the starring wheel frustrated.

“I’m sure they are doing all that they can to find the murders” I can only try and give my few words of encouragement but deep down we all know the South African justice system.

“Khaya J ust has to die now. he left...”

Wait...

“Khaya”

“Yes, my sisters husband. Didn’t you see on the news, he was found with three bullets on his head”

Dammit... God please not Thobile’s Khaya.

“No i didn’t” I say nervously

My heart is ready to jump out of my chest

“Well they cut off his balls before he was killed, imagine how evil is that” I want to leave as in yesterday I can’t be here any longer

“Yes it is hey” I look at my phone hoping there’s a message from my brothers but nothing

“I have to go my brother is looking for me”

I lie through my teeth

“I’ll call you later”

I tell him and climb off the car without waiting for his response.

How do I look him in the eye and offer my condolences knowing that my brother is the one that killed his brother in law.

I can hear him screaming my name behind but I

ignore him and increase my strides.

It's Sunday and the sun is too hot seeing that it's just a little after eleven am but what can we do.. that's Africa for you.

I woke up early and prepared breakfast for all my bothers like i do every Sunday, remember the Buthelezi's ritual?

Like always the buthelezi men left as soon as they were done eating I'm not sure were they were running off to, now that I've mentioned it, they seem to be distant lately and they are hardly home. I wonder what's going on...

Anyway back to Lungelo, he called me last night distraught about his brother in law's death, little did I know that it's the same Khaya I loath with everything in me. Yoh I hate that guy, even in his death I still hate him.

He deserves what happened to him although I wish

his blood wasn't spilled by my brother.

Lol.. I can imagine what you thinking..

hehehe Qhamu was crying blaming herself that Khaya died.. well that was just shock after I throughly thought about all the young girls he infected, all the lives he ruined I concluded that him dying is the best thing that happened to Pietermaritzburg.

I'm evil I know but i lost a true friend and to this day I blame him so you can judge me all you want.

I go straight to my bedroom once I get home, I'm breathing heavily from running, my palm are a little sweaty I don't know if it's nerves or what.

I don't know what to do.

On second though it's a Sunday, so God must be listen to more prayers today so I get on my knees and pray

"God" I start

I always find praying hard.

"I promise this is the last thing I ask of you, I know

my brother killed Khaya but you know he was not a good person too so I'm asking you to please forgive my brother, I don't want him to go to prison so please. He's the best thing close to a father after you took my father from me so I'm asking you to not to let him go to jail, in Jesus name I pray amen"

I know blackmailing God is not the right to do but I'm too desperate here

I still feel uneasy even after praying, I'm not fazed by Khaya's death I'm just worried that my brother might end up in a jail cell, I don't care about Khaya.

I take out my phone and dial his number... he's the only person that I know can calm me, he does it without trying and worse my neurotic self will not stop worrying about Misuzulu going to prison unless I speak to him, like I said he calms me.

He is tranquility.

So I don't have a choice.

I chuckled as I punch his numbers I seriously thought I'd have forgotten them after such long months.

It rings a couple of times before he answers

“Hello” he answers sweetly

His voice is still as hoarsely as I remember

I’m tongue tied so I remain quiet but my breath has quickened instantly

“Hello” he says again

I’m tempted to hang up

“Qhamukile” He says just as I’m about to hang up

I get jittery with butterflies in my stomach

He still has that effect on me.

“Sthandwa sam” those are the first words that comes to mind

I can’t see him but I can feel his smile

We both remain quiet just breathing through the phone

“You finally called”

“I did didn’t I?” I’m actually blushing

Please don’t ask me why because I don’t know but

the sound of his croaky voice does something to me on the inside.

“It took you long enough” I roll my eyes

Now this is the Mngqobi I know and love

“Roll those beautiful eyes all you want my love, one day...”

“They will not roll back” I’ve heard that line too many times to count

We both chuckles and we remain silent for some time

I told you he calms me, see how have I forgotten all about Khaya’s death and Misuzulu going to prison thanks to Mngqobi.

“How are you” he asks breaking the silence

I smile before I answer him

“I’m good and how are you” those feelings I thought I buried comes back rushing

good people I love Mngqobiwesizwe Ngcobo maan!

I love him with everything in me, I can feel and hear

his heart beating and I know it beats for me. it's sounds crazy I know but it beats rhythmically with mine so this is how I know that I'm a yin to his yang just like he's a yang to my yin.

Crazy...

"I miss you"

I can here Sjava's eweni playing softly in the background which remind me of the good old days when he would play Intombi for me. I wonder if he still loves imisho too.

"I miss you too" I tell him

"I never stopped missing you" Mngqobi can be cheesy but I'll let him be for now

"I can't seem to forget about you, Qhamukile I yearn for your love. I know we can't be together but I love you and I can't help it" he stops to breath

"I've tried so hard to forget about you and move on but it's like the more I try it's the more I fall deeper in love with you"

he chuckled

“Is that even possible”

I wish I could say no but I know how he feels
because I too feel like that everyday.

I laugh feebly

“Mnqobi please don't tell anyone that, people will
think I gave you a love portion” I say jokingly

“Well if that's the case I want more it because I
don't want to fall out of love with you”

“Mnqobi”

I can feel emotions engulfing me

My tears are just a blink away

“Qhamu” even the way he calls my name is just I
don't know.. he says it with love.

“Sthandwa sam, I can't do this anymore. I can't
pretend like I'm fine without you I want you, no I
need you Qhamu, I need you in my life”

I let the tears fall

I need him too

“Just say yes Qhamu and I’ll come back to you in a heart beat, get back together with me Qhamukile”

What happened to asking nicely or just a simple please

“Mnqobi”

“Shhh listen to your heart” Mnqobi is crazy but I oblige and listen to my heart, i know what it wants and that undoubtedly Mnqobi and then there is my brain, the one organ that is constantly in conflict with my heart...

Common sense always wins

“Mnqobi you know we can’t be together, the hatred between our families is just too much and I don’t want any more blood”

“Qhamu what do you want, what does your heart want”

I can tell he’s getting agitated now

“You know very well that I want to be with you but that doesn’t mea...” he cuts me short

“Do you love me” his voice is a little stern for my

liking

“Yes and you know this but...”

“Do you think I love you just as much”

“Yes Mngqobi but..”

“Do you doubt my love for you”

“No!” I’m a little offended that he’d even think, I know he loves me and I’d never doubt his love for me.

“Then fuck everyone, I know what I want and that is you, my heart chooses you every time so I’m tired of this fighting , I’m tired of hating, I’m really tired of this misery I am in right now so I don’t know about you but I’m ready to be with you”

He’s fighting for his love and here I am questioning everything

“I want to tell you how much I love you Mngqobi” I say softly

As much as I want to be with him I can’t and he knows this.

“Qhamu don’t do this..”

“It pains me to say this but I don’t believe in love, I don’t believe in this whole idea of Cinderella love story where boy meets girl and girls falls in love and they live happily ever after..”

“Don’t, please” he says softly

“It doesn’t exist, frankly it’s nothing but a foreign dream that will never happen and you know this”

Fairytales and happily ever afters only exist in movies and bedtime stories but this is real life, no Cinderella’s glass slippers, no handsome prince here.

“And the fact that I have Shaka zulu and his soldiers as brothers made lose all the little hope I had that love exist, heck Mngqobi growing up I never saw myself as someone’s wife or in love for that matter”

I stop to draw a long breath and exhale

“You breaking my heart”

I ignore him

remember I said my brain always wins but I guess this time common sense losses because I'm using my heart to conquer, it's no longer Qhamu speaking but the heart that beats for Mnqobi

I smile before I let the heart do the talking

“But on the twentieth of March last year I met a this arrogant boy who nearly killed me with his old corolla and everything changed. I started to believe in this ridiculous thing called fairytale, I was suddenly the princess and he the prince.. I believed in this Cinderella story that day I saw that love exist, I knew I had found my handsome prince charming, so yes Mnqobi I choose you, I choose our love. I don't care about our family history I want you and only you” I'm in tears by the time I finish

I can't tell if he's crying too but he chuckles softly before he speaks

“Fuck Qhamu I've never been so scared in my life” I can hear him breath out

“So I’m the arrogant Prince Charming huh”

I laugh at that

“Yes you’re my arrogant Prince Charming”

We both laugh out loud

“So we doing this”

“It’s me and you till the end” I love how that sounds

Qhamukile and Mngobiwesizwe forever...

“No more breaking up, no more playing this on and off games”

“No more games” I tell him

“No matter what”

“No matter the storm” I mean every word

I’m prepared to fight for our love and I know he too is ready to fight for our union.

“Good”

I guess Mngobi and I are finally back together I hope this time is forever.

Lol... this is so funny I tell you, who would have

thought that at seventeen I'd be claiming to love like I do..

I always thought one had to be older and wiser to fall in love but now I know that being in love has nothing to do with age.. I'm seventeen and I'm in love...

Abu judge Judy need to get over it.

“I'm coming next weekend”

Mnqobi though, he's just a month and a couple of weeks from his mid year exams but he wants to come

“Baby it's ok soon you'll be starting with exams, I'm not going anywhere you'll see me so don't worry just focus on your schooling”

“Qhamukile i'm coming and that's final”

My eyes roll back..

I let him be.

“One minute remaining”

We all know that annoying voice

“Mnqobi lets talk later, Oh and I’ll see you in J une”

I don’t care what he says, he’s going to stay in joburg and focus solely on the reason he’s there in the first place.

We have a life time together, so he has absolutely nothing to worry about.

He laughs softly

“Ntokazi” he says defeated

I can see him shaking his head, he knows very well that he won’t win this one no matter how stern he can try to be.

“Mnqobiwesizwe”

He laughs

I sometimes forget how sweet and contagious his laugh can be.

“I’m in love with you” and the line cuts

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Happy readers happy admin..

the couple is finally back together...

Good morning

[06/20, 18:18] Lynne: Chapter 26

QHAMUKILE

My life has been nothing but blissful, my bothers are alive, I'm alive and more importantly I'm back together with Mngobi and this time it's forever we promised to remain together no matter the tribulations. Its June so it's freezing cold but I couldn't miss the opportunity to meet Mngobi at the bus station when he asked, I'm actually getting ready for that

"Last tollgate" he text me just as I'm combing my coily Afro into submission

I smile at his message and respond with an excited emoji.

I'm wearing a black jean, knee length boots and a jacket, I must say I look really beautiful.

It's just before one pm and Mngqobi took a six o'clock bus, he just couldn't wait any longer.

Nqaba budes in my bedroom without knocking

"I wonder where you going looking this beautiful" thank god I'm looking away from him so he can't see when I roll my eyes at him

"I'm going to town, I told bhuti" I lie again

I had to lie too to Misuzulu about my trip today, Zane and I have gotten close this past month so I said I'm meeting up with her for movies.

"Mmmm" he hums

he's leaning in the door frame, I can't see him but I can feel his eyes on me

"I'll take you"

"No!" I say fast

He can't, he just can't.

"I'll be fine I'm meeting with zanele so I'll be alright"

Nqaba needs to back off

"I don't mind it's not like I have anything better to do anyway, finish up I'll wait for you" he says and walks out.

Why is Nqaba like this though?

He's ruining my plans, let me think.

I quickly take my phone and text Zanele and ask her to bath because I'm taking her out.

The things we do for love.

She protest at first but I bribe her and she ends up agreeing

Nqaba is watching soccer repeats when I emerge from my bedroom

He's boring shem..

"I'm done, we can go" I tell him

"Oh and can we please get zanele from Mats'heni first" I can tell he's bored but it serves him right

“Can she not just meet you in town” he says flatly

No dear brother

“She asked for a lift and I already told her we coming, askies bhuti I just thought why not get her seeing that you taking me” I try to be convincing

He’s annoyed but he agrees and we leave.

Zanele is standing at the gate with Lucas when we get to her house, I trust her to be ready in just a few minutes.

“Hey you” I’m surprised to see Lucas

“Hey African doll, I’m bored so I’m coming with” he says and gets in the back with zanele

I can see Zanele rolling her eyes, they are so close it’s cute.

“Hey Que, Hello bhuti” Zanele greets my brother too

“I hope you don’t mind but Lucas is joining us”

“She doesn’t mind” Lucas can be so dismissing at times it’s hurts

“Hello hotness” Lucas greets Nqaba who squirms in

his seat

Hotness”

I want to laugh but I hold it in for Nqaba’s sake

“Sawubona” Nqaba replies in his mainly voice

Now I can’t help it, i let out a chuckle

“Qhamu you’ve never mentioned that you have such a handsome brother” I’m so loving Lucas right now.

Nqaba laughs nervously and starts the car

“Whose the lucky lady” Lucas again

Did I tell you how much I’m loving this?

I’m not even feeling sorry for him in fact he deserves it for ruining my plans.

Where are the popcorns, I’m enjoying watching Nqaba squirm.

He looks at me with pleading eyes but I pretend not to see him.

“Phela wena uyababa, any girl would be so lucky to have you” I’d let out a full on belly laughter if my

brother didn't look so terrified

Zanele and I are just quiet listening to Lucas go in about how hot Nqaba is.

Nqaba literally flies to town. I'm laughing inside as he speeds, it takes us just thirty minutes to get to Pietermaritzburg CBD.

"I have something to do so I won't be able to get you, use a taxi" he hands me one hundred note before he speeds away

Zane and I finally let out laughter we've been suppressing and high five each other

"Lucas you scared Qhamu's brother away" Zanele is still laughing

"Ah he'll live"

"That was fun, thank you Lucas"

"It's nothing babe but I want to know why did I have to do all that, whose this mystery person you're meeting. it is Mngobi oh you two are so cute together, is it him isn't it" the noisy Lucas has come out to play I see

My lips are sealed, Mngqobi and I decided to keep our relationship a secret for obvious reasons

“My lips are sealed”

“Ah you no fun but you owe me for my Grammy award winning performance”

“Hey Lucas she owes me, you gate crashed our plan, she asked me not you” zanele says jokingly

“Relax I’ll share with you besides you were just sitting doing nothing, I’m sure he wouldn’t have left if it wasn’t for me” he says rolling his eyes

“Yes and I thank you for that but for now I need to get to the bus station”

“Bye hunny be good and don’t forget to condomise, I’m still way too young to be an aunt” Lucas is just too much for my soul

I don’t know how did we get this close oh I remember he’s always in Zanele’s business so that’s how, his excuse is that he wants to make up for lost time so that’s why he’s always with her.

SMH

He's such a lovely soul.

I leave once Mngobi tells me he's arrived

I'm excited as I walk into the bus station, I can't wait to see him.

I take out my phone to call him but his phone rings just behind me and I quickly turn around

"Darli wam" he says in his hoarse voice embracing me in his arms

I forgot how warm I feel wrapped underneath his arms

Someone has been working out, his chest feels harder than it was.

"Baby" I say and kiss him

His lips still feels cold and soft like I remember.

I break away and look at him throughly, it's good to see he still has love for his ridiculous presidential shirts, I can see the collar peaking underneath his jersey.

I brush my hand down his chest, this is really him,

he's here in flesh. It feels like I haven't seen him in years.

He has grown a beard on his chin and I don't know if it's me but I feel like he's grown taller by an inch.

I bring my lips to his and kiss him again.

How I missed these sultry kisses

There are people watching us as we exchange saliva but I don't care I missed him so much, remember the last time I saw him was when Makhosini was in hospital and that was months ago, I didn't allow him to come the weekend after we got back together, he was sad at first but he got over it.

I quickly wipe my happy tears and hold on to him

"Don't cry" he coos helping to wipe my tears

"I know you can't leave without me but don't cry I'm here now" I forget him at times

I laugh with tears still running down my cheeks

"Ah she laughs, my work here..."

"Is done" we say in unison

I can't help roll my eyes, he's so full of himself.

I can't help kiss him again

"Let's go before my lips finish" he says after breaking the kiss.

Mngobi is stupid..

He is carrying his bag and yet he still wants to hold me close to him, I let him. I want to be close to him too.

Zwelethu is waiting outside when we exit the station, I haven't seen him since that day at school so I'm kind of surprised seeing him here.

"Bafo" they exchanged their weird hand shakes

"Qhamukile how are you" Zwelethu is the meanest yet the sweetest

He's that complicated huh.

"I'm good thanks and how are you" I ask nervously

I don't understand how can Mngobi let him come here knowing very well that we can't be seen together especially by any of his brother or mine for

that matter.

“Don’t worry, our secret is safe with him” Mngobi whispers softly against my ear and kiss my temple
He can see how uneasy I feel.

“Let’s go, they are all expecting you to arrive later so no one is home but ma will soon be back with Sma, so you need to kiss each other quick and take her home” I actually laugh at how sweet Zwelethu is

Who would have thought that this would be the same Zwelethu that was rude to me not so long ago

We get into the car and Zwelethu drives us to Matsheni.

He parks outside the gate, kills the engine and turn to look at Mngobi and I in the back seat

“Please you two no babies” he says and throws Mngobi a packet of condoms

You should see how embarrassed I am.

It was Lucas now Zwelethu, it’s clear the universe doesn’t want Mngobi and I to have babies not that I’m planning on it, we still have a lot to accomplish

before I can even think of having babies.

“You not funny you know, baby lets get out of here before I kill someone” Mngqobi says jokingly

He takes his bag and we climb off and walk to his room.

It still look like how I last saw it but now there’s no more sneakers lined up on the side of his bed, his scent still lingers around the room.

“I missed you so much” he says wrapping his arms around my waist after pulling me closer to him

I wrap my hands around him shoulders and give him a mouth watering kiss.

“Won’t Zwelethu tell bhuti Makhosini” I ask after breaking the kiss

“Don’t worry about him, he loves you but his ego won’t let him admit it” he says and plants a kiss on my forehead

“We have an hour, so give me what’s due to me woman” he’s already unzipping my jacket before I

can protest

I had decided to be celibate or at least I thought so, only Mngqobi can make me feel hot as I do right now. He's the only one capable of making me forget about my celibate choices.

He kisses me hungrily and in no time he's panting on top of me. Unlike the first time where I felt pain, I'm enjoying every moment as he goes in and out of me. I'm holding on to him vigorously as he pounds harder and harder.

I love how he moves his hips, there's this thing he does that I can't explain but I curl my toes with each stroke.

"Baby" I moan when I feel the explosive orgasm erupting from my core

"Baby" I dig my nails deeper on his back

"Qhamu" he moans my names as we both reach our peak.

I don't see myself giving myself to anyone like this besides Mngqobi, he has my heart, my body in the

palm of his hands.

“It’s still feels like the first time” he says softly

I know what he means, the emotions are just as raw as the first time.

I’m glad he’s the one I gave my heart and my womanhood to.

“But nicer” I tease

He rises his head from my breast and look at me

“What are you saying woman, I always deliver the best performance” I want to laugh at how silly he’s being right now

“I don’t know about that” I joke and look away from him

“What” he says and moves his waist in a circular motion

I can feel him hardening again

“Oh no Mngobi get off me” I push him off me

I feel so empty without him inside me but yoh I can’t, my lady parts need breath before he goes for his

seconds

He laughs at me before he say

“I just want to proof that I’m the best”

Cocky much..

only he can say such things without any hint of
arrogance in his voice

“Oh baby, oh Mngqobi, harder baby” he moans
mimicking me

“Shut up” I hit him with a pillow

How can he do me like that and I don’t say those
things, or do I?

“I know you love uMapholoba and he loves
umaShenge too” I’m still trying to catch my breath
here can he stop being his silly self, I don’t know
where does he get all this energy because he just
worked out.

“I love you” he says softly

I’m too spend to say anything so I just smile at his
words, I don’t need to tell him I love him too

because he knows it

“It feels so weird using a condom with you” he says
removing it

Well I hate it too but we both don’t want any babies

“Zwelethu said no babies” I say laughing

He laughs too and pulls me to lay in his chest

I’m beaming with happiness, his running his index
finger on my bare buttocks and I’m listening to his
heart beat. This is just magical.

The scar from the shooting is visible on his chest
and I can’t help run my finger back and forth on it

He couldn’t died that day.

“I’d take another bullet if it means being with you” a
tear manages to escape my eyes.

“I know” I’d take bullets for him too

We both remain quiet just listening to our breathing
and heart beats

“So I spoke with the bursary sponsors” he breaks
the silence

“And” I still don’t want him coming this side if it means he has to stop doing medicine.

“They refused that I transfer so I’ve decided to change causes instead”

“Mnqobi no, you can’t do that, why not..”

He shuts me up with a soft kiss

“let me finish”

The kiss has totally disempowered me, I’ve got no power to object to this decision he has taken without talking to me first

“I’ve applied for another bursary, I will no longer be doing medicine”

“What will you be doing Mnqobi, I know how much you love doing what you do so why are changing now. I thought we spoke about this, I’ll wait for you and you know this” I can’t let him drop out

I’ve listened to him talk about being a neurosurgeon ever since I’ve known him so I won’t let him just leave it like that

“Pietermaritzburg campus doesn’t offer medicine

Qhamukile and you know this”

“Yes I know it and that’s why I want you to stay in joburg and finish your doctorate” my voice is rising higher as we continue arguing about this

“What do you want me to do, I’m doing this for you. For us”

Mnqobi can be short sighted at times

“Mnqobi I’m not saying let’s break up, what I’m saying is finish your qualifications and you’ll find me here waiting or better yet I can also come to joburg and we can be together but you’re not dropping out”

“Why, I’m planning on applying this coming August and there’s nothing you can do about it” his pitch is rising as well

“Mnqobi I’m not going to allow you to do that, tell you what I’ll come visit but please”

“And how are you going to do that, have you forgotten that you have hitler and his soldiers guarding your every move”

I'd laugh if we weren't having a serious conversation

"I'll lie, I'll tell them I'm going to Durban or something" he can't quit

"That's ridiculous and you know it" he removes me from his chest and looks at me

"what will happen when Misuzulu calls your aunt, ever thought of that" I sit up straight too

"My aunt is always busy she's doesn't have time to keep guard of me" it true, she's a very busy business woman who won't have time to check my every move besides she's hardly home so how will she know?

It not like I'm going to spend a week, just the weekend then I'll come back.

"Qhamu I'm coming back and that's final" he says and stands up

He roughly put his pants on and searches his back and pulls out a packet of cigarette.

I'm just looking at him, I don't know what to say or

do to show him that this is the best option for the both of us.

I don't want him resent me in future because he chose me over his career

“Why, why don't you want me to come back, are you cheating on me or something” he says puffing his cigarette

“I'm not going to entertain your insecurities Mngqobi, you know very well that I'm not cheating on you, if a fight is what you looking for then go seek else where” I'm now angry, how can he think I'm cheating on him.

I abruptly get off the bed and get dressed.

“Take me home” I'm done with this conversation

So much for spending time with him.

He scoff and calls Zwelethu to come take me home.

It's takes Zwelethu twenty minutes to come, that was the worst twenty minutes I've spent with Mngqobi, he can't stay more than a minute without touching me when we together but today he spent

twenty minutes not even looking at me.

We both silent, I don't know when did we get here but it looks like we serious lot fighting about this.

I can see he is angry but I'm also angry for him wanting to come back here, don't get me wrong I want him to come back but not when it will cause him his career.

I love him too much to be selfish.

Zwelethu hoots from outside the gate and we both walk out without exchanging any words

“Love birds, done bonking so soon” Zwelethu says laughing

We both remain silent and get in the car

“Ah we not fighting are we” can Zwelethu shut up.

I ignore him and gaze out the window, I can feel Mngobi's stare but I dismiss it and continue to look outside.

He instructs Zwelethu to park just a few streets away from my home stead.

“Thanks you for the lift Zwelethu” I say before exiting the car.

“I love you” Mngqobi says just as I prepare to get off

“I love you too” I say and shut the door.

Our first fight....

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Going forward I'm only going to post Qhamu and Mngqobi's POV only

[06/20, 18:18] Lynne: (Continuation”

MNQOBI

You know the saying “a way to a man's heart is through his stomach”?

Well I can now see why my father loved my mother

as much as he did, this woman can cook. We are all gathered around the table and I've just a mouth watering supper, dumpling and beef stew, my favorite.

“maNgidi that was out of this world” I tease

She prefers it when I call her ma

“Whose maNgidi Mnqobi” I told you

“I'm just joking ma” I laugh at how she is trying to chid at me

“Thank you ma, as always your food melts my heart” Ive placed my hand over my left breast smiling as I say this

I wonder if Qhamu knows how to cook but I guess I have to wait a couple of years to find that out, which reminds me I have to call her and apologize not that i've changed my mind regarding the decision I've made.

This is our first fight and I hate it.

“Good to know I guess we won't have any problems with the dishes” all by brothers crack themselves up

with laughter

“Ah ma I just got here today and already I’m washing dishes” I complain

“You the youngest here go wash those dishes”
Langalibalele says laughing

I sulk and look at Sma

“Don’t even think about it” Makhosini says shaking his head

“He’ll break all my dishes” my own mother is not on my side today

“I’ll help you” see why Sma is my favorite brother

“Let’s go boy” I pat his head and stand up to clear the table

The joys of having no girl sibling around now I have to wash dishes.

It’s always refreshing being around my family, they are loud annoying at times but I wouldn’t give them up for anything.

Everyone is watching tv by the time I finish with the

dishes with the help of Sma ofcause.

“Make space” I force myself in between Mncedisi and Manqoba on a two seater couch.

Sma sits on the floor next to uMa, I wonder if he’ll ever outgrow being a Mama’s boy

“Hey you fat now, look you can’t even fit between Manqoba and I, igoli is treating you fresh huh”

“It’s called muscle Mncedisi not fat, I’ve been working out with Simphiwe”

“Simphiwe” I sense a little bit of jealousy from Manqoba but I understand it has always been him and I, and we didn’t have to make friends because as brothers we are all friends.

“Just a guy I know back In joburg”

They are all interested in what I’ve been doing so I’ve got no choice but to narrate about my escapades in joburg, I leave out Thozama.

“No girlfriend, nothing” Makhosini

“No, nothing” I smile just thinking about Qhamu, she’s the one that holds my heart

“Haibo, a whole grown Ngcobo man with no girlfriend, hai what’s happening to you” Zwelethu says and smirks

I’m going to get him for this

“Hey leave my boy alone, he went to joburg for school not girls... it’s a good thing that you not dating my boy” my mom does sometimes comes to my rescue

“Whipped” Zwelethu murmurs

“Calm down ladies I’m very content with my relationship status, if you must know she’s very beautiful and she has my heart” I say proudly

“I wonder who is she” Manqoba sounds a little excited by this

“Relax, you’ll meet her soon”

Zwelethu clears his throat and looks at me

Let me keep quiet before I say something I might regret.

“What happened to that girl you love” trust my mother to bring Qhamu into the conversation

“Nothing ma, she moved on and did I” I lie

“Mmh If you say so” she says and look back at the tv screen

The rest of the night goes on perfectly until it’s time to go to bed.

*clears throat**

My eyes move from the tv to look at Makhosini

“Mnqobi walk with me I want to show you something” Makhosini looks serious

I stand up and push his wheelchair outside

“Dad would be proud”

I’ve got my cigarette lit which he hates because he doesn’t smoke but he made peace with my bad habits and please don’t ask where did I adopt this habit, white schools are not as strict as they make it out be trust me.

“He would be proud of all of us” he’s always been the father to all of us and Langalibalele has been by his side too for as long as I can remember

“You finally went into medical school I think he’d be proud of you more”

I hate when my brothers do this, I know my father always thought that I’d live up to his dream of becoming this world greatest doctor but now that I have Qhamu in my life and not only that, but I’m becoming my own self, a Mngobi whose not in his father’s shadow anymore I start to realize that this is not me, this is not what I want to be. I’m just hiding behind the image Sgidi created but I’m starting to be myself more, I’m starting to know me more and I’m realizing this white coat life is not for me, it’s not what I want.

“Manqoba mentioned you’ve been wanting to talk to me” I obviously change the subject

“Oh yes, well business is not doing so great since you left, it needs those big ideas you always have”

I chuckle and look at him... now our family business is what gets my heart pumping.

“What’s wrong, I thought you had everything handled” I love how all my brothers always seek my

advice when it comes to running the business

As young as I am they trust me.

“Yes but it’s been a little slow since Gatscha reopened his father’s taverns too, now we have three taverns in one street so completion is tight” this is something I’ve never told you about us, my brother owns a tavern in Pietermaritzburg CBD, it’s a family business my father built from the bottom to the way all up so it’s our baby, it’s something that we still have of him besides the three cars he owned which one I own.

“Then we need to do something about it, we can turn it into a nice pub where youngsters can come then in that way we will generate more income” that’s the best solution I can come up with right now

“But what about the old customers, I’m sure they won’t feel free with teenagers shakings their bums in front of them” I actually want to laughter at his facial expression but I hold it, we discussing important things

“I hear you, bra Mike. This anyama hasn’t been doing good for time now, why not buy it and make something of it, I mean it would be good for business plus it’s here so Langa and Mncedisi can operate it” I love taking business, even if it’s a small business but it gives me joy and I’m glad Makhosini asks for my ideas

“Yes then Zwelethu can continue with the life-stock business, he’s good at it anyway”

Again I didn’t tell you that we have a farm back eMPophomeni where my father originally comes from, that’s where I was born before I moved to Mants’heni

“Mngobiwesizwe” I know he means business when he calls me by my full name

“Talk to your brother, I don’t know what’s happening to him. He’s forever distant even when I try to talk to him he seem not to be interested in the family business at all. You two shared a womb so maybe he’ll listen to you” I can tell he means well, Mangoba is his brother as much as I am and he love him just

as much

“I’ll talk to him” I know Manqoba, he’s a reflection of me and I know when something is wrong. It all started last year, I can’t put a finger to it but it’s obvious that he changed, even Makhosini sees it.

I promise Makhosini to talk to him and we go back into the house.

I’m tired from the traveling and the little sex I got to have with Qhamu so I’ve got no choice but to hit the sag, Sma joins me. It’s a little after eleven when I get into bed so I’m assuming Qhamu is sleeping and as much as I would like to talk to her I switch off my phone and sleep.

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It’s been a two days of misery because I haven’t spoken to Qhamu, i tried calling her yesterday but she didn’t answer, I seriously don’t understand how

can she still be angry at me.

Two whole days later and she's still angry?

Who does that?

I miss her dammit.

This is probably the longest time we haven't spoke since we got back together.

Mncedisi, my photocopy, like he says it and Zwelethu budes into my room as I bush my hair, I've just taken a bath.

"Mtaka ka ma" Mncedisi is the only one that always reminds us of our biological mother, I hear he was closer to her.

I know I was young when she left but sometimes I miss her you know, I can't explain it.

I wonder if she's still alive.

"We going out and you joining us" Zwelethu is the one that likes nice times than the rest of us

"Yes" Manqoba seems excited too.

I haven't spoke to him as yet like Makhosini asked

“Where to”

“Sticks opened a new car wash so we going to chill there” I’m surprised Manqoba is this excited, I guess he must be missing how our relationship used to be.

“Yes I need to damage your brains Cells before you go back to that boring life of yours” only Zwelethu is capable of saying such

“Yes, we only have two more weeks with you and you’ll be back in joburg so dear brother we are getting you drunk today” I love this care free loving Manqoba

“Of cause, let’s go get drunk” I’d hate to disappoint

“Makhosini will be Sma’s guardian until Ma gets here so no need to worry about that little rascal”

I quickly put on my sneakers and we leave.

It’s after three pm when we get to newly opened car wash, we park and join Langa who is chilling with guys from the hood.

After exchanging pleasantries we open our beers.

It's a nice vibe I must admit, the music is nice and the gents are a good company but something catches my eye and quickly down the fourth bottle of Heineken, my eyes must be deceiving me. What the hell is she doing here”

It's Qhamukile chilling with some girl I don't know and guess who is she also with

NOKHAYA, yes the Nokhaya I used to hang with.

They are also chilling with Lucas.

I feel my blood rushing seeing her with a glass of what looks like juice in her hands but we all know there's alcohol in there.

Qhamukile drinks now?

I take out my cigarette and walk towards to where they are seating.

I want her to see me.

“Mnqobi” Nokhaya is the first one to see me

I haven't spoke her since she called me crying and apologizing, I now realize that I haven't officially broken up with her.

“Nokhaya” she looks so different, expensive hair, long nails and all.

How old is she again?

She stands up and walks towards me, I can see Qhamu is boiling but she can't look the other way.

I resist the urge of going to her and smack that glass off her hands.

“You didn't tell me you around”

“Sorry” I seriously don't know what to say

“Relax Mngqobi, I know you love her” she rolls her eyes at angry Qhamu's direction

I laugh softly

“And I've made peace with that, listen I know I tried to force things on you, I love you but you don't love me and I've made peace with that. I now realized that you love her so you are free to date her” wow, is this the same Nokhaya I used to fuck with?

“Ok”

“Anyway enjoy” she says and walks back to her

spot

I look at Qhamu again and she still looks angry I think she realizes that I didn't break up with Nokhaya but I guess I'm now free from her.

Once I'm done smoking I go back to join my brothers

"Is that princess"

"Yes it's her" I'm trying to be neutral, I don't want to show that I'm pissed off seeing her here or at Manqoba for calling her princess

"Stay away" Langalibalele says almost scolding me

I say nothing and just look at him

I want to speak to Qhamu so bad

Zwelethu clears his throat and gives me that look, he's telling me to stay calm without saying anything but I can't, why is Qhamu flipping here, drinking.

How I wish I had Nqaba's number right now.

I take out another cigarette but this time I don't move away from the guys

“Some things never change you still smoke like chimney I see” I’d laugh along with my brothers if I wasn’t this pissed off.

Zwelethu pats my shoulder before he walks to Qhamu and her little group

I don’t know what he say to them but soon Qhamu takes her bag and leave.

You should see me, I’d kiss Zwelethu right this moment

“And then” Langalibalele asks him once he sits next to me

“I had to get rid of her before her annoying brothers might come here, I hate seeing their ugly faces” I let out a full blown laugh

“Right” Langalibalele is not so gullible so believe me when I tell you he doesn’t buy that even for a second

My phone vibrates in my pocket

“The Mrs” flashes my screen

That’s how I saved her number and she saved me

as “The Mr”

It’s all Qhamu’s doing, she’s says I’m cheesy but she’s on another level, I’m just smitten by her and her cheesy ways though.

I move away from the rest of my brothers before I answer

“Qhamukile” I’m still angry at her for coming here

“Why did you tell Zwelethu to chase me away, Mngobi I wasn’t there for you so you had no right ok” she’s angry

I actually want to laugh but I hold it in

“Lucas invited me because I was bored sitting at home alone but no you had to”

“Ntokazi calm down, I didn’t tell Zwelethu anything besides I’m happy you left, this is not a good place for you” I say softly

“But it is for you” she’s still shouting

“If it makes you feel better I’ll leave but only if you promise to see me tonight” I can feel her roll her eyes

“Mnqobi I’m still angry at you”

“I know baby but I don’t want to talk about that right now, am I seeing you later?” I really miss her

“Huh uh” she wants me to work hard

“Please Baby then after tonight you can go back to being angry” I’m teasing

“This is a joke to you” I wish I could see her right now

I can just see that nose of hers flaring

“Ofcause not Sthandwa sam, but I seriously don’t want to talk about it, not today. Tell you what let me come tonight and we’ll talk”

“Don’t patronize me Mnqobi” there no winning with her

“But Qhamu you say I don’t take you serious and when I do you say I patronize you, tell me baby how do I make it right”

“By not changing your course”

I keep quiet, I don’t want lie to her.

“Mnqobi promise me”

“Baby let’s not talk about this, I’ll see you later okay”

“Fine, I’ll try and sneak out” Finally

She’s stubborn as mule.

“Good, I’ll be there around eleven” I say and hang up

I love just the fire in her.

“Ladies I have to love and leave you” I say to my brothers when I get back to them

“Haibo don’t tell me we boring you, it’s just after six and the night is still young” Mncedisi loves alcohol more than anything

“Yeah but I have something to do at home”

“I hope you not running after her” Langalibalele says in his serious hard voice

“Come on, I’ve moved on”

“Mmmh” like I said Langalibalele is not easily convinced

“Come on don’t be a party pooper” I feel bad at how

I haven't spent time with the person I shared a womb with like how Makhosini puts it so I move my chair and sit next to him

“Alright then bafo, let's get drunk”

My brothers are are crazy I tell you, I don't know how many times have they teased Zwelethu about some crazy girl he's dating. Mncedisi and Manqoba are single as far as I know and Langalibalele is dating Nobuhle, they've been together for as long as I can remember.

When the clock strikes eleven I'm tipsy, not drunk so I can still drive to Mvubukazi to see the one who holds my heart

“Ladies I need to go somewhere I'll see you in a minute, Mncedisi can I have the car keys please” he's the one that was driving

“Where you doing, sit down and drink man” eish

“I have to rush somewhere I'll be back just now”

“Hey Mngqobi you miss your bed so early” they crack up laughing

This is going to be hard

“Very funny Manqoba but if you must know I’ve got..”

“I see you, are you going to that lady I saw you standing with earlier”

“What...”

“I saw you” Zwelethu gives the look and I quickly catch on

“Do I have to spell it for you ladies, give me that key”

I leave them laughing at me.

What would I do without Zwelethu?

It’s eleven thirty when I get to Mvubukazi, it’s so dark tonight.

I take out my phone and text Qhamu telling her to meet me at our usual spot.

I wait for another thirty minutes before she knocks of the window

“Baby” I kiss her, hard.

At first she she doesn't kiss me back but she soon opens her mouth and let me in.

I guess she's still mad at me

"You smell of alcohol Mngobi"

"I know" I kiss her again

"I'm sorry about what happened yesterday" I'm not sorry about wanting to change my course though

"So you've decided to finish your PhD" her eyes glisten with hope

"No Qhamu, I'm changing"

"But.."

"I don't want to fight, we have a few minutes together and I'd rather spend it laughing than arguing with you" she lets out a tired breath and throws her hands in the air

"Fine but this is not over" ofcause it's not over, she has her mind made up.

I pull her to me and let her rest her head on my chest.

Right here is where she belongs.

She's my life

My soulmate

My forever.

I kiss her forehead and hold her tighter.

“You complete me” I whisper.

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[06/20, 18:18] Lynne: Chapter 27

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QHAMUKILE

Two weeks later...

Lol... sorry to laugh out loud like that but I can't help

it, it's quite funny how Mngqobi and I have been sneaking around like ninjas these last weeks.

You're laughing at me?

it's alright.

Mngqobi is leaving tonight so I had to spend today with him, I'm going to miss him and his random kisses.

I'm actually hiding in his room waiting for his mother to leave so that I can go too.

It's after four and I have been here since one, no we didn't have sex. I can see you getting excited thinking we did the deed, sorry to disappoint you.

"Let me go check on her" Mngqobi has been checking up on her thinking she'll leave but nope she's still sitting outside on the lawn.

Just imagine.

How the hell am I going to get out of here?

To make matters worse Gatscha has been blowing up my phone which I find odd because he never calls me so much unless he needs my help with his

many girlfriends I wouldn't be surprised if he's in trouble right now.

Mnqobi comes in rushing breathing heavily as I'm about to return Gatsha's call

"She's coming, act cool ok"

"Wh.."

"I want to see what is it that you hiding in this room"
I hear his mom shouting from outside

I'm dead, I'm so dead.

My blood pressure increases instantly, my breath hitches just from the thought of her seeing me in here.

My heart is also about to jump off my chest from fear.

The door opens widely and she comes in

"So this is it huh, you hiding girls in my house" she's shouting angrily

"Ma, please"

"Hey please yani wena, is this what you've been

doing ever since you came back”

She looks at me

“Young lady what are you doing here”

World please swallow me.

Never have I thought I'd be caught in a guys room

I look down embarrassed

“I'm talking” she shouts

“Ma, you embarrassing me” Mngqobi says pleadingly

“Embarrassing you, heee lalelani le ngane” she says
and claps her hands

“It even smell la” she even fans herself

We didn't even have sex, Mngqobi's mother is just
exaggerating

“Follow me”

Mngqobi and I follow behind her and go to the main
house.

We both sit on a two seater couch.

The house is as beautiful as I imagined, but I can't

admire it probably because of the predicament I find myself in.

I my eyes quickly do a three sixty glance around the room and I see a picture of Mngqobi and Manqoba when they were young, it's hard to tell which one is which because they look s alike.

“What were you doing in there, ntombazana where are your parents, do they know you here”

“Ma, please” Mngqobi says softly

“Shut up wena, I'll deal with you later” she shouts at him and look at me

“Where do you come from”

“Mvubukazi” I whisper

“What are you to him”

“She's my girlfriend ma” Mngqobi comes to the rescue when I don't say anything

“Am I talking to you” she shout at him again

“I'm...” i raise my head to look at Mngqobi

He too is waiting for me to answer

“He’s...” god

If I say he’s nobody I’ll hurt him and if I admit he is my boyfriend I’d be disrespecting his mother

“He’s my..”

“I don’t have all day, talk”

“He’s my boyfriend ma”

“J ehova” she says dramatically clapping once and she storms out.

Okay...

I wonder where is she going?

“Don’t worry about her, she’ll be fine” Mngqobi assures me and brush my hand with his

I want to hold on to him but I can’t

“Thank you” he says before his mother comes back with a belt

Haibo...

she first swings the belt across Mngqobi legs and soon after I feel the belt hit hard against my own

legs.

I'm crying as she continues to hit the both of us.

She stops once she's tired

"Yeses" she says trying to catch her breath and walks out angrily leaving us standing there

"I'm sorry baby" Mngqobi comes to give me a hug but I push him away

"She'll catch us" I say and wipe my tears

I can't risk her seeing us touchy touchy

She comes back and clicks her tongue at us.

"Sit down you two" you should see how we both quickly sit down

She looks calmer at least.

"Did you two use a condom" wow just wow

"Ma!!"

I'm speechless

"What, I want to know if I'll be a grandmother in nine months or not" whose this woman?

She just whipped us now she's talking to us about sex.

“Ma Qhamu and I didn't have sex” I see her roll her eyes

Did I mention how speechless I am?

“Do I look like a fool to you Mnqobi, Qhamu did you use a condom”

I lied to you guys, I'm sorry

No more lies okay!

I nod embarrassed

“Good, now I know you two think you love each other”

“I love her ma” can Mnqobi stop adding petrol to this fire

Her stare is enough to shut Mnqobi up

“And I'm sure you love each other but there's no need for you to rush into sex, you are both still young”

“I'm nineteen” we both look at him and he shuts up

Yoh I wish I had a sellotape to put over his mouth.

“And I understand that you’re in your adolescence stages so you’re bound to be sexually active but you need to be safe at all times.” She stops to draw breath

“I’m a nurse..” oh ya, now I remember her

“Nurse Thembisile” I say in realization

“It’s good to see you still remember me” wow this woman

So she recognized me and she still said nothing

“I don’t want you to end up like your friend, pregnant and HIV positive”

“Haibo ma I’m not sick” Mngqobi jumps out of his seat

I laugh

“Hey sit down I didn’t say you sick” Mngqobi though

“Listen Ntombi yam boys come and go, so please take care of yourself but I’m not happy with what happened today, you two have been locked up in

that room since I don't know when. I'm not old, I saw you two sneaking in why do you think I've been seating outside this whole time" I'm no longer crying so I smile her words

she chuckles a bit before she continues

"You're a beautiful young girl Qhamu and I want you and Mngobi and love each other forever but for now focus on your schooling and if you two are meant to be then you will be together" she says and standing up

"I hope you two have learnt your lesson"

"But did you have to beat us though, you do realize I'm old now"

"Old, you'll forever be that small boy who ran around naked here"

"Ma can you please stop embarrassing me"

I laugh at the thought of young Mngobi running around naked

"I'm not sick Qhamu" Mngobi whispers

His mind is still stuck on that issue I see besides

his mother never said he's sick.

SMH

I know he's not sick and we use protection all the time so I'm safe.

“Take her home Mngqobi, you also need to get ready you leaving remember” ma says and walks out

What an interesting day it has been

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“You should have seen yourself...mama please no, mama” I mimic Mngqobi when his mother was giving him a hiding

We actually laughing at how we cried when his mother was beating us earlier

“Oho you the one that was crying”

It's true, I cried like it was my last day on earth,

Mnqobi didn't even shed one tear.

“She loves you”

“I doubt it, she wouldn't have whipped my ass like she did”

“I know her if she didn't like you then she wouldn't have whipped this ass” he spanks me after saying that

We again seating under the bamboo tree with a yellow dandelion plugged on my Afro

He likes plugging my hair with these flowers

“December is so far” he pulls me closer to him

I roll my eyes

“It's just four months away” ” i give him a soft kiss

“I'll come during you September holidays”

“Mnqobi we spoke about this, you promised me that you going to focus on your schooling and don't forget you promised not to quit your doctorate”

He finally relented after I beg and beg.

“I know okay fine I’ll see you in December” he kisses me again

He deepens the kiss this time

“Thank you” he says after breaking the kiss

“For”

“When your mother-in-law asked what am I to you, you said I’m your man”

Mother-in-law??

“I said boyfriend”

“Man, boyfriend. Same difference. I can’t wait for you to call me your husband” wooh can we slow down

“Slow down brother, we still have a long way to go before we can even get there”

He needs to take it down a notch

“I know, yoh I don’t even want to think about the future, let’s not even mention Hitler and his soldiers”

Oh no he didn’t...

“Hitler oh please what about Terreblanche and his followers” how dare he calls my brother hitler I’m the only one allowed to mock them

“Don’t let them hear you say that” he laughs softly and kiss my temple

“we still need to deal with them too” I sigh

“Don’t despair my love I wasn’t named Mngqobi for nothing, we will conquer this too” I shake my head and laugh with him

I just love him.

This has been the best school holidays so far, I’ll miss him so much but we’ve got no choice, just one more year then I’ll go to jhb too.

His phones rings startling us, “my love” flashes the screen

Remember how jealous I was when I first that

Funny...

“Ma” he answers

“She wants to talk to you” I wonder what does she

want from me now

“Hello ma”

“Hai Qhamukile you’ll see him when he comes back in December yoh I know he’s your boyfriend but hey the bus waits for no man. kiss him for the last time and let him go” and she hands up

Yoh.... I give up.

“What does she want” I laugh and tell him what she said.

He finds his mother overly dramatic

“Let me go before she comes here” he pecks my lips one last time

“I love you maShenge”

“I love you Mapholoba” you should see him

He’s smiling like a retard

“December” he says and get into his mothers car

“I’ll be waiting” I tell him before he drives away.

I watch him as drives away until he disappears.

I smiling like a retard too as I walk home.

I'm surprised I was able to contain my emotions like I did, I hate goodbyes but I'm rest assured knowing that he'll be back to me.

Where he belongs.

The gate is wide open when I reach my homestead and there is a heavily pregnant lady standing outside with a brick in her hand

“Hello”

“Where is that brother of yours”

I have five brothers lady which one are you talking about

“Which one”

She looks very angry I must say

“Gatsha, he needs to take care of his child”

Say what now.

“Child”

“Yes, see this baby I'm carrying it's his tell him I'll be

waiting for him” she says angrily and walks out the gate

What the hell

Gatsha is a father to be? My brother Gatsha”

My brother, brother?

This is unreal.

I run into the house and guess who I find peaking through the curtains

“Thank you so much” he says after I close the door

He looks very relieved to see me, he sits down and calms himself

“Bhuti what’s going on” I’m horrified by what I just saw and heard

Am I going to be an aunt soon?

“That’s Yobanathi, shes crazy I’m telling you” he says chuckling

“Bhuti what’s going on” I ask again

He stands up and puts his arm around me smiling

ear to ear

“You, my favorite sister” I keep telling him I’m his only sister so I’m bound to be his favorite

“..... you’re about to be an aunt”

“What”

To say I’m shocked would be an understatement.

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Last one for the day

[06/20, 18:18] Lynne: (Continuation)

MNQOBI

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J ozi maboneng!

Same year, second semester.

It feels like I've been gone for a very long time, being home was good and the fact that I was with Qhamu was the best highlight of my holidays but it's back to reality now.

I'm only realizing how much I missed my little apartment and the city lights one thing I didn't miss about though is the busyness of the morning and evening rush, the hooting cars and the rudeness of the people.

I take out my phone and text Ma and the love of my life, they have been calling me every thirty minutes wanting to know if I've arrived safely.

The dramatics!

SMH

I just got to the flat and it still smell just like how I left it. I look at my unmade bed and shake my head, that's so unlike me but I had Qhamu to rush to so making up my bed seemed less important.

Laugh at me all you want, I'm whipped I know and guess what, I love it.

Memory of kissing Thozama on this very same bed rushes my thoughts and I can't help feel somehow.. I don't know.. bad maybe?

I'm not sure all I know is the Mngqobi I know wouldn't even care so I'm surprised at myself for caring.

I tried calling her before I left wanting to apologize fact what happened or rather what didn't happen but she ignored my calls

I was happy that I was finally going to get laid after such a long time of drought but what does Mapholoba?

He goes soft on me.

The hell!

That has never happened to me and funny thing is I wanted her just as much, the thought of being inside her excited me but the unspeakable happened.

Please promise not to tell anyone about this I don't want to be a laughing stock.

I know I'm taking this secret with me to the graze.

I know what you thinking, how can Mngobi feel like this, I can't believe he wanted to sleep with Thozama, hell yes I wanted to sleep with her. She's beautiful and has a great body too why wouldn't I want to sleep with her?

Lol I can see you turning red with anger.

Just relax your tits please.

That was all before Qhamu and I got back together and looking back I've got no regrets that I didn't get to do the deed with Thozama, as embarrassing as it is to say this i'm happy Mapholoba didn't get ha...

clears throat

Remember you promised not to tell anyone so I won't say it out loud too.

Anyway imagine how I'd feel knowing very well that I slept with Thozama and got back together with Qhamu the same day.

Sigh

I take out my phone and call Thozama.

If she doesn't answer I swear I'll stop calling her, I understand she's maybe angry at me for what I didn't do but I'm not about to get on my knees and beg her.

shouldn't she be happy?

You girls confuse me at times.

One minute you don't want someone who rushes into sex the the next you angry because I don't want to have sex??

Makes no sense...

Her phone rings until it takes me to voicemail, arg i'm trying for the last time. She can't still be angry after all this time besides what was I supposed to do?

Qhamu's face was hovering my thought, my mind, my whole being so how was I going to have sex with her when all I could see was Qhamu?

It wouldn't be fair on Thozama or Qhamu even on

me.

“Hello” she answers in her small sweet voice

I’m tongue tied

I want to apologize but what am I apologizing for?

For not having sex with her?

For not loving her?

For seeing Qhamu as I was about to have sex with her?

For loving Qhamu?

God...

“I miss your food” I say instead

Don’t look at me like that, she’s a good cook

“Oh”

I can tell she’s a little disappointed by that but what am I supposed to say

“Oh hey I’m sorry my dick got soft because I was imagining Qhamu whilst trying to have sex with you”

Shit!!

I can't believe I just said that, pretend as if you didn't hear me.

Anyway that doesn't sound like something any guy would say and it's hurtful too.

Back to my phone call.

“Yes, I'm coming over”

She agrees and I hang up.

Let me go face my demons. I quickly put on my sneakers and walk out.

Simpfiwe is standing outside the entrance with rich boy Katlego and they are vaping

“Howzit magents” we exchange our hands shakes and I light my cigarette after all pleasantries have been exchanged

“How was the rurals” I don't know how many times have I told Mr Baggy pants here that Matsheni looks nothing rural but here we are

“It was alright” I don't even bother trying to correct

Katlego

“I’m glad you back, there’s this party that I want us to go to. It will be buzzing and you know the ladies will be hot” I shake my head

All he knows is parties and girls.

“Oh yeah, it should be fun I’m game” I figured I’d sound excited but when the day comes make an excuse

This is the only way.

“And dude you finally banged that Mpumalanga girl” trust Katlego to call Thozama a Mpumalanga girl

“Woooo you smashed Thozama, what happened to waiting” Simphiwe shouts

Don’t be surprised boys can be dramatic too...

“I didn’t sleep with her”

“Ah boy, how can you not. Have you seen that girl’s butt and she’s always holding on to you like a handbag just smash her man it’s not like she’s doesn’t want you” I know you hating on Katlego right now but he’s right Thozama is forever clued to

me well that's before everything I don't now.

"I have to go, see you two later" I throw the cigarette butt into the drain and leave them there

"Oh I see you, you going to her right now" I hear Simphiwe shouting, I ignore him and continue walking.

Thozama lives in the student accommodations in Jorisson street so i have to walk the distance because I live in Biccard street near Queen Elizabeth bridge that separates braamfontein and the CBD.

She's waiting outside when I get to her flat, she's wearing a short with a crop top.

Jesus..

She's smoking hot.

Don't worry this sights doesn't even get Mapholoba aroused.

I once did say Qhamu has done something to me.

"Hello" i hug her

“Hey” her hug is cold but I guess I deserve that
“How are you” I ask her once we inside her room
“I’m good” she brings me a plate full of food.
I’m actually full but I eat anyway.

“Thozama look, I don’t know what happened that
day and I’m sorry I snapped at you” I decided to
have this conversation now rather than later, as
uncomfortable as it is.

“Is it me” she says with her voice breaking
Oh hear comes the water works

“No it’s me, my mind was not in the right space look
Thozama I told you I’m not ready for a relationship
and believe me when I say I don’t want to hurt you” I
can’t believe I’m actually entertaining this

“Mnqobi I told you I’ll wait for you” this is going to
be harder than I anticipated

I don’t know if I’m crazy or what but my name
doesn’t sound the same when she says it, only
Qhamu knows how to say it right.

Like I said it sounds crazy.

“That’s just the thing Thozama I don’t want you to wait for me” how do I tell her I’m in love someone else without breaking her heart

She quickly wipe the tear that has just fallen and look away from me

“Look you’re a great girl and believe me any guy would be lucky to have you but that guy is not me, and I’m...”

my ringing phone interrupts me

“The Mrs”

I can’t miss her call for anything or anyone

“Hello” I answer moving away from Thozama

“Sthandwa sam you arrived safe” I thought I texted her

“Yes, didn’t you get my message”

She chuckles sweetly

“I did I guess I just wanted to hear your voice” I smile at how sweet she is

“Missing me already”

“I do and December is so far, I can’t wait to finish school so I can come be with you” how sweet is she

“That’s if hitler allows you to come study this side”

“Mngobi I swear I’m going to kill you if you continue calling Misuzulu hitler” I laugh

Hear how different it sounds when she says my name?

“I’ll be eighteen in J anuary, they’ll have no choice but to treat me like an adult” it’s sweet how she thinks her brothers will stop treating her like a baby

“Chesa wena eighteen, I bet you my love you’d be forty, married with kids but your brothers will still treat you like you six”

We both laugh

“That’s true, listen my love I have to go, my brother are on Gatsha’s case because he’s afraid of his baby mama and I too want to join in the fun”

Gatsha.. baby mama?

When did that happen

“Ok baby I love you” I had to say it

“I know” and she hands up

She knows....

“Is that her” I’m startled

Shit!

I totally forgot about Thozama, her eyes are glistening with tears.

Shit..

“I’m sorry Thozama” I walk to her and hug her.

I’m surprised she doesn’t push me away so I hold her tighter and let her cry on my chest.

This girl loves me it’s hurts

“I’m sorry I’m just being a cry baby, I know you love Qhamu and you told me about her countless times I’m just being silly. I’m glad you two got back together” she’s says trying to calm herself

I wonder who is she trying to convince that she’s

okay because I can see she's clearly not.

"I'm sorry ok, I didn't mean to hurt you"

The old Mngqobi would have just walked out the minute she started crying but the heartless me has vacated instead this sweet caring person I don't like remains

"It's ok, I'm good really. I hope we can remain friends though"

"Of course we can" she's a great girl and I'd rather have her as a friend than but have her at all.

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NARRATED

Makhosini and Misuzulu have once again meet at their usually spot discussing their plan to take out Zithulele and his hardcore family.

"I hear Zithulele now works with the Nigerian but if

we do this right no one will know it's us" Makhosini says

He's still on a wheelchair and he's slowly but surely accepting that he might never walk again even though Qhamu told him he will.

'maShenge is just young girl who knows nothing' he thought to himself

"Yes Ngcobo do you really trust that Nkanyezi guy" the concerned Misuzulu asks.

He doesn't trust easily by nature

one of the trades he got from his father.

"I do, he would never betray me" Makhosini sounds unsure so his words comes out with less conviction and he hates that a Buthelezi is making him question his judgement

"I see... anyway the boys are ready to take him down"

"Nkanyezi said he meets with his father every Thursday in the wear-house so maybe we can attack then" Langalibalele suggests

“That’s Good then we can take them all out at once”
Gatsha sound excited

“We need to make sure that no one survives, I’m
tired of seeing your ugly faces so if we do this right
then we will be out of each other’s hair for life”
Langalibalele will never like the Buthelezi’s as long
as he lives

“Nothing would make me happier” Gatsha hates the
Ngcobo’s just as much.

“Calm down you two, you’ll get a chance to make
love right now we need to focus on this” Misuzulu
can be playful when he wants to.

Makhosini is the only one that laughs but
Langalibalele and Gatsha are pissed off

“Come on that was funny” he says still laughing

“Are we done here, I’ve got rather important things
to do” Gatsha says bored

“Like dealing with a crazy baby mama” Makhosini
mocks

“Who do you know about them, I swear Makhosini if

can get even an inch close to them I'm going to kill you" Gatsha fears for his unborn child

"Relax, It's you I have a problem with not your child, I promise not to touch them if it that will help you sleep better at night"

"I swear I'll kill you with my bare hands should you touch my nephew" Misuzulu is now angry too, they know what the Ngcobo's are capable of.

"We done here" Makhosini says and push him self to the car

He knows if they can starts fighting amongst themselves then they won't be able to kill Zithulele and his notorious family.

Langalibalele helps Makhosini in to the car and he sits comfortably in the back seat.

The Buthelezi's too get in their cars and prepare to depart but before they do Makhosini rolls down his window and signals for Misuzulu to rolls down his window.

"Did you find the bustard that touched Qhamukile"

he's ask coolly

"He's dead" Misuzulu says unfazed

"Good to see you haven't lost your touch"

"I'd love to take credit but It's not my doing"

"Oh I see"

"Yes, he was found near umgeni river with three bullets on his skull and his testicles hanging around his neck"

"Mmm so sad" Makhosini is not even touched that Khaya died in such a cruel manner

"Indeed, which makes me wonder who would be that heartless" Misuzulu looks at Makhosini inquisitively which Makhosini smiles

"But then again throwing people in rivers is your métier"

A full blown laughter erupts from Makhosini, he can't hold himself he laughs hard which annoys all the guys looking at him including his own brother.

"I didn't kill him why would I anyway, Qhamu your

sister not mine but I'm touched that you'd think I'd fight your families battles" Makhosini says lastly and rolls up his window.

The memories of the night he almost killed Misuzulu comes back flooding in fast but he dismisses the thought just as fast.

It happened a long time ago and he didn't have a choice but to do it.

"I can't believe that fucker was killed before I could get my hands on him" Makhosini thinks to himself as Langalibalele drives them home.

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[06/20, 18:19] Lynne: Chapter 28

QHAMUKILE

Sigh..

I know I'm exasperating you from sighing but I can't help it schools have reopened, it's another term of Mrs Ndaba of her boring self, boring me half to death.

I think I almost loved school when Lungelo and I were close but now that he stopped talking to me my hate has slowly come back. I kinda miss him I admit, the midnight phone calls, the morning text he was so sweet.

I don't know what happened, since I now know that Khaya was his sisters husband I kinda of closed off. I ignored him when he was here for the funeral and I hate myself for it, Lungelo has always been good to me.

But right now I don't have the luxury of time to dwell on how estranged we have become I have school to get to.

Just a couple of months to go Qhamu, that's what I keep telling myself every morning when I have to

wake up.

Some things never change, I'm late for the third time in a row this week.

Blame my alarm.

I hear Mngqobi calls but I never hear my alarm, well it happens.

Rolling my eyes.

I quickly finish preparing for school in ample time but by the time I get to the bus stop bab'Khuzwayo is long gone. I know it's him because my favorite bus driver would never leave me behind.

A taxi it is.

I wait another twenty minutes before a mustered Corolla stops right in front of me

I don't want to get excited because I know Mngqobi is in Joburg but I get hopeful anyway

The driver rolls down the window and it's Manqoba
"Oh it's you" the disappointment sounds too loud in my own ears

“You sound disappointed” should I apologize?

“I thought it was Mnqobi that’s all” I try to be casual about it

“I see, I’m not sure if you know this but he’s in joburg now. come on in”

I first want to protest but time time of of the essence besides it’s Manqoba, what harm can be possibly do

I get in and sit comfortably on the passenger seat

“How have you been” I ask him

I haven’t seen him in forever

“I’ve never been happier, I’m glad you here with me”

Ok..

“I’m glad you came when you did or else I was going to be so late” I’m genuinely glad he came

I can’t take anymore of Mr Buthelezi’s tales

“I’m always here for you” I don’t know why that gives me chills down my spine and not the good chills

It must be my paranoia again

I look at him and smile instead

“You’re so beautiful” he whispers

I can tell he didn’t want me to hear it so I dismiss it too.

“When last did you speak to Mnqobi”

“In ju..” I stop myself quickly before I reveal something that could end Mnqobi and I in a nanosecond

“Last year when bhuti Makhosini was shot and I haven’t seen there except the time we were at the car wash” I have to be extra careful, talking about Mnqobi excites me so I can go and on

“That doesn’t count, you didn’t get speak to him”

“I guess” I say and look away

I don’t want him to see the remains of my smile or the sparkle in my eyes.

The mention of Mnqobi name does that to me sometimes..

Or is it all the time?

“I’m sorry it never worked out between the two of you and I guess I don’t stand a chance either with all the family drama” say what now?

“You and me” I ask trying not to sound surprised

His voice sounds serious and yet there’s a hint of jest which confuses me

“You should see your face, relax princess I’m only joking”

The way he says princess is just... I don’t know.

I’m happy I’ve arrived, after saying my many thank you’s I bid him farewell. He doesn’t lock me in like Mngqobi did the first time I was in his car, he doesn’t force me to see him after school and he also gladly takes the ten bucks I give him.

He’s looks like Mngqobi so much, I didn’t even realize that he sounds just like him until today but they are just so different.

I smile at the thought of Mngqobi demanding that I kiss him before exiting the car, he’d go as far as

locking me in.

SMH

“See you after school” now this is something Mnqobi might say but he’s not Manqoba so I decline without even thinking twice.

I’m early thanks to him but I don’t want him giving me anymore lifts, today was more than enough besides it’s just weird.

Manqoba is a Ngcobo too.

“It’s alright, I’ll take a taxi” I tell him

Just imagine just last year i was seen with Mnqobi and now him

I can’t.

“No!” He shouts startling me

“I mean I’ll wait, I don’t mind really” he says now softer

“It’s alright really plus I’ll be late today”

“You’ve got extra glass I know, I’ll come pick you up princess and that’s not negotiable” he says smiling

and drives away

I wonder how does he know I've got extra glasses but that's besides the point, I don't want to be seen with any of the Ngcobo brood mainly because I don't want to anger my brothers more than I have, now imagine if they were to find out that I'm now accepting lifts from Manqoba, Mnqobi's brother.

Yoh they would be so furious.

I don't even what to imagine how they would they react, too much blood has been spilled and I don't want anymore blood spilled from either side of the families.

I see Mr Buthelezi approaching the gate just as I enter which means the bell is about to ring

“maShenge” not again

“Baba” I walk to him

Why can't this old man let me be?

“I've been meaning to talk to you” I wonder what about

“Yes sir”

“How’s everyone at home” why can’t he just go check them or better yet summon them here like he’s done before

“Everyone’s good” I need to get to class

“Tell Gatsha to come here, we have important things we need to discuss I don’t know why has he been ignoring my phone call” I’m sure this about Gatssha’s pending baby issue

I still can’t believe my brother is about to be a father and I an aunt. It feels so surreal maybe once the baby is here then it will sink in

“I’ll tell him baba”

“Oh maShenge tell that brother of yours Mondli I want to see him too it’s a matter of urgent in fact give me his number”

Eye roll

He can be so extra at times.

I take out my phone and give him Mondli number, he doesn’t waste any time

He calls him right there. He shouts at him once

Mondli answers, I don't know what's that all about but I leave him there shouting when the bell rings.

Mondli was too furious at me when Zwelethu came to my rescue but he's still my favorite brother and he's still the sweet one which is why I want to know why Mr Buthelezi here would be shouting at him like that.

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True to his words Manqoba is waiting outside the school gate when I walk out, I pretend not to see him but he screams my name loudly catching everyone's attention

Breath in and out Qhamu

“Hey I didn't see you there” i lie through my teeth

“Really, hard to believe anyway come one in princess” I like how he doesn't dwell on thing like how Mnqobi would

I know for a fact that he's go on and on about i'm ignoring him.

I've got no choice but to go in

All the schools girls are looking at him like he's the next best thing after buttered bread but I'm not fazed. He doesn't ooze confidence like Mnqobi, his strides are not as precise as Mnqobi's, his smiles doesn't reach his eyes like Mnqobi, his shoulders are not as broad, I could go on and on. He's just not Mnqobi, they may look alike but he comes nothing close to him.

I take a seat in the passenger seat like I did in the morning and unlike Mnqobi he didn't open the door for me.

He turns his head to look at me and smiles, if it were Mnqobi he would be smirking.

"How was school"

"It was good" I'm not sure what he does but I ask him about his day anyway just to exchange the pleasantry.

By the time we get close to Mvubakazi we've spoken about a whole lot of stuff not worth mentioning but I'm startled when he asks

"Any new guy you dating now" how is that any of his business

I remain silent not knowing how to respond

There no new guy, it's the same old Mngqobi that I love so much.

He fiddles with the car stereo and some cheesy mb fills the silence

"Sorry, I don't mean to pry" then why are you

"Not that is any of your business but yes"

Quick as lightning I see a glint of anger submerge his face but just as quick he masks it well with a smile

Not sure what happened there.

"That's good, I'm glad" his voice doesn't resonate with his words

I'm sure he's just jealous on behalf of his brother

“Qhamukile I lo.. I mean Mnqobi still loves you so it’s just sad that you’ve moved on” I can now hear the sadness in his voice

“Well what can I do, family history won’t let us be”

“Yes but it’s a good thing you moved on cause he did too”

Didn’t he just say he still loves me?

“Oh”

I don’t want to think about what he said, I know Mnqobi has n’t moved on or rather I’m the girl he moved on with.

“Yes you know joburg girls don’t play besides just look at me no one would say no to this face”

Mnqobi would say something like that

I chuckle at the thought

J oburg girls huh?

Mnqobi is not dating anyone I know for sure, I’m his one and only so I try not to laugh at Manqoba’s misconceptions

Even though Manqoba sounds like the Chauvinist that is Mnqobi right now but he doesn't have Mnqobi charisma or his confidence

"I see"

"Yes, you need to leave that guy you with and take me instead" he says chuckling

"I'll treat you better" I laugh at him

He's full of jokes

"I'm sure you are, listen let me go before Shaka Zulu and his disciples come with their sagila's blazing" I'm in stitches when I finish

"What...? He doesn't get it

"Nothing, you wouldn't get it" I say a little disappointed but what was I expecting, he's not Mnqobi.

I take my bag and leave him standing there

I take out my phone and call Mnqobi seeing Manqoba face made me miss him so much.

His phone rings four times before he a female voice

answers

“Mnqobi’s voice hello”

I look at the screen maybe I dialed the wrong number “The Mr” it says

It’s definitely Mnqobi number

“Hi can I talk to Mnqobi” my voice stern

Manqoba’s words replays in my head

“J oburg girls”

Don’t tell me Mnqobi is two timing me

“He’s in the shower right now, can I take a message”

I swear this is god testing my love for Mnqobi

What the hell is he doing in shower when there’s a girl answering his phone

I hang up without saying anything further

I trust him and I know he wouldn’t cheat on me.

He was here just a month back there was no sign that he was dating someone else.

“Qhamu stop it” I reprimand myself

There must be an explanation for all that he would never do that to me.

I open the gate and enter my homestead.

Mondli is pacing around the house when I enter

“Bhuti what’s wrong” he turns around to face me a little startled

“Nothing, nothing” he says fast

Ag I won’t even bother enquirer further he won’t tell me anyway besides I’m still thinking about Mnqobi.

I’m letting my thoughts work overtime here but I can’t help it, Manqoba is close to Mnqobi so he would know of Mnqobi is dating anyone else.

What am I doing?

I know the truth. I clear my thoughts and look myself in the mirror.

“Mnqobi loves you and you alone” I tell my reflection

Let me stop torturing myself. I won’t let Manqoba’s

empty words saw any seed of doubt even that girl,
I'll simply ask Mngobi about it.

I'm sure there's an perfect explanation why she
answered his phone.

Mondli opens my bedroom door just as I'm about to
change my uniform

What happened to knocking

"I'm going to meet bab'Themba I'm coming" he says
and closes the door

Oh that Mr Buthelezi by the way I wonder what has
he done now.

He looks too nervous, I'll ask him when he gets back.

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I know it's short I'll try and post again.

Not promising.

[06/20, 18:19] Lynne: (Continuation)

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MNQOBI

The rowdiness that has erupted from my apartment forces me to take a very quick shower. I love how the cold water cascade down my body, hitting my stiff shoulders instantly relaxing me. I had just come from soccer practice when I found Katlego and Thozama waiting for me outside my apartment. Simphiwe joined in the moment we stepped into my room. I let the water fall from my head one last time before stepping outside the shower.

When I was back in school I'd take ice bath after a long days of soccer practice but now I have cold showers instead.

I have a towel around my waist, not wasting any

minute longer I let it fall and I apply lotion and pull on a pair of shorts and a t-shirt and walk out of the bathroom.

It's a Thursday but these fool here decided to turn my place into a mini party. Music is playing loud and Katlego as always brought beers with him.

“Yoh Zulu boy—“ that's what Katlego calls me

He says he gave me that name because of my thick Zulu accent.

I shake my head at his remark

“Weee mlungu” i tease

I've learnt to tolerate him.

once you look pass the baggy pants and the snobbishness you'd find that he's a cool guy to be around and I like that he doesn't think better of himself though he comes from a filthy rich family

“The Mrs. called you wimp” he teases too

According to him I'm whipped because I refuse to cheat on Qhamu though she's miles away.

I take out my phone from the charger but I see no missed call

“I answered” the thought of Thozama answering my phone gets me apprehensive

Why the fuck did she answer my phone

I glare at her without saying much but I don’t have to say anything for her to know I’m pissed off.

I excuse myself and walk out of the apartment

Her phone rings to voicemail the first time but she answers with anger reeking from her pours when I call the second time

“What!” The Vernon in her voice clearly tells me she’s angry

“Sthandwa sam” I try to be as casual as I can be

I don’t know why because I’m not doing anything that I shouldn’t be.

“Mnqobiwesizwe are you cheating on me?” She never calls me by my full name unless in occasions like this

When she angry.

“What” I ask incredulously

That’s just absurd

“I said are you cheat—“

“I know what you said but where does that come from”

“I call and a bitch answers” I’ve never heard Qhamu cuss before but this makes me even more angry that Thozama had the guts to answer my phone

“Qhamukile I don’t ever want to hear you say such words again—and I’m not cheating on you, you know this” I say my voice a little stern

I don’t take cussing lightly especially coming from her mouth.

“Then why was she answering your phone” her voice just as stern

I wasn’t expecting anything less, I like the fire that burns inside her.

I fall in love with her ferocious self everyday

“I was in the shower—“ she cuts me midsentence

“She mentioned” i can tell she’s still angry so let me
relief her out of this torment she’s in

I breath in and out just so my voice can come out
as soft

“Qhamu that was Thozama we just chilling with the
gents and she’s part of us. I’m not cheating on
you—I’d never”

I’ve risked so much just by being with her and I’m
not going to let Thozama ruin that for me.

“If I ever find out that you cheating on me I swear
I’m going to castrate you” I laugh at how serious
she is

“I’m serious Mnqobi”

“I know baby but you have nothing to worry about
my heart only beats for you and only you” I can feel
her smile

“Is that a smile”

“No” she growls

“I’m not smiling, im still angry at you. You’re mine and only mine I don’t want any girl to even smile your way”

I love it when she gets jealous

“Ain’t we territorial” I tease but I like love it when she claims me like this.

“I mean it Mnqobi” I know she does

“How’s school” I’m glad she’s over Thozama answering her call. I still need to have a chat with her about it.

My phone is off limits which is why I don’t understand what gave her the impression that she can answer my calls.

“It’s good, guess who I saw today” I wait for her to tell me because I’m not good at her guessing games and she’s aware

“Your twin, Manqoba” I get a little jealous that he got to see her and I’m stuck miles away

“Oh really” I can’t hide my disappointment

I need her close to me at all times

“Yeah, he gave me a lift I was so late so if he didn’t show up when he did I was going to be late again” she sounds almost happy the little ping of jealousy comes back, tenfold this time.

No one is supposed to give her lifts but me

“I see, I’ll call you every morning to wake you like I did before in that way you’ll never be late” I don’t want my brother giving her lifts so I’ll wake up an hour earlier if it means waking her up so she can make in time for the bus

“I’d love that” I miss seeing her eyes glister when she blushes

Though she won’t admit it I know she’s blushing at my words

“Can i ask”

“Yes baby”

“If it happens that I don’t come study in jhb will you move on, I mean you’ll be there for such a long time and I know with the distance and all we would forget you know” my heart breaks

Why would she think I'd move on. She's all that I want if it ain't her then it ain't anyone

She's all I need now, tomorrow and forever

“Qhamu—“ I hate it when she doubts my love

“Would you forget about me, would you move on if it happens that you and I split” not that will happen.

I pledged my forever to her but I guess she needs that assurance.

“No” the softness in her voices tells me my words hurts her just as much but she needs to know what I'm feeling when she starts doubting the love I have for her

“Then baby trust me when I say you going to be my wife, one way or the other.”

I reassure her once more

I hate Thozama for ever making Qhamu feel somewhat insecure

“Promise me never to doubt me, promise never to let anything make you insecure” she lets out a tired sigh before she makes her promises

“I promise” that’s all I wanted to hear

“Listen baby I have to go, I’ll call you a little bit later ok” I need to politely chase the guys away so I can deal with Thozama

“Alright, I love you” she says sweetly

I could never get tired of hearing those words coming from her lips

“I know” I say proudly and hang up.

I take a deep breath before I step back into the apartment.

“Done exchanging I love you’s with the Mrs” Simphiwe can be just as annoying as Katlego when he wants to be

“Shut up” I slap the back of his head lightly and move to sit on the couch next to Katlego I can’t help but glare at Thozama’s direction.

The guys refuse when I ask them politely so I become rude about it, they leave eventually leaving me with Thozama

“Why did you answer my phone” I’m not angry but

my voice is stoic

“I’m sorry, you were in the shower and I thought I could take a massage” her bounce is sweet but I can’t let this go or else she will feel like she can do whatever she wants

“I don’t appreciate what you did, you know very well who The Mrs. is but you still answered, I don’t want to have to distance myself from you because you affect my relationship” I’m looking at her right in her eyes

She needs to know I mean every words

Qhamu is off limits.

“I’m sorry, I won’t do it again” if I dismiss this or take it lightly she will think I’m ok with what she did.

“I hope so” I say and stand up

She needs to leave.

“Mnqobi I said I’m sorry, you don’t have to chase me away” speaking to Qhamu has made me miss her so much so I need to call her again just to listen to her melodic voice but I won’t be able to do that

when Thozama is busy hovering my apartment

“Thozama I need to call Qhamu and I’m sure you don’t want to here when I do that”

“Come on, you’ll call her later” my eyebrows furrow involuntarily

“No, I need to call her now so please leave” That is as polite as I can be.

She doesn’t argue further but leaves.

“Photo copy” I decided to call Manqoba first

I’m not sure what I’m hoping to archive by what I’m about to say but I have to say it

“Hey bafo how are you” once the pleasantries have been exchanged I get on with it

“I hear you been giving Qhamu lifts” I say lightly

I don’t want to come off strong just Incase he starts questioning

“Yeah I saw her today” the excitement in his voice managed to flare up some jealousy in me

“You need to stay away from her bafo, we don’t

need another battle with the Buthelezi” I’m casual
but the anger in me breathes through my pours

“Don’t worry I’m too careful, no one will see me” I’m
not sure what to make of that

“Manqoba stay away from Qhamu” my voice comes
out hostile

He may be my brother but Qhamu is mine

“Hey relax Mnqobi it’s not like you dating the girl,
chill—“

“Manqoba I’m not going to tell you this again, stay
away from her.” —she’s mine

“Yoh ndoda I mean no harm, I know you got shot
because of her but that’s no reason to be
belligerent”—I’d take many more bullets for her

“I don’t want to have this conversation with you
again” I tell him and hang up before he could say
more.

He knows I mean every word I said.

Manqoba is my brother I know he would never hit
on Qhamu because her and I dated but I can’t help. I

too get territorial just like her, I too own her like she owns me and I don't want any guy getting close to her even my own flesh and blood.

I breath in and out to calm my self down and once my anger subsides I call her.

[06/20, 18:19] Lynne: Chapter 29

Unedited

QHAMUKILE

Days turned into weeks, weeks into months with Manqoba continuing to be tenacious. Regardless how many times I've told him I don't want lifts he just won't listen; I guess he's not easily dispelled like his brother.

remember how Mnqobi would travel by bus every day when he was still courting me?

I miss those days.

Just like Manqoba I told Mnqobi to stop calling

every morning but he too like his brother, is very perpetual so I ended up yielded. I now pick up his five o'clock calls like he promised to call and I also accept lifts from his twin brother without complains. I'm saving money anyway.

Besides Manqoba is not as bad as I thought, he's not Mnqobi but he reminds me so much of him so I guess spending time with Manqoba has somehow made me feel I don't know, closer to Mnqobi.

As crazy as that sounds it's true, I love Mnqobi with everything in me and Manqoba is like that brother I'll never have.

He's too sweet.

It's just funny how neither of our brothers have found out but whenever when I'm with Mnqobi it takes hours for them to find us.

It's mid- November, Yobanathi is due to give birth anytime now, I swear I thought she was close to giving birth when I first saw her. Damages were paid to her family so the Buthelezi clan is free to see the baby whenever we wish to, with her

permission of course but you catch my drift.

I'm a little jealous that there will be a new baby in the family soon, crazy I know but I'm so used being the baby of the family that it's still feels so surreal. In a few days, max a week I'll be someone's aunt, not to just any of my brother's child but Gats ha.

Who would have thought, Gats ha the ladies' man tamed?

I still can't believe it.

He said he's serious about his relationship with Yobanathi just the other day when Mis uzulu asked what his intentions are with her, if im not mistaken I think he even mentioned that he loves her or something along those lines. I was eavesdropping so their voices were not coherent enough for me to hear all that they had to say.

Please don't tell on me.

My phone rings just as I'm about to sit down and watch some TV, it's a hot Saturday and ive just finished cleaning and I'm tired. Maybe next time I should wake up and clean before the sun gets too

hot.

Manqoba's

name flashes the screen

"Manqoba" I'm too tired to be sweet

"what got you so grumpy" I ignore his remark

"what's up" the hot temperature isn't helping with my grumpiness either

"nothing much—just wondering if you could join me" he says calmly

"join you?"

"yeah, I'm bored and ma send me to get a few things so I desperately need your company" I roll my eyes

I'm sure that's just a plot to get me to meet him

"Manqoba" I drag his name longer than necessary

"please" an image of him crossing his finger flashes in my mind

"I can't, I promised to help Mondli with something" if I wasn't this tired I'd probably meet him

"Princess you know I won't stop until you relent so please" he's right.

He's just relentless

"you'll have fun, I promise to keep you

entertained—plus grocery shopping is not so bad
huh” “that should

be fun” the sarcasm in my voice is rife
who sends a nineteen year old grocery shopping
out of all things but again his mother is the same
woman who belted me so I’m not surprised.

“I’ll buy you ice-cream” tempting

“please”

“fine” I finally relent.

I take a quick bath and pull on the closest summer
dress I can find. It’s after one when meet him where
he usually parks which is further from where
Mnqobi parks.

“hi” he’s the closet friend I have after Zanele, oh let
me not forget Lucas who seemingly enjoys being
around his sister and I.

“looking beautiful as always” at first I’d find his
compliments unsettling, I guess I’m used to him
now.

“whatever, let’s go”

I say jokingly

Manqoba is dramatic, his mother send him a few
things but he made it sound he had a shopping list.

Rolling my eyes.

Two hours later we are parked under the bamboo tree, mine and Mngobi's bamboo tree, I somehow feel guilty that I'm with Manqoba and not Mngobi but I dismiss the thought as quickly as it came, I'm not doing anything I shouldn't be doing with Manqoba, this tree shares no sentimental value to him and I but means everything to Mngobi and I. I miss him.

"how is Mngobi" I can't help talk about him
"he's alright, he seems to be enjoying being in J o'burg" the Mngobi I know wants to come back home more than anything. I don't tell Manqoba that though instead I smile.

"I'm glad you two broke up" I raise a brow
"glad"

"no—what I mean is you two lov—I mean liked each other but it never worked out" I can hear his breathing quickens

"Manqoba I love.. I loved your brother and I doubt I'll ever find anyone who will replace him" I mean every word

"I can—I mean you will meet someone, didn't you say you moved on" did I?

“it didn’t work out”

“I’m glad—“ he looks at me for some time without saying anything

it’s just crazy how he and Mnqobi look so much alike.

They both have beautiful hazel brown eyes, they are tall and well-built for nineteen year olds. I don’t know how Manqoba keeps fit but soccer seems to be doing the trick for Mnqobi.

The longer Manqoba stares at me the more I see their similarities, like how they both furrow their brows and how they both have smiles that you can’t explain, it’s that smile you have trouble distinguishing from a smirk but as much as they have similar physical appearances they are different in so many ways. Mnqobi has that roguish smile only reserved for me, his eyes shines like diamonds when he looks at me. I fall in love with him every time when I look into his eyes. My heart beat erratically just by the mention of his name.

The depth of the love I have for him runs deeper than I could ever imagined and that’s how I tell

them apart.

That's how I know they are not the same person.
Mnqoba lips crashes against my own jolting me
out of my trail of thoughts

What the hell, did he just kiss me?

Mnqoba kissed me?

His lips are still resting against mine when I push
him away once my brain starts to process that he's
actually kissing me or trying to

“what are you doing” angry can't even begin to
describe how I'm feeling

“I'm sorry, I thought—“ he's now seeing the distaste
he left on my mouth

My face ya hardened in an instant

“—oh I'm sorry princess”

“stop calling me princess—what the hell was that” I
shout

“I saw you looking at me and I thought you were
feeling what I'm feeling” what the hell is he talking
about

Mnqobi is all I think about.

“what the hell Manqoba, you kissed me” the thought of his lips plastered against my own repulses me

“I’m sorry, I thought—“ he pauses to draw breath

“I’m sorry ok”

I glare at him without saying anything

I seriously can’t believe he kissed me

“I’m sorry”

the more he says his pathetic sorry’s the more I want to strangle him to death

I yank the door and abruptly get out. I don’t want to even look at him right now so I storm off.

I didn’t hear him get out of the car but he grabs my upper arm painfully and pull me to look at him

“look Qhamu, I’m sorry ok I didn’t mean to kiss you but

I—“

”Manqoba leave me alone” I say through gritted teeth. I’m boiling with fury. I can feel the fire erupting in me.

He might be taller, bulkier but I’m more angry which is why I can confidently say I can knock him down

with just one fist

“I’m sorry but I love you” his voice comes out as a whisper

“Wha—t” unbelievable

it’s like I’ve been slapped so hard right across the face

dumbfounded doesn’t even begin to describe the shock I’m in

His head moves in a slight nod

“what—“ maybe if he repeats it one more time I’ll believe that my ears are not fooling me

“there, I said. I fucken love you Qhamukile. I loved you the first day I laid my eyes on you” it gets worse

“I didn’t want to tell you but I can’t hold it in anymore I love you it hurts every time I think of you. You’re the first thing I think about when I wake up and the last thing I think about before I go to bed, I know you love me too. I’ve seen the way you look at me, I know you don’t love Mnqobi as much—“ THWACK

That's the sound of my palm meeting his cheek.
His hand involuntarily rubs against where I've just
laid a hop slap.

“STAY. THE.HELL.WAY.FROM.ME!!” I bellow off
each word, each word punctuated with anger.

“I—I.”

“for your sake I hope Mngobi never finds out about
this” I bellow out one last time and leave him
standing there.

Should Mngobi find out that his own brother kissed
me would hurt him more than us breaking up that's
why I'm deciding not to tell him.

I don't want to be break up the bond he has with his
twin, I don't want him to ever have to choose
between Manqoba and I.

I love him too much to hurt him.

[06/20, 18:20] Lynne: NARRATED

Zithulele warehouse

The day has finally come where the two families, the Buthelezi and Ngcobo's are forced to work together to defeat the most feared notorious family in KZN, the Ntshangase family. The brothers from both families and their men are ready to ambush Zithulele and his men but little do they know that Zithulele too has intel and he knows they are planning an attack. He is waiting for them, he is ready.

He made sure that his family is safe, away from where his enemies can have access to them. Since his younger brother, Qophelo who was killed by Makhosini, died, he makes sure that there's someone guarding his family, he has now become paranoid, always looking over his shoulders. he will not admit it but he fears what the brood can do now that they have come together and has become one. Makhosini and Zithulele used to work together and he knows just how dangerous he can be. Makhosini is feared but respected by many because of how he conducts his "business" and that's what Zithulele fears. He knows lots of men admire Makhosini and

Misuzuslu business ethics and he is sure that there are lots and lots of men on their doorsteps offering to help to taken him down.

There are about ten men guarding the post, the warehouse is also heavily guarded, all his guns are fully loaded and ready to kill.

It's just him and his thoughts occupying his office space, a vintage decanter full of smooth whiskey lays on the corner of his oak wooden office table. He drags the decanter slowly to him and pours just enough whiskey in his glass, drops two cubed ices and downs the content. His blood flows instantly from the heat of the expensive whisky.

One gun is strapped safely around his angle whilst two more guns are held safely by the shoulder holster, he loads the last pullet into the cartridge and inserts it into the chamber and puts the gun on the table and pours himself another glass of whiskey.

Now he is ready.

He is ready for the Ngcobo's.

He is ready for the Buthelezi's.

he is ready for the people who killed his brother.
he is ready to avenge.

At joe's garage

“To killing that bastard” Gats ha raises a glass of the finest scotch he can afford in the air and let his words linger.

“To not getting killed” Langa too raise his glass.
They all remain silent letting what Langa just uttered sink in.

None of them fears death but dying is not an option. Makhosini, Mis uzulu, Langalibalele and Gats ha are all gathered around Big joe's garage. They just went through the plan one last time to make sure everyone knows what to do.

All that's left is to put the plan into motion.

“no one is dying except for that piece of shit and his crew—“ he looks at Mis uzulu unblinkingly

“Buthelezi I want you to come back in one peace, no one is allowed to kill you—but me” Makhosini wants

in on the action but his current health state constraint him from joining his rival to take down what he considered an ally once upon a time.

“of course” Misuzulu clicks his glass with Makhosini’s before he downs the content.

His body warms up instantly as soon as the scotch settles in his stomach, the bitter taste lingers on his tongue but his face possesses stoicism that he is unfazed by his burning throat. All the brothers too down their contents following after Makhosini who too is unfazed by the bitter taste.

“let’s go boys” all the men pack up and prepare for a battle that they have been waiting for months.

Nkanyezi has proven to be loyal and useful to Makhosini and Misuzulu, this ambush was planned a while back but Zithulele managed to leave the county before they could get to him so they had to wait it out until now.

Both the older brothers have managed to get eleven men between themselves to fight Zithulele who is hell bend in avenging his younger brother.

They all walk out to their respective cars once

Misuzulu has given the orders, Misuzulu is the last one to walk out following his men.

“Buthelezi—“ Misuzulu stops at his track and turn to look back at Makhosini, the rest of the men including Gatscha and Langa are already outside ready to depart.

“take care of him” with a simple nod Misuzulu walks out

Deep down he knows Makhosini trust him to bring Langa back in one peace and he is planning to do whatever it takes to ensure that none of his men gets harmed but they are going on a battle field, someone is bound to get shot that’s if they don’t die but he is hopeful that all his men will survive.

It takes them around forty minutes to get to Zithulele’s warehouse which is situated on the far end of town in a secluded area

All men gather around one last time under Misuzulu instructions

“Gatscha you and the three men will take the back, Langa I want you to stay behind me at all tim—“

“that was not the plan, I’m not going to be your

shadow throughout this” Langa interjects interrupting Misuzulu mid-sentence

“I don’t care about what you want but Makhosini would prefer you come back in one piece, not in a body bag, so save your tantrums from someone who cares to listen”

Langa opens his mouth to say something but nothing comes out

“now that’s settled. The two of you will take the east and the rest come with me” they start moving towards the warehouse.

They are all dressed in black to blend in with the dark night. Misuzulu is emotionless, his head is focused on the mission ahead.

They all walk a mile to get to the warehouse and as planned all men take their positions and ready themselves for what’s about to unfold.

This is kill or get killed game and all these men came here knowingly.

They know they might not make it out alive but Misuzulu’s men would do anything for him just like Makhosini’s men. The sound of a gun going off indicated that Zithulele’s men know they have

company and soon there's gun fires going off everywhere.

Misuzlu with Langa behind him manage to kill the three guards on the door and move in, the plan is to apprehend and kill two people only.

Zithulele and his father.

The warehouse doors are locked but Misuzulu manages to pick the lock, Langa has managed to kill two men from the opposition side when Misuzulu was picking the lock. They both enter only to find two more men waiting who manages to miss Misuzulu with a bullet before he shots them.

Chaos has erupted everywhere around the warehouse. Gatsha who's on the back entrance manages to kill two people before him and his men goes inside the warehouse but one of Zithulele's people shots him on his shoulder before he could climb the stairs going to the second floor.

It's mayhem from there...

The three men he came with manages to shot the guys that shot Gatsha and he falls on the ground instantly.

He is dead.

Police sirens howl from a distance before they can get to Zithulele's office. He's been hiding in there throughout this ordeal like a coward he is.

"shit" Misuzulu cuss when he realizes that him and his men need to leave before the police get here.

"fuck" he cusses one last time before he tells all his men to go back to their cars.

"what about Zithulele " Langa

"we will get him but we need to leave now" Misuzulu voices reeks of anger

"we can do it now, I can't let the bastard go after he shot my brother" the memories of seeing his brother get shot overclouds his judgments

"how are you going to kill if you'll be rotting from a jail cell"

"we can get to him before those stupid police get here" he scoff before he answer him

"well I don't want those stupid INNOCENT police to die because of us"

"too bad, I'm
goi—"

"Langa—I'm not going to repeat myself. We are

leaving” Misuzulu’s patience is wearing thin.

He doesn’t like being questioned and his word is the law, when he says something can’t be done, then that’s final.

No one dares to question him.

Langa’s insubordination is ticking him off but he doesn’t have time to show him who runs the show here instead he leaves him standing there and his men follow behind him because they know his word is the law.

He will deal with him later.

Langa is hesitant at first but he soon follows Misuzulu tracks as they all run out.

Gatsha’s wound is oozing of blood but the men he’s with carry him until they get to their cars and speed away, a different direction to where the police are coming from. They lost one man in the battlefield but they can’t say the same about Zithulele’s crew. They aimed precisely to kill.

“we need to get him to the hospital, now!” Langa is panicking seeing all the blood come out of Gatsha’s wound. Him, Misuzulu and Gatsha are riding in one car while the rest of the guys took other cars.

“that’s where I’m taking him” Misuzlu shouts at no one in particular

he manages to speed to the hospital and they rush him in and doctors attend to him.

They are sitting in the bench in the waiting area when the heavily pregnant Yobanathi walks in followed by her mother.

Misuzulu abruptly stand on his feet and greet the mother once he notices them

“Yobanathi, what are you doing here” her nose flares in anger

“I left him thousands of missed calls” she shouts

“is the baby fine, what’s wrong” Misuzulu’s voice is panic stricken

“I swear I’m going to kill him” the angry Yobanathi shouts but her voice still containing that respect for Misuzulu

“oh—“

“urg” Yobanathi growls and storm off

“don’t worry about her, its time and she’s just scared—her mother says sweetly

“please inform Gatscha that she is here and soon the

baby will be here too” her mother has that gentle voice.

She leaves Misuzulu standing there and follows behind her daughter to the maternity ward

“and then, why are you so shocked” Langa pats his shoulder trying to jolt him out of his shock.

Silence...

“what’s up with you” irritation lingers on Langa’s words

Misuzulu finally snaps out of his trance and look back at Langa “I’m about to be an uncle for the first time, that what’s up” he says with a smile plastered on his hard features.

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I don’t know how I feel about this insert.

Hope you enjoy

Don't forget to share

[06/20, 18:20] Lynne: Chapter 30

QHAMUKILE

Name: Unknown Buthelezi

Date of birth: 10 November 2019

weight: 3.1 Kg

finally, I'm an aunt and the feeling is exhilarating.

Who would have thought that I'd be this happy?

Misuzulu called last night to inform us that

Yobanathi gave birth to a healthy baby, you should have seen me. I wanted to climb on the highest mountain and scream for everyone to know that my brother is a father and I an aunt. I didn't catch a wink of sleep because excitement got the better of me and I'm too impatient to wait, I wanted to see myself holding the baby.

When morning came I bathed and came here

leaving Ngaba and Mondli behind. Gcina is just as excited so he too woke up early and he both came

here in a taxi.

Baby Buthelezi... Yes, you heard right. It's a

Buthelezi

LOL

I say unknown Buthelezi because Gatsha hasn't named the baby yet.

I'm frantically pacing outside Yobanathi's ward waiting to get in so I can see the baby, I don't even know the gender but the love I have to that little person in there is beyond any comprehension. I know Gatsha was shot but he's not my worry right now, I'm too excited about the new little person to worry too much about him.

"you can go in" the nurse says when she steps out

I'm too nervous but the excitement in me carry my feet into the ward

Yobanathi is laying on the bed and Gatsha is seating on a chair holding the baby close to his chest

happy.

He look so

He looking down at the baby smiling ear to ear

"hi" I greet the tired Yobanathi

“Nonto” he doesn’t even lift his head to look at me he’s just looking fondly at what I assume is his son because he is wrapped in a blue blanket.

God ...

Another Buthelezi testosterone to deal with.

“hey sisi, don’t be afraid come closer” Yobanathi says sweetly

I didn’t even realize I’ve been standing close to the door looking at Gatsha and his son

“he looks just like me” love is evidently glistening in Gatsha’s eyes

I smile and step closer.

I peak through the blanket and he’s sleeping sucking on his finger.

He is beautiful.

“want to hold him?”

“ah I’m still holding him though” my big brother says sulking.

I’m afraid I might drop him but I sit on another chair close to the bed and wait for the sulking Gatsha to hand me the baby

“he was so afraid of holding him but look at him now”

Yobanathi chuckles softly while Gatsha hands me the baby, his arm is wrapped in a bandage and there is a soft sling strap looped around his neck to support his injured arm but he manages to hold the baby delicately.

If you didn't know him, I swear you'd think he's not a first time father.

“Balance the head” Gatsha helps me hold him right. I'd laugh at him if my attention was not absorbed by this little person who look so much like Bheki, his grandfather

“he looks so much like ubaba” I'm not surprised Gatsha look so much like our father not forgetting that he look so tiny

“of course. He's going to break hearts, like his father” that managed to get Yobanathi to scoff

“I'm joking darli, he's going to be a good handsome boy just like me” Gatsha winks at her

he is so afraid of her it's quite funny is you ask me.

The player Gats ha is finally tamed.

I chuckle softly and kiss the baby's soft lips.

I'm in love.

I'm too focused on this new life that I don't hear when Mis uzulu and Gcina step into the room, I just feel Qcina's presence next to me.

"hey you could not wait" he tries to take the sleeping baby from my arms but fails

I'm the one hovering him now

"He's so cute, can he wake up already. I want to see his eyes" I'm impatient, I need him to make those baby sounds just to ensure that he's finally here. I know I'm holding him but I need him to make a sound. He can cry for all I care.

"don't wake him up please, I'm tired" Yobanathi is already yawning

"Hai Qhamu you're hogging him. we all want to hold him" no one was complaining until Nqaba budge in with Mondli

"I'm still holding him" I complain too besides I don't trust any of them with him. He's too small they

might just drop him

Misuzulu has been looking at him fondly, I guess it still feels so surreal to all of us. Who would have thought we would all be gathered in a hospital room looking at Gatsha's offspring like we are?

"he needs a name" I still can't believe Gatsha is a father

"—and Gatsha and I thought we would let you name him" how sweet of her

I'm naming all my kids; I don't trust any of my brothers with good names.

"He's the first grandson" Gatsha says and pats Misuzulu on the shoulder

"I feel honored" Misuzulu says sweetly and a little surprised

I can tell he wasn't expected that

"Are you two sure you want me to name him" I'm not looking at neither of them because I'm focused on the little man I'm carrying but I can feel emotions engulfing us all.

"I'm sure bafo, you're his father too--" tears I've been

suppressing fall

“you’ve been a father to us all and nothing would make me happier than you naming him”

I quickly wipe it away before anyone I can see me. I’m such a cry baby.

Silence fall upon us and we all look at the sleeping Gatsha junior until he wakes up and start making those baby sounds I’ve been wanting to hear.

I guess he too wants to hear his name.

Misuzulu slowly walks to me and pick him up, the only sound is of the baby squealing softly

“He looks like so much like ubaba” my thoughts exactly

“Bhekumuzi Buthelezi” my eyes open widely...
Bhekumuzi?

“I thought you said--“

“Baba would’ve loved it” I wouldn’t agree more

“I love it” Gatsha looks at Yobanathi lovingly and mimes thank you.

I love it.

“it’s befitting” Yobanathi looks at her man lovingly, smiling.

seeing them makes me miss Mnqobi, I need to call him.

“Bhekumuzi Buthelezi”

silence fall on us again and we let the name linger more.

Bhekumuz Buthelezi huh?

I don’t even remember when was the last time I heard the name. he died and to ease our broken hearts we never mentioned his name again but saying his name is different this time. There no sad tears that follow, there’s no sorrow in our hearts. Happiness surround us all.

“Bhekumuzi” Gatsha repeats the name no hint of sadness in his voice.

“Bhekumuzi” the name roll on Nqaba’s tongue too his voice filled with nothing but love

Mondli smiles before he too recites “Bhekumuzi” he’s the only one who constantly showed how my father’s passing affected him, he was not so closed off like the rest of them.

“Bhekumuzi, it’s perfect” Gcina says and takes him from Mis uzulu.

I see a tears falling from Yobanathi’s eyes silently but none of Buthelezi offspring are crying because we don’t find any of this saddening in fact we all happy and celebrating this new life.

Soon baby Bheki is exchanged amongst all the bother, happiness doesn’t even begin to describe how we all feel.

“Thank you maKhumalo” Mis uzulu tells Yobanathi who smiles wiping her tears and I thought I was cry baby.

I stand up and take the now fully awake Bheki from Mis uzlu, I can’t get enough of him. I kissing him countless time I love how his soft his skin feels against my lips. I have never pictured any of my brothers married with kids but seeing how happy Gatsha is, I can’t wait until they all have babies.

I kiss the little man again for the hundredth time, I’m obsessed.

“yoh Qhamu the boy is tired of your kisses” can Nqaba mind his own business.

Its joyful, that's until the nurse chases away because we are making noise.

[06/20, 18:20] Lynne: Continuation

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MNQOBI

I rifle through the pile and pile of dirty laundry sprawled across my bed looking for the one shirt that manages to pull me out of my momentarily gloomy state. I can't seem to forget about him no matter how much I try, how will I, when I look in the mirror all I see is his eyes, when I speak I hear his voice. Sometimes I wish I didn't look so much like him then maybe I would have forgotten how he looked like, Perhaps if I didn't sound so much like him then I wouldn't miss the sound of his voice but I'm a man and if I remember correctly I once said

men are like sheep, and we don't cry and we certainly don't mope around dwelling on the "what if's".

I wipe away the remains of my tears and get off the bed, men don't cry.

And it's not like he was a Nobel prize winner for being the greatest humanitarian anyway, in fact, he was hated and feared by most, many wanted him dead I wish I could say I hate him but I can't seem to utter those three horrible words towards the man who cared for me, regardless of all the terrible things he did he was still MY FATHER.

Sgidi Ngcobo.

And I loved him unconditionally.

I know you think he was a bad person but he is still my father.

I step into the shower and let the hot water run down my rigid body, I'm loving how soccer has kept me fit.

It's a rainy day in J oburg and I want nothing more than to stay indoors and sulk all day but the bioinformatics exam awaits.

Once I'm out of the shower I pull out the Gold and black shirt that once belonged to him, it's wrinkled but nothing a hot iron cannot fix. I haven't spoken to anyone these past couple of days because I miss my dad, pathetic I know, but if you were in my shoes then you'd know what I'm talking about.

I miss him and I'm not going to pretend like I'm fine so you can perceive me not man enough.

I don't care.

Men do cry too and I'm only human, allow me to feel vulnerable without judging.

Hey, let me stop I'm starting to sound like a girl now...

Anyway, Thozama came knocking but I didn't open. She has become a pest in my life nowadays.

I take out my phone and call the only person who knows what I'm going through this moment, the phone rings a couple of times before he answers

"Mnqobi" he too is in a gloomy mood

It's a twin thing, he feels what I feel and I feel what he feels, believe me, it's not a myth.

"How are you"

"I've been better" I know he's missing him just as much

"I know--"

"don't you think it's time we start looking for him, I know Bafo tried but failed, I think we need to start looking again" Manqoba is not softly spoken by nature but today he's too soft.

"yes you right, I've been meaning to talk to you about it too" sometimes it's like our minds are in sync, he knows what I'm going to say before I say I say it and it's funny how I talk to him first before talking to any of my brothers, I guess I trust him in still yet to tell him about Qhamu and I being

together again.

”what are we going to do if he's dead” he knows he's dead but like myself, he's hanging on to a little thread of hope

”Manqoba he is dead, I feel it and I know you do too” that's the hushed truth

” I know--”

”But we need to find his body and bury him with the rest” there's a graveyard back in Mpophweni where all the Ngcobo people are solemnly buried, one day my sons will be buried there just like the rest of my brothers and myself. Sgidi too deserves to be laid next to his fathers and brother.

I'm no longer interested in avenging him the only thing I want is for him to find his eternal peace.

I'm not expecting you to understand.

”is it normal to want to avenge him, bafo” I wanted that more than anything but things have changed now, I have fallen in love.

” I guess it is, but we need to know what happened

before we do anything” I know he killed Qhamu’s father but that doesn’t change the fact that he’s my father and maybe I should be wanting nothing but revenge, but I’m in love.

”and we are not sure that it’s indeed the Buthelezi’s that killed him” we all know he was killed by a Buthelezi

I’m just grasping at straws here

”He was killed by them” his voice full of hatred

I once felt that way.

”even so, we need to make sure” I take out my cigarette and light it

”– talk to Mankhosini and hear what he says” my fathers’ disappearance has been daunting all of us but the girl I’m in love with has the same blood running through her veins as the men that killed my father

So tell me how do I look her in the eye knowing I’m planning on killing her family?

How do I begin to hurt her like that, will my heart

contain it, will I sleep at night?

I love her too much to let her suffer because of our forefathers, I love her too much to see her shed tears because of a Ngcobo I'm willing to do all that it takes not to hurt her even if it means turning my back from my own flesh and blood.

I love her too much.

I have truly and undoubtedly have fallen IN LOVE WITH THE ENEMY.

"you'll be here in a couple of weeks so we will talk to him" he's not brave enough to face Makhosini alone. Unlike me he's always been shy and so I mostly lead and he follows, it's not a power thing but just how he and I are, ever since we were younger it had always been like this. I'd take the blame in most cases for his naughtiness and I'd get beaten up for him. I was seen as the naughty one but for someone reason, MaNgidi always knew when it wasn't me. I sometimes wonder if my biological mother knew how to differentiate us.

"Alright then" speaking to him has somehow

managed to lift my mood, I'm no longer as gloomy as I was and I can hear his voice rising as well. We both ok now.

It must be a brotherly thing...

"so--" I pause to draw breath

I know something has been bothering him, Makhosini picked it up too but I haven't had time to confront him. My brother has changed and not for the good.

"what's going on with you, we haven't been talking for some time now" I hope that doesn't sound girly

He chuckles before he answers

"hai bafo, don't tell me you want us to discuss feelings like how girls do" I too laugh feeble

This is unlike us

We used to say that we would never discuss feelings like girls do in fact we found it useless and funny I mean which Zulu man sits and discuss his feeling?

This is new to both of us.

”of course not, but I’m worried about you”

”its nothing serious, I’ll talk to you once you get here,” he says

it's not serious and yet he wants to talk about it face to face

”Are you sure” I hate talking about this just as much

”I’m sure, tell me--” he pauses

I know him too well, he's conflicted.

”yes” I prompt when he doesn't say anything

”I’ve just been wondering if maybe you would date someone I’ve dated before” I was not expecting that all.

it's a hard one considering I've never loved anyone to care about that

”and then, are you the one talking about feelings and shit now” I chuckle

”come on”

” I guess, remember how we used to play with Nokhaya before she was able to distinguish us so

yeah I would” Nokhaya is not the only victim, his girlfriends were played too.

”really” he sounds too excited

”don't tell me you want to hit on my ex, whose she” I laugh

This reminds me of when he wanted to break up with some girl he used to date, I don't even remember her name but because he's too much of a nice guy he couldn't do it so I came to the rescue, poor girl.

I've changed now though.

”no one, I was just asking” I know he has someone in mind or else he wouldn't have brought this up, this is just too random to be just a simple inquiry

”photocopy is it Nokhaya” I remember they were kind of close at some point

”what... No, have you seen how she has changed” a lot

I still can't believe she lied about her uncle raping her.

Thank goodness I cut her loose when I did.

”Thulisiwe” it's another girl I used to fuck with

He lets out a full-blown laugh

”where is that one, I haven't seen her in a while” the last time I spoke to her was when I broke things up

”is it Mpumi” another one

I'm irresistible

Don't blame me blame the looks

Qhamu says I'm arrogant, she just confuses it with confidence

”Qhamu” I know he wouldn't dare

He instantly quiets down

”come on, out with it” I know he's not talking about her

He laughs too

”come on, I know you loved her so I wouldn't do that to you” he knows me too except that it's not 'loved' but love

"I know you wouldn't but I've run out of guesses" He would never go for someone I've loved that's the unspoken bro code and I trust him enough to know undoubtedly that he wouldn't go for Qhamu.

"bye Mngobi I'll see you in a couple to weeks" with that he hangs up leaving me in stitches.

It's always good talking to him, I'm connected to him more than any of my brothers and I'm glad we spoke.

Seeing that I'm now in a happy mood I might as well call the one who holds my heart.

I've got about an hour before my exam starts.

"sthandwa sam" I can't get enough of hearing those two words leave her lips

"How are you"

"I'm good, Gatsha's girlfriend gave birth to a baby boy" she sounds too excited

"that's nice, I hope he's not ugly like him" I laugh sweetly

"he's so cute, it's just sad that he won't be staying

with us” I didn't think she'd be so into kids

”don't worry ill give you yours” I laugh

She laughs too, music to my ears

” I miss you”

” I miss you more” I know she's going to argue that

I can feel her rolling her eyes

”well I beg to differ” I know her too well

”How are the exams” I have a little secret km

keeping from her and I'm this will hurt her

”good, just four more papers then ill be finished. I
can't wait to be in matric next year”

” I hope ill be your date for matric dance”

” I wish you could” we both know that's impossible
unless...

”Qhamu I want us to talk when I come back”

”about” she sounds a little apprehensive

”is it about what happened with Manqoba”

”what no, I'm read.. What happened with Manqoba”

I just spoke to him and he sounded fine unless if there's something he didn't tell me.

”Nothing, I thought... Nothing. Baby, I have to go, I'll call you later on. I love you”

”Qhamukile what happened and you better not hang up this phone”

”nothing Mnqobi, I'll talk to you when you come home” with that said she hangs up

Manqoba said he wants to talk face to face and now it's Qhamu I just wonder what's going on with these two but it looks like we all have secrets. I'm keeping something from her that I know will hurt her but I have to tell her before she finds out on her own.

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Good people

I'm currently experiencing network issues and it's bad.

I managed to write that as in at work.

[06/20, 18:21] Lynne: Chapter 31

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QHAMU

"No, you are not wearing that" that can only be Lucas, I still don't understand why he's here this was supposed to be my date with Zanele but he had to tag along like always

"what's wrong with this" it's a beautiful summer dress, perfect for the hot December temperature
He rolls his eyes and rifles through my wardrobe

and pulls out a jean and an open back t-shirt

”This is better, I think you forgot where we are going” I roll my eyes and change

”Luu for the last time we are going to the mall not some buy and braai, I think sometimes you forget that Qhamu and I are not over eighteen,” Zanele says

She and I planned this outing thoroughly, we going window shopping and from there we will be having lunch and of course come back home after, well that was before Lucas changed our plan without consulting us or whatsoever so we are now going to a buy and braai in Matsheni

I don't want to go there just in case I run into Manqoba whom I haven't seen since he kissed me last month but Lucas gave me no choice.

The thought of his lips plastered on mine still repulse me

”come on, it's not like you'll be drinking alcohol. I just want your company that's all” he won't admit that he enjoys our company more than he does his

friends.

Zanele rolls her eyes and relents

Lucas always gets his way.

”its December and the place it's new, I hear it belongs to Mngqobi's brother so without a doubt he'll be there and you two can rekindle your love” it's my turn to roll my eyes

Mngqobi has been here for a week and I have been ignoring him like a plork.

How do I look him in the face and not tell him that his brother kissed me. I'm not ready for the drama besides his brothers have been harboring him which makes it difficult for us to see each other.

Our relationship is a secret remember.

”Lucas mind your own business” I tell him and tie my braids into a ponytail

Thanks to him I now have braids and I look beautiful.

”don't you two know by now that your business is my business too” he rolls his eyes and helps me tie my braids neatly

By the time I finish preparing it's around two, Zanele and I are just going to chill there for a couple of hours two at most then we will come back home. I don't want any of my brothers knowing I went to a buy and braai that belongs to the Ngcobo's.

Mondli, Nqaba, and Gcina are in the lunge area when emerge from my bedroom.

”ah I didn't know you guys are here”

”We just got back--” Nqaba stops mid-sentence when his eyes meets Lucas's and he shift uncomfortably

Ag shame.

”and wena, where are you going looking this beautiful” Mondli asks eying me inquisitively

”n..nowhere--” I stutter, lying has never been my

forte

”she's coming with me” Lucas.

He’s flapping his eyelids. I actually want to laugh at how ridiculous he looks but I hold it in

”oh” Mondli has nothing more to say

”hey Nqaba, how are you” why is Lucas making my brother uncomfortable in his own home

”sure, sure mfethu” he greets

I giggle this time, I love how he get all macho when Lucas is around

”i’m good too, don't you want to join us” he says blushing

Lord, my brother wants a hole to hide in. ”NO” he says flatly

”please” Nqaba waste no time in walking out, Mondli laughs so hard and I join him, Lucas needs to stop it now.

Gcina has been gawking at Zanele since he laid his eyes on her

”Bhuti” I greet because he didn't respond but as expected he says nothing and continues to stare at Zanele

”hello” he greets her

Lucas nudges me with his elbow making sure none of my brother notice him, he wants to laugh at how taken my brother is

”hello” Zanele answers sweetly

I roll my eyes seeing how taken she is as well.

”let's go” I drape my hand around the crook of Zanele's arm and pull her towards the door

”is that your brother” she asks once she's come out of her little trance

”Yes he is”

”How old is he”

”eighteen”

I'm not going to answer any more of her questions about Gcina

”what's his name” Lord

”Gcina and that's the last question i'm answering”

”he's handsome huh”

I roll my eyes at Lucas, Zanele is his sister for goodness sake

I scoff

”what, I didn't say you must have good looking brother. They are all so yummy especially Nqaba” Nqaba would flip hearing him say this.

I expected him to be hostile towards Lucas seeing that he is gay and let's face society has made ”manly men” think that being polite to gay people automatically makes you gay and as ludicrous as that sounds it's our absurd reality but Nqaba disappointed.

His only problem is Lucas flirting with him but it's so entertaining to watch.

”stay away from him please”

”oh hunny he's not my type but he's easy on the eye” I roll my eyes

Lucas is twenty but sometime your swear he's our

age.

Zanele is too silent

"Zane..." she snaps her head back to look at me

"you good"

"yes i'm good"

"oh she's so charmed by your brother"

"no i'm not" she says defensively

"of course you're not my little sister and that is why your checks are redned and you blashing" I laugh at how she's blashing

She looks away annoyed and flags a taxi.

Lucas and I giggle as we get into the taxi too.

I have one hundred rands which should be enough, I don't think alcohol so I should be fine.

An hour later we are seated under a stretch tent with ice buckets all around us. Nokhaya and Nontombi are here too and they are drinking expensive alcohol. Zanele and I are the only one's drinking juice just like the last time I was here.

The music is good and and it's packed, everyone is having fun. This place looks like it's going to be a success. I'm happy Makhosini bought it and turned it to what it is.

The Ngcobo brood, being Zwelethu, Mncedisi and the two indistinguishable enter the tent and sit on couches a bit far from us, my eyes travel to Mngqobi's and I catch him looking at me. His face is hardened with no smile in place, I know me being here is the cause of his rage but I don't care, he needs to relax.

I look at him briefly and smile but I look away before anyone can see us.

"Let's do sleepovers, I'll sleep at your house and next weekend you'll come to mine" Zane startles me

"yea, sure" on second thought

"Zanele I hope you not coming because of Gcina, I don't want you dating any of my brothers" I value our relationship and I know if she dates Gcina it's going to come between us.

She rolls her eyes and sip her juice

"I'm serious" she shouldn't think in joking, Thobile knew I don't joke about such things that's why she saw my brothers as her brothers, nothing more than that.

She lifts her hands up as surrender

"Zanele.."

"relax, will you. I'm not after him" I certainly hope so.

Gcina will hurt her I know this because once he sleeps with her he will bail and I don't want that happening to her.

Gcina is my brother and I know him.

"I promise you" I nod and drink my juice

My eyes can't help but travel to Mnqobi direction and I catch him looking at me.

I miss him.

Manqoba's head turn to my direction but I look away before he sees my eyes in them. I'm still angry at him.

The day progress with Mngqobi and I exchanging looks, I miss him so much.

I want to kiss him so bad and my body yearns for his touch it feels like I haven't seen him in years, he body is more lean, and he's growing a beard. I'm loving how well his growing and in still the same old thin girl with the big afro but I know he loves me as I am.

"So you two finally broke up" Nokhaya asks me
I didn't even realise that in looking at him again.

"huh" I know very well who she's talking about but in not discussing my relationship with Mngqobi, especially with her.

"you and Mngqobi" her voice sounds loving when she mentions his name I don't know why I do I get jealous hearing his name on her lips but I do.

He us mine and only mine.

"yes we did" I say dismissively

"i knew it wasn't going to work out, Mngqobi needs a real woman in his life, he has needs you know" I say

nothing

I'm still angry that Mnqobi lied to me about their relationship.

"How is Akin bazala, i'm surprised you went back to him after how he beat you up the last time" Lucas winks at me

I know he always has my back but my mood has drooped tenfold, I just want to get out of here.

I excuse myself and go to the loo while Zanele finishes up her drink so we can go.

There's no line so I get into the toilet and do my business, wash my hands and walk out.

A rough hand pulls me back against the wall before I could even walk out the toilets

"What the hell.." I shout and yank my arm away and turn around to see whose this person

"Ba.." Their resemblance is too impeccable that I too don't know who's who at times

"Manqoba" but I just have to gaze in their eyes to know who's who.

“What are you doing here” their voices too sounds the same but I know Mnqobi’s.

“Chilling like everyone else” I shout

I’m still angry that he kissed me

“Look you need to leave”

“Manqoba stay away from me, I thought I made myself clear” I’m getting more angry seeing him next to me

“Get over that little kiss Qhamu, I know you enjoyed it too” What the..

“Manqoba I’m dating your brother...” I snap

His eyes opens widely at my revelations, the cat is out of the bag now.

”yes Mnqobi and I got back togetherast year” he runs his hand on his head frustrated

“and I love him too much to hurt him but if you continue with this I’m going to tell him” I don’t care what he does with this information, his brother and I love each other and there's nothing they can do about it, even my brothers themselves.

“What do you mean” he asks incredulously

“I mean just that, Mnqobi and I are together so stay the hell away from me” I say and push him out of my way but he grabs my arms painfully and pushes me against the wall again

Why isn't there anyone coming this side, the tent is hidden behind because the toilets are in the back

“Let go of me” I try and push him away from me but he's too strong. He remains unmoved.

“I know you enjoyed that kiss too” he's delusional

“Manqoba you kissed me—“ he shuts me up with a forcefully kiss but I push him away

“Tell me you didn't like that” he's crazier than I thought

“Stop it, just stop it”

“Come one Qhamu, I know you enjoy my lips just like I enjoy yours” he pins me against the wall with his weight

“Kiss me again” he demands

I'm close to screaming for help

"Manqoba for the time, leave me alone"

"kiss me" I push him with all the strength in me and he relents

"better pray that your brother never finds out about this"

"I'm sorry okay" unbelievable

"You kissed me"

"What" Manqoba and I snap out heads at a voice that sounds exactly like his

Shit...

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MNQOBI

I have been back for a week now but haven't seen

Qhamu as yet, I'm too much of a coward to face her so I made my brothers an excuse. This secret is weighing too much on me and I'm afraid this might end us but in as much as I fear to tell the truth she has to know, I have to tell her, I have to be honest with her and I have faith that our union is strong to survive any turbulence and we will survive this too.

She's all I've been thinking about since I got here but today it's the official opening of the buy and braai that Makhosini bought so let me stop worrying and go celebrate.

I'm dressed in my signature shirt and jeans. Makhosini and Langa are already there making sure that everything runs smoothly.

The rest of my brothers and I get there around four thirty. It's buzzing with music, everyone looking beautiful but you can imagine my fury seeing Qhamu chilling with her friends.

What the hell is she doing here?

I want to drag her out of here but I refrain myself mainly because I don't want to embarrass both of

us and besides I don't any drama today I'd have to deal with her later. In the meantime, I have no choice but tame the anger in me.

Zwelethu gets us drinks and I find solace in the green bottle of Heineken.

As I gulp down the content in my bottle my rage resurface, Qhamu has managed to put me in a trance of thought, she's all that I'm thinking about, I don't want her here. I don't want her chilling with Nokhaya and Nontombi I don't care if she'll think I'm controlling in fact I want to control her just like she controls me. That girl has my heart in the palm of her hands and I'd do anything she wants.

I glance at her direction and I catch her staring at me. She knows I'm pissed at her but the corner of her lips lift up into a smile but I look away before my own lips lift up, she makes so damn angry and yet she manages to make me smile

I'm Pathetically whipped.

She stands up angrily and takes her long strides all

the way to the back towards the toilets, I wonder what got her so angry.

This is my opportunity so I gulp down the rest of my beer and prepare to follow her but Manqoba stands up before I could.

Dammi.

I don't want him to see me with her. I'm yet to tell him that she and I are back together so I did back down.

"bafo, you good" Zwelethu almost whispers close to me

I nod and open another beer.

He knows I want to follow Qhamu but I can't, not now at least.

I listen to Mncedisi joke around, teasing me about Nokhaya

I'd tease him about his ex's if my mind wasn't so preoccupied by Qhamu.

Manqoba has been gone for sometime now and Qhamu might come back before before he does

”fuck” I say aloud and stands up

The urge to see Qhamu has become too strong to restrain.

I don't care whether my brothers see us together, sooner or later I have to tell them about us anyway.

”I'm sorry okay” I know my brother's voice, even in my sleep and I've no doubts it's him apologizing to her

”you kissed me” her voice reeking of anger

Kissed?

”what” they both turn to look at me

”What did you say” my eyes are burning with fury

He is pressed close to her but he moves away from her once he sees it's me

“Bafo, it's not what you think” I grab him by his t-shirt and push him into the wall

”tell me it's not true” his eyes fall

Manqoba's eyes never lie.

He kissed her.

My fist contact with his jaw before I can stop myself

I think I burst his lip because he has blood dripping from his lip

"I'm sorry Mngobi" I punch him again

"Mngoni stop it" Qhamu shouts but I don't even turn to look at her, her eyes are my weakness.

"How can you" I slur and give him another punch

"I love her okay"

What???

"what" Qhanu asks incredulously

I want him to repeat, how can he love her knowing she's mine.

"I'm sorry"

I don't want his sorry, I want him to tell me he's joking or something.

I drag him down and punch him repeatedly when I

see the truth in his eyes.

Fury has engulfed me and I'm just giving him blow after blow, he loves her. I continue to punch him more what pissed me off is that he's not fighting me like he's supposed to.

I get on top of him and punch him on his stomach

"how..." a punch lands on his ribs

"can..." another on his lower stomach

"you..." I punch him again on his jawline

"love..." again on his ribs

"Her..." this one lands on his eye

Every punch is impelled by my wrath, anger has consumed me I don't know how many times did I punch him before some guy pulls me away but I push him away and continue assaulting Manqoba.

He said he loves her.

Qhamu manages to pull me off him, screaming for me to stop but the anger me is too powerful even for I can't contain it.

”Mnqobi you killing him” she pulls my arm but i’m stronger so I swing my hand wanting to punch Manqoba again but my fist comes into contact with Qhamu cheek and she staggers back and falls on her ass

Everyone is screaming for me to stop. I don't know when did my brothers get here but they are pulling me to get off Manqoba I relent and I get off him and look at Qhamu whose on the floor crying hysterically

I didn't mean to hurt her.

I pull her up and force her to stand up straight

”you kissed him” I point at the unconscious Manqoba

”no, he kissed me” she coughs spluttering with tears coursing down her face.

”wipe those tears”

“Mnqobi he kissed me” what's the difference, their lips touched and she didn't tell me.

”and you didn't tell me” my words slurs from anger

and the few beers I drank

Manqoba groans from the floor.

The sound of his voice gets me more indignant and I go back on top of him and punch, kick him again.

He betrayed me.

Langa pulls me before I can do more damage to him

“Stop it” Langa shouts at me when I try to wiggle out of his hold.

Manqoba betrayed me.

“I’m going to kill him” I’m too enraged

“Ntombazane get the hell out of here” Langa shouts at Qhamu who looks at me hoping I’d defend her, not his time I’m too furious at her to come to her defense.

I look down when I see the hurt in her eyes. I want to hold her and comfort her but my anger doesn't allow me to.

She wipes away her tears and fixes herself, her

friend takes her hand and they walk away.

"what's going on here" Langa is irritated more than anything

"ask him" I manage to kick Manqoba before Mncedisi pushes me away.

"calm down bafo and tell us what happened" I feel betrayed.

I don't understand why Qhamu didn't tell me, I thought our relationship is built on trust but she fails to tell me that my own brother kissed her.

The thought of his lips on hers outrages me more

"how can you let a skirt get in between..." the skirt I love

"sort this out" Langa shouts at us and walk away, he never intervene in our fights but that's because they've always been minor fights, nothing to kill each other over.

Zwelethu helps Manqoba to his feet, his eye is swollen closed from my punches and his coughing blood. He's still breathing meaning u didn't beat him

up enough.

“You” I point at the breeding Manqoba

“You know how much I love her and yet you went after her” I shout and leave them all there

”I’m sorry” not as sorry as I am

Shake my head and leave him there

”I love her” that line will haunt me all the days of my life and for that I will never ever trust Manqoba ever again.

I can hear him shouting my name from behind but anger doesn’t allow me to even look at him, I continue to walk away.

Nokhaya runs after me, I can hear her screaming my name from behind but I don't turn to look

”Mnqobi wait” she runs until she catches on with my fast strides

”Mnqobi calm down” I just gawk at her

I've got nothing to say to her

”lets go to your room, you need to calm down”

”Nokhaya...” she exasperates me

”Just leave me alone” I walk away without saying anything else.

My own twin brother betrayed me, he knows how much I love her. I didn't our relationship will ever be the same after his.

I get into the car and drive away.

Is it not enough that Qhamu and I have our brothers breathing down our throats, wanting us apart?

Is it not enough that we are caught up in the middle of a feud we know nothing about?

Is it not enough that she got abducted?

Is it not enough that I got shot?

Is it not enough that I'm in love with her?

Is it not enough that she's in love with me?

I guess not huh, all that it's evidently not enough because my brother loves her too.

HE LOVES HER.

Ngcobo's twin brother in love with the same girl,
both in love with the enemy.

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It's been long overdue

I apologise my good people

[06/20, 18:21] Lynne: 32.

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QHAMU

"put ice on your cheek just in case it swells" an SMS
from guess who?

He still cares.

I smile re-reading the SMS again.

He still cares.

"I'm sorry and I love you baby" I SMS back and wait for an 'I love you too' text but I'm a little hurt when a few minutes pass with no text.

Lucas is still begging his brother to borrow him his car so that he can take me home, he refused me to take a taxi home, he's angry that Mngobi behaved the way he did and he's angrier that he hit me. He doesn't care that it was a mistake.

Matsheni is a small location so he does not stay too far from the buy and braai.

He comes dangling the car keys smiling.

"what happened" he doesn't waste any time in asking, I haven't even strapped in my seatbelt but he gets really agitated when one delays telling him what he needs to know so I get in with the narration from where it all started. It's stated with his persistent lifts, then escalated to being friends or do

I thought we were, then the kiss.

The kiss.

God is still angry that it happened thinking about it makes me want to hate Manqoba.

Yeses...

"hai nawe uyadina Shem (hai you're annoying) I don't understand how can you not tell Mnqobi" just moments ago he was angry that Mnqobi threw a punch at me but now that I've just told him the full story he's blaming me.

According to him, I brought this upon myself so it serves me right.

"I don't blame Mnqobi going berserk on his brother, imagine your own girlfriend kissing your brother, your time brother nogals"

Tears I've managed to suppress blinds my sight at the thought of what happened today.

What if Mnqobi no longer wants to be with me?

No! He sent me a text. He still loves me.

I won't even begin to think he doesn't, he loves me and I know we will get over this too. I shouldn't have told me I know but what's done it's done.

”I was trying to protect him” it's the truth

”by lying” he says incredulously

My voice is a little clogged because in crying but I manage to give my reason

”No, I didn't want him to hate his own brother.

Manqoba made a mistake by kissing me and I didn't want Mngobi to kill him, you saw how he beat him up”

”haibo Qhamu whose more important. Manqoba or Mngobi” Mngobi of course

”then why the hell are you taking Manqoba's side...”
there are no sides here

”that's just a lame excuse. I still don't understand how can you not tell your boyfriend, this is all your fault” the more Lucas blames me the more my tears fall

”Lucas don't say that, she's hurting just as much”

Zanele says defending me

”and she has no one to blame but herself,” he says adamantly

My tears continue to fall

”crying won't solve anything, you brought this upon yourself, so help me and wipe those tears away” I oblige and wipe them but not because he told me so. I just have a bad headache.

”What did you expect huh, for him to smile and be happy that you kissed his brother”

”for the last time, I didn't kiss Manqoba, he kissed me” defending myself has come tiring.

I told him thousand of times that I didn't kiss Manqoba, he kissed me.

”you don't get it, do you” what's there to get

Manqoba kissed me but I'm to blame and not forgetting that I'm the one getting lip from Lucas like it's my fault, is it not enough that Mnqobi is mad at me.

”it is not about Manqoba kissing you, it's about you

not telling Mngqobi about it. I'd feel betrayed..."

"I didn't betray him" I say defensively

How can he even think that

"still--" he throws his hand in the air and let out a sigh

"to him, it feels like that" eye roll

How does he know how Mngqobi feel

"what would you do if Nokhaya "kissed" him and didn't tell you bout it" he air quotes the KISS

I'd feel Hurt

Betrayed even, Okay I get the point.

"Not so good huh"

"He's hurt by you not telling him than his brother kissing you"

Zanele is quietly seeing next to me listening to Lucas as he continues to lecture me.

"I get it, I should've told him" I regret not telling him

"damn right you should've, what did you think he'd

do once he found out, clap hands for you” can he just stop it with the help dramatics

”Ntobazana you wrong, don't you know secrets have a way of always coming out, were you ever going to tell him” I know I'm wrong for not tell Mngqobi about his brother kissing me but it's with good reason

I was avoiding what happened today.

”where you” I look down

The unspoken truth is better than telling a lie

He claps once

”hai I hope he's Ok wherever he is” Mngqobi has a fan in Lucas I see

I take out my phone to speak to Mngqobi. I have some explaining to do. Lucas takes the phone before I can press the green button I regret seating with him in the front seat.

”I doubt he wants to talk to you right now, give him some time to cool off” he sneers at me

I can tell he's irritated at me.

” I didn't want him to tell him because I didn't want to be the reason he fights with his twin” I reason even though it's a little too late now

”and look where that got you, had you told him none of this would have happened”

I know

”Lucas stop she's hurting you should be comforting her than chiding at her like you are” my loyal Zanele comes to my defense yet again

”comfort her by lying, she's wrong and I don't care what her reasons are, she said she wasn't going to tell him so I'm supposed to say that's good thing, hai Zanele true to your friends at all times regardless no matter how much it hurts” Zanele shuts he mouth and look outside

”I'm glad he found out shem” yoh hai

We all remain silent processing what Lucas said.

He's right, about everything.

”hey mara your boyfriend can throw some punches, did you see how Manqoba was, blood and all” he

says laughing

I'm still sulking so I don't laugh

"oh sisi sulk all you want but the truth will stay true, whether you like it or not" he rolls his eyes

"When you snap out of your somber mood I want to hear all about you and Mngqobi, I'll let you sulk for now"

Can we just get to Mvubukazi, I just want to sleep my pain away not only emotional pain but physical too. My cheek is throbbing from the backhand slap Mngqobi gave me, mistake or not he slapped me and he is unapologetic about it

It takes Lucas another twenty more minutes until we reach my homestead, I'm not in the mood to chit chat so I get off the car once we come to a complete halt

"thanks Luu, bye Zane ill see you soon" with that I walk away

"Woh you so dramatic you know, you need to apologize profusely to Mngqobi and let's hope he'll

forgive you” why is he making it as if I cheated

”I didn't cheat on you know”

” I know but still you lied”

” I didn't lie” how is it a lie if I didn't tell him about it

”yes you didn't tell him either” I'm done arguing my point to Lucas

” I love you babes” he blows me a kiss and drives away.

I shake my head to get into the house.

Mondli is watching TV relaxing, he eyes me once and back at the TV

I wonder what's up with him.

”bhuti”

”Mmmh” ah I forget how moody Mondli gets at times

I'm too worried about Mngqobi to entertain him so I walk to my bedroom

” How was the party” he asks before I can disappear

into my room

I stop at my tracks, how did he know?

”what?”

”the Ngcobo opening party, I hear it was quite fun”

he's too calm

”It was ok, I didn't stay long” half-truth is better than a lie right beside what's the point in lying because he knows I was there.

”I see” he shifts his whole body to look at me

”I hear the twins had a huge fight, what was it about” how does he know all this

I shrug nervously

I learned that the truth has a way of always coming out

”I heard they fought because of you” gossip spread like wildfire around here

I shrug again, I can't look him in the eye and deny it nor can I look him in the eye and admit it too

”hey the Ngcobo boys are taken by you, they are

even fighting for you” as I told you he's not angry and remembers I once did you he's the reasonable one so I might as well talk to him.

I throw my sling on top of my bed and walk back into the sitting room and sit next to him defeated

”bhuti I tried to stay away from him but the more I try it's the more I fall in love” fingers gross, I hope this conversation won't anger him in any way

”Qhamu I've never been in love like you claim you are so I can't relate but I know you two being together will cause more fights between us all and you know our history, someone will die” this is the Mondli I know and love

My always understanding brother ok not always but you know what I mean

” I know bhuti” the reality is harsher than you can imagine, I saw my father burn in front of me because of this rivalry.

”trust me none of this will end well. I want to understand why you love him this much but I can't. This relationship of yours with Mngobi infuriates

me more than you can imagine” I hate that I love him too.

”The Ngcobo’s are coming tonight, we need to sit down and talk”

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The Buthelezi’s and the Ngcobo’s are all seated in one roof talking, not fighting but talking. I haven't heard any raised voices so they must be talking calmly.

This is probably the first time this has ever happened and it feels surreal. Maybe just maybe they might just get Mngqobi and I date in peace.

I so wish... But one must have faith, right? Misuzulu instructed me to sit in my bedroom until I’m called out to ”explain” myself, his exact words.

I don't know who told them about the fight but I hate whoever that person is. Now they all know that

Mnqobi and I are back together.

My ear is pressed against the door hoping to hear what they say but nothing. If link they can raise their voices I'm a neurotic mess, not forgetting that I'm very worried too.

Imagine if this were my Lobola (dowry) negotiations, I'm sure I'd be dead of worry. I can already see myself as Mrs. Mnqobiwesizwe Ngcobo.

Ain't I too faithful?

But please let me be.

I'm letting imagination run wild and it's alright I know Mnqobi wants the same thing too. if only our families were not fighting like they are.

My little talk with Mondli managed to calm me down a bit, I was panic-stricken after he told me that the Ngcobo brothers are coming here but he assured me that no one will die today. I hate how they joke about serious matters.

I'm not sure if I should tell you about what I'm about

to say next because you'll just laugh at me.

Promise not to laugh.

Ag, it's a little hypocritical of me expecting you not to laugh if I'm laughing at myself.

I changed into a dress and I have a head scuff.
There I said it.

Like I said I'm practicing for when the Ngcobo men come to ask my hand in marriage...LOL

Let me not get ahead of myself here or else I might end up believing that it will happen and we have bigger issues to deal first

Like how we've been killing each other with unknown reasons to us.

Thank God for my melanin I'm not bruised from the blow I got, i'm still angry at Mngqobi, I don't care if I was wrong he should never put his hand on me.

My door opens abruptly and Nqaba gets in. I want to roll my eyes at how he's looking at me.

"and then, what's with the doek" showing respect to my inlaws

”nothing, am I needed” i’m a little excited for someone whose going to get an earful

He looks at me inquisitively and nods

It must my choice of outfit.

I laugh at myself inwardly

Qhamu uyaphapha shem...

They all look at me when I emerge.

Makhosini is in his wheelchair, I thought those two old men said he”ll walk and it has been months and nothing. I need them back so I can chide them for lying to me.

”Sanibonani bo bhuti (evening)” I greet respectfully slightly bowing my head and bending my knees to show some level of submission.

They all respond.

”MaShenge” Makhosini decides to use my clan name, not that i’m complaining

I’m uncertain of where to sit because there's only two seat available, one next to Mnqobi and one next

to Zwelethu and I'm not about to sit on the floor.

Bending knees and bowing is as far as I can submit, I'm not seating in the floor for anyone.

Mnqobi's magnet manages to pull me close to him because I find myself incoherently seating next to him.

I'll fight the urge harder next time.

Misuzulu and Makhosini shake their heads at me.

What was I suppose to do? Blame Mnqobi for loving me like he does.

"Mnqobi has something to say" Langa is always hostile, I don't know if it's only at me or of it's his personality in general.

So there's Makhosini, Langa and Zwelethu from the Ngcobo's side and Misuzulu, Gatscha and Nqaba from the Buthelezi's side, how I wish Mondli was here instead of Nqaba. He can be abruptly rude like Langa and i'm not ready to stop another fight today.

Mnqobi turns to look at me

" I first wang to apologize for hitting you, mistake or

not I'm sorry" this is a good start

To be continued.

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Going forward ill try my best to post daily like I used.

[06/20, 18:21] Lynne: (Continuation)

Unedited

MNQOBI

Makhosini clears his throat bringing an end to the silence that has engulfed us all.

"is that all" I apologized for hitting her what more do

they want me to say

” I’m not proud of what I did and it will never happen again” that's it.

I don't know why I'm here but after the whole catastrophe I took a long drive trying to clear my head and understand why Qhamu would keep such from me and also try and understand why my own brother would fall in love with the only girl I've ever loved, maybe had it been Nokhaya or any of my ex's for that matter I wouldn't be this angry at him but not Qhamukile anyway I was driving around when Makhosini and Langa demanded I come back and here we are now.

I'm afraid to even ask who's left at the buy and braai.

”Qhamu do you have anything to say” Misuzulu asks.

I'm glad she sat next to me but she is never close enough I want to feel her under my touch but I guess this is as close as I can be to her under the circumstances.

Her choice of outfit is just hilarious, I've never seen her wearing a doek but it looks good on her.

"I'm sorry too" her voice is always delightful to listen to, I'll hear her excuse when we together hopefully sooner rather than later.

"What really happened--" Misuzulu is interrupted by a knock.

Nqaba is the one who stands up and opens... Okay, Mr. Buthelezi steps in.

What is he doing here?

"I hope I'm not late" he says and walks further into the house

Qhamu is as surprised as I am, I thought this is some plot to force Qhamu and me apart again which I doubt they would need an adult for that.

"You not late Baba, we just waiting for one person so we can start" Gatsha tells him and offer him a stool

I wonder whose this one more person. I guess we about to find out because there a soft knock, this time Misuzulu is the one that stands up to open and in comes uncle Maphikelela from my father's side followed by Mncedisi and Manqoba. I seriously did a number on him, his left eye is completely shut and he has bruises all around his face.

I don't feel sorry for him, in fact, I want to punch him on another eye so he can never look at Qhamu again.

”what’s he going here” I say angrily standing on my feet charging at him but uncle Maphikelela stops me before I can get to him

”Sit your ass down” Makhosini shouts at me

I feel suffocated already, can this meeting conclude so I can leave. I hate being in the same room as him. I don't hate him but I'll never trust him again.

I shut up and go back to my seat. Qhamu’s hand brushes mine but I move mine away quickly, Manqoba’s presence reminds me of how she betrayed me. The anger I thought I dealt with comes back, tenfold this time.

”We are here because of the mess caused by these two” the anger in Makhosini’s voice is noticed as he points at Qhamu and me.

”Mnqobi was even prepared to kill his own brother

because of Qhamu” he continues calming himself

” I love her” I retort

I don't know if it brave or stupid

They all ignore my little rant shaking their heads

My uncle and Mr. Buthelezi don't even exchange any pleasantries, the air thickened as they glare at each other with so much hate.

This is must be really important for him to travel all the way from KwaMavuso which is miles and miles away from here.

I thought meetings like this are organized and not just a spur of a moment thing. Just earlier we were all drinking and it's after ten pm now and here we are all.

”Malume” Makhosini greets and they exchange handshakes.

My uncle is the only brother from my grandfather's

children who never involved himself in this fight but he still hates the Buthelezi's for killing his father and brothers.

I'm clueless as to why they are all here and now we are joined by Mondli and Gcina too.

"How many times have we asked you to stay away from each other" my brothers moves his wheelchair closer to the both of us

I can hear Qhamu's erratic breathing, she's scared hearing this might end us but I'm not worried, nothing, I mean nothing will break us up.

I'm still angry at her but that doesn't mean I love her less.

"huh, we begged and begged but no, you even had to beat up your own brother because of Qhamu" and I'd do it again.

”Qhamukile what the hell happened” Misuzulu

”Manqoba kissed me and Mnqobi heard us talking so he got angry”

”and you didn't even bother tell...”

Makhosini’s gaze shut me up instantly

”then why didn't you tell Mnqobi after it happened”
Makhosini voice is way too calm when he speaks to
Qhamu

”i didn't want to cause a fight between them, I love
Mnqobi but Manqoba is his bother and I couldn't do
it” her tears are on the verge of falling.

”if you love someone you tell them the truth
regardless of how painful it is, you just need to trust
that they will accept it. Mnqobi you nearly killed

your brother today--”

”why did he kiss her”

They all look at Manqoba for an explanation

”I don't know, I guess I think I love her I don't know”
he says softly

”you guess you love her, how can you love her
knowing your brother loves her” Gats ha

Manqoba remains quiet

”you two, make peace and preferably soon. I've got
so much I need to deal with I don't need you adding
wena Manqoba stay the hell away from her, find
your own girlfriend to love” Makhosini says looking
at me and Manqoba

”these two are going to give us grey hairs before our time” Gatsha says chuckling and they all follow I'm glad they find my relationship with Qhamu amusing and they wouldn't have to get any grey hairs if they just stay away from us

”seeing that now brother's are killing each other because of one girl we've decided to tell you where it all began, where all this hate comes from and hopefully you will all stop this nonsense” my uncle clears his throat

”We all know this rivalry started many years ago and we have all been fighting and killing each other, many people died but it has to stop, you're now caught up in all this and none of us know what really happened. Mngobi you remind me so much of my brother, your stubbornness and ferocity is the reason we are all here today anyway what you don't know is Buthelezi and Ngcobo our great grandfather's were best friends, together they were

influential and very powerful no one dared to mess with them but the unfortunate happened, Buthelezi betrayed Ngcobo and that's where it all began--”

”what did Buthelezi do” I need to hear the full story

”No one knows but it is said that Buthelezi sold Ngcobo out to their enemies which led to the murder of Ngcobo’s wife, she was hanged in front of him and his children were raped and butchered to death right in front of him too, his whole family was massacred and he witnessed it, he begged them to kill him too but they didn't instead they told him who betrayed him.

To avenge his family he killed Buthelezi in front of his family too and so began the killing spree, a Ngcobo kills a Buthelezi then a Buthelezi kills a Ngcobo it's like a never ending domino effect” I can imagine it's not easy seeing your family getting killed in front of you but still, I need to know what led to Buthelezi betraying Ngcobo.

"Malume who knows the full story" Langa's voice is accompanied by anger, no surprise there.

"They all died, we just wanted these two to understand why we don't want them together. We can't let a traitors granddaughter date any of us" my uncle says

"we don't know for sure if that's even true" Mr. Buthelezi argues

"Still, we can't let a Ngcobo date a traitor" Langa

"hold up Qhamukile is not a traitor, your son is the one that decided to pursue her not the other way around" Misuzulu voice is raising a little

I'd react the same

"he's right Qhamukile did nothing" I say angry

How can my uncle say something like that out loud?

"his blood runs through her veins, she's a Buthelezi

too and we can't let you two date”

My uncle hasn't been part of our lives since my dad disappeared and here he is barking what a traitor Qhamu's family is.

Who cares, it's all in the past.

”it doesn't matter anymore Sgidi killed Bheki just like Bheki killed his father, it's been like that for years but we want it to end now, we need the peace”
Mr Buthelezi says

”if ubaba killed Bab'Bheki then where is he, where is his body” I ask, I know they killed him but I just need to hear it from them.

Mr. Buthelezi stands up from his seat and runs his eyes at all of us

”Yes, we know he killed Bab'Bheki but who killed him” I don't know how Makhosini can stay this calm

” I killed him” silence

we all just look at him, his voice has no remorse

”he was going to kill them all, so I killed him before he could and I’m not going to stand here and tell you how sorry I am because I’m not, Bheki was a brother to me and your father killed him but that not why I killed him, he was ready to finish all of them and I just couldn't let it happen. Mngqobi, Qhamu wouldn't be here if it wasn't for me, you wouldn't be claiming this love you have for her” I don't know how I feel about him killing my father but I’m happy Qhamu is alive.

”where is his body” Makhosini asks after some time

”buried on top of the mountain, I’ll exhume his body so you can bury him in his rightful place” he says

and walks out

We are left dumbfounded.

At least now we know who killed him.

”Madoda let's meet again tomorrow so we can find a way forward and you two--” my uncle points at me and Qhamu

”stay away from each other until we find a way forward” we all leave but not before I wink at Qhamu

I need to see her soon, if it wasn't midnight already i'd have her meet me but she's tired i'll let her rest even though my chest yearn for her to lay her head in it, my arms yearn to touch her and Mapholoba yearn to be inside her...

"I'm going to kill him" Langa startles me back to reality.

We are driving back home.

Ain't we done with killing each other?

"no, we are done killing each other" Makhosini says sternly

"He killed him bafo" sadness in Langa's voice breaks my heart but our father was going to kill Qhamu and I find solace in knowing that he died but my Qhamu lives.

"an eye for an eye" Manqoba concedes

[06/20, 18:21] Lynne: 33.

The next day

MNQOBI

We are all gathered around again but this time we are joined by my mother and Qhamu's aunt from urban.

The urgency of this meeting had people canceling their plans just to avail themselves.

That's how important it is.

My mother cooked up a storm as if this is some celebration of some sort, too bad because I don't see us sitting down together to eat in one table. We hate each other too much to do that. I want to get out of here due to all the bickering we've been doing since morning but I guess I can't get my way, I'm stuck listening to all these men breathing down each other's throat.

It's a little after one pm now and we've been here since morning discussing, no shouting at each other.

there's just no way forward.

"We demand to know what happened that night"

Langa bangs the table angrily

It was better when we were at the Buthelezi homestead because he couldn't bang tables like he is.

we as the Ngcobo have decided that we going to exhume my father's body and bury him at his rightful place, have a ceremony there after.

"I'll tell you what happened but this war needs to end. You're the next generation and I don't want you killing each other like they did" Mr. Buthelezi shouts at all of us.

"All lot of people died and I'm sure you're all tired of looking over your shoulders every second of the day to make sure there's no gun pointed at your head" he continues to shout

"The day all this happened Bheki came to me and told me he heard that your father was planning to attack him but I thought he was just being paranoid so I dismissed him and told him Sgidi wouldn't do

that but I guess I was wrong. Bheki made me promise to look after his kids should something happen to him--" he stops and looks at all the Buthelezi brothers

" I failed him, I didn't believe him and he died. He called me that night needing my help when Sgidi and his men came but I was too late"

"We would be dead if it wasn't for you bab'Themba so thank you for coming when you did" Misuzulu says

Mr Buthelezi whose name I just learned is bab'Themba looks back at us the Ngcobo brother's

"you lost a father that night, but so did they and worse they witness everything so I'm pleading with you. end this, move on and forget about this rivalry you don't know where it started from" his voices sound nothing like the man who had no remorse in him J ust yesterday, today I feel his pain.

"You killed him, you should also die" Langa again

"What will that solve huh, Langa I wish you could let go of this anger that consumes you. I raised you

from a young age after your mother left and you've been angry since then" my mother reasons.

Langa shakes his head, nothing will get through to him, not when he's this angry.

He stands up "this is not the end" he says and walks out.

Makhosini stops Zwelethu from following him "leave him, he needs some air"

I know we are all tired of fighting the Buthelezi's included, and I know we are all afraid of dying but because we are too proud to admit it, we would rather die than to show fear. For some stupid reason we believe that fear is cowardly so we choose to remain "fearless"

Some call it bravery I call it stupidity.

I'm not going to stand here and preach to you about how I want this war to end, you know my secret, you know I initially wanted to hurt Qhamu but instead I fell in love and know I want to keep her delicate heart safe, I'm the safe keeper of her heart which is why I'm now standing here wanting this war to end.

If it wasn't for her I'd want to revenge my father just like Langa.

I think I've recited that well enough, don't you think?

I stand up and clear my throat to ease the hoarseness before I plead my case.

"I apologize for standing in front of you all like this, my mother raised an obedient young man but my father also taught me to speak my mind which is why I'm standing here—" I stop and look around.

All eyes are on me, inside I shutter at how Manqoba is looking at me but I have to say this for Qhamu's sake.

"I won't lie and say I'm not hurt that bab'Themba killed ubaba. I want revenge as much as you all do—" I look at all my brothers

"But what good will that bring. This will just escalate further but that will not bring him back or bab'Bheki. This fight has caused us too much heartache and I'd like for it to stop, sekwanele manje (enough). Let's all leave the past where it belongs, in the past and focus on the presence. We are all that's left

now. Our father's are gone, we were all denied the chance of knowing our grandfathers because they died too early and I don't know about the rest of you but I'd like to see my grandkids grow" I stop to draw as much air as my lungs need and exhale before I continue

"I'd hate for my kids to inherit this hate we have amongst us, I don't want my kids to die for nothing. Just look at us, we are fighting, we have this hatred that we don't even know where it comes from. I don't want to feel this hate anymore, I don't want to live each day wondering when will I meet my maker. Let's forget about all the ones that have died, for they have died for nothing. Let's re-write history, I'm not saying let's all be friends but all that I'm asking is for us to co-exist. The world is big enough for us all"

Manqoba scoffs, I know this sounds like some cheesy line but this is the only idea I have and I hope all that I've said echoes in their heads.

"Bhuti Misuzulu—" the level of respect I have for this man is impeccable If I say so myself, he raised

the young lady who captured my heart and I'll forever be grateful for him.

“Bhuti Makhosini, you are the oldest and you are wiser now. I ask that you both shake hands and let bygones be bygones.” I look at Misuzulu

“I mean no disrespect but I love Qhamukile with everything in me so I'm asking you to make peace for her sake ” I turn to my brother

“Bhuti you know I'd never ask anything like this of you but I know you love me and I'm asking you to make peace” I sit back down

Silence lingers

I'm a little embarrassed at how I sound like a “pussy”. I'm sorry for the profanity, I sometimes lack manners.

“Spoken like a true man, you remind me so much of your father. People thought he was a bad man but I beg to differ, he was my brother and I'll tell you he was a good man who let rage over cloud his humanity. He witnessed Bheki kill ubaba in a very gruesome way and he was never the same there

after” my uncle says softly breaking the silence

“My boy you still very young and yet you so wise,
I’m sure your father is proud of you wherever he is”

Bab’Themba say

I’m hope for peace to be bestowed upon us all.

“We here you, we need to talk as a family and we
will meet again” Misuzulu says and Makhosini nods
in agreement.

Zwelethu and Mncedisi are easy to persuade, my
worry is Langa and Manqoba.

“Don’t get any ideas, I still don’t want you dating my
sister, you can wait till she’s forty” Gatsha says
serious

I’d roll my eyes if I didn’t I think the act is gay but I
guess he’s being like any other big brother out there.

Manqoba storms out angrily as everyone laughs at
Gatsha

Everyone thinks Gatsha is joking but I know he’s
being serious.

“Let’s eat” My mother finally say happily

I guess I was wrong, we can sit down and eat together. Rome was not build in a day and it will take some time to mend the relationship between the Ngcobo's and the Buthelezi's but for now I'm out of here, I need to talk to Qhamu and besides Mapholoba needs his food.

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QHAMU

Misuzulu refused that I tag along today which I don't understand why because I'm the reason there's a meeting in the first place and to make matters worse all of his army agreed with him, imagine nje, the nerve those Buthelezi testosterone have. Now, I have them to thank for being frantic all day worrying myself with the possibility of what could happen in that meeting.

1. They might kill each other, that's if they haven't

already.

2. They might demand I break up with Mngqobi

3. The Ngcobo's might kill bab'Buthezi because he admitted killing Mngqobi's father

The possibilities are endless but I thought I should just name a few.

“Sit down, you giving me headache” I don't know why he's here because I told him I don't want any company but I never get what I want right.

“And tell me, when did you and Mngqobi get back together phela the last time Nokhaya was the Mrs.” I roll my eyes and sit down

I haven't told him or Zanele about this rivalry we have going on or why Mngqobi and I had to break up in the first place.

Huh... why the hell is he mentioning Nokhaya?

“Lucas marn” Zanele always defends me when

Lucas is being... well Lucas

“What, I want to know” he says and rolls his eyes

“We got back together last year, I guess we got tired of pretending we don’t love each other” I say smiling

I’ve just realized how stupid we were, thinking we could stay away from each other.

He moves and comes to sit next to me wiggling his brows

“Have you two done the hanky panky”

“Hanky panky” is that even a word?

“Yes like have you two.. you know..” I know what he wants to know but my lips are sealed.

“No, I don’t actually” Zanele giggles lightly, I’ve told her about my sex escapades with Mngqobi

“Agh have you two fucked” he says exasperated

I’m taken aback by his choice of words

Like fuck?

No hunny, we made love.

“Not that it’s any of your business but yes” he claps his hands excited like a child in a toy store

“How was it, is his package as big as Nokhaya claims it to be” did he have to say that

“Do you ever shut up” Zanele

I’m offended really and I’m not about to hide it

“Lucas that was uncalled for, are you going to remind me that Nokhaya was sleeping with Mngqobi every second of the day” I’m pissed off to say the least and the fact that I’m worried about the outcome of the meeting isn’t lightening my mood either

“Sorry hun, I didn’t mean to be insensitive” he sound sincere but I’m still angry at him

“Please forgive me, I won’t mention Nokhaya ever again”

“Promise”

“Cross my heart hope to die” I smile at how he is pouting. He’s just dramatic

“Ntokazi I’m here, that’s so cute” can Lucas mind his own business, now he’s checking my text messages.

I can’t deal with him right now besides I have the love of my life to see so I don’t feel bad when I chase them away.

I still have braids on so I don’t worry about my hair but I change into my favorite floral dress and rush to our usual spot.

Under the bamboo tree.

“Baby” he gives me a kiss which I wasn’t expecting because he’s still mad at me

I hold on to him tighter and deepen the kiss.

His lips are as soft as a baby buttocks, he twirls his tongue softly around my mouth giving me chills. I missed him.

“Hello Miss Buthelezi” he breaks the kiss

“Mr Ngcobo” I snuggle closer to him.

I’m never close enough to him.

We kiss each other one last time before we get into the backseat of his car. I missed this car so much.

Like always, I'm laying my head in his lap and he's playing with my hair.

"Qhamukile I want us to be truthful to each other at all time. I hate that you didn't tell me that Manqoba kissed you, I shouldn't over hear such things from around the corner I want you to be honest no matter how much the truth hurts" I knew he was going to raise this up, I just didn't think it would be now

"I know and I'm sorry, I was trying to avoid you fighting with your brother but I've learned my lesson and I'm sorry" I now realize how much damage was caused by not being truthful.

"I know you meant good but trust me"

"I trust you" I'm done talking about this

"How did the meeting go"

I'm a little hopeful that there will be peace as he tells me the events for the meeting.

It's a little after seven when he finishes telling me

how angry Langa and Manqoba were, to tell you the truth I expected nothing less from those two.

The sun is set, leaving us in a dark summer evening. I missed Mngqobi so much that I just need to feel him inside me.

I straddle him with my one leg on each side of his hips and kiss him.

I can feel he's trying to fight the urge to take me right here but I want him so bad.

I deepened the kiss when he try's to pull back and he groans in my mouth

"Qhamu...stop" his words are labored because he's trying to resist but his body is failing him

It's embarrassing how I'm the one that's always initiating sex.

"Shhh" I unbuckle his belt, he is rock hard underneath me and yet he is hesitating.

"Qhamu... I have... something.. to tell you"

We've done too much talking for today

I insult his mouth with my tongue, he taught me how to kiss like this so please don't be astonished. I leaned from the best.

"I don't have a condom" I moan in frustration
I'm too aroused.

"Then don't cum in me" I can't believe I said that
"Baby stop" how can he forget condoms knowing he's coming here, I thought he wants me as much as I want him.

"Please" I beg.

I just want to strip and be bare from the inside to show him how much I need to feel him close and him being inside me is the only way I'll feel one with him.

I need it and he needs it too.

"Please" I trail my hand down his rigid toned stomach

"Fine"

A lady never kiss and tell, if you know what I mean.

“Hell I love her” he says wiping his spills from my stomach

Please don't judge I needed the release and only he can give it to me.

“Her, what about me” I sulk

“Jealous..” he smirks

I roll my eyes and get off him, I'm still panting because I had to do all the work.

Please don't ask where I leaned all that, blame Lucas and his dirty mind.

“Let's talk” ah Mngobi is annoying

What are we talking about now?

I sit up straight so we can “talk”

“Baby I love...” my ringing phone interrupts him

“Qhamukile I swear I'm going to kill you along with that boy, it's after eight and you not home” God, time travels so fast when you having fun.

Misuzulu hangs up after that.

I have to rush home so I guess we will “talk” some other time that’s if I don’t die before then.

I’m ecstatic that I family got to feel him in me so even if Misuzulu kills me tonight, I’ll die a happy girl.

He drives me closer to home and stops a few house away

“I love you”

“Me too baby” I peck his lips one last time before I dash home.

Heck I love Mngobiwesizwe Ngcobo.

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Can we share as much as we can please

[06/20, 18:22] Lynne: 34.

Mid-J anuary

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MNQOBI

”Mapholoba,

Nyuswa,

Fuze, Mavela,

Mafuz’afulele njengefu lemvula.

Mashiya amahle ngath’azoshumayela.

Dambuza, Mthabathi,

Mabhala ngozipho abanye bhala ngepensela

Malal’efake omunye endunu,

Avuke ekuseni awucinde akhombe ilanga,

Mavulankungu Kuvel’ilanga,

Sisidane,
Ngongoma,
Maqadi amakhulu,
Mbili!”

The tradition healer continues to recite the Ngcobo clan as all of us fill up the grave with soil, we are all in a somber mood. I feel suffocated and not from the burning incense but I'm suffocated by emotions. I'm trying to act tough like how a man should but my heart feels heavy hearing the small stones come into contact with the casket.

I'm broken into pieces but I'm wearing a stoic, macho expression, no one is allowed to see how broken or how sad I am. My face shows no emotions it's better this way, no one will see how angry I am.

I'm angry at the World, I'm angry at my great grandfather, I'm angry at my father. I'm angry at how the past affected us, I'm just angry but I feel

relief knowing it's all about to end.

The big brothers haven't shaken hands as yet but I'm hopeful.

I would have loved to spend just one more minute with my father but instead, I'm standing, looking down at this shallow grave, the grave that has become his eternal home.

"Please welcome your child for he is now found and resting eternally in his rightful place, accept his soul for he is part of you now" the healer continues and blows the incense on top of the now filled grave.

I tilt my head to my left and I catch my mother wiping her tears.

"Lala ngoxolo (rest in peace) baba" I hear Manqoba whispering next to me. We haven't made any peace, in fact, I haven't spoken to him since we the fight. I still feel betrayed and he is still too angry.

The traditional healer chants incoherently and

splashes water mixed with traditional medicine around the grave pleading for my father and the rest of the ancestors to guide and protect us.

"he is happy now," he says lastly before he walks away leaving us still staring at the grave.

" Let's find peace in knowing he's happy" Makhosini says and sighs

I'm happy too, I know where my father's body lays.

It's hot, Mpophomeni is hot during summer and the fact that there's not long building shielding the sun makes it even ten times worse. After some time we walk back to the house wash our hands and eat.

The job is done and now we can finally be at peace.

I've decided to tell my brothers I changed courses, they were not happy at first but they got over it, now I have to tell Qhamu.

She'll be disappointed but she knows very well that I had my mind made up. She'll be angry but she'll get over it.

She surprises me at how fierce she has become,

she does all that she wants with my body. Can you believe she says she owns this body so she will do whoever she wants with it?

Shaking my head...

She has become the leader in between the sheets and I love it. I love how she claims me and to be true to you, I always thought I owned her, that her body belongs me but little did I know I'm at her mercy. She holds the cards dammit she owns me.

We are seated in a semi-circle reliving the happy days of our childhood, Sgidi wasn't always bad, he played his fatherly role.

I scoff when Manqoba stands up, at least his bruises are healing and he can now see.

"hey in tired of you two walking around like one doesn't exist, Mnqobi you leaving soon, I'm sure you want to make peace with your brother now talk it out" I didn't even realize my mother was looking at

us.

Manqoba stops at his tracks and looks at me.

I admit I miss my brother, our fights never last this long. This is all foreign to us and I'm hurt that we have become so estranged though I'll never admit it out loud... I can trust you I know you won't tell him.

"talk it out" she has her hand rested on her waist looking at us.

We know when to be defiant but right now it's not an option.

We both look at Makhosini hoping he will intervene

"I'm not getting involved, just talk it out" he says and lifts the calabash full of traditional beer to his lips.

Ag we can't ignore each other forever I guess.

"Bafo" he surprises me

I thought I'd be forced to be a conversation starter

He walks away and I follow in his tracks

”I’m older--” here we go again

”but I sometimes behave like I’m younger. I guess I’ve been trying to be you for so long that I lost myself. I now realize I don’t love Qhamu. I thought I did but j was wrong and for that, I’m sorry” Woah I am dreaming right?

”I haven’t been behaving like a brother instead I’ve been your enemy I’m sorry being here, showed me that nothing is as important as family and you’re my brother” he extends his hands

”what do you say, let’s forget this ever happened”

I don’t want to be an arse so I shake his hand, I guess we made peace.

”I missed you” I pull closer and give him a manly hug but he pushes me away jokingly

”don’t you dare hug me, dating princess has made you soft.” my face changes

I hate it when he called her that.

”relax bafo, I swear I’m not into her” not so long ago

he was head over heels with her and today he's suddenly not into her??

Only a fool would believe that

"Manqoba you're my brother but believe me I'll forget that once you cross me, Qhamu is off-limits. Stop calling her princess, stop being so bloody nice to her, in fact, I don't want you ever talking to her again" he knows I mean it

"come-on..."

"I'll never ever trust you again because of this" I meant that too.

"I promise I'm over her" like I believe that

"Just stay away from her" I leave him standing there

We now on speaking terms that's a good thing right?

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"it's going to be a boy" not these old men again

" I know, I can already see how ugly he's going to be. Mnqobi looks like you after all" I chuckle lightly

These two never get tired of quarreling

"I'm glad Qhamu is beautiful so if we lucky he'll look like her" I'm not going to intervene

I'm just going to sit here and get them to entertain me with their silliness

"imagine a man with a woman's features, no, no, no he must look like my grandson" they continue to argue about this baby that supposedly will look like me.

This old man said I'm ugly, clearly, he doesn't know what he's talking about.

"hey stop staring at us and get here" they are both sitting on a big rock under a familiar bamboo tree.

The one with hoarse voice hands the other one a briarwood tobacco pipe but he declines

"how many times have I told you, I don't smoke" he sneers at him

I step closer.

”The storm is finally here, I need you to be stronger than ever. We are going to guide you to the right path, hold her hand and walk along with her because you going to need each other to survive this” from cracking jokes and being serious and what the hell are they talking about

”Mkhulu I don't understand”

”He is talking about the storm that has finally come” they've started with their riddles

”Who are you and what do you want from me”

”who we are is not of importance right now but don't worry all will be revealed soon” this one reminds me so much of Qhamu, even the way he talks.

I'm done here, I know they won't say more than that so I'm not going to bother myself trying to crack or understand their riddles.

”before you go” I stop but don't turn to look at them

”Name him...”

My ringing phone wakes me up.

Dammit... Name who??

Why is Qhamu calling me the time of the night?

"baby" I answer fully awake

"hey..." her voice sounds down

"what's wrong sthandwa sam"

"Nothing" I know her like the back of my hand.

She knows my silence means I want her to talk to me

"... I can't sleep" and she woke me up too

"why what is it"

"I know this will sound outrageous if not crazy but I just had the weirdest dream" what's weird is that she just woke me from a weird dream.

I say dream yet it felt so real.

"oh yeah, what about"

"Promise not to laugh or think I'm going crazy"

I laugh at how innocent she sounds

"promise me Mngobi"

”ok baby, I promise”

”I’ve just woken up from a dream and it was about Thobile” she must be missing her

”oh” I let that oh hang because I don't know what to say.

”she told me to be strong and that the storm has finally come. She said something about me needing you to survive”

What the hell... That's the exact same thing those old men told me.

Why the hell would she dream about Thobile telling her something like this

” I knew you were going to think I’m crazy”

I didn't realize I was silent

”No baby, you’re not crazy. This is kind of bizarre because I had the same dream” no use hiding it

”What, you dreamt of Thobile too”

”not Thobile but two old men telling me the same thing, you actually woke me from my own weird

dream”

”two old men” she sounds shocked

”Yeah I don't know them though”

”does one smoke a tobacco pipe, has a hoarse voice...and they are always..”

”arguing,” we say in unison

Please tell me Qhamu and me are not losing our minds.

”Mngobi please tell me this isn't happening”

”What else did she say” I ask hurriedly.

We have lost our minds.

”Something about a boy being an angel, which didn't make sense at all” she sounds frustrated

I know how she feels.

”the old men said I should name him but who am I naming and did Thobile tell you about an Angel” this doesn't make any sense at all..

See why I hate dreaming of dead people?

They always leave you confused and worried.

"Qhamu are you pregnant" I find myself yawp vehemently

I swear I don't mean to about but that does all this mean. I know we've been having sex lately but I don't cum in her. I don't know why did we stop using condoms.

"What, no I'm not pregnant" her voice lacks certainty

"are you sure" we both can't afford to have a baby right now, not when there's a "storm" that we don't know off.

If she is then I'm as good as dead. Her brothers are going to kill me.

"Mnqobi I'm not pregnant" that's the unequivocal answer I want to here

Back to the dream...

"We seriously need to talk about these dreams--" I remove my phone from my ear to check time.

00:37 it reads.

"I'm on my way" this can't wait.

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As promised.

I'll post other one tomorrow

Nothing less than 50 shares

[06/20, 18:22] Lynne: 35.

(Unedited)

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A week later

QHAMU

It's raining cats and dogs today which makes me a little sad because it's my birthday.

Yes, I'm turning eighteen.

Finally...

It's quite surprising that Mngobi and I have never celebrated our birthdays before, mine is on the twenty-fifth of Jan and his' is in September

Lucas sent a very sweet message wishing me many more years to come and Zanele sang to me the moment I got to school this morning.

A little dramatic if you ask me but she's Lucas sibling after all.

My brothers, well we are not so fixated on celebration birthdays at home, I'd be surprised if they knew it's my birthday.

Please don't feel sad for me, I'm used to it.

I'm just happy I'm eighteen and it's my last year of "uniform" school.

The ringing bell jolts me out of my trance, thank goodness it's after school. Have I told you how happy I am that it's my final year of school uniform and Mrs. Ndaba,

Oh not forgetting Mr. Buthelezi, speaking of him, he summoned me to his office. It's after school meaning I should be going home but I still have the big old principal to see, I hope I'm not about to listen to one of his sobby stories, nevertheless, I walk to his office.

Shaking my head...

I'm still stunned that he's the one that rescued us that night. My memory from the night is a little indistinct but I'm happy he came when he did.

I admit though I'm still in awe that he's the one that killed Sgidi. I'm not sure if I should be happy he

killed him or be sad that he killed Mngqobi's FATHER, the man who wanted us all dead, the same man who fathers the love of my life.

Arg, Qhamu stop it, I'm just overthinking things. Mr. Buthelezi did all he did to save us and I'm happy with that, in fact, I respect him even more now.

Not everyone would have done what he did.

I knock twice before he shouts from the inside telling me to come in.

"maShenge" he smiles lifting his head from the pile of papers stacked on his office desk

"Good day sir" I'm worried that the bus will leave me

"take a seat Ntombiyam" his voice leaves no room for a protest so I sit on the leather chair opposite to his

"I've been meaning to talk to you" I have a feeling this conversation is going to be lengthy

"I know you might have concerns but I assure you, you have nothing to worry about. I'm just asking

you to stay away from that boy. You're still young--" he started good but now he's talking an off turn.

My facial expressions change just from the thought of Mngqobi and me apart but I respect him too much to protest but I know my face says it all.

"Yes" I acknowledge him

"you're my daughter which is why I don't want you dating these young boys. You will someday date and get married just not now especially now that you're in matric" my head involuntarily hang low. I know this comes from a good place but how will I stay away from Mngqobi

"I shouldn't be discussing this with you, but the Ngcobo's have agreed to meet us so we can talk more which is why I want you to stay from that boy until a consensus has been reached" why do they keep on referring Mngqobi as a boy.

"yes Sir" I acknowledge what he says but that doesn't mean I agree with it.

After I say my goodbyes I leave him to his papers and rush to the bus stop, the rain is not pouring as

hard but there light drizzle.

I see a mustard corolla waiting on the side of the road as I rush to the bus stop and my favorite person is leaning on the bonnet folding his arms to his chest looking at me.

I stop walking fast and smile in his direction. My feet have somehow been glued to the floor so I'm just staring at him.

"don't you know, staring is rude"

"I could say the same" he laughs sweetly

"just get over here" I like it when he gets authoritative

My feet carry me towards him and I peck his lips and give him a warm hug.

"I have something for you birthday girl" he says and inhales my scent before breaking the hug

I find that oddly sweet each time but I love it.

He opens the front door and pulls out white daisies and plugs it on my hair

”now you look even more beautiful” I roll my eyes.

”What...that’s a birthday present” I’d feel special if he hadn't plugged it out of his mother’s garden

”happy birthday my love” he pecks my lips once again and opens the passenger door for me.

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Today we changed from our usual spot which is either under the bamboo tree or Mnqobi room, we are actually chilling on the rocks that are just outskirts from Matsheni. Now I see why this place is Matsheni, you’d swear these rocks were placed here deliberately seeing the way they are perfectly aligned.

The rain has stopped but my shoes are covered with the dew remains of the rain. The grass is wet so we seating on the rocks.

Mnqobi kisses my temple jolting me out of my train of thoughts.

“I have something for you” and here I thought a flower is the only thing I’ll be getting.

He pulls out a gold vintage heart-shaped locket necklace from his jean pocket.

I can’t help smile when I see it.

“This is for you” the gold is rusty which hides the beauty of it

“It’s old” he says brushing his hand over mine

“I love it” I don’t want to disappoint him by showing him how I’m so disappointed with his choice of present. I can think of thousands of things he could’ve gotten me, not an old rusty necklace.

“My grandfather gave it to my grandmother when they got married, she then gave it to ubaba before her passing, asked him to give it to his wife but he never did. Now I have it and I want you to have it” did I say I don’t like it??

Forget I said that, I love it.

“Mngobi—“ I’m lost for words

I lift my head from the gold peace to look at him

“Mnqobi I can’t accept, this is too much. I mean your grandfather gave it to your grandmother it must have some sentimental value to you” I’m in disbelief really. I know he means well but this is too much.

“Besides you should give it to your future wife not—“ he shuts me up with a chastening kiss

Part of me wants to pull back but his sultry and luscious lips disempower me so I give and kiss him hungrily

“My grandmother would want you to have it” he says after breaking the kiss and kisses my nose

I’m a little emotional as he takes it from my hand and put it around my neck

“It looks even more beautiful on you” happy tears manage to find my eyes

How can the one person I’m forbidden to date be this loving and sweet?

“Thank you” it’s truly beautiful.

I’m sniffing and he’s chuckling softly next to me

helping me wipe my tears.

“I love you Qhamukile” I know he loves me and I love him more than you can imagine.

He kissed my forehead and pulls me closer to him and I snuggle him.

“So how did you get this necklace” I’ve managed to stop with the waterworks now.

“My father gave it to me so I can present it to my wife too” he says carelessly

Why would he go against his father’s word, I’m not his wife, in fact, I will never be his wife but when our brothers are on the verge of killing each other.

I don’t see any peace between the Ngcobo’s and the Buthelezi’s in this lifetime.

If they are not fighting over their stupid businesses, they fight about this rivalry so do you see any peace there?

My brothers are too proud to bend the knee and so are Mngobi’s brothers.

You know after all the meeting we had I thought

there would now be peace it at least a fraction of it but I was wrong.

“Hey—“ Mngqobi lifts my face up using his index finger forcing me to look at him

“Let’s not think about our families, it’s your birthday. let’s forget about them and focus on us” he kisses my temple

“And for the record, you are going to be my wife, whether they like it or not” ain’t we confident.

We spend the rest of the day talking and laughing. I sent Misuzulu an SMS telling him I’m at Zanele house just so he doesn’t send his army looking for me.

“Oh, this has our initials engraved inside” he is talking about the necklace.

I remove it delicately, you would swear it’s new with the way I’m handling it.

He opens the heart Lockett, Q&M is written in italics inside it.

This day couldn’t get any perfect, have I told you

guys how I love Mngqobi?

Well, I love him beyond infinity, just like the infinity sign that's below our initials.

Q & M

“There's no enough space to write forever but that infinity sign couldn't be more befitting” I can't believe he did this for me.

“Mngqobi—“ the tears again

“It's perfect” I plant an emotional kiss on his lips

“I spent most of my savings for that but I know you'll show me just how much you appreciate it once we get in that car” he winks

Typical Mngqobi, here I am bare with emotions and he's thinking about sex. Well, he can forget it.

Speaking of sex, Mngqobi has been frantic lately and very worried because we've been having unprotected sex, please don't judge I know it's wrong anyway he's worried that I'm pregnant, I think those two old men are seriously playing with us

which is why we have both decided to tell our brothers about them and hopefully, that will somehow help.

He's been buying, let me wasting money on pregnancy test since he dreamt those men telling him about naming a baby, these dreams don't scare me anymore remember Thobile once told me her baby will have a playmate 'soon' and when was that again, a year and a couple of months back, and I still don't know what she meant by that so Mngqobi needs to relax. Those old men will forever keep you wondering.

Oh before I forget, I'm now on a pill. Prevention is better than cure right?

Rather I do that and not fall pregnant, Mngqobi and I are back to using condoms' again.

Sorry to disappoint some of you.

"I love you so much" I kiss him again.

"I know you do baby, let me take you home before Shaka Zulu and his warriors start looking for you" I roll my eyes and stand up.

I play with my new necklace all the way home smiling to myself. I still can't phantom that Mngobi sees me worthy to have this necklace that means so much to him.

I give him one last kiss before I go home.

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See you on the 6th of January but should I get nothing less than 40 shares I will post again before 2020

[06/20, 18:22] Lynne: 36

QHAMU

(a year later)

It's been a very stressful year for me, I chose to focus on school and not the fights and everything else that has been happening. As you have anticipated the rivalry between the Buthelezi's and the Ngcobo's hasn't been resolved, in fact, they fight more now because of businesses. Apparently, the Ngcobo's opened a new pup in town which means my brothers lost customers to them, Misuzulu also expanded his taxi business meaning he now covers lots of routes which furthermore adds to this war but as I said, I've been focus more on my school work. I'm glad I'm done with exams, they were quite tricky but I managed, with the help, I got from Lungelo, yes, we rekindled our friendship, Mondli and Mngobi helped of course so I'm expecting at least two distinctions.

”sit still please or else I won't get this right” he's forever dramatic

I roll my eyes and let him continue, he 'pampering'

me, so he says, for my matric banquet tonight.

What would matric year be without matric dance?

I sit still so he can finish even though I'm now restless, you would be too. he's been at it for over an hour now.

He takes a couple of more minutes before he exclaims "done" excitedly and hands me a mirror to look at what he's done.

I gasp when I see myself, I look nothing like how I know myself, bare, make up free self.

I look beautiful.

My eyebrows are on fleek, I see the minimal blush pops out my cheeks bones.

I just look magnificent.

Beautiful.

"wow"

I even have light shimmer of gold on the bridge of my nose.

”told you these hands are gifted” he says rolling his eyes.

When he first told me he'll do my make-up I was skeptical that he'd do an amazing job, but what do you know, Lucas always surprises.

I love that I look natural even though I have layers and layers of make-up piled up on my face. I refused the long eyelashes though and thank God he listened. The nude lipstick brings out the shape of my lips. I just look beyond beautiful.

”dress up before you late” Zanele

She hands me my royal blue long dress, it has lace on the upper body, it is flowing from the waist down, open in the back and shows the right amount of my chocolate skin.

”beautiful” they say in unison once I’m dressed.

I paired the dress with royal blue block heels and a silver clutch.

I do the last turn around looking in the full-length mirror before walking out of my bedroom.

All my brothers are gathered around the lounge area waiting for me to make my entrance.

They all gasp like I did a moment ago and they start throwing compliment after compliment.

”Ntonto is this you” Gatsha says excitedly

Gcina and Zanele exchange unexplainable gazes like they have been doing the whole year I’m just glad either one of them has acted on this little crush they have for one another and boy I am glad.

”mama” my little man says smiling opening his

arms wanting me to take him from Mondli.

Don't be surprised he calls everyone mama.

Little Bheki has grown so much, he can now walk and he talks a lot like his father, mostly incoherently words but he's getting there.

I'm saddened that Gats ha broke up with Yobanathi shortly after Bheki was born, I actually believed she was the one for him. I still talk to her, in fact, we are more closer now. She brings the baby whenever we ask besides the boy loves being here.

"thatha (take)" he extends himself when he sees I'm not taking him.

he's too cute to be resisted.

"hey, he will dirty you. Can you not see all that drool on him"

Lucas sways my hands away just as I was about to take him.

I sulk...

Lucas is such a bore, I'm pleased that Nqaba brings his girlfriend, Qondile, whenever he's here, he was actually hurt, no, jokes aside, I mean seriously hurt that Nqaba has a girlfriend... rolling my eyes.. he actually thought Nqaba is gay?

I'm actually surprised that Qondile is not here right now.

”shh don't cry my boy, I will beat him up”

Mondli tries to shush the now crying Bheki. He lays him on his chest and which manages to stop him from crying.

He's such a sweet child, no I take that back, he can be just like his fathers, stubborn as a mule, I'm actually surprised he stopped crying this quickly.

Misuzulu is the one driving me to school but because all of them wanted to come we using a taxi, how embarrassing. This reminds me of back when my father would do the same, at least Misuzulu is not playing those Maskhandi songs.

It's a little after four when we get to school, everyone is already here so we get into our respective transport and head to Durban but not before I see Mr. Buthelezi talking to Misuzulu and Mondli and looking at how he's shouting at them, they must have done something wrong.

An hour later we arrive in Durban and head to the boat. I've never been on a boat cruise before so I'm excited.

There's good food, good music, and good people so I have no reason to complain.

The night proceeds very well. I don't know who

came up with the after-party idea but whoever that is is brilliant.

You know the saying "when a cat is not around, mice come out to play?" that's exactly what we doing. All the teachers we came with went about their businesses, leaving us to ourselves. I change into a pair of jeans and a simple t-shirt and sneakers and we head to Florida street.

I opt for coke with ice because alcohol and I are not friends. I learned the hard way.

The night is young and so are we.

I dance until I'm tired and after twelve we go back to the bus and we drive back home.

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my bags are packed and prepared to leave for

Durban, December holidays are long meaning I get to spend as much time I can with Mngqobi but this time my brothers forced me to visit my aunt. I know they are trying to keep Mngqobi and me apart but that won't work. He'll be coming to Durban a day after tomorrow before coming back to Matsheni. He's still in Joburg which I know his brothers find rather odd because he's usually home by this time but what can we do.

Our brothers are so in-tuned in our business that I doubt they have time for their girlfriends.

Anyway Mngqobi saved enough to book into the sun hotel in Durban for two days. I miss him so much and it's worse because I only saw him during the June holidays and it was not frequently as I'm always on a tight leash when he's around. You know, I seriously thought those meetings they had last year were helping but I guess I was just fooling myself. Things have gotten from bad to worse but Mngqobi and I are surviving the storm. Speaking of storms, I haven't dreamt about those two men in a while and neither has Mngqobi which is why I'm

convinced that it's either we both paranoid or just plain crazy to have taken what they said seriously. Remember we were both planning on telling our brothers, but it never happened I guess it slipped our minds and you can't blame us, a lot is happening and sometimes things just slip the mind and we move on.

”ready” Gats ha is the one driving me.

I waste no time in putting my bag in the car and we leave.

We have a meaningless conversation along the way teasing each other, I want to ask why he broke up with Yobanathi but I don't want to pry so I don't even attempt to start that conversation instead we talk about my future plan.

I don't think I've told you this but as expected by brothers refused that I move to J oburg, no surprise there. I'd have wondered what was wrong had they agreed.

I'll be completing my culinary degree in some expensive culinary school in town. I chose the most expensive one thinking they would relent and let me go to Joburg but that was just a distant dream because they said they can and will afford the fees.

Shaking my head...

I'm Qhamukile after all, and I never get what I want.

Two hours later Gatsha drives into my aunts' driveway, he is extra cautious since Bheki was born, he never speeds, in fact, he drives like an old white woman, not my words. Blame Misuzulu, which is why we took two full hours instead of one to get here.

Sighs

Having a child sure does change a person for the better. Gatsha is no longer care-free like he was, you should see him when he's with little Bheki, you'd swear Bheki will break each time he plays.

My aunt exchange pleasantries with Gatsha and unlike Misuzulu he accepts a plate of food and a drink when aunty offers. He's more polite compared to Misuzulu. Soon as he's finished with his food he departs.

My aunt is a busy woman as I said before so she's going to cape town to join her husband meaning Nomcebo and I have the house to ourselves for the next coming two weeks.

Freedom, freedom!!

I'll be able to see Mngqobi freely.

My brothers forcing me to come here was a blessing in disguise after all.

I take a nap which is interrupted by Nomcebo demanding we go out for lunch, I refuse at first which obviously falls on deaf ears so I end up changing into a summer dress and join her.

She has a car but she prefers taking an Uber just

Incase she gets drunk.

She's wearing a short short if there's such a thing, it is so short that her bum cheeks are visible, she's wearing it with a crop top showing her belly ring and sandals.

I fail to understand how can she feel comfortable walking around wearing that. She's practically naked.

Let me not judge.

She says she's comfortable with her body so I zip my mouth and we walk into a restaurant near the beach.

It is shocking how I'm no longer excited to be here, the beach house, the hundred percent juice and all those other things I was excited about seem not to faze me this time around.

Her friends wave at her when they see us.

I always feel plain, for a lack of a better word, when I'm with Nomcebo's friends. These are not the same

girls I was with the first time I came here, these ones are even faker, as always they are all wearing close to nothing, long weaves, and long nails. I wonder how do they wipe themselves.

After pleasantries are exchanged we order, I'm hungry so I order burger and chips

"haibo girl, a whole burger, you'll get fat"

I hate it when people do that besides this is my body and I'm paying with my own money, can you believe that as a bribe my brothers gave me one thousand five hundred rands.

And who the hell made her my dietician?

Nxa!!

Let me not let her get to me.

"and a large coke please" I tell the waiter

She huffs, I don't even know her name and yet she's

on my case.

Ignoring her I continue to chat with Mngobi. He's telling me about a party he's attending tonight with his friends, this Katlego character seems to be trouble whenever Mngobi mentions a party I know Katlego has something to do with it. I guess I shouldn't complain too much, he will be here in just two days.

Nomcebo and her friends are talking about some party happening tonight too. I'd rather be in Mvubukazi with my friends, not these fake barbie dolls but my brother had to force me to come here.

Soon the waiter brings our food and I waste no time, I munch on my food and the girls nibble on their salads.

Yoh I don't think I'll manage with eating salads only, I love pap too much.

I finish first... Hey, I told you I'm hungry.

I'm bored now, I take out my phone and call Lungelo. I haven't seen him in forever which is why he was surprised when I told him I'm in town.

Twenty minutes later he waltzes in, his stride always confident.

"hey you, where is Sbahle" one of Nomcebo's friend ask him as he sits next to me.

"around" he answers dismissively

I'm guessing that's his girlfriend anyway we don't chill with them so we bid farewell after I've explained to Nomcebo that I'm leaving with Lungelo. She doesn't seem to mind so we leave.

"give me a hug" he demands the moment we step outside the restaurant and I hug him giggling.

”it’s been so looong” he let’s me go and looks at me smiling

”and you still beautiful” I blush at his flattery

”The last time I saw you was when I came to PMB to bury my brother-in-law” I swallow the rising bile down my throat.

Khaya!

Even in his death he still haunts me.

The thought that my brother killed him haunts me to this day.

”yes it has been so long, how’s your sister” I can hear the nervousness echoing in my ears but I master a normal visage or at least I try.

”she’s been good” he says lightly and put his arm around my shoulder.

I hate to admit but I missed him, he's always been a good friend to me.

He now works at some media production company and by the look of things, he's doing well for himself. He is glowing and his dress code has improved, he now wears expensive sneakers and judging by the VW car keys dangling in his hand he bought a car. Someone is doing well financially.

I know you what you guys are thinking, keep your panties on please I'm not fazed by his money I was just pointing it out there.

It's a polo TSI, we are driving to his place which is situated in the heart of Durban, we first get pizza, I know I just ate but who says no to food? Lol... I just love food.

Thank God for my skinny bone structure.

He lives in a studio apartment, I admire that Lungelo is clean unlike most guys, I live with men so I know how dirty they can be.

First I help him fold his clothes, it looks like he did his laundry, as soon as we are done we settle in front of a tv with a box of pizza in hand, he is drinking his beer and I juice and engaging in unimportant chitchats.

I enjoy Lungelo's company. It's after seven in the evening and I've been with him since three that's how I enjoy being with him.

"I should get going now" we tried watching movies but failed because we talk more than we watch tv.

"So soon, I'll drive you home besides knowing your cousin I'm sure she's getting ready for some party and you will be bored home alone" he gives me his best convincing smile

"yea you right but I need to get home, I'm tired and I'm not leaving anytime soon so you'll see me often" I say and stand up

I seriously need to get home.

I'm relieved when he does not protest so we clear the floor and he grabs the car key on top of the glass coffee table and we walk to the door but before I can open the door he pulls back to him roughly and crushes his lips on mine. It takes me a couple of seconds before my mind registers that he's kissing me.

"Lungelo" I push him back lightly

Mnqobi's first kiss was stolen, Manqoba followed and now Lungelo too?

I don't know what happened in my previous life time but I'm hating that all these guys kiss me unexpectedly.

He moves back and sighs loudly

"I'm sorry, but Qhamu I love you" I'm taken aback by that.

He loves me?

I made myself clear two years back that I just want to be friends and nothing has changed.

”Lungelo—“ words fail me

“I know you said you can only offer friendship but I want more than that, I’ve tried moving on but I can’t. I love you Qhamukile and I know you feel the same way” he says stepping closer to me

I can feel my breath quickening with each step he takes.

My legs involuntarily move back until my back is against the door.

I watch him until he is right in front of me.

“Tell me you don’t love me” his breath mixed with the hint of beer hits my face lightly as he speaks

“Look me in the eye and tell me you don’t love me” my heart rate quickness and not because I love him but because I’m afraid of this feeling that has suddenly evoked within me.

I tremble convulsively under his lustful grimace.

I love Mngobi, I love Mngobi, I love Mngobi I recite the mantra more than I can count in my head. This can’t be happening.

He rests his forehead onto mine and sighs.

“Tell me, and I promise I’ll let you go” I swallow the lump on my throat but whatever I do I can’t seem to utter these four words ‘I don’t love you’ what’s hard in saying that.

He leans his face in and our lips touch, he lets his lips linger on mine for a couple of minutes before he moves his lips.

At first, I don’t respond to his kiss but soon I do.

He pulls me to him and wraps his arms around my waistline and I wrap mine over his shoulder all the way around his neck.

His kisses are soft and slow, this is how they usually kiss in movies.

“Mmmh” I moan when he swirls his tongue.

We kiss for what felt like an eternity before I feel his hand trailing up my spine through the soft fabric of my dress and he pulls down the zipper.

I fit so well in his arms.

He pulls down the left strap of my dress from my left shoulder before repeating the act on the right shoulder, he does all this without removing his lips from mine.

With a soft thud my dress fall to our feet. I'm not wearing any bra because my dress needed no bra and besides that, my breast doesn't need anything to hold them into place.

He moans in my mouth as he cups my left breast with his hand and he tugs at my nipple. The

sensation I get from him pinching my nipple with his thumb and index finger is enough to send a quick vibration to my region area.

I don't know when did we move from the door to the bed but I'm now beneath him and he is working his kisses down my body, from my enlaced neck, shoulders, collar bone, to my breast. He drives me crazier as he continues to leave kisses going further down to my belly button. I'm still wearing my panty and he is still fully clothed.

He opens my legs apart using his hand but my legs stiff involuntarily causing him to pinch me softly

“Mmh” a groan erupts from the back of my throat and I open them apart.

My eyes are closed but I feel him as he caresses softly and continues to plant kisses on my inner thighs

“Beautiful” I hear him murmur

I feel the vibration of his word against my sensitive skin causing me to quiver

Feeling how uneasy I am he comes back to my face and kisses my lips softly. I help him remove his t-shirt and also to unbuckle his belt.

“I can’t” I whisper against his lips

Pretending not to hear me, he kisses me hard while his hand moves from my neck that is enlaced with the necklace Mnqobi gave me for my birthday to my womanhood and he pushes my panty to the side

Mnqobi...

My body jerks as he is about to stick his finger in me

“Mnqobi” I moan

Wait...

Mnqobi.

“Mnqobi” I shout his name the moment his face flickers in my thoughts

Lord what am I doing?

I gather all the strength in me to push Lungelo away from me.

God!

I can't believe I let another guy touch me in that manner.

“What, did I hurt you” Lungelo asks

His face covered by worry.

Is he meaning to tell me he didn't hear me moan and shout Mnqobi's name?

God, I'm so stupid.

I don't have the energy to explain so I roughly get off the bed, put on my dress, grab my phone from the floor and run out.

I hear Lungelo shouting my name behind as I run down from floor to floor, taking two steps at a time until I reach a narrow corridor towards the entrance.

The security guard opens for me with no questions asked and I let out breath I've been holding once fresh air hits my face.

I felt suffocated as I ran down the stairs.

My dress is unzipped but I couldn't care much about that. All I'm thinking about is Mngqobi and how I almost let another man into his secret chamber.

I feel dirty.

I scan my surroundings hoping to see a taxi or something that can take me back home, home in Mvubukazi. I don't care that it is this late at night. I just want to get home.

it looks like luck is on my side because there's a parked meter taxi just across the road, I run to it and ask the driver how much is it to get to the bus station

“One hundred and fifty,” he says

What??

So much?

The bus station is literally minutes away and I only have one hundred in cash

“I only have one hundred, please baba I need to get to the station, please” I look behind checking to see if Lungelo made his way out, he hasn't, he's still most probably dressing up or beating himself up that he didn't sleep with me.

I look back at the driver again

”please baba” I beg

My labored breathing has abated but my heartbeat is still rampaging against my chest

He looks at me questionable before he nods for me to enter.

I let out a sigh of relief as the engine roars to life.

”QHAMU” the shirtless Lungelo finally emerges

from the tall building screaming my name.

I manage to see him running down the driver turns into the next street.

He's late, too late and that couldn't make me happier.

Sighs

That's a sigh of relief.

It's either he's slow or I'm fast but whatever it is I'm glad he didn't catch up with me.

Tell me again, what the hell was I doing at Lungelo's place?

I let him touch where only Mnqobi is allowed to touch.

I let him kiss where Mnqobi is only allowed to kiss.

I clutch my dress tightly as the thought of him caressing me like he did comes back tenfold. I nearly cheated on Mnqobi.

Did I cheat?

Does it count as cheating seeing that "it" actually

never happened?

Tears fill my eyes but I can't let them fall I have no one to blame but myself and it's not like Lungelo forced himself on me and that's what scares me the most, I let him touch me, I let him kiss me, willingly.

"Where are you going this late" the driver asks

He is old, maybe around mid-sixty or so.

"Pietermaritzburg baba" I answer

He looks at me through the rear view mirror and nods

"You seem awfully young to be roaming around this time of the night" I don't want to talk so I gaze out the window as he connect to Umgeni road, I'm close now.

"I have a granddaughter around your age and I'd

hate for anything bad to happen to her. So my child talk to me” I look at him once and out the window again.

I feel disgusted by what I did, almost did. I don't know what the hell was I thinking going to Lungelo's place.

“We here” he says startling me.

I thank him and climb out without looking at him.

“The world has become a dangerous place, please be safe my child” he says lastly before I walk into the bus station.

It's a little before nine. I need to get home. I know my brothers will be deranged but I can't be in Durban any longer. I hate this city and its people and mostly I hate me.

I hate what I have become.

What changed?

I know I don't love Lungelo, in fact, I have never seen him more than just a friend so why couldn't I say the four words Lungelo needed to hear to stop himself. I don't love him but I couldn't tell him either.

Firstly, I withdraw all the money I have left in my bank account, a thousand rand. It's more than enough.

It's end of November so it's a little full but I know in a week's time it will be worse as schools will be closing and people will be coming back home.

Secondly, I purchase a bus ticket, Greyhound is expensive so I settle for city to city.

I don't know what got to me but I know I have to be with Mngobi, I need him.

Some lady helps zipping my dress and once my head rests on the headrest I let sleep take over. I have a long road ahead.

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It's a new year so nothing less than 5k likes and 59 shares

[06/20, 18:22] Lynne: 37

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MNQOBI

The sound of an unceasing jarring ringing phone forces me to open my eyes, thanks to the little light coming in from the tall street light of jozi I'm able to scan around and notice I'm not in my room.

Fuck!

I must apologize in advance, I'm going to swear a lot today.

Last night or rather this morning was hectic and my ringing phone is not helping with my banging headache

How much did I have to drink?

I run my hands on my face trying to wake my half-asleep brain.

The persistent ringing phone stops. Thank goddess!

My head is banging hard, bile has risen up to my throat that all that I want to do is puke out all the vodka I consumed last night.

I don't think I have ever drunk like that in my entire life, damn Katlego and his farewell parties.

I huff when I see a half-full beer bottle on the side pedestal and to be honest with you I think I'm still a little drunk.

My phone's loud ringtone managed to wake me up fully this time and I search my pocket trying to locate it.

I don't remember where last did I put it.

It stops again.

Fuck.

I told you I'm going to use profanity a lot.

I switch on the lamp on the side of the bed. Katlego is sleeping next to me and Simphiwe is sleeping on the couch near the bed. I don't know what time did we get here but we are all in one peace so I'm relieved.

I push Katlego on his side causing him to let out a loud grunt and pull out my phone underneath him.

It rings again just as I was about to unlock it and The Mrs. flashes my screen.

I'm sure she's unable to sleep and wants to hear my voice.

The joys of dating.

Shaking my head

"Qhamu" I answer

my voice gruffer than ever

Silence

“Qhamukile”

I hear her sniffing on the other side of the line.

I sit up straight a little panicked.

“What’s wrong”

“Qhamukile what’s wrong” I ask again harshly when she doesn’t talk

I swear I’m close to shouting at her now

“Mnqobi—“ I wait for her to talk to me

“Can you please come get me” I hope she’s not drunk because my patience is running out

I’m still drunk and she’s not helping by being her typical self

“Qhamukile I’ll be there tomorrow” I huff in frustration.

She sniffs again, that’s clear indication that she’s crying

“Why are you crying” I chide at her

“I’m—I’m at park station in joburg, can you please come get me” she speaks so fast that I think I missed the part where she said she’s in joburg

I abruptly stand on my feet and remove the phone from my ear to check time

3:55 it reads.

I sigh before I put the phone back on my ear

“What—what did you say” I’m trying to be calm

“I’m in joburg, Mngqobi I’m scared. Can you please come get me” I sober up immediately.

I pace around looking for Katlego’s car keys. Once I’ve allocated them, I sprint out like a mad man.

Fuck!

Thank god I slept with my shoes on.

This girl will be the death of me I tell you.

I startle the sleeping security guard when I emerge from the stairs

“Zulu boy where you runni—“ I’m already out the building before he can finish

Thank god Katlego parked on the side of the pavement.

I look at my phone once I'm inside the car and Qhamu is no longer on the line. She must've dropped the call.

“The number you have dialed is no—“ I hang up once the annoying white woman start speaking “FUCK, FUCK, FUCK!!” This time is say it out loud banging the starring wheel.

Park station is not far from where I stay but I speed like legendary Micheal Schumacher winning an F1 race, mind you it's raining hard, pray that Katlego tires have enough grip should something happen.

I don't bother checking if I parked right, I just get out the car, lock it and run inside.

The same white woman speaks when I call her again.

FUCK!!

Qhamu can be so irresponsible at times.

I'm panting, walking around like a mad man trying

to locate her.

Fuck, I'm going to kill her.

How can she come here without talking to me.

I walk to where Durban buses offload and she's not there.

Fuck.

I now look like a demented young man as I look for her in each and every offloading bus.

I finally see her, seating on a bench clutching on her dress.

“QHAMUKILE” I don't care that people are watching

She abruptly wakes up and runs to me when she sees it me.

“I'm so sorry Mnqobi, I'm sorry” she cry's holding me tightly

Listening to her cry this painfully breaks my heart, the anger I had in me vacates as I listen to her hysterical crying.

“Shhhh I'm here now, don't cry” I brush her back.

She cries for what feels like a life time before her tears subside

“Let’s go home” the little apartment has become home to me

I’ve long given her the light jacket I was wearing because the rain came with coldness.

I still can’t believe she’s here.

She has no luggage with her, I’m not surprised though no sane person would travel this time of the night wearing just a light summer dress.

I’m afraid of asking what the hell happened, I can’t bare to hear that someone hurt her or that something bad happened.

I immediately light the heater once we get to the car and we leave.

Fuck

Qhamu is seriously going to give me a heart attack. It takes me under fifteen minutes to get to my place, I was driving like a normal person this time.

The security is now awake when we enter the
“Bab’Mathebula can you please open for her” my
voice pleading just Incase he demands her ID which
I doubt she has.

To my surprise he opens for her without asking
anything, I’ll buy him a cold drink tomorrow, ag it’s
tomorrow already, later on then.

She’s clenching lightly on q jacket as we walk to my
apartment, I have my keys in my pocket so I open
and she enters first and I follow behind her
switching on the light.

FUCK!

FUCK!

FUCK!

I can go on forever.

Thozama and Lerato are sprawled comfortably on
my bed.

FUCK!

Before you start chiding at me let me tell you what

happened seeing that I now remember everything that happened.

Katlego threw a farewell party for Simphiwe seeing that it is his last year here with us so obviously all his friends attended, Thozama and Lerato being part of those friends.

We all got drunk and Katlego drove us home but when we got here he could not drive back alone and that's when "we" (clears throat) I suggested that the girls sleep in my apartment and us guys use Simphiwe's apartment and now that Qhamu is here I regret ever suggesting such an ludicrous idea.

"What's happening here" she says jolting me

"Uh—" What do I say

Her arms are now folded to her chest waiting for an explanation

"We all went to that farewell party I told you about

and they got too drunk so they ended up sleeping here and I slept at Simphiwe's place" telling the truth is the right thing to do.

"Mnqobiwesizwe are you cheating on me" all her tears have dried up

I guess this sight before her made her forget about whatever that made her cry in the first place or brought her here for that matter

"Baby I'm telling you the truth" I say walking to the bed to wake up the two ladies.

It's a struggle because they were too drunk but I have no choice they need to leave before Qhamu cuts their limbs.

They manage to wake up after a while and they walk to Simphiwe's apartment.

"Tell me, what happened" I say once she's settled on a couch

“Can I take a nap first” I guess we both need it.

She refuses to sleep on the bed because Thozama and her friend were sleeping here so I have no choice but to first change the sheets and she finally sleeps with her head on my chest.

What a fucked up way to start the day.

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I wake up a little after nine but Qhamu is sound asleep next to me with her lips slightly parted, she's even snoring lightly but please whatever you do don't tell her I told you, she'd kill me.

I remove her head from my shoulder carefully not to wake her and go to the kitchen to drink a glass of water.

I'm surprised I don't have any headache from all the

drinking I did, frankly I'm not even hung over I guess being woken up in the wee hours of the morning takes the hangover away or maybe I'm overly excited that I'm with my love.

After washing the cobwebs from the little sleep I got off my face I charge her dead phone, grab my wallet and Katlego's car keys and walk out.

The guys are awake when I enter Simphiwe's apartment.

"Zulu boy wasn't I sleeping with you" Katlego asks looking at Lerato and Thozama who are still sleeping next to him I guess he's trying to piece up the events of last night slash this morning

"Slept with me" I tease

He scoffs and run his hand on his face

"How did we get here" Simphiwe manages to stand up from the couch and get himself a glass of water

“Katlego brought us here”

“Nna (me)” Katlego’s thick Pedi accent does come out at times

I don’t have time to relive the events of last night I need to get to the mall to get Qhamu a few clothes.

The guys complain at first but they have no choice so after they wash their faces and drink lots of water we drive to legit up the road, it’s the closet and cheapest.

”so are you telling us that Zulu girl came here in the wee hours of the morning Katlego says as I show him a dress that can look good on Qhamu. I don't know her size so I'll just get anything that will suit her.

“Yeap” I grab two dresses and pay.

My bank balance is left with close to nothing but what can I go?

“That girl of yours is crazy boy, mos she could have waited for you to go home” Simphiwe

“I guess she couldn’t wait” I’m worried that something happened.

“I thought I wanted a wife from the farms but if this is what they do then I’m good, Zulu girl is crazy and I can’t deal with that” we laugh as we drive back.

Bab’Mathebula is no longer here, so Katlego is allowed to enter freely.

The guys want to come in with me but I refuse. I need to speak to Qhamu alone before they see her.

I find her staring outside the window wearing my soccer t-shirt, the sight alone gets Mapholoba

excited but he needs to wait his turn.

“You’re awake” I walk to her and peck her lips.

“How are you feeling” I place the plastic bag on top of the bed

“I got you a dress”

She smiles feebly before she speaks

“Thank you. I’m fine now that I’m with you”

“So are you going to tell me what happened” I walk back to her and turn her around so she can look at me

“Uh—“ she turns back around and gaze outside

“My love talk to me please” if she doesn’t talk I swear I’m going to force it out of her.

Sweet Mngqobi is out play but angry Mngqobi can come out just as fast

“It’s this rivalry going on between our families”

She sighs loudly

“Gatscha fought with Langa, again and I just can’t take it anymore. Sooner or later someone is going to die and i’m afraid that will just escalate things to a point of no return.” I feel her pain

These fights have gotten worse now.

“I can’t do this anymore Mngqobi” wait is she breaking up with me?

“Mngqobi what if you and I are not meant to be” I’m confused.

Just last night we were happy and now she's telling me all this load of crap?

“I am starting to think we don't belong together, I mean how can we be together when our families hate each other, perhaps if we weren't together then we wouldn't be fighting like this, I can't keep fighting for us like this. Things have gotten worse and it's because of us”

I remain silent

We promised each other forever but here she is saying the total opposite.

“I love you Mnqobi but for how long will we keep on fighting for our love, until one of us is dead.” Tears are streaming down her face.

I pull her to me and hold her tightly, this feud is just redundant if you ask me.

I pick her up and place her on the bed where she cries until she falls asleep.

Isn't she just dramatic..

-

Its a few minutes before two and she's still sleeping.

I can't cook so I got takeout I know she will be famished when she wakes up.

Shaking my head..

Qhamu is something I tell you if I didn't love her like I do I would've dumped her ass a long time ago.

Katlego and Simphiwe were here a few minutes ago wanting to meet her, Katlego thinks Qhamu is dramatic so he can't wait to meet her.

I think he like her and her dramatic ways, he finds it cute, annoying if you ask me but I have to deal with it.

Qhamu needs to make peace that we never breaking up.

Simple!!

The sooner she realizes that the better it will be.

I've cleaned a bit so it smells fresh.

Her lips are parted looking cute, even in her sleep her brows furrow. I want to kiss her pouted lips but I'm afraid that will wake her up.

"Mngobi" she moans my name in her sleep.

Fuck!

She's dreaming about me, isn't that just cute.

She looks good in my t-shirt, I want to watch her sleep like this for the rest of my life, wait...

I have just gotten a very ludicrous if not a crazy idea but I think this will somehow stop this feud, being with Qhamu is the only thing that makes sense right now and I can't let her go. I hate that she wants out because of this stupid feud but us being apart is just a distant wish that will never happen.

If you have been in love like I am then you'd know the true meaning of being "crazy in love"

I think I'm literally losing it right now.

I can't believe a thought like this crossed my mind

I read somewhere that "you have never loved If you have never done something out of the ordinary" and what I'm about to do is proof enough that I'm crazy in love.

I shake her awake

Lord, I have totally lost my sense right now.

She flaps her eyelids open and yawns softly.

"Baby" she whispers

This is it!!

"Marry me"

[06/20, 18:23] Lynne: 38

QHAMU

I laugh at how serious he is, of course, I'll marry him.
We just have a long way to go before that happens
"of course baby, I'm going to marry you one day" I
was crazy to even think I'd break up with him.

"No like marry me, as in now, today" I stop laughing
when I see how serious he is

"Uh—"

"Let's get married today, right now"

"what" I abruptly sit on my bums

Mnqobi is not serious.

"but how" do you just rock up in court or home
affairs and be like hey I'm here to get married?

I don't know how these things work but I doubt
that's the way

"Wait here" he rushes out the door

"Change into something decent" he shouts before
he closes the door.

I'm left bewildered.

I think Mngqobi has lost his mind.

I change into one of the dresses he bought me, I don't have time to check and see which one suits me better I mean they both long and ugly but I wear the pink one. Imagine my dark skin inside a pink dress.

Please remind me never to trust Mngqobi with any shopping going forward.

Did I mention how hideous the dress is?

He comes back rushing with two guys following him behind him just as I finish dressing up.

“Katlego call your dad”

“Uh—“ the light-skinned guy is confused as I am.

“He’s a magistrate or something right” Mngqobi frantically ask him

“A judge yeah” with the few words Katlego said I gathered he’s kind of snobbish

He speaks English very eloquently though.

He calls his father when he notices how serious Mngobi is.

“Papa Mogwera waka o gopela go bolela le lena” he hands Mngobi his phone shortly after his father replies.

Katlego speaks Sepedi so well too, I swear it sounds like two different people when he speaks both languages.

It’s fascinating.

I know he just said ”dad a friend of mine asks to speak to you”

Eye roll.

The stereotype that Zulu’s don’t speak other languages is false, I watch Skeem Sam every weekday so I can confidently say I can speak Sepedi, I’m not fluent but I know the basic so please stop saying Zulu’s refuse to learn other languages.

The other guy hasn’t said a word, we are all wondering what the hell got into Mngobi anyway

Mnqobi takes the phone and walks out.

”Zulu girl what's gotten into that boyfriend of yours”

Zulu girl?

Did he just call me Zulu girl?

”I’m not sure, tlare moemele a fetše ka phone (let’s wait for him to finish with the phone call)” told you I speak Sepedi

A smile finds his lips

”Zulu girl you know how to speak Sepedi, it's official I like you more than that boyfriend of yours” you should see how excited he is.

I roll my eyes and greet the other guy

”oh sorry, I’m Simphiwe and you must be

Qhamukile” he says in his thick Swati accent
I swear if I wasn’t with Mnqobi I’d date a Swati guy.
I just love the language.

“We’ve heard so much about you, but your
boyfriend left out how beautiful you are”
they could just say his name and not your boyfriend
but he said I’m beautiful so he's forgiven for now.
Mnqobi is my boyfriend mine and will forever be.

Speaking of my boyfriend, he comes back panting.
The conversation must have been really intense for
him to come back breathing this heavily.

“Your father is not easily convinced yoh” he says
looking at Katlego

“What was that all about vele” Simphiwe asks
I think we are all still dumbfounded by Mnqobi’s
behavior

“I’ll explain on our way, let’s go” and then

“Where are we going” Simphiwe asks before I could

“Court” he says already out the door.

If you think I was shocked you were wrong, now I’m totally flabbergasted.

“What” the three of us in unison.

He left us standing, I think my feet are glued to the floor, my breathing is shallow, I just don’t know how to feel or react.

“He said court, so he’s going to my dad.. why though, Qhamu what did you give to my boy.. he wasn’t this crazy yesterday” I don’t hear what the rest of Katlego says after that.

My mind is still stuck on the part where he asked me to marry him and now we going to court.

Mnqobi never ceases to amaze me.

He comes back dangling car keys, we manage to snap out of our trance and we all walkout.

I'm seated in the back with Mnqobi, he is playing with my fingers, my ring finger to be precise and Simphiwe is seating on the front passenger seat while Katlego is driving.

We all quiet, I guess we all asking ourselves as to why we going to court on a Sunday.

Courts don't open on Sundays.

It takes us twenty minutes to get to Randburg high court, poor Katlego,

he had to speed because Mnqobi was rushing him.

He's so impatient.

Katlego gives Mnqobi his phone once we arrive in court because the security is giving us a hustle, refusing us to enter but they let us through once they get confirmation from Katlego's father.

I've never been to any court before so I'm amazed at how big it is.

Katlego knows where his father's office is, so we follow behind him as he takes the stairs all the way to the fourth floor.

He enters leaving us outside.

I grab Mngqobi's hand and pull him to a corner

"What are we doing here" I half shout

I think my senses are coming back

"I'm going to convince Katlego's father to get us married" it's official Mngqobi has finally lost his mind, what the hell makes him think a whole judge will listen to anything he has to say.

"Mngqobi this is crazy, I know you want to marry me and I want nothing but to be your wife but this is not a way to go. Our families need to bless our marriage,

what about Lobola (dowry), think about it”

I know Mngqobi, nothing I say will change his mind
but I at least have to try

“Do you think our families will agree to us getting
married, Qhamu they don’t want us dating now
imagine marriage”

Sighs

As much as this is wrong he’s right though our
families will never allow us to marry each other and
God knows I’ll never marry anyone else besides
Mngqobi

“Zulu boy he’s ready for you” Katlego says startling
us

“Yes, ill marry you so do whatever you have to”

he smiles at my words winking before he enters
Judge Mashego’s office

I know this because the name is written boldly on

the office door.

“Qhamukile do you know why we are here” I forgot
they are still in the dark

“Mnqobi is trying to convince your father to marry
us”

“What” you should see their faces
I shrug and sit on the waiting bench

“Wait, Qhamu—you mean to tell me that your crazy
boyfriend is in there trying to convince my father to
marry you two” that’s what I said

I like how he says Qhamu, he can’t say the clique so
he ends up saying Chamu

It’s funny if you ask me.

I nod.

“Tell me you joking” he comes and sits next to me.

I wish I could.

“Look where we are” we both look around and let out a full-on belly laughter but Simphiwe is just looking at us amazed as to why we laughing and yet this is serious

“Why is your father working on a Sunday anyway”

“What you should be asking is when is he not working” he half laughs

“He changed after my mom passed on and now he’s always working, I guess it’s his coping mechanism. I’m used to it now.” He says sadly and shrugs

The sadness in his voice is too rife to be ignored

“I’m sorry”

“It’s alright, it was a long time ago, sometimes I just miss my dad but I guess his work is more important”

“I’m sorry hey if it’s any consolation I don’t know my mom, she died after giving birth to me”

“I’m sorry too”

“How did she pass” curiosity kill me.

“Car accident. I was eleven when it happened and since then my father has never been the same. He is really tough but he was soft when it came to her. He was only twenty and my mom was only sixteen when they got married but they loved each other till the end. I just wish he could find his happiness

again” he laughs again

I think he’s trying to hide his pain with laughter.

He might be fooling his friend but I’m not fooled.

“Do you think he will remarry” I’m asking too much I know

“Nope, I don’t see him even dating for that matter. My mother was everything to him”

Let me stop asking too many questions

•

I stop pacing when Mngqobi emerges from the office, it’s been the longest hour of my life. Simphiwe and Katlego begged me to sit down I don’t know how many times but I’m still on my feet walking back and forth.

“What did he say” that’s the first I ask when I see the sadness sprawled on his face.

I’m sure he refused, this was a bad idea, to begin with.

“Qhamukile follow me”

I didn’t notice that Katlego’s father was following Mngqobi, his voice leaves no room for protest so I have no choice but to follow him.

His office is bold.

He walks to sit comfortably in his thick leather seat and instructs me to sit on the opposite seat.

My heart is beating right out of my chest, I have never been this scared in my entire life.

I don’t follow courts or criminal cases but I can’t help feeling like I’ve seen him somewhere, TV maybe. I don’t know.

“Mngobiwesizwe said his piece but now I want to hear your side” my eyes leave the heavy law books stacked neatly in a shelf behind him and they fall on his hard features.

I’m not sure if he’s angry or if this is his demeanor but whatever it is it’s intimidating so my eyes drill the dark brown oak wooden table instead.

“Tell me why are you kids in a hurry to get married” his voice is soft for someone who looks as scary as he does.

“I love him” I start

He gives me that continue look

This is going to be difficult

“With all due respect sir, can I ask you something personal” he nods looking at me inquisitively

“Katlego mentioned your wife passed away a few years ago” his face hardens further but he doesn’t stop me.

“I just want to ask, Would you have married anyone else besides her”

He clears his voice

“No, I wouldn’t have”

“And why is that” I know I’m barking at the wrong tree here but I’m sure Mngobi explained everything

“Lethabo was everything I wanted in a woman, she was loving and sweet. She was just made for me. You know sometimes in life some people search for love all over, some find it some are not so lucky but I found my heart in her. She was my first and last”

I'm smiling at he says all this

“How old were you when you two got married” I know I'm using what Katlego told me against him but I want him to see my point

“Very young but times have changed now, that's was back then”

“I know baba, however, you were both still young but the marriage was a success. I'm not asking you to do anything you feel it's wrong but I'm sure Mngqobi told you about our family history and believe me when I say my family will never allow me to marry him but nonetheless Mngqobi makes me feel the same way you felt when you first saw Katlego's mother, my heart beats only for him. I know I'm young and who knows what the world holds for me but what I know is that I'll forever love Mngqobi and that won't change today or in the next coming ten years. I know if you could you would

marry her all over again, as young as you both were you'd do it all over again and that's how I feel about Mngqobi, I might not marry him today but I'll love him till my last breath" my eyes are teary now.

"I want to marry him now just like I'd marry him in the next twenty years. And I know you wouldn't change anything about your marriage and that's how I know love knows no age"

I stand from my seat

Tears are free-flowing but I wipe them and try to maintain a formidable expression.

"I'm sorry for wasting your time"

I'd be lying if I told you I know where I got this little bravery from.

He nods

"before I go sir Katlego tells me he misses his

father” I say one last time before walking to the door.

“Qhamukile how old are you” I come in a complete halt and turn to face him

“Eighteen”

He stands from his chair

“Mnqobi is lucky to have you in his life, you’re so young and yet you so wise. Let’s hope I’m not going to regret this. Let’s get you two married”

He said what?

•

Mnqobi has signed on the dotted line it’s now my turn, my hand is shaking not from nerves or doubt

but from excitement.

“Done” I say looking at Mngqobi

I can't believe we did it...

Simpfiwe and Katlego both sign as our witness and we leave.

Katlego's father first had to give us a long speech about commitment, faithfulness, love and everything else that comes with marriage.

I know he means well so like two obedient children, Mngqobi and I sat there and listened.

“My children your families will find out sooner or later so I can only hope your union is strong enough to withstand all the turbulence you're going to encounter”

We both smile at him as he takes away the papers

“The marriage certificate will be ready in a couple of weeks, Katlego will let you know when to come to collect it” with all that said we bid farewell

“Katlego please be home for supper I'm cooking” he says before we disappear around the corner.

Katlego can't help to smile.

It's been a fruitful day.

The drive home is jolly, Simphiwe keeps on pointing out how crazy both Mngqobi and I are, Katlego still can't believe we married

"Zulu boy you're someone's husband" he keeps on saying.

It's a little after five when we get home, I'm tired and I'm hungry, the food Mngqohi bought in the morning is now cold and Mngqobi doesn't have a microwave but beggars can't be choosers so I eat it cold.

I'm relieved Simphiwe and Katlego are nkt here with us, it's been a long day.

I just need a good night sleep and what better way than to sleep on Mngqobi's chest.

But first, have you noticed how I've been ignoring the elephant in the room?

I know some of you if not most are judging me for what happened with Lungelo well I'm only human

and bound to make mistakes, tell me, have you been perfect for all your life, have you never made a mistake in life?

I bet some of you don't even know their baby daddies and yet I'm the worst person out there.

I didn't lie to Mngobi I just chose not to tell him what I did and guess what, He'll never know about this and ain't I glad you don't know him, you are not to be trusted shame.

So all the holier than thou out there please forgive me for my bad behavior, at least I know I'm not perfect.

Enough about that, we shall discuss it some other times. I'm too happy to let your judgments damper my mood.

My belly is full, I've just come out of the shower and I smell like Mngobi

I used his body wash that's why.

“My husband” it still feels so surreal, he is my husband.

I’m wrapped in a towel but now it’s time for Mngqobi to get what’s due to him.

“My wife” don’t you just love the sound of that.

To being Mrs. Ngcobo.

[06/20, 18:23] Lynne: 39

QHAMU

Mngqobi is snoring peacefully next to me, not that I blame him, my lady parts are swollen from last night so as you can imagine the ‘sex-exercise’ was way too much, I’m tired myself.

My whole body is in knots which is no surprise as I was in positions I never knew existed, damn Mngqobi.

How is it possible that I can't feel my legs?

Oh, I know why... But all that I'm going to say is, being one with your partner is the best feeling ever. Making love connects your bodies, your souls, your whole being becomes one and this is why I'm not going to pretend that I don't enjoy making love to Mngobi, my husband.

This is the second time I'm saying my husband and God it feels good each time.

My husband touches me in a way that no other person can, his kisses make me feel like a tub of roses swimming in honey, nutmeg and blackberries, each time he plants his lips on mine it feels just like the first time, full of rawness and emotions. Most importantly he devours my body like it's his and that how I know we are one.

Lol...

Don't worry someday when you find the 'one' you'll know what I'm talking about.

Last night was medical to say the least, thinking about it gets my whoo-haa excited

I inhale and exhale when I get that tingly feeling on my... you know where.

It's twitching for Mngobi's attention, I'd tell her to behave if I didn't want to make love my husband this much.

I'm exhausted but not exhausted enough.

Ladies and gents let me shut my mouth before I reveal too much but I can bet on my life your eyes are popping out of their sockets because you are eager to know each and every detail of last night and that is why I'm not telling.

Eye roll...

Have you forgotten you were playing the devil's advocate not so long ago and now you want to know what went down between my husband and me?

Lol... my lips are sealed.

Calm down, I'm only joking. I like to brag so let me

tell you all about it or better yet let me re-do it all over for you.

(Clears throat)

I have never done this before but Mngqobi is my husband—husband, who would have thought I'd be calling him HUSBAND so soon, anyway I crawl under the blankets all the way down to his waist. I forgot he's naked but it's perfect for what I have in mind.

I slowly wrap both my hands around it and stroke “Mhmm” I earn myself a moan from him.

Good start right?

I continue to stroke his shaft slowly until pre-cum glistens on the head, his pre-cum coating my hand in the process.

Back.. forth... back.. forth.. slowly...

It's hardening as I continue to stroke back and forth. perfect.

I sink my head into him

[TOO EXPLICIT, SO TO AVOID REPORTS, THIS PART WILL BE POSTED IN THE GROUP]

”fuck, what the hell was that for” he says panting on top of me.

I smile at his words and push him off me, hai he’s too heavy, don’t forget he gets bulkier each year and I’m still my tiny self.

He makes that low guttural sound and gets off me.

“Good morning dear husband” I lay my head on his chest after kissing him softly

“It’s a good morning indeed” his eyes are closed but he’s smiling lazily, he’s too spend to even open his eyes.

“If this is how Husbands wake up each morning,

then I'd marry you every day" isn't he just a charmer.

"You need to go back to taking your pills, I can't keep using condoms with my wife" I roll my eyes and kiss him one last time before getting off the bed, my body is stretched beyond comprehension that I now don't want to be in bed anymore.

I stopped taking the contraceptive a while back, the reason being that Mngqobi and I only get to make love when he's around which is during Easter, June and December holidays so I don't see a need to continue taking them.

"Coffee" I don't know where do I get the energy from but I'm feeling fresh and revived

It must be morning glory.

Lol...

"No, I want my wife next to me" he manages to open his eyes and sit up straight leaning his upper body against the wall.

There's no headboard here.

I roll my eyes and grab his t-shirt on the floor and a pair of fresh boxers, his boxers and dress up and make coffee for the both us.

•

Joburg's weather isn't very welcoming

it's been raining since I arrived and I thought I'd see the town before going back home but I guess not.

Flip... Home!

I need to call Nomcebo.

I quickly take my phone on top of the table, can you believe it's been off ever since?

The Huawei tone whistle as I switch it on, In a second message comes flooding in like a river.

It's message after message.

'Qhamu I'm sorry please answer your phone' from Lungelo

'i'm worried' him again

'Qhamukile please answer your damn phone' another one

He left a voicemail.

'Please answer your phone dammit, I'm worried sick here. I swear I'm close to reporting you as a missing person'

this voicemail message was left yesterday

Another message

'i'm sorry I didn't mean to shout at you, I'm just worried about you'

There's plenty more but I don't have time to listen to them all.

'Mzala, Lungelo says you missing, isn't he dramatic'

I'm now reading Nomcebo's messages

This one was sent soon after I ran out of Lungelo's place, he must have called her and told her what happened.

'Qhamukile this is not funny, you didn't come home last night. Where are you' this one was sent around seven yesterday morning

'I swear if you don't answer your phone I'm going to call Bhuti'

I sense her desperation as I read the SMS, we are all afraid of Misuzulu, now imagine if she was to report me missing.

Yoh Misuzulu was going to kill her.

Anyway this text manages to give me a mild panic attack.

it was sent yesterday around midday

I move from message to my contact list and search her name.

I hope I'm not too late or else death will be too kind to what Misuzulu will do to me.

"we've been married for a day and already you ignoring me for your phone" Mngqobi teases

He's smiling adoringly at me

I blow him a kiss and press the green button

"Mzala (cousin) where are you" she's panic-stricken which I would be too.

I roll my eyes.

”don't panic please, I'm in Joburg” Mngqobi is just looking at me, sipping on his coffee looking handsome.

He just woke up but lord he looks good, to eat.

Qhamu relax please, he gave you enough to last you the whole year.

”JOBURG!” Nomcebo screams jolting me.

I totally forgot I'm on a call with her, see what my husband does to me.

”Joburg” I hear a voice that I never want to hear in this lifetime or the next for that matter.

Lungelo.

”Nomcebo whatever you do, don't call Bhuti, please. I'll be there tomorrow”

my heart is beating so fast, why the hell is she with Lungelo.

I hear some shuffling before Lungelo's voice bawls through the speakerphone

"Qhamukile what the hell—" I hang up before he can finish and put my phone on silence, I know he's going to call nonstop.

I don't need him to remind me of what happened between us, I feel dirty thinking about it.

"everything fine" Mngqobi

I nod because I don't trust my voice to be affirmative enough.

"Nomcebo was close to calling Misuzulu" I've calmed down now.

"thank god that didn't happen, I still want to enjoy being called husband before I die"

We are as good as dead should any of our brothers find out about our marriage. I can already see Misuzulu killing Mngqobi after he kills me.

”ill pack while you shower”

It's after ten am so we have ample time to get ready for our nine o'clock bus. The sad part is Mngqobi will get off at PMB alone and I'll continue with the road alone because I have to get my clothes back in Durban but I'll join him after a day is so

I can't be in Durban while my husband is in Pietermaritzburg.

”or you can join me” his tone is very naughty so nope.

I'm his wife hell make love to me all our lives.

” I wish but I want to clean up first, you know your friends will be here soon”

He goes to the bathroom complaining that seeing me in his clothes gets him horny.

SMH

I first open the window to emit the sex odour around the room, make up the bed and wash the few dishes from yesterday.

My phone has been vibrating for a while now so before tidying up I answer

”Qhamu hello” I don't recognize the number

”Qhamukile please don't hang up, I'm begging you” I get angry instantly

”Lungelo what do you want”

”I'm sorry for what I did but I'm not going to apologize for loving you”

”what.. Lungelo I'm not going to say this again, stop

calling me. Delete my number from your phone and move on. I never want to see you ever again”

I'm breathing heavily by the time I hang up.

Yes es... I don't want anything that has to do with him.

In fact, let me block and delete his numbers.

Nxa

Que Breathe in and out...

I still call myself Que even though Mngobi despises it. .

Uzoba strong shem.

He comes out of the bathroom as I pack his suitcase, he wrapped a towel around his waist and his upper body has a few droplets from the shower.

The sight alone calms me down, how can one person look so perfect.

I look away when he drops the towel not because I'm afraid of seeing his nakedness but I fear my body will long for him, even though he was inside me all night.

Please forgive me, I'm turning into a sex freak.

He dresses in a blue pair of jeans, white sneakers, and a simple white t-shirt, his hair is cut neatly giving him that roguish look I love so much.

"I'm yours you know" he says smiling

I was starting, wasn't I?

Of course, he is mine.

I roll my eyes and take the agricultural science textbook on top of the chest of drawer and page through it.

I guess he finally changed his course.

"I'm sorry I didn't tell you about that" he comes closer and kisses my temple.

I know Mngqobi like the back of my hand, I knew he was going to change course and there was nothing I could say or do to change his mind

When he sets his mind into doing something, nothing will change him and that's one of the qualities I love about him amongst others.

”it's alright, I knew you were going to change, I support you in everything you do and I respect your choices and the decision you make. I just want you to be happy and if agriculture makes you happy I'm happy too”

”I'm so lucky to have you as a wife” he said the same thing after I told him what I said to Katlego's father that made him change his mind about marrying us.

He told me Katlego's father bluntly refused when he asked, told him he is young and just crazy.

I guess we are young and crazy.

“I love you my wife”

Gilt overclouds my thoughts

How did I nearly sleep with Lungelo whilst I have such a great guy in my life?

That Moment of weakness nearly cost me a life time with someone I love more than anything.

I can only hope the guilt will vanish as time goes on.

”I’m the lucky one” I kiss the corner of his mouth before walking to the bathroom.

Thirty minutes later I feel fresh and I’m wearing the dull dress Mngqobi bought me, don't have much of a choice, do I?

Katlego and Simphiwe walk in after a while with one of the ladies I found sleeping here in the wee hours of Sunday morning.

"I hear you two got married, congratulations" even a deaf man can hear how disingenuous she sounds.

I don't like her.

"thank you" I can't even pretend to muster a smile

"thank you Thozama, I just couldn't wait to wife her"
Mnqobi says and kisses my cheek

I know he knows I'm pissed off. This is the same girl who had the nerve to answer his phone. My phone call?

The nerve.

Thinking about it gets me angry.

"We came to bid farewell, Zulu girl I'm going to miss you" I like Katlego

“Please don’t miss my wife”

“Yoh safa thina the one’s with no wife, Zulu girl can you please do us all a favor and divorce him”

We all laugh at Katlego’s silliness

”I’m also leaving for Mpumalanga tomorrow, I’m going to miss you all so much but one thing I’m not going to miss is cooking for Mngqobi”

The devil must be testing me.

She cooks for Mngqobi?

As in cook for him?

Cook? Food?

My ears must be deceiving me.

”Thozama you cook for all of us” Simphiwe says with a bored tone

I have nothing to say but glare at Mngqobi.

The guys notice that the atmosphere has changed so they don't waste any time with the chit-chats, after saying their goodbyes they leave dragging Thozama along.

I'm trying not to be a hypocrite by chiding at Mnqobi, especially after what I did.

she cooked for all of them right?

Urg

Even so I don't want him eating her food. I saw the way she looks at him, she wants him which is why he must stop eating her food but how do I tell him without sounding like a jealous wife?

We request Uber around past eight to take us to Park station. And a few minutes later we are seated in a city to city bus waiting for it to depart.

We had to take the cheapest bus because between what Mnqobi has in his account and what I have on

me, let's just say we in poverty.

”don't you ever eat her food again” I say.

I lay my head on his shoulder as the bus exits park station.

”of course” he sniffs my hair

I still find that weird

“I love it when you get jealous” he chuckles softly next to my ear

I'm angry and here he is thinking I'm feeding his manly ego.

”I'm serious Mngqobi” he shouldn't dare think I'm joking.

”I know you are Mrs. Ngcobo” he says softly

against my ear and kisses my forehead.

My first time in Joburg has been, interesting for a lack of a better word.

I got married and that's interesting enough.

I'm glad I came here.

I get comfortable on my husband's shoulder as the city light fades behind us.

[06/20, 18:23] Lynne: 40

MNQOBI

Being in Joburg with Qhamu was refreshing and crazy at the same time. I still can't believe we got married, which reminds me Katlego called and mentioned that the marriage certificate is available for collection so that will be the first thing I do when I get back to Joburg in Feb.

I don't know how Qhamu manage to convince

Katkego's father to marry us because he was hell bend that he wasn't going to when I begged, this proofs to show how lucky I am to have her in my life.

Speaking of my wife, I'm getting ready to see her and I hope she has a lunch box with her.

Yeap, whenever we meet she comes barring a lunch box full of delicious food.

SMH

Don't you just love how possessive she is of me because I love it?

I'd complain if her food wasn't so good, the last time I saw her she cooked a mouth-watering seven or is it several colors? Well, you should have seen me, my tongue was out like a dog seeing a bone.

I indulged.

My stomach grumbles at the thought.

people my wife can sure cook, she is actually better than any other woman I know including my own mother.

Shame on me.

She'd kill me if she heard me saying this. My mother's dumbling is still the best though.

It's been three weeks since Qhamu and I came back and I miss the time we spent together in Joburg because we were so free but it is what it is.

We decided not to tell our respective families about our marriage, telling them would be like hanging ourselves with a rope so no we are not telling anyone, we both still wish to be alive for long.

I don't even want to imagine what Misuzulu will do to me because eventually, we will have to tell them preferably after I pay lobola (dowry) and the traditional wedding but for now, that's still a pipeline dream not with all the fighting happening.

Sighs

The dreams

Sighs

These dreams are the main reason I'm meeting up

with Qhamu today.

They are back and this time it's worse than before, sometimes it feels like I'm hearing those two old men when I'm awake.

I can't take this anymore.

I'm going to suggest to Qhamu that we tell our brothers, I know they won't believe us but I'm desperate for a good night's sleep so we don't have much of a choice but tell, hopefully, they will have a solution.

"ma can I borrow your car" Zwelethu left with mine.

He's dating now so he's always preoccupied with his new girlfriend.

I'm happy for him, he is 28 so I'm guessing he's trying to find something serious.

"No I'm working the night shift"

It's after four so I should be back in time for her to make it for her six to six shifts.

The joys of being a nurse.

"I'll be back before you leave" I give her a smile only reserved for her

"no Mngqobi it's already late and we both know you won't come back any time soon, not when you going to see Qhamu" my smile fades and surprise engulfs my face.

How does she know I'm going to see her?

"ah my boy you might fool your brothers into thinking you guys are not together anymore but not me. take a taxi" she says and stands up from her seat and leaves me with my jaw on the floor.

I can't wait for Manqoba or Zwelethu to come back cause I don't know what time they will be back with the cars and I also don't want to see Qhamu late, she's been complaining about headaches lately so I no choice but use a taxi.

Smagele went to visit his maternal grandmother so we have no one to take care of while mom is at work.

I flag a Zola Budd and get in

I haven't been a taxi in a while so I forgot how uncomfortable it is.

”hey” a lady next to me touches my hand forcing me to remove my headsets

“Mnqobi” she says smiling ear to ear

“Yes..” I’m startled that she knows my name and I have never seen her before.

”it’s been so long” she says excitedly

I remain quiet and gaze at her unfazed, sometimes I can just be hostile for no reason I guess it's my nature.

”you don't remember me, do you”

am I supposed to?

”I'm Neli—Nelisiwe, we meet two years ago at that chisa nyama”

Nelisiwe, Nelisiwe, Nelisiwe... nope.

Her name doesn't ring a bell.

”oh God, I can't believe you don't remember me after we—“ she looks around to see if there’s anymore

looking at her and leans closer to me

“Slept together” she whispered

Is that supposed to make me remember her?

“Oh”

she’s one of many who fell for my charm and looks
and I won’t apologize for not remembering her.

“Yeah I’m not like that you know—“ I raise an
eyebrow and look at her

“Like Sleep with a guy on a first day”

I don’t know why is she telling me all this, it’s not
like I care.

“Oh”

“Yeah, I’m so glad we meet I tried calling you so
many times but you never answered”

When is this taxi reaching Mvubukazi?

I don’t have anything to say so I shut my mouth as
she continues to ramble on until I have to get off.

“Oh delete my numbers” I tell her coldly before

getting off.

My wife is already waiting for me with a small lunch bag in her hands.

Looks like I'm having her food for supper.

She smiles feebly when she sees me.

“Hey baby” I peck her lips

“Is it the headaches again” I have never seen Qhamu looking this horrible.

Her face looks dull and her hair is a mess.

These headaches are seriously killing my wife.

“You need to go see a doctor” I raise my hand to touch her forehead and her temperature is hot.

“I’ll be fine, I think my body is dehydrated so I’ve been drinking lots of water”

“But if it persists you promise to see the doctor”

“Yes” she wraps her hand around the crook of my arm and we walk towards the tree.

I first plug out a yarrow flower and plug it on her

hair. I don't know why do I do this but I seem to enjoy it and she loves it.

She smiles and sits on the green grass under the shade provided by our favorite tree.

Once I'm seated, leaning my back on the tree trunk she lays her head on my lap.

Shame, my wife is seriously not feeling well.

"So my dreams have gotten worse and I think it's time we tell our families about this" I'm playing with her hair which calms her down

"do you think that's a good idea"

no

"yes it is, they might be able to help us. Look at yourself you're drained from lack of sleep my love, we have to tell them"

she calls me every night crying that when she closes her eyes all she sees are the two old men, telling her the same thing over and over.

I've tried chasing them away in my dreams but that hasn't been successful.

”As long as we tell them together”

How the hell are we going to do that?

It's evident that these headaches are affecting her level of thinking capacity.

”How will we do that, don't forget these people can't stand each other”

I ate before I came here but the whiff coming from the lunch bag is enough to get my stomach grumbling, I waste no time and open the lunch box.

Dumpling and stew.

My favorite.

”I don't know, my brothers will all be home Sunday morning. It's tradition so that's the only time you'll find them all together. Please try and convince your brothers to come just make sure they are there before eleven”

Qhamu forgets I don't perform miracles

How will I get my brothers to agree to this?

”Makhosini listens to you so convince him”

” I’ll talk to him” I say taking a bite

I don't want to stress her but my brothers will never agree to this.

”Mmmmh” I moan

It's like a rail of sunshine is walking on my tongue, this is the meal I've ever had in my entire life.

I take back what I said about my mother’s dumbling, my wife’s cooking is simply the best.

”Mmmh baby this is so good” I take a bite again

”its just dumbling love”

”thee best dumbling I've ever eaten” she rolls her eyes

”Mmmh” I can't help moan

”baby stop moaning” she says flushed

We haven't made love ever since we came back and I miss being in her just as much as she misses feeling me inside her.

”Why, getting turned on” I say teasingly wiggling my eyebrows

”Mapholoba just eat your love portion and leave me alone”

I laugh.

”I’m loving this love portion” I peck her lips and finish my food before we part ways.

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QHAMU

”the storm is here, the storm is here, the storm is here” those four words replays in my head like an earworm.

I’m awake and yet those old men's voice echoes in my head like I’m dreaming.

I look myself in the mirror, my eyes are strained, dry and itchy from lack of sleep, the way they are so red I think I have burst blood vessels and the fact that I have a headache that wont to away makes

everything ten times worse.

It's Sunday morning and as per tradition my brothers are gathered in the kitchen have breakfast but I'm in my bedroom feeling the the world has just crumbled on my feet. I'm not sure who cook breakfast today because I didn't but a whiff of eggs coming from the kitchen tells me they managed without me.

I'm sure it's Mondli, he's the only one capable of this, I doubt the others are able to even boil water.

SHM

Let me go join them and see if the kitchen is not burning down as yet.

Mngobi spoke to Makhosini but he refused, which doesn't come as a surprise I wasn't expecting him to agree anyway.

“The storm is here”

My phone rings just as I try to fasten my coily hair into submission.

It's Mngqobi

”hey”

”I’m coming with Makhosini, Zwelethu is only coming because he said he doesn't want to miss it when Misuzulu kills me and you know Langa he is Makhosini’s shadows so he's coming along”

”what—“ he can’t just spring this up in me now

“I’m sorry baby but we on our way, tell my brother-in-law—“ he lets out a chuckle

I don’t know how does he find this amusing

“—that we will be there in an hour” he says and hangs up

Mngqobi can’t do this... not now

I quickly joking my brothers in the kitchen, like I said Mondli is the one laboring on the stove while the rest of my brothers are sitting and watching him

“Hey Ntonto how are you feeling” Nqaba is the first one to see me

“I’m good, Bhuti let me help you with that” I take over from Mondli and continue with breakfast.

By the time i finish with preparing everything I only have forty minutes to inform my brothers about the Ngcobo’s surprise visit.

We all sit down and eat, I’m not a fan of cheese but today I seem to enjoy it so I feast away.

By the time we finish eating I have twenty minutes left...

I swallow the lump on my throat and look at all my brothers, I can’t do this.

“Nqaba will wash the dishes” Misuzulu says and walk to the lounge area.

Nqaba is left complaining alone as we all follow our big brother.

It has always been like this ever since we where young, Misuzulu leads and we follow behind his steps so nothing has changed.

“Bhuti—“ cat caught my tongue

I’m playing with my hands looking down, how do I tell my brothers that their arch enemy is coming to their home.

“Ntonto come sit next to you favorite brother and tell me what’s wrong” I roll my eyes inwardly and move to sit next to Gats ha “my favorite brother”

“Uh—bh—“ a knock interrupts me

“Heee it’s either you have a death wish or you just plain stupid” We all hear Nqaba’s deep voice shouting from the kitchen

My brothers all stand to their feet and follow his voice but I remain clued to my chair.

“What’s going on here” Gcina

“We come in peace” I hear Makhosini raspy deep voice

“Mapholoba you are disrespecting my home, how can you enter my gate uninvited” Misuzulu

I’m not sure if he’s angry or just surprised

“I’ll let you kill my young brother once we hear what he and maShenge have to tell us” Makhosini says jokingly.

I can imagine how my confused brothers are.

”I must first apologise for coming unannounced Mngqobi and Qhamu seem to have a pressing matter that needs to be discussed” Makhosini

I guess Misuzulu allowed them to enter because they all stroll in, my brothers first and the Ngcobo brothers following behind them.

”Qhamukile I hear there's something you and this boy want to discuss with us”

This boy?

That's my husband you know?

Misuzulu’s voice is I don't know ridiculing id say, he gives me 'you're in trouble' look before he sits opposite me after offering the rest of the Ngcobo brothers seats

” I first want to apologize for coming unannounced but Qhamu and I rather have something important

to discuss with you” Mngqobi says respectfully

”Are you pregnant Qhamukile” can Nqaba shut up

”i swear I'm going to kill you Mngqobi” he says
before Misuzulu shuts him up with just a grimace

”I'm not pregnant bhuti”

”is she still a virgin nje” can Langa shut his pie hole.

Langa we didn't come here for that, Mngqobi
continue” Makhosi half shouts and Langa, his voice
always authoritative.

”Qhamu and I have been having weird dreams” my
husbands starts

”dreams, we came here to hear about your dreams.”
does anyone have a sellotape, I seriously need to
shut Nqaba up.

”he’s telling the truth—“ Mngqobi and I begin to tell
them about the two old men. We leave out the part
where Thobile mentioned a baby being an angel, it’s
bad enough Nqaba thinks I’m pregnant.

Everyone is shocked, including Mngqobi when I start
talking about how I was tusked to help bhuti

Makhosini not cross the river.

“When they they start” Makhosini looks concerned
to say the least

“Just before a friend of mine died” I doubt he knows
Thobile

“And you only telling us now” Misuzulu sounds
angry so I look down

I don't know how to respond to that.

“Don't tell me you believe them, don't see you guys
see this is some kind of plot for us to let them date”
Langa says angrily

Gcina clicks his tongue and leave.

This was expected.

Mnqobi and were just grasping at straws here. We
knew they won't believe us.

“Calm down Langa, maShenge do you know these
men”

“No we don't, which is why we confused. Why us,
why choose to ghost us. Look at Qhamu Bhuti she's

a mess, she hasn't been sleeping in weeks and neither have I. We didn't have a choice but tell you as our elders, we need your help”

Who would have thought Mngqobi and I would be seated in one room talking to our brother like this.

Makhosini and Misuzulu pass looks that I only notice before Misuzulu clears his throat

“Makhosini and I will talk about this and we shall meet again to discuss it further and see what solutions we can come up with”

At least this was not a waste after all.

“You believe them, God I can't believe you this stupid—“

“Langa If you dare call Misuzulu and I stupid again, I swear I'll forget you're my brother” Makhosini doesn't shout but he means every word

“This is ridiculous” Langa storms out angrily

Makhosini believes us and that's all that's important, Gcina and Langa can go jump in the nearest river for all I care.

“Makhosini let’s talk” Makhosini follows my brother pushing his wheelchair out.

“So you two are having dreams about ghost now, I wonder what’s next” Gatsha shakes his head chuckling and walks out.

“Mapholoba do you have cigarettes on you, mine are finished” I roll my eyes.

“Hai Nqaba then buy your own” my husband complains

“Quit being a baby, let’s go. I need a smoke”

Mnqobi winks at me before walking out with my brother.

Nqaba finds joy in being bossy to Mnqobi, I hear he slapped him when I was in hospital.

Who does that?

Only Nqaba right?

Heee do you still remember I got kidnapped by those hooligans?

It feels like it was a long time ago.

After a few minutes the two older brothers come back and tell us that Mngobi and his brothers will see a tradition healer for clearer meaning to these weird dreams and they leave peacefully.

I'm happy we got to sit down and talk without fighting about family history or businesses.

I feel a little hopeful.

Could this be new beginnings?

[06/20, 18:24] Lynne: 41

MNQOBI

"Yaz bafo I fucked up, imagine, now I'll be stuck with her for life"

He's seriously panicking

"Don't laugh, this is serious. How do I tell ma"

imagine a whole 28-year-old man scared of his mother

I'm glimpsing at him through a mirror, his head hangs low. The always mischievous Zwelethu not insight and is replaced with the worried Zwelethu.

It's quite amusing seeing him like this if you ask me.

I laugh while Shaking my head.

"I doubt she'll be angry, but be ready to start packing. you know her, she will chase you away" I doubt he's ready to be on his own but he should have worn a condom.

"angithi if you're old enough to make babies then you're old enough to have your own house as well, so please nje."

I imitate my mother

We've heard that line too many times but again my bothers are way too old to be living at home.

It's time they come out.

”ah bafo please don't remind me, now ill have to get my own place. Who's going to cook for me”

I laugh and continue to brush my fade.

Once I'm done we both walk out of my bedroom

It's after six in the morning and I'm preparing for the journey ahead.

We had no choice but tell maNgidi about the dreams.

She first gave me an earful about not trusting her but after endless apologies she finally forgave me and now she's coming with us to the seer.

”Ma I'm ready” I tell her once I'm inside the main house

”must I tell her when we come back” Zwelethu whispers

”hey wena Zwelethu stop gossiping, let's go boys”

Makhosini is already outside waiting so Zwelethu,

ma and I joint him and we all get in the car.

I'm on the passenger seat while Zwelethu drives.

Ma is in the back with Makhosini.

The drive to Mpophemeni is long because ma keeps shouting at Zwelethu when he speeds so it takes us a whole two hours to arrive.

The last time I was here was when we buried the remains of my father which feels like it was just yesterday, I know he resting well so that thought gives me peace but the temperature is still as hot as that day.

We travel along a gravel road with huge dongas before we park outside the big yard filled with huts.

Makhosini announces our arrival and shortly thereafter a young boy emerges from one of the huts.

"sanbonani" he greets respectfully

He's inside the yard and we are outside the gate.

”hey young man, we came to see bab’Nzama”

I hear he is very powerful so I'm hoping he will have answers for us.

”he said I must ask why was she left behind”

”left behind—Who, young man”

my mother is a little confused, well, we only told her about my dreams and not that Qhamu is affected too.

”I’ll go ask him” he runs off before we could ask any further questions

”What is he talking about”

we all shrug

The young boy comes running this time

“He said I should tell you he won’t allow you in without her”

Don’t tell me he’s talking about Qhamu, if so, how the hell are we going to get her. She’s in Mvubukazi, which is two hours away.

“We traveled a long way and we won't be able to go

back without seeing him, Can I at least talk to him, please”

Makhosini knows the “she” referred to is Qhamu.

The boy shrugs nonchalantly

“Let me go ask him” off he runs again

I can’t imagine what he must feel like running back and forth in this scorching sun, mind you it's a huge yard.

He comes running back again

“He said I should not open until you get her”

“What’s going on, who is he talking about. Mngobi, Zwelethu have you gotten some girl pregnant”

Ok!

Someone balance me real quick, how does any of this have anything to do with “her” being pregnant?

Isn’t my mother jumping to conclusions?

“Uh—how does he know that—ma I swear..”

“I’m sure He’s talking about Qhamukile, she’s been

having the same dreams but her brothers refused for her to come along” Makhosini rescues the stuttering Zwelethu

”and I'm only hearing about this now” can my mother relax or else she's going to raise her high blood pressure

Makhosini takes out his phone and presses it a few times before putting it on his ear

”Buthelezi we are here but the seer doesn't want to let us in without MaShenge”

I didn't know he had Misuzulu's numbers.

I'm not sure what Misuzulu's response is but they exchange harsh words for quite sometime before my brother hangs up.

”Send your girlfriend the location” he says harshly and push himself back to the car

I don't understand my brother at times, so now Qhamu is no longer MaShenge but my girlfriend?

I shake my head when he has his back turned against me and send the location.

See why Qhamu and I need to keep our marriage a secret?

-

QHAMU

”Qhamukile vuka (wake up)”

What the hell

Misuzulu is shouting shaking me vigorously

I rub my eyes and look at him annoyed.

Like seriously?

I haven’t gotten any proper sleep in weeks and when I finally do get to sleep peacefully without nightmare I get woken up so rudely.

”get ready, we leaving in five minutes” he says already walking out the door

Ugh, Misuzulu is so annoy...

let me hold my tongue, I may be annoyed but he's still my older brother and he raised me well.

'Lord, please grant me enough patience to deal with my grumpy brother' I pray silently instead before getting off the bed.

The first thing I do is rinse my mouth and wash my face.

It takes me just over thirty minutes to finish bathing and fastening my hair, much to my brother's irritation.

Eye roll.

They can't seriously expect me to get ready in five minutes.

Misuzulu and Gatscha are waiting impatiently outside next to the car when I walk out.

"where are we going" I'm my asking now

"check your phone your lover send you a location"

The sarcasm is too rife so I ignore him and check Mngobi Whats App.

Are we going to Mpophomeni.?

I last spoke to Mngqobi the previous night when he mentioned he and his brothers will travel there to see the seer today.

So I'm guessing they are there to what am I going to do there?

I follow behind my brothers and get in the car.

The ambiance is just sour as Gatsha takes a turn onto the highway. I don't know why was I rushed because he's driving so slow, on purpose.

Let me rather nap.

•

I abruptly wake up after three hours when the car enters the untarred roads of Mpophemeni. it's extremely hot I love it here, the green terrain is just beautiful plus the air is fresh, I feel at peace.

”Good you’re awake”

I roll my eyes inwardly at Gatsha, of course, I had to wake up with the way he's driving.

I first see my husband leaning on the car wearing a cap, he looks good to eat.

MaNgidi steps out of the car as soon as we park beside them.

”good afternoon” Misuzulu greets her respectfully
I can’t help smile at Mnqobi.

”hello how are you”

she greets back

Once the greeting has been exchanged Zwelethu helps Makhosini out the car and he announces our arrival

A young boy around the age of nine to ten comes out of one of the huts and opens the gate for us.

It's a long walk to the huts but we all stroll in and enter one of the huts

We sit for close to thirty minutes before an old man waltz in holding a walking cane.

“Ah you're finally here” he says shaking the big brother's hands

No, you're finally here!

Imagine, we had to wait thirty minutes for him and he says we finally here.

“you must forgive me old age of catching up with me, I'm no longer as fit I was that's why I sent my great-grandson”

he instructs the boy to get us water because we were supposedly standing outside for a while.

”yes baba we were waiting for over five hours but we are here now” Makhosini

”yes mfana wam (my boy)—“

I have never heard anyone call Makhosini my boy but it’s fun to watch him growling from the inside

“I’ve been waiting for you for a very long time now” the old man says walking out this feels more like a casual visit more than anything

“You two follow me” he points at Mngqobi and me with his cane.

We follow behind him measuring his sluggish pace into another hut.

We are instructed to take off our shoes and sit on the woven grass mat.

“My children I will not waste your time, I know how younger-stars are always occupied with meaningless things” he says leisurely.

You can imagine how long it takes him to finally sit on the floor.

“So Mngobiwesizwe and Qhamukile—“

How does he know my name?

I haven't introduced myself as yet.

“When I look at both of you I see nothing but death”

Death?

My heart rate quickness very fast at the thought of Mngobi dying

“Death, am I going to die, is Qhamu going to die.

Please don't tell me she's going to die. I can accept dying but she can't die. How do we stop it—“

Mngobi panics until he's stopped by the old man when he raises his hand

“Calm down. I see death but none of you is going to die. Your ancestors are blocking me from seeing beyond that”

I hear Mngqobi release a sigh of relief

“How do we stop death” only God can stop it but I can’t help it.

A lot of blood has been spilled already.

“Your destiny has been written way before I was even born and I can’t do anything to change that and neither can you, so all you have to do is embrace it”

I squeal inwardly, he seriously can’t be telling us to embrace death

“Don’t despair, my children, a life lost means a rebirth of another. Everything happens for a reason so hold on to each other and continue to love one another as you do—“

he stops to cough a few times

“I’m coming down with fever” he takes out a handkerchief inside his pocket and wipes his nose

I wouldn’t be surprised if we spend the whole day here, this old man is unhurried but I’m shaking in my boots.

Who's going to die?

I’m sure it’s one of us.

He keeps talking about ancestors, ain’t they suppose to protect us, if so, why would they allow one of us to die?

“So my children these nightmares, like you call them are not nightmares, it’s just your great grandfathers communicating with you”

“Grandfathers” Mngobi says incredulously

“Yes, your grandfathers—“

He coughs again

“They are very powerful and will only show me what they want me to tell you—“

Coughs again

“The storm—“

I swear I'm close to losing my mind with this storm nonsense

Could the storm be the death of one of us?

“Yes Mkhulu the storm, that's all they say now in our dreams. They told us to be strong and that the storm is here but what storm are they talking about”

I'm getting impatient with him running around the bush

“Like I said your ancestors only show me what they want me to see but you will see what they are talking about really soon. I wanted both of you here to tell you to be strong when life throws you hurdles.

It's going to get really tough. You two are the only people who are going to stop all this nonsense going on and I trust that you will end it"

Thank god he said all that without coughing but what does he mean

"How do we stop this feud baba this is beyond us"
Mnqobi

He throws his hands in the air lazily

"Yes how do we stop it, one of us is going to die because of this feud please tell us how do we stop it from happening" I ask

"You two possess so much power pity you haven't realized it but worry not my children your ancestors will guide you through it all"

He stands up slowly from the mat leaving Mnqobi and I still wondering

"Mnqobiwesizwe come help me before I break my bones"

God, old people are exhausting.

Mnqobi helps him stand up straight and he pats him on the shoulder

“Tell her the truth, she can handle it. Trust her, she’s all you’ll need just like she’ll need you”

I see Mnqobi’s Adam’s apple move up and down as he swallows nothing

“What are talking about Mkhulu” I too stand on my feet

“He will tell you but don’t get angry at him. It was the only way to get close to you” he takes his cane and begins walking out

Wait... are we done here?

Is he not supposed to take out his bones and make us blow inside a bag like other traditional healers out there?

“Mkhulu are we done, ain’t you suppose to take out your bones or something”

My voice comes out hard involuntarily.

I was roughly woken up from my peaceful sleep for such?

“Has she always been this feisty or is it the little one” he’s looking at Mngobi totally ignoring me

Mngobi chuckles softly before he answers

“She’s always been like this” He finishes off with a nonchalant shrug

“Yes, my daughter we are done”

Patience Qhamu Patience

“You said little one, who are you talking about” I ask

calmer

Remember I told you my brothers raised me right which means I can't shout at my elders.

“The answers you want are right in each other's eyes so I'm sorry I could not be much help, blame your ancestors but you're welcomed to seek for answers else which will be a waste of money”

we are walking behind him as he says all this

“Oh congratulations on your marriage and the little—“

he coughs so much that he starts coughing out blood.

Lord.

Mnqobi runs to the main house and gets him a glass of water

How the hell did he know about my marriage to Mnqobi?

Everyone else has come out to check on him, MaNgidi is a nurse so she helps him out. Once he's calm we help him back into the hut where the rest of the family was seating

"I'm sorry you wasted your time by coming here but like I told these two everything will be revealed soon and it will all be over"

"What's going on baba" MaNgidi asks

"These two are the answer to everything"

Everyone turn their eyes to look at Mnqobi and me to which we both shrug

He literally told us nothing. I

Coming was a total waste of time if you ask me.

"Go well" this old man has totally amazed me

Can you believe he left us standing here?

We all walk out angrily.

I hear Makhosini and Misuzulu asking Mngqobi what happened.

I'm too hungry and tired to even care at this point.

The only thing I care about is getting some food and good sleep.

'I need to see you later' I SMS Mngqobi

He has some explaining to do.

I can't help think about death.

I hope and pray none of my brothers die, ins till need them all but i'd also hate for Mngqobi to lose any of his brothers too.

I guess I now have my answer, death is the storm.

[06/20, 18:25] Lynne: 42

QHAMU

The following day...

The trip to the seer left me even more confused, I had never been to a traditional hearler before so I don't know how they work but that old man has to be the most confusing seer out there.

The first thing I did when we got home was to gather all my brothers and recite what the seer said, leaving out the “little one” part. It's enough that Langa was already asking about my virginity like that's his business so you can imagine what my brothers would've done to me had I mentioned the baby part.

I told them about the death that has umbrellaed us. I'm not going to lie and say I'm not worried, I'm shaking in my boots.

There has been too much innocent blood spilled already and I don't think I can bear to bury any of my brothers, I had to bury my father and that's enough.

My brothers mean the world to me and it pains me to know one of them can die at any time.

Nqaba is the only one who finds all this amusing

and he didn't seize the opportunity to mention that the seer is just hoax but how do I believe he's a scam if he didn't take any money from us.

This is all so confusing and not only confusing to me but to the rest of my brothers and as you can imagine they are now neurotic thinking the Ngcobo's are planning an attack. I'm subjected now to their harboring, I can't even blink without one of them guarding me. I love being around my brothers but not when I feel like I am in Robben Island.

Mnqobi and I briefly discussed what the seer told us over the phone yesterday and we planned on meeting today to discuss it further seeing that we could not meet last night, like I said I'm back to being prisoner Qhamu with guards everywhere.

My brothers are just crazy, the Ngcobo's will never hurt me.

I know this, but I guess this pending death has everyone jumpy and not only I am worried about death but the seer mentioned a "little one".

Sighs

I'm not stupid nor am I going to be oblivious to the fact that he spoke of a child but whose child. I know I'm not pregnant, I last had sex with Mngqobi a couple of weeks back but we always use protection I mean always.

I swear if Mngqobi impregnated some girl out there I'm going to kill him. I can't even begin imagining being a stepmother to my husband firstborn child, God death will be too easy to what I'll do to him.

Let me not jump into conclusions I'll have to hear what he says when I see him later today.

I need to know what the seer was talking about, I need to know this secret he was talking about.

Oh God, what if Mngqobi really has a child that's he's keeping a secret.

Breathe Que breathe...

"Little one...death... a life lost means rebirth of another... a secret" lord I'm going crazy trying to piece together what that old man said.

I'm sure you're as confused as I am.

Well, I'm done trying to figure out what each piece of information means for now.

I scribe down the last few things I'll need on my Christmas shopping, we just a week away from Christmas and I'm planning on cooking a feast for my family, with everything that's been going on we need something jolly to look forward to and what better day than Christmas day.

My family is not traditional and no doubt they don't believe in God, let alone the birth of Jesus but I'm hoping good food will bring us closer together. This reminds me I need to spend more time with Gcina, he's been detached for some odd reason and I miss him. He's the only one I relate to when it comes to teenage stuff, remember we are just months apart besides that I miss my brother.

Nqaba is watching overseas soccer repeats if you must know I know nothing about soccer.

No sport interest me as you know, I'm so happy I'm done with school so I won't be forced to participate in any sport anymore.

I'm happy it's Nqaba guarding me today, he's easily manipulated, unlike Mondli.

“My favorite brother”

I give him my most innocent smile

He tells me my eyes shine every time I smile at him.

“I knew I'm your favorite”

he beams with happiness

I told you he's an easy target.

“Don't tell the rest, we don't want to make them angry”

“My lips are sealed” I smile and sit nearer to him

“Bhuti you know I’m planning to cook good food for Christmas plus I’ll make mutton stew too—“ that’s his favorite

“But I’m in need of a lift to the mall”

I’m meeting Mnqobi there and what better way than making Christmas shopping an excuse to leave the house.

“Ah Qhamu you know how busy it is there”

I inwardly roll my eyes, I forgot he likes to be begged first

“I Know bhuti, you don’t have to stay with me. I’ll call you when I’m done please, remember I’ll be cooking mutton stew and we don’t have mutton”

“But bhuti said I shouldn’t let you off my side”

Misuzulu and his ridiculous rules

“Okay, then Nqaba I guess we won’t have lunch for Christmas like other families. I wanted to cook for my brothers, have a normal Christmas like other families but I guess not”

I sulk

“Okay Qhamu you don’t have to cry just try and understand that we trying to protect you here”

“What could the Ngcobo’s probably do to me, a mall is crowded Bhuti and I doubt if they want to kill me they would do it in a public place”

“Qhamukile—“

“Go with me then—“

he hates malls so I doubt he'll agree

“Fine, let's go”

Eish, I shot myself in the foot there.

“What—let's go”

I'm seriously shocked that he agreed that easily.

I stand up and take my sling bag and join him.

Gatsha gave me money to get everything I'll need.

Nqaba drives slowly listen to his boring songs if it was a regular day I'd sing along with him but he bored me so I'm seating in the back sulking. He has never liked malls in his entire life but on the day I meet with Mngqobi he decides to come with me.

I just needed his transportation that's it.

Urg Nqaba can be unpredictable—unless, why didn't I think of this.

“Oh Bhuti Lucas and Zanele will be joining us, they have some shopping to do as well”

He chokes on his own saliva.

I inwardly laugh.

“Are you ok”

I can't help let out a slight chuckle

“Yes, you mean Lucas, Lucas. That gay friend of yours”

I nod because he's looking at me through the rearview mirror

“Hai, why didn't you tell me this earlier, that one think I'm his I mean her—urg What do you address him as. I'm not homophobic or anything but he needs to stay the hell away from me”

I'm in stitches

“I'm serious Qhamu, I have girlfriends, I like girls, I love vagi—you know what I mean just Make it clear to him that I'm straight”

I have never seen him squeal like this before but I'm loving every minute of it.

“I told him you straight but he said he'll bend you”

I say with a nonchalant shrug

Lucas actually did say that.

“I'm being serious here Qhamu that friend of yours needs to stay the hell away from me”

I laugh at him, you'd laugh too if Nqaba was your brother.

“You know what I'm just dropping you off, I don't

even want him to even see a glimpse of my shadow.
You'll let me know when you done"

mission accomplished

I told you he'd fall into my trap.

Lucas is miles away traveling to PE with his family
but a mention of his name managed to scare Nqaba
off.

I get off the car once he stops close to the entrance

"I'll call you when I'm done. Bye"

He speeds away without responding.

I want to laugh but I also don't want to look like a
lunatic laughing alone so I go inside the mall.

Mnqobi is waiting at the food court.

I'm hungry myself so I opt for KFC, it's my favorite.

“So are you going to tell me what the seer was talking about”

I ask once we seated, eating.

“Not here Qhamu, we need privacy to discuss that”
oh so there is a secret he’s keeping from me.

“Mnqobi In case you haven’t noticed this is as private as we can be, my brother are hell bend making sure I stay away from all of you so this is the only privacy we will know going forward”

He told me his family is also neurotic that my brothers will attack so they are always looking over their shoulders just like my brothers.

“Mnqobi have you impregnated some hoe”

“What—“ He’s truly baffled

“The little one the seer was talking about” I remind him

“Qhamukile what do you take me for, you’re my wife and the only person I’m getting pregnant is you. I don’t know what the seer is talking about but he certainly wasn’t talking about a non-existent child I have out there” he says calmly

“Then what was he talking about” he shrugs

“Are you pregnant”

“No!” How can he even think of such

“We’ve been using protection remember so I can’t possibly be pregnant” his Adam apple moves up and down when he swallows, he looks kind of nervous.

“Mngobi what’s going on, why are you nervous”

“I’m not” he gulps down his drink.

I continue to take a bite on my chicken and crew

“Eeeew” I spit out on the napkin

“Does this chicken taste funny” I feel like vomiting, the unpleasant piece I’ve just bitten messed up my taste buds

“Mine tastes fine”

I take a bite at his and it tastes the same. It’s either his taste buds are dead or something is wrong with me.

“Anyway what else do you have to tell me, the seer

said you need to trust me so what are you hiding from me”

“Can we not talk about this now, this is really not a good place”

“Mnqobi just tell me already”

He takes a deep breath wiping his hands with a saviet. I seriously can't believe he finished that rotten chicken.

I have to complain to the manager before leaving this place.

“Mnqobi I swear if you are cheating on me I'm going to kill you” he rolls his eyes and takes my hands in his

“You seriously need to stop with these outrageous scenarios, I'm not cheating on you” he kisses both

my hands

“Then what’s going on”

“Promise that you won’t get angry or make a scene”
I snatch my hands away from his

When someone starts with those kinds of words
just know you will get angry and make a scene.

“Mnqobi I’m not making any promises without
mnkwjnb anything”

He sighs deeply

“Baby I can't tell you now, especially here” I swear
I’m going to strangle Mnqobi

“Mnqobi I’m your wife so I deserve to know, please
baby. Tell me.” I won’t get any chance to be with

Mnqobi in private my brother makes sure of that.

“Okay fine I’ll tell you even though I still think this is not the right time” I roll my eyes

“Remember when we first meet”

How can I forget, he nearly killed me.

I nod

“Well that was not the first time I saw you, I had been stalking you for—“

“Stalking me” I say incredulously

“Shh keep your voice down”

he huffs running his hands over his face

I’m looking at him with my eyes all out waiting for him to continue

“Why were you stalking me, did you like me that much” I half laugh

“No that’s not it baby, I had a task to complete”

“Task,” I ask confused

What the hell is he talking about

“I’m going to stop if you keep disturbing me”

I shut my mouth and let him continue

“My brothers and I believed your brothers killed my father. This was before we knew what really happened to him but anyway we wanted to avenge him so we started formulating a plan to get back at your brothers. I was tasked to make you fall in love with me then I’d drop you once you were deeply in love and I’d convince you to take your life. We know

you're your brothers weakness and we wanted to use you to get to them”

What—

“But baby I fell in love with you, I was the one that fell deeply in love long before you fall for me. I love how feisty you were when I scared you that day. I remember you were listening to that house song by destruction boys”

where my earphones that loud

”you were be rude to me but that didn't stop me. I was so relentless in my pursuit, you being rude to me made me want you even more. Do you remember you made me take a bus with you each day until you agreed to be mine? I miss those days.”

he lets out a soft chuckle

”I fell in love with you the first day you spoke to me as rude as you were I fell for you but I was in denial.

I knew I was doomed when you got angry when you saw me chilling with Nokhaya and Nontombi you literally stomped to my direction with your nose flaring in anger and that day I knew I had fallen deeply in love with you so I just couldn't hurt you like that. My brothers forced me to stay away from you once they learned I was in love with you, Manqoba was supposed to take my place and pretend to be me but you could differentiate us. Do you have any idea how happy I was when he came home and told them that you knew who he was? Baby, i'm so sorry but u had to tell you. I don't want to be the reason for your pain my love”

Tears are streaming down my face when he finishes

I can't believe his intentions were this vile, how do I even know he's not lying to me right now?

“I'm so sorry baby, I didn't mean to hurt you”

”how do I trust that you are sorry after telling all

that”

I manage to say through my tears

Our voices are not raised in fact we are soft spoken which I find surprising after the bomb he just dropped on me.

”believe me baby, you know me. I'm your husband”

I want to believe him so desperately

“Well you succeeded in making me fall for you” I say wiping my tears with the back of my hand.

“I'm sorry Qhamukile, this might have been a plan to get back at your family at first but baby I love you more than anything”

“I don't believe anything you saying right now. Is marrying me part of the plan too. What were you guys planning for you to marry me then divorce

me—you say you love me but how can you love someone you despised, someone you used as your pawn to avenge someone you called a father whom you loved.”

“Qhamukile I backed down from the plan once I fell in love with you, I even told you about this when you were in hospital”

He shouldn't dare say he told me about all this because I'd remember

“I had just been found Mngqobi, I was kidnapped because I sneaked out for you, Mngqobiwesizwe. In case you don't know I was heavily sedated with medication you can't possibly think I heard everything you said that day not that it matters now. You accomplished your mission”

“Qhamukile I know, it was my fault you got kidnapped and guilt will forever eat me up inside

and I'm sorry you went through all that because of me but baby, that doesn't mean I don't love you. I love you so much”

“I don't believe you. I don't believe anything you have to say that's going to make me think you love me. All this has been a plan from the beginning. My brothers were right about you all, the Ngcobo's are nothing but enemies to us. I can't believe I disrespected my brother because of you, I went against everything I believed in for you but to you, all this was a plot for revenge. God I can't believe I've been this naive”

my tears have stopped falling, hatred overclouds my heart.

“Qhamu, Baby, I swear—“

“Don't you dare swear anything to me”

“I love you dammit” he shouts forcing everyone to turn their heads in our direction

“I love you, our brother tried to separate us but never succeeded, why do you think that is, we are meant to be even the seer said that”

That seer is a hoax just like Nqaba said

“don't tell me anything said by that crook, I wonder how much did you have to pay him to get him to say all that rubbish”

To say I'm angry would be an understatement I'm livid.

“I swear we didn't buy him. Qhamu, I fought my brothers to be with you and I'm not letting this get in our way”

“And I fought my brothers thinking I'm fighting for

our love but clearly I was mistaken, you don't love" I chuckle sarcastically

"tell me, do you even have a slightest feeling for me or this was just revenge for you"

"I love you and that's that, I don't know how many times have I proven that. Your brothers even kidnapped Sma just to make me stay away from you but I didn't, they bumped him with a car but I still stayed. I chose you every time and I'll forever choose you"

his eyes are filled with tears, just a blink they'll come down pouring

He's a good actor, I give him that.

"Mnqobiwesizwe nothing you say will ever make me turn against my own flesh and blood, if you think that little rant about Sma will make me hate them then you're clearly demented"

“Qhamukile I understand you’re angry and you have every right to be but don’t you ever say I’m demented” his voice is hard, I’m a little scared but I keep a stoic expression refusing to show him how intimidated I am.

“You might have not gotten me to commit suicide but you managed to break me beyond repair. Well done. you played your part in making sure you get back at us. You broke me I might as well be dead because you took everything in me, I want to hate you so much but the love I have for you won’t let me do that. I want nothing to do with you. I want this to be last day I see your handsome face”

I wipe the remains of my tears and stand up.

I was wrong about the Ngcobo’s never hurting me, they have broken me into million pieces.

As much as I’m broken I need to do my shopping, yes, Mngqobi hurt me so much that I want to crawl under a rock and never resurface to see the world

again but the thought of my brother's faces helps me to be strong.

“You don't get it do you, you're married to me. You're my wife which means you're stuck with me forever. you don't get to walk away like I'm your boyfriend when we have problems. This is a marriage so we sit and talk out issues out, this is not a flimsy relationship that ends because I wronged you I know I hurt you and no amount of sorries can take away your pain but you're my wife and I'm planning on keeping that tittle forever”

I chuckle sadistically and grab my bag from the table

“You're seriously crazy to think I'd stay with you”

“You're right about that, I'm crazy and I'm crazy in love with my wife”

I look at him unblinking for a while, I'm going to

miss his soft lips, feeling his hard chiseled body against mine.

I'm going to miss how he furrows his brows together.

I'm going to miss his roguish smile and his mischievous behavior.

I'm going to miss the late night's calls and the the midnight visit.

Lord I'm going to miss his minty scent mixed with nicotine.

I'm going to miss him plugging flowers on my hair and how he always plays with my ear.

I'm going to miss his forehead kisses, his craziness.

I'm going to miss Mnqobi.

“Goodbye Mnqobi” I say wipe my tears and walk out.

I walk to pick n pay to get the things I need.

I feel like going home and cry my eyes out but I'm sensible enough to know Nqaba will question me

should I come home with no groceries so I'll hold my tears just until I'm in the comfort of my own bed.

Have you been hurt to an extent that you feel like you have this huge hole on your chest, that's how I feel, it feels like air is slowly being sucked right out of my lungs. I can't breathe yet I'm exhaling and inhaling, I know I'm not making any sense but that's how I feel. It feels like I'm carrying tons of cement weight with my chest. I thought I've been hurt before but no pain amounts to what I'm feeling. Mngobi has managed to break me, he and his brothers wanted to get me to commit suicide to get back at my brothers but this is far worse, I'm alive but I'm just a shallow person and death is far better than an empty human.

I feel his minty scent disguising the heavy scent of nicotine behind me as I push the trolley inside pnp.

“I know you don't want anything to do with me but I can't help it, I'm here for you”

I ignore him as he takes the trolley from me and follows behind me as I walk to the meat aisle.

I choose the mutton stew enough for all of us and mix it with beef and chicken.

He keeps apologizing, following behind me like a lost puppy. I'm not even going to entertain him.

I do the rest of my shopping, pay and call Nqaba to come to pick me up.

I'm planning on apologizing for the way I've been behaving ever since I meet Mnqobi to them but I won't tell them what he and his brothers planned, I still love him too much to get him killed besides I can't endure "We told you so" looks from my brothers. I know they will be on my case so I'll just gradually learn to live without Mnqobi.

He pushes the trolley outside to the parking lot where I wait for Nqaba.

"I'll give you the space you need but don't you even for a second think you'll divorce me. You're stuck

with me for life. I'm just giving you some time to process this. I love you ok" I continue to totally disregard his presence

"I said I love you Qhamu"

I nod because I don't trust words that might come out of my mouth.

"Get some sleep when you get home, I'll call you later and you better answer" he kisses my temple
I hate the feeling I get when he's so close to me

"How can you do this to me Mngobi" tears threaten my eyes

"I'm sorry, I'm so sorry my love. Shout at me, swear at me if that will help you deal with this" I shake my head and wipe tears that have escaped my eyes.

“I need to be alone”

“I’ll give you some time to be alone, it just won’t be for long. I want my wife close to me at all times. I’ll call you later. I love you believe that, I love you so much”

he says softly and kiss the side of my head before walking away

I release breathe I hadn’t realized I was holding.

I don’t know what to believe anymore, he hurt me so much and yet my heart wants him. His words carry so much emotion that I want to believe everything he’s telling me but I can’t, I refuse to be that naive little girl any longer. I quickly wipe my tears and look at him as he slowly walks away.

I hate how radically my heart beats for him, this organ called a HEART betrays me each time when it comes to him.

I’m supposed to hate him, I should wish nothing but

ill things towards but my heart won't let me.

“Qhamu his plan is to get back at your family” I remind myself more times than I can count.

The Ngcobo's are nothing but an enemy.

[06/20, 18:25] Lynne: 43

MNQOBI

I'm quite surprised with Qhamu's reaction to this whole thing I was expecting her to stab me with a plastic knife that was in-front of her and swear at me but she didn't and that scares the hell out of me.

I hope she's not planning anything evil to get back at me.

My Qhamu is feisty and never lets anyone play on her head and I guess I was expecting that from her but she disappointed.

No, I disappointed her.

She just sat there with tears streaming down her beautiful face, reminding me how of my family's evil plan to kill her family.

The sight of seeing her broken like that broke me more than my truth could ever break her but I understand I wouldn't forgive myself too.

I had to tell her I was planning on using her as a weapon against her own brothers and nothing hurts more than that. I know she would have done far worse than to sit and cry if she could but I guess I broke her. I hate it when she cries and this time she was not crying because her brothers detained her from seeing me or crying because of my brothers. I'm the reason behind her tears and that shudders me inside.

I'm so disappointed in myself for hurting her like that but what was I suppose to do?

If i could turn back the hands of time I would but even so I wouldn't change anything. Remember before Qhamu, I liked meaty and light skinned girls, the total opposite of Qhamukile so I'm hundred percent sure with no doubt that in a normal circumstance I wouldn't have tried to pursue a relationship with her and this is how I know that everything happens for a reason.

I was kind of furious that she doubts my love after everything we went through, I got beaten up and shot for her so for her to doubt my love pissed me off but after speaking to Zwelethu I realized she has every right to be angry at me.

Imagine if tables were turned and you were on the receiving end...

Damn I don't even want to think about what I'd do to anyone who would try and mess up with my family anyway after processing everything I understand why she's hurt.

Imagine your own husband telling you he just

wanted to use you to get to your own family.

Not too nice uh?

“Can you just call her” Manqoba says jolting me

I last saw her three days ago and I am missing here but she needs her space to deal with this too but soon she will have to snap out of it. We need to talk at some point.

I look at Manqoba and scoff, he's been bothering me a lot lately.

”go away”

I can't call her, not yet. calling her means I have to listen to her painful cries and I can't bear that so I've resorted to sending her text messages instead though she just blue sticks me without responding

At least she didn't block me so there's hope, right?

”call her man”

“Mangoba just leave me alone” I snap

Ask me why.

“I’ve known you your whole life and I have never seen you love anyone like you love princess—“

“I told you to never call her that” I cut him mid-sentence, rudely so.

“I apologized for kissing her and I told you I don’t love her. I don’t know what else can I do to show you I’m over her”

He wants to piss me off now.

I don’t want to reminded how he betrayed me.

“Just stay the hell away from her”

He rises his hands up, surrendering.

“For What is worth I hope you fix this. I wronged you but you’re my brother and ng’yakcanywa (I love you) so I want to see you happy even if it means being with a Buthelezi”

“Heeee don’t come here with your gay tendencies. Why you telling me you love me now, hai suka” I say half laughing

We have been so affectionate, worse he just told me he loves me.

“Hai who’s gay wena, don’t forget whose older here” I laugh and he joins

I used to always get annoyed when he reminded me he’s older then but now I missed hearing him boast about it.

“By a minute—“

“That doesn’t change the fact that I’m older”

We not a hundred percent there yet but we are attempting to fix our bond.

We both laugh until an uncomfortable silence embraces us.

“So you told her about the initial plan”

Zwelethu is such a lady, did he really have to go gossip about me to our brother?

“Yes I did”

I’m sure he told Mncedis i too.

“How did she take it”

hurt obviously

“She’s feels betrayed I guess”

“I can understand, I’d kill anyone who dare messes with my family but she’s not me, she loves you and

I'm sure she will forgive you"

Eventually she will have to, i wouldn't divorce her even at gun point.

"I guess" I say with a lazy shrug

"Trust me she will forgive you, she loves you too much to let you go. I've seen the way she look at you, it's like the rest of us don't exist and only you do. What did you give that girl bafo. Her love is so raw and true"

I wonder why she loves me each day

"It's probably my looks—"

We both laugh

"I'd lie if I were to tell you why she loves me like she does all I know is I love her just as much, if not more"

This is the first time i actually have a lengthy

conversation with my twin brother after the whole kiss incident and to be quite honest I'm enjoying it.

"I'm glad she makes you happy. I'm learning to accept that you are truly in love with the enemy"

we both chuckle at the memory of how we swore never to fall in love with a Buthelezi growing up, in fact, a mention of a Buthelezi name used to repulse all of us but look at me, I went as far as marrying a one.

"I'm no relationship expert but allow me to chip in my two cents of advice—"

I look at him inquisitively

"so Princess—" he rises his hands fast before continuing

"—I mean Qhamu is angry and hurt so show her you

feel her pain, stop ignoring her like you are. Call her, go see her. just do something rather than to mope around feeling sorry for her. You're my brother and I know how smooth you can be with the ladies so use your charm and give her good dick after you'll see she'll forgive you”

I let out a full blown laughter by the time he finished
Manqoba is the worst advisor out there

“Mxm laugh but this plan will work believe me, just make her forget her pain”

It's been fun.

“It's been fun chilling with you bafo but I'm helping out at the pub for extra bucks so I'll see you later”

I leave him laughing at his own ridiculous advice.

•

The pub is full which means only one thing, more money for us.

It's a family business but Langa runs it solely, Makhosini is more focused on the taxi business while Zwelethu focuses on the life stock poultry business back in Mpophomeni.

Mncedisi, Manqoba and myself are still focused on our schooling for now.

Mncedisi is doing his internship with Eskom, and Manqoba decided to do financial management, his on his second year and I'll be doing my last year this following semester. Remember I changed course during the second semester on my first year so now I only have one semester this following year and I'll be done with my degree. I can't wait to come back home permanently.

Enough about that I have drunkards to serve, they are a fun entertainment when they are not fighting so tonight it's no exception, ladies are gyrating their bums on guys groin areas giving us a show I'd love to sit and watch but I have booze to sell.

I'm filling the fridge up when I hear a familiar voice behind saying

“Excuse me”

I turn around and it's none than Nokhaya

She cleans up pretty well I admit, I hear she now stays with some Nigerian guy and she smokes drugs too but I'm not judging.

“Hey How are you” her accent has even changed

“I'm good and you”

“I'm alright, it's been a while hey. You still as handsome as I remember” she says flapping her long fake eyelashes

“And you still look beautiful” I say and serve the guys next to her.

I know she won't leave anytime soon.

“Can I have an a glass of gin and tonic please”

I’m a bartender for the night so I get one for her.

She’s lucky I’m giving her so much attention most of the customers are already drunk so it’s not so full at the bar anymore.

“I miss you Mngobi”

The alcohol is talking now

I say nothing and smile at her.

“I can leave Akin and be with you, I still love you”

I’m assuming Akin is her boyfriend.

“I thought you said you no longer love me”

“I said I give you my blessings to date that girl, I’m sure you two broke up now. She was so young for you”

“Qhamukile is her name and I’m still with her”

she’s actually my wife but I’m too clever not to say such to Nokhaya or else my marriage to Qhamu will reach my brothers ears before I could blink

“What, you must really love her but we can have our thing on the side”

I laugh at her ridiculousness

“I can do things to you” she swirls her tongue on the rim of the glass

Mapholoba twitches instantly just by seeing her lick a glass like that.

Nokhaya gives the best head, Qhamu ties but she’s not in Nokhaya league.

“Baby girl—“ Manqoba calls her that

“We had our time and it was fun while it lasted but I’ve moved on and so did you so you and I ain’t happening”

I’m trying to be as polite as Mngqobi can be.

My patience runs low really fast when it comes to Nokhaya.

“Come one, don’t act as if you don’t miss me”

I don’t know how does she not care that there are people listening to her

“Nokhaya go home, you’re drunk”

“Ag you’re such a bore, anyway call me when she fails to satisfy you. I’ll be waiting” she blows me a kiss and stands up from the bar stool

I watch her stagger until she exit the entrance

She didn't even pay

“Ah uyabaiza san (you're a fool) how can you let a hot girl like that leave, it's clear she want to give you her cake”

Sticks says next to me

He's a hired bartender

I shake my head laughing

“Nah I'm good brother” I tell him and serve my customers.

Im just a few hundreds rands away from buying—wouldn't you love to know.

I take out my phone from my back pocket and go on WhatsApp, it's after one am and she's online. I wonder whose she chatting to this time of the night.

‘Hey my love. I miss your delicious food. Please try to sneak out tomorrow I really need to see you and

Qhamu get some sleep it's late you shouldn't be awake chatting on WhatsApp. I love you' I press send

Of course, She blue ticks me but it says she's typing.... five minutes later there's no message I guess she changed her mind.

Soon she goes offline.

[06/20, 18:25] Lynne: 44

QHAMU

I've heard about the nativity of Jesus Christ many times that I have lost count but I have never believed in it until now, I'm in need of divine intervention. I need something greater than human capabilities to believe there is some good left in this world and the twenty-fifth of December is the most important liturgical day for Christians so I guess this is just what I need.

Christmas used to be like any other day to us but what I did this morning contradicts all that. I woke and prayed, I prayed for God to cleanse my soul and to give me enough courage to forgive those who have wronged me.

Mnqobi...

I won't lie and say I'm not hurt, in fact, I'm torn and what's worse is that my heart keeps betraying me, I've tried all the tricks in the book to forget about him but all that has been fruitless, my heart yearns for his love, my body covets for his touch and mostly I miss him.

He sends text every day, do you have an idea how many times have I stopped myself from pressing the send button after I've confessed my love for him?

It's been very hard, to say the least, what's worse is I'm constantly sick and he's the only thing I need.

I think my bile has risen up too much because I'm always light headed plus I vomit a lot, be it at night or midday.

I need to clean my stomach.

Eish listen to me go on about my sickness I'm sure you are not interested in that, I think I've trailed enough now.

Coming back to my new spiritual enlightened self, I have never prayed like I did this morning in my entire life asking for God to grant me enough serenity to accept things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can and the wisdom to know the difference. I know I can't change what happened but I can only pray to heal and move past it.

Tell me, What do you do when everything you believe in turns out to be camouflaged by evil, I know, you pray, which is what I did when I woke up. I prayed for a Christmas miracle.

its Christmas Day!

I've cooked food enough for the whole Mvubukazi, my brothers are happy of course. The sun is shining, baby Bee is here so I'm feeling very mirthful and

optimistic that everything will be well again.

“I think I’m full now” Gats ha even took his seconds or thirds

I just don’t know anymore.

“I’m glad you enjoyed bhuti even though the chicken is a little spoiled” I fried it but that’s didn’t help

“It tasted fine to me hey” he says licking his hands
His son should be doing that not him

“Yes, there’s nothing wrong with it, in fact, Mondli please pass me the last piece” Misuzulu seems to be loving the rotten chicken as well

“Bhuti can I please dish up for bab’Miya and mam’Bengu, I haven’t seen them in a while. I’m sure

they are missing Tee especially today, you know how fussy she was over Christmas”

I say already standing up

“Mmm I’m sure they would appreciate that very much”

I have to strap baby Bheki on my back because he’s been clingy since he got here three days ago. He’s always clued to Gcina whenever he visits but he hasn’t even given him a glance this time around.

“He’s giving me a well-deserved break” Gcina says leaning back on his chair happily.

I never knew my brother ate so much.

“Don’t get too excited he might just turn on her any second” Nqaba

He’s right Bheki is never to be trusted.

“Jealous that he wants his mama” I imitate the little guy when I say mam and they all laugh.

I don't understand how does baby bee not talk so much like Gatsha, he is his father after all. I expected him not to keep his mouth shut.

Have I mentioned that I'm carrying a whole cement bag on my back or at least that's how it feels like it, baby Bee is so heavy but I have no choice but to soldier on.

I pack two lunch tins neatly and put it in a plastic bag.

“Don't come late” Mondli

I was expecting Misuzulu or Nqaba to say that not him any way I smile at all of them and ask them to wash the dishes before I leave

I hear them grumbling before I close the door. I know Misuzulu and Gatscha won't bother, they will just bully the younger ones into washing them, my poor brothers will just have to fight amongst themselves which I know Nqaba will dominate because he's more of a bully too. Poor Mondli and Gcina.

It's after three and the sun is blazing hot and remember I'm carrying so much weight on my back because he refused to walk but I have an umbrella which makes my journey a lot less unbearable.

The Miya house is still the same, the last time I was here was shortly after Thobile passed on, I think a part of me still blames bab'Miya for what happened to Tee even though she explained in her suicide note that her parents shouldn't feel at fault and that it was her decision but I still can't entirely find it in my heart to forgive and forget.

I knock once before mam'Bhengu tells me to come in.

She's seated on a couch with her husband reading a newspaper.

"Ah this is a nice surprise, Qhamu my child how are you" bab'Miya says folding his newspaper and put it beside him on the hand rest.

"I'm good thank you baba and how are you" I ask politely

I unstrapped Bheki the moment I entered, I'll be crippled before I can strap my own kids on my back.

"We good my child, come sit down I'm sure you're tired phela that little man is a rock" I love how sweet this old man has become pity his daughter had to die for him to care this much.

"Ah baba you spoiling her, in my times we used to do all house chores while a child was strapped on our backs and we didn't complain" I smile at

mam'Bhengu and sit on the opposite couch

“Oh ma I brought you Christmas food, I hope you'll enjoy it”

“Ey you still love cooking, phela Thobile wouldn't shut her mouth complimenting your cooking” I smile shyly and hand her the plastic bag.

I'm startled when a voice shouts from behind me

“Qhamu is that you”

“Njabulo” I say unsure

Do you remember him?

The last time I saw him was when Gatscha threatened to cut his balls eleven years ago

“The one and only” he pulls me up and gives me a warm hug

For a geek, he cleans up really well

“Wow whose this little guy, your son” he’s enquiring

“Yes he’s my one and only”

“Nice” that’s laced with some hint of disappointment

“How have you been”

He rambles on about his escapades, his life sounds interesting. He explains that he was not in the county when Thobile passed on, that explains why he was not at the funeral.

I spend an hour with the Miya family before I bid my farewell. It’s been very fun, reminiscing on the happy times we had with Thobile for once I managed to talk about her and be jolly about it. I shed no tear.

Njabulo offered to carry baby Bee but he woke up and wailed the moment Njabulo took him from me now I’m forced to carry his heavy sleeping self.

“What brought you to the dusty roads of Mvubukazi” I ask him as we stroll down the road to my homestead.

Mnqobi has been blowing up my phone more than usual, I don't know why doesn't he get that I don't want to talk to him, at least not now.

“I just wanted a chilled festive I guess besides I wanted to spend time with my uncle you know I haven't seen them since Thobs passed on and she was a sister which makes bab'Miya my father”

I nod and continue walking

“Where is Gatsha” he asks a little frightened

I laugh at him

After all these years he is still scared of him

“He’s around” I continue laughing but I stop laughing the minute I see Mngobi marching towards our direction

“Is he still scary”

not as scary as Mngobi right now I think to myself as he stops right in front of us

“Is this the reason you’re not answering my calls”

he says sizing Njabulo up with his hand underminenily, the disrespect my husband has towards other male species is too rife.

I want to run in his arms and kiss the daylight out of him but the memory of what he told me still lingers and I dismiss the thought very fast, he looks so handsome though.

“Mngobi what are you doing here, just go”

“You want me to let hoe freely with your boyfriend”
lord, please give me the strength to deal with my
irate husband and who the hell is he calling a hoe.

“Qhamu what’s going on, who is this guy, is he the
father of your son”

I ignore Njabulo and glare at Mngqobi angrily

“What are you doing here, have you been following
me Mngqobiwesizwe. I thought I made myself clear
that I never want to see you again”

“Too bad” he says nonchalantly

“You’ve been ignoring me for a week now, so you
can’t blame me for following you”

it’s been five days, not a week.

“That’s what you’re good at vele, stalking people.
just leave me the hell alone Mngqobi”

He scoffs

“I’m going to let that go for today”

“Qhamu whose this guy” Njabulo again

“No one”

Bheki has woken up from all the noise we are
making and he’s crying softly.

I hush him back to sleep, he loves sleeping no
wonder he’s so fat.

“I’m her husband, that’s who I am” Mngqobi says
angrily and take Bheki from me

The traitor wakes up from the force Mngqobi used to

take him from me but he looks at him once and snuggles comfortably on his chest.

Yoh this child.

Imagine he refused when Njabulo took him and here he is resting on the enemy's chest.

“If you know what’s good for you you’ll follow me” Mngobi says and walks away.

If he wasn’t holding Gatsha’s child I’d probably go the opposite direction.

“Njabulo thank you for walking me home”

“Are you going to be fine, do you think he’s going to hurt you” he would never hurt me physically and as much as I deny it I know he would never hurt me intentionally too.

“No!” I can’t believe how quick I am to defend his honor

“He’ll never hurt me, he’s just angry but he’ll be fine”
I tell him and run behind Mngqobi.

•

We are in his car and he’s raging about how I’m entertaining other guys while ignoring him.

Njabulo was just walking me home innocently, he didn’t try making a pass at me or even hinted he wants me for that matter but according to Mngqobi I shouldn’t even look at any guys direction besides him as if that’s realistic.

He is just rising his blood pressure for nothing.

I let him continue scolding until he is satisfied with the amount of anger he released.

“Qhamukile Tell me what to do to make everything

right, I miss you and I want my wife back. I'm tired of fighting with you”

He switched from being angry to being sorry in a split second that I can't keep up.

“I just need some space Mngqobi”

“But I gave you a full week”

He means five days

I look at him exasperated

“It's been five days and you have been texting and calling every chance you get”

“Well I didn't know not texting forms part of your space”

I hate the sarcasm laced in his voice

“Space means not having any contact with you”

baby Bee is still sleeping comfortably on his chest

“Hai forget it, I’m not giving you any space then. I don’t want vultures like that guy giving you attention”

can he quit with the jealousy it’s not a good trade on him?

I roll my eyes and lean back on my seat, arguing with Mngobi has proven to be futile, he always gets what he wants.

“I’m sorry my love I know I hurt you but remember the seer said—“

“I don’t want to know what that fraud said” I cut him short

“You know very well he’s not a fraud and he did say this was the only way for us to get together.

Remember he told you to forgive me” he’s not serious

“So now I must forgive you because he said so”

“No, but I’d like for you to forgive me soon rather than later, you know me baby and you know I’d never hurt you intentionally”

I huff because he’s telling the truth and truth is not something I want to hear right now.

“I’m going to let you go because the little man has to sleep comfortably on a bed but I’m coming tomorrow and you better meet me—“

“Or else what” I love testing him at times

“I’ll come to your home and this time I mean it”

remember how he threatened me when he called me the first time. He said the same thing but he

didn't come.

“Well it will be your funeral”

“As if you'd survive without me”

I roll my eyes at how arrogant he is

“I'm serious I'll come there and I bet you this time Shaka Zulu and his troops will do more than just shoot me” he half laughs but I remain aloof.

“I know you still angry but I'm going to fix everything. I love you and I know you love me too”

I look at him straight in the eyes hoping to see a fragment of a lie but love is all I see.

I hate myself for ever thinking he didn't love me.

“I love you” he says sweetly.

“I know”

He hands me the sleeping rock that is Bheki

“Are you leaving now”

I know I’m angry at him but I still want to look at him a bit longer, I’m allowed I’m married to him after all.

He laughs and kisses my nose

“You’re so cute but yes baby, your in-laws are waiting for me. we are traveling to Mpophemeni”

He helps me get off the car and I strap Bheki on my back careful not to wake him

“I’ll see you tomorrow” I can’t believe I agreed to this.

“It’s not like you have a choice”

His egocentricity never ceases to amaze me.

Unexpectedly, he kisses me deeply, I want to push him away but I open my mouth and let him in

instead. I miss his lips.

He pulls away just when I start to enjoy the kiss leaving me dazed.

“Why—“ he shuts me up with a peck on the lips

“I love your crazy ass” he says and goes back to the driver’s seat.

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I see most of you have gotten lazy to press the reaction icon and leave an encouraging comment nyana on the comment box.

prove me wrong!!

[06/20, 18:26] Lynne: 45

MNQOBI

I thought she'd be fine after seeing me yesterday but I guess I was wrong because she's still sulking. When I called and told her I'm around Mvubukazi she sounded annoyed but she knows better so here she comes.

Her strides are slower which explains why I had to wait for over an hour, it's hot so I'll forgive her.

She's wearing one of my favorite dresses, its a blue one that has white flowers, it's just below the knees and has the fastening type of strips.

She looks beautiful.

Have you noticed how much she loves wearing dresses, well, I have and she looks so sexy right now. I want to lift her dress up and fill her up with Mapholoba, I can already picture her panting on top of me looking flushed and hot with sweat.

Fuck..

Mapholoba throbs from the imagination of making

love to my wife.

Calm down Mngqobi, you two needs to talk first and sex won't solve anything, I reprimand myself inwardly as she gets in the car without waiting for me to open for her like always, she makes it so hard for me to showcase my chivalry side at times.

I laugh inwardly when she bangs the door.

I hand her the white lily flower Im carrying, she first contemplates but she eventually accept it. My mother will soon kill me for plunging out her flowers.

I look at her and smile but she doesn't return the smile instead she gaze out the window while playing with the lily, Qhamy is troublesome but I understand that I need to work hard to earn her trust again and I'm willing to put in the extra effort in making sure that she can trusts me again but I still say if I didn't love her like I do I'd have dumped her pretty ass a long time ago.

I start the car and drive without saying anything.

I chuckle lazily when I catch her stealing at a glance at me.

I shake my head and light my cigarettes.

I had to travel from Mpophomeni this morning just for her. We spend our Christmas there, why, I don't know. It was our first-time spending it there but MaNgidi insisted. I think he wanted to be where her husband is.

”MaShenge how are you”

I know how that annoys her but it's funny how she doesn't mind when Makhosini calls her by her clan name but hates when I do.

She looks at me once and back out the window.

I shake my head and laugh lightly.

The driver to Matsheni is long, particularly because I'm driving slow, listening to Intombi by Sjava just to annoy my wife.

She takes out her phone and starts fiddling with it, I know she's playing candy crush so I'm not bothered with her loud laughter, she wants my attention and I'll gladly give it to her when we get to my room.

There's no sneaking in today because Ma and the older brothers are not here. I came back with Mangoba and Mncedisi and I trust them not to tell Makhosini that I brought Qhamu here.

Once I'm parked, she gets out the car without looking at me and stomps to my room.

She trust me too much for someone who thought my intentions towards her are vile.

I follow behind her after ensuring that the car is locked and I find her seating on the edge of the bed, playing with her phone.

“Baby should I get you anything” she shakes her head.

Ok.

Looks like I have to work harder than anticipated.

“Baby talk to me please”

Qhamu can make a person beg.

She looks at me once and back at her phone.

I thought I'd be a gentleman and talk to her but I can't talk to someone who's mute so I guess Manqoba's advice will come handy after all, you know the "go see her and give her good sex" advice. Qhamu is forcing me to use sex to get her to talk to me.

I step closer to her and part her legs with my knee and stand in between her legs. Let's see for how long will she ignore me.

Her chest is rising and falling, her breathing has quickened just by standing so close to her. I know I'm irresistible I just didn't think I have this much effect on her like she does me.

I take her phone unexpectedly and throw it on the bed behind her and pull her up to me.

"What are you—" I shut her up with a deep kiss.

At first she's hesitant but I deepen it until she relents and opens her mouth.

My hands are trailing on her back, I can feel her getting warm under my touch.

She might ignore me but her body will never stop being responsive to my touch.

“Mmmm” she moans in my mouth

I pull away just to frustrate her.

“Mngobi” she moans frustrated

I kiss the corner of her mouth and loosen the strip of her dress, left shoulder first, kiss her collar bone and I do the same to the right strip and with a little patter her dress fall to our feet. She’s not wearing any bra so her perky breast are fully out, her nipples hard. I know how she loves to be held but I’m not going to give her what she wants, I want her to feel how frustrating i get when she acts on me. I tease her breast not wanting to entirely cup them with my hands, I trail my hand down her stomach instead. She helps me get off my t-shirt and she quickly unbuckle my belt and I remover my jeans simultaneously with my underwear and my erection springs out.

I pull her closer to me without breaking the kiss

I want her to feel how excitedly my body gets when

I'm with her. I want her to know how my body craves for hers.

I take off my sneakers using the sole of each shoe and kick my jeans off, now I'm naked.

I lay her on the bed and get on top of her.

My dick is squeezed against her stomach, throbbing painfully needing to be inside of her warm treasury chest. I part her legs with my knee and dry hump, I know she'll soon be begging me to enter her.

My hand involuntarily find her twins and I cup her left one. —wow—I don't know if my mind is playing tricks on me or what but her bobbies are now fuller. They fit so perfectly in my hands, I waste no time and indulge in the fullness. She arches her back when I nibble on her one nipple while pinching the other lightly with my other hand.

“Don't pinch, they are painful” she says pulling my hand away from her perfectly proportioned breast.

Ok..

Her periods must be nearing I know her breast gets really sensitive when she's on her periods but never too sensitive that she would actually pull my hand away like she just did.

I pull her panties down. I don't have time for anymore foreplay I missed her and I know she missed me too.

Look like I'll cave in before she does, her body is too warm for me to handle I just want to be inside her.

Her legs are parted just how I like them, sinking in I push the tip in and stop mid-thrust.

"Mnqobi..." she moans and holds on to me tightly

"Tell me you love me" I whisper against her ear and bite her earlobe lightly

"condom... baby"

her voice carries no conviction like always when she wants us to use it and this is how I know she doesn't want us to use protection but she's saying it out of obligation besides I want to make love to my wife with no latex plastic constricting us.

I want to feel her rawness and her bareness as I make love to her.

Sinking in I start thrusting slowly, I quicken my thrusts as she lets out soft moans. I just love hearing her moan like this.

In no time I'm pounding harder and harder and she screams loudly, that just sweet melody to my ears.

I pound a couple of times before coming to a complete halt.

"Pl..ea..se" she holds on to my buttocks wanting me to continue with my deep thrusts

"Tell me you love me" I tease by thrusting shallower, just enough to give her a taste of what she is missing but just enough to frustrate her.

"please baby"

Baby?

At least we getting somewhere

I thrust deeply this times and she screams holding on to me but I stop again.

Let's see how far is she willing to endure this until she tells me what I want to hear

"Tell me you love me baby" I take my penis out slowly but leave the tip inside. As much as I want to punish her I also need to be inside her.

"I ...don't..." I thrust deeper forcing a moan out of her.

"You....don't" I thrust in circular motions, I want to fill her up with emotions, emotions she fills me up with.

"Ntonto you don't what" I stop thrusting completely. The corner of her mouth lift up into a smile and she opens her eyes.

"You called me Ntonto" I smile and kiss her.

I've heard her brothers call her Ntonto so many times.

"i demand you love to me Mngqobi" she says lust written all over her face it's hard not to do what she wants when she's this cute and isn't she just too bold to be making such demands.

Shaking my head...

“Tell me you love me”

I thrust, she closes her eyes enjoying my lazy thrust but I stop just when she moans in enjoyment.

“Mngobi can you please stop that” she’s getting more frustrated almost angry if I may say.

“Tell me you love me”

I tease again but this time I push too deep, just once and hold...

“Ok fine! I love you, are you happy I love you, there I said it. I love you” she shouts with tears in her eyes.

I know why she's crying and it's not because she admitted to loving me but it's because she feels powerless, to her it feels like I've taken away the only thing that makes her stronger but that's the thing, I need to hear how much she loves me in order for me to be sane, love prevails and I feed on her love just as much as she feeds on mine.

” and I love you Qhamu”

I tell her this because I want to give her power back,

I want her to be in control of her feelings and emotions.

I wipe away the remains of her tears and kiss her eyes.

I hate seeing her cry but I needed to hear that for my own sanity too.

I dip my head onto hers and our lips touch, I kiss her deeply, thrusting. She loves it when I thrust her deep in circulations so I do just that until she continuously moans my name and how much she loves me.

“Mnqobi... I... love... you” she keeps moaning as I dig deep in her with my penis

she's close to reaching her pick, I know this because she's holding on to me vigorously, her legs wrapped around my waist and she's crying softly.

Emotions are very high and I hate to do this to her before she reaches her happy place but I have to.

I stop pounding and look at her. It's takes a minute for her body to register that I've stoped thrusting

and she opens her eyes and glare at me angrily.

I can imagine how frustrating it must be for her.

“What now” she says annoyed

“Please forgive me” she sighs

“You hurt me”

“I know”

“Please give me sometime” I can’t have that, I need her forgiveness right this minute. I do realize that’s very selfish of me but ill forever be selfish when it comes to her.

“I’m not making love to you until you tell me you forgive me”

She rolls her eyes, she thinks I’m joking.

My tip is still inside, I want to get off her but I fear to be completely out of her so I’ll just leave the tip inside.

“You’re serious”

“As a heart attack my love”

“I’d be lying if I were to tell you I forgive you now” I get off her. My dick throbs painfully from being out of her but I have to do this.

“Qhamukile, my love. I know I hurt you and if I were to turn back the hands of time I would but baby still that wouldn’t change anything”

I can’t help play with her breast, the fullness is inviting.

“Ouch Mngqobi, I told you they are painful” she chides at me

Yoh let me keep my hands to myself.

“Tell me would you have done thing differently given the chance, would you”

“No—“

the truth hurts but I’m not about to lie to her

“I wouldn’t change anything, I don’t regret ever wanting to revenge my father because that hate I had for your family brought me to you”

tears gleam in her eyes

“I don’t regret anything baby” I kiss her tears and pull her closer to me.

She chuckles softly surprising me

“You’re so full of yourself you know” she seats on her bums

I’m not sure if I should be happy that she doesn’t look mad or if I should run away because she’s about to murder me

“But I know you’d be lying had you told me that you would have done things differently and for that I forgive you my husband”

She said she forgives me?

“You forgive me” I ask unbelievably

She nods lightly smiling

“I forgive you but if you ever hurt me like this again I won’t forgive you” she forgives me that’s all that matters.

I pull her down to the bed and get on top of her. My penis is already hard you’d swear it was not soft second ago.

“Thank you my love, I’m not going to make any promises but I’ll try not to hurt you again” I say already in her.

I hate vanilla sex.

For those of you who don’t know what that is, vanilla sex is the slow sex, filled with emotions and all that other bull but whenever I’m with Qhamu vanilla is all I

want.

I do enjoy the rushed, stolen sex we get to have all the time but this is just perfect. I become one with her even more so now that there’s no latex constricting us from feeling the rawness between us.

I pin her hands above her head and continue with my labored thrust, I’m loving every minutes of it.

“Baby” she’s close and this time I’m going to see to it that she reaches her pick.

I dig deeper and balance her legs over my shoulders I love how fully exposed she is when she’s in this

position. Mapholoba reaches all the hidden corners when she's this open and she loves it.

I make sweet love to her until she cums all over my dick, no her dick. It's hers if you must know. Soon I follow pursuit and reach my happy place too.

She's panting, I'm panting too. I lower her shaky legs and peck her lips.

“I love you Mngqobi”

“I know baby I know” I kiss her one last time before getting off her.

I get a towel and wipe my remains from her glistening womanhood.

I've been with quite a number a people before but none of them have ever made me feel they way I feel with Qhamu.

I kiss her womanhood and throw the towel away after wiping myself.

“You see now we have to get morning after pills”

“I guess” the condom has busted more than I can count before but if she wants to get morning after

pills then it's her choice.

“So are you ready for next year” she's going to a culinary school, not sure how it is but she's excited about it so I'm going to support her.

“Yes I am, I'm a little nervous though” that's totally relatable.

I too was nervous when I first went to Joburg, she'll be fine.

“You'll be fine, at least I'll get to see you everyday”

She's resting on my chest comfortably and her breast is fully exposed.

I can't control myself.

My hands find her nipple and I play with it softly.

“Baby” she moans

Mapholoba has a head of its own so he's already up just by hearing her moan like that.

“My periods are near that's why they are this painful” damn these painful breast.

My penis doesn't have patience so I'm forced to get

on top of her and soon she's moaning and I'm groaning while thrusting deep inside of her.

•

Hours later.....

I've just dropped Qhamu off and I'm picking up Zwelethu, I'm not sure when did he get here but he's with his supposedly pregnant girlfriend and I'm picking him up.

I'm happy, Qhamu finally forgave me which is one thing out the way. My mind is a little preoccupied with what the seer said but I guess we will figure things out as they come.

I find Zwelethu waiting at the stop sign, I wanted to see the girlfriend but I guess she's gone.

"Bafo" he looks stressed

"Is she really pregnant"

He shrugs

“I don’t know, I asked her to take a pregnancy test but she hasn’t so I don’t know” he sounds down.

Why doesn't this girl want to take a pregnancy test though?

“So how does she know she’s pregnant if she’s hasn’t taken any test to determine that”

“I don’t know, she told me she missed her periods and bull shit about her breast being painful. Hai I don’t get ladies mfethu”

I have a light bulb moment....

Qhamu... Painful breast... the seer... little one..
Those thoughts come down flooding like a water fall.

could Qhamu be pregnant?

No she can’t be, not now. I know the condom burst a couple of times before but she can’t be pregnant, can she?

Oh I’m dead...

“Mnqobi are you listening to me or you day dreaming about your girlfriend” Zwelethu says jolting me out of my train of thoughts

“Yes ask her to take a pregnancy test that’s the only way you’ll be sure”

Qhamu can’t be pregnant, Mis uzulu will definitely kill me this time that’s if I’ll still be alive after Makhosini deals with me.

“She said she’ll do an abortion if she is, imagine bafo she said so with so much ease with no remorse nothing, it's my child too you know but I have no say in it all”

I’m hearing Zwelethu but my mind is far away

I take out my phone and call Qhamu

“Miss me already” her voice forever sounding sweet

I swear it gets me hard every time.

“Baby when are you going on your periods” I don’t know why I am panicking but I can't help it

I feel her rolling her eyes “In a couple of days, why are you asking me this”

“I’m just asking, you were crying saying your breasts are painful so I’m just wondering and when last were you on your periods”

She laughs lightly

“I understand you’re my husband and you want to know everything about your wife but baby my periods should be the last thing you’re interested in knowing” she’s finding this cute and she’s right her menstruation doesn’t interest me at all.

“But if you must know I last went on my periods before we got married—“ we got married on the first of December and she says she was on her periods a couple of days before that which was the last week of November so today being the twenty-six means she should already be on her periods.

Let me not panic just yet maybe she’s just late, her periods are still coming, they have to come.

“Ok baby, I’ll pick you tomorrow so we can get morning after”

“Ok my love” she hangs up.

“Heeeee don’t tell me you’re hitting it raw brother” I forgot Zwelethu is next to me.

“So in nine months I’ll be an uncle” he lets out a full blown laughter

“You’re so dead, imagine what Misuzulu will do to you” he continues laughing

If Zwelethu didn’t look like us I’d wonder if he’s really my brother.

“So you and Qhamu have been naughty huh” can he shut up

I’m stressed as it is.

“I can’t wait for Makhosini to find out, he’ll die from a heart attack, you know brother I’ve always known you’re brave but I just didn’t know you were this brave” I ignore him and start the car.

I don’t even know why did I bother getting him.

“Slow down bafo, I still want to see my nephew or niece” he says and laughs out loud again

I don’t know how can he find all this amusing if Qhamu’s brothers are going to kill me.

“You are aware that if she’s pregnant then her brothers will kill me right”

He shrugs nonchalantly still giggling

“I doubt Makhosini will let them because he’d want to kill you himself. I guess we have to wait and see”
urg I’m done

“Oh wait... you have to get your own place too because you know ma will put you out. Oh by younger brother you’re in deep shit” thank god we’ve arrived.

I climb off the car leaving him laughing and go straight to my room.

Qhamu can not be pregnant. She can't.

•

5k reactions, over 300 comments, 50 shares... Let's do this.

Don't disappoint me please

[06/20, 18:26] Lynne: 46

QHAMU

Weeks later...

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Never underestimate the power of a tongue, I remember I once told you I'd gain weight and blossom like my peers and that's finally coming into pass. My days of being thin Qhamu are coming to end, pity I'm not longer in primary school or else I'd be gloating to all those kids that used to make fun of my bony structure. 'Sticks' was my name for a long time in primary school and in the early grades of high school but look who has the last laugh now. I'm not where I want to be in terms of the weight gained but if I continue gaining weight like this then pretty soon my hips will be doing all the talking.

My boobs are fuller which Mngqobi loves, he never seizes the opportunity to play with them, my ass is not there yet but it's grown a bit and I'm loving good.

Ok, enough about my physical appearances.

It's six thirty in the morning and I'm getting ready to go purchase a newspaper, yeap I know some of you have been there, it's nerve racking right?

I'm trying to stay calm but I'm failing the pressure it's too much, considerably so because my glass mates have received SMS's so most of them know whether they've made it or not, except for me of course, I subscribed but just haven't gotten the SMS

I'm sure I failed and department of education won't send me an sms because they don't want to break my heart.

Qhamu calm down... you passed, you passed, you made it. I try and remain positive.

Who am I kidding, I failed, this explains why I didn't get an sms like everyone else.

“Qhamu let's go” I hear one of my brother shout from the lounge area.

I'm scared to leave my room, I don't want to disappoint them.

This reminds me when Mondli was in matric, he was the first person to make it to matric out of all my brothers and so you can imagine how happy we were when we saw his name with four distinctions next to it on the newspaper.

I quickly tie my hair in a bun and exit my bedroom.

“Good morning” they are all dressed and ready to accompany me to get the newspaper

My nerves are high but I'm trying to remain calm.

Mnqobi woke up at five, had the decency to get the newspaper but refused to tell if I passed or not...

He enjoys torturing me.

“Wake up Qhamukile and get the paper yourself” he

said, he wasn't sad nor was he happy which is why I'm convinced I failed or else he would have told me right or sounded happy at least, worse he gave me a two minute heartfelt motivational speech about how it's not the end of the world if I didn't make it.

I hung up on him before he could say more.

God, he frustrates me at times and the fact that I didn't get an SMS just puts me on a frenzy.

I'm dress up in a pair of jeans and a t-shirt and I feel a little suffocated I don't know why because I look good in these jeans, must be the nerves.

Mondli puts his arm around my shoulder after we have all hopped in Gatsha taxi and he drives us to the nearest garage.

"don't worry, you passed" they keep saying as Gatsha speeds to the garage.

I run out the minute the car stop, purchase the newspaper. I page through it the minute it's in my hands.

It takes me a while to finally locate my student

number but before getting excited I reference the student number on the piece of paper I wrote it on just to make sure it's really me and indeed it's my student number.

I scream excitedly once I see I got a distinction in IsiZulu next to my student number, I was hoping for more but I'm ecstatic nonetheless.

I made it.

I'm not sure when did I walk out of the garage but my brother are now surrounding me happily and they all chant how proud they are.

"Ubaba would be so proud" Mondli says beaming with happiness

Of course, he would be. I was the apple of his eye after all.

"He's very proud wherever he is" Gcina says and grabs the newspaper from my hands

"Distinction" He says amazed

"Mondli you have competition huh, you not the only one with brains" Gcina says mockingly Mondli

Mondli got distinctions in maths, physical science and IsiZulu so I don't think my academic level measures up to his but like I said before he's the intellectual one in this family, the rest are just street smart like our father and I just studied hard.

After the celebration quiet down we all head home and I cook a well deserved breakfast for my family.

•

“You could've told me I passed you know” he chuckles lightly

“I didn't want to take the experience of actually waking up early and getting the newspaper from you my love, it's exciting and nerve racking at the same time”

I know what he means, I got to experience it today.

“im so proud of you my wife” I blush

Can you believe I still blush after all this time?

“Thank you baby and my brothers are also happy”

“i can imagine, Zwelethu sends his greetings—“ I still need to give him an earful after laughing at Mngqobi like he did when he thought I was pregnant

“So am I seeing you later” I wish

“No baby, Zanele is coming over so I’m spending a little bit of time with her before schools open”

she’s going to grade twelve and excite about it.

I’m a little angry well not angry but I want Mngqobi to sweat a little after the pregnancy scare he gave me. I’d be angry for real had I missed my periods, they were late yes but I got them eventually so I’m relieved.

This husband of mine decided to keep to himself that the condom busted a couple of times until he got some crazy idea that I'm pregnant.

Shaking my head... let's thank the Ngcobo's ancestors that my periods came when they did or else we would both be buried and forgotten by now.

“But babe I'll also be leaving in less than a month, so you need to spend as much time with your husband as you can before i leave”

when he starts with the 'husband' I know he's trying to guilt trip me

“As much as I want to spend time with my husband I haven't seen my best friend in a while and I miss her”

“Come on love, I'll make it worth while”

I laugh at how seductive he sounds. He uses sex to get his way, my body yearns for him always but not

this time around

“Tempting but I’ll have to decline” who says no to a great orgasm

Qhamukile Ngcobo, that’s who.

“Ok fine, I’ll see you tomorrow then but you owe me”
I roll my eyes and hang up.

He needs to relax a bit, I’ve spend most of my holidays with him even though I’m heavily guarded.

“Qhamu you turning me into a sex freak, I can’t stop thinking about you” a text from Mngqobi comes just as Zanele gets off the taxi.

I roll my eyes and put my phone in my pocket without answering. He’s not getting any sex until I’m back on the pill.

“Hey Que, you look so beautiful my friend. What’s

going on with you, you're glowing" Zanele is as dramatic as her brother

"Oh come on"

"Is it my eyes or you've gained weight" she loves my slender figure which I don't understand because she has a killer body that I'd love to have.

"Are you sure you're not pregnant" seriously?

Why is it that when a woman gains weight pregnancy is the first that comes to mind?

I'm not pregnant.

"Urg shut up, I'm not pregnant" I'll admit this to you mainly because I can't keep any secrets from you, I got my periods I know but there's this worry that still lingers. What if I am pregnant but let's dismiss that thought for now.

“Where is your side bag” that’s what we secretly call Lucas

See what I did there, I changed the topic.

“He’s at home, I didn’t tell him I’m coming here or less he would have followed me. I don’t know what is it about you but my brother sure loves you”

I doubt it’s me

“Me or Ngaba” we both laugh out loud as we continue walking to my homestead

“Is Gcina around” I can’t help eye her questionably

“Actually yes, he’s around” she blushes and look away.

Let me not make too much of a big deal of this little

crush she has on my brother.

I saved Zanele from getting under Khaya's claws so I won't let her enter another lion's den namely Gcina. My brother is a serial cheat and Zanele is better off.

We walking slowly until we reach home, Gcina is watching TV when we enter the house.

They both exchange greetings blushing and I take Zanele's hand and literally drag her to my room.

“Qhamu your brother is..”

“Hot, I know” i roll my eyes

I've heard that line too many times

“Stay away from him” I warn

“I know besides he hasn't made any move on me so I can't actually go after him”

So she wants him to make a move?

SMH

it's a good thing Gcina listened when I begged him to stay away from Zanele.

Him and I have been spending time together and I must say it's been a bliss. My brother has finally found himself, he's no longer Nqaba's shadow.

“So how were the holidays” she goes on mumbling about how amazing being in PE was, I'm a little jealous that she has extended family members and I only have my aunt whose never around when I visit.

“Mngobi and I got married” I blurt out

She laughs at first but I remain aloof

She thinks I'm joining

“Oh God you not joking” she says once she realize how serious I am.

I nod smiling

“What” her mouth is wide open with her eyes ready to poop out.

Eish me and my big mouth.

“You two got married”

“Go ahead shout for the whole world to hear” she rolls her eyes and comes to sit next to me

“I’m confused, what do you mean you two got married” she whispers

“Remember when i was in Durban last year”

She nods hurriedly yet confused

“Well I went to joburg and we got married”

“How, like he paid dowry and all or just legally married. How does that work, like how I don’t understand I’m so confused right now. I thought your brothers hated his family so how did they agree to this—“

I let her rumble on

“God this is all so confusing, where’s the ring. Like you two are married, married you not joking right”

I narrate the whole story leaving out how I almost slept with Lungelo, you’ve already judged me too much and I don’t need her passing judgements too.

“Wow” she claps once

“So Katlego’s father just married you two just like that. He’s insane”

I laugh at the remembrance of his reaction when I spoke to him but he understood why I wanted to marry Mngqobi

“Yeap, he married us” I shrug nonchalantly

I’m used to the reality of being married to Mngqobi now so I’m not fazed by Zanele’s reaction

“Oh wow Mrs Ngcobo” she laughs lightly

“You two are crazy, how long are guys intending on keeping this a secret”

For as long as we can

“I don’t know, but please Zanele don’t tell anyone even Lucas”

Lucas should be the last person to know this.

“I won’t tell but I’m just wondering how long will you keep this a secret, like I’m speaking to you as Mngqobi wife”

I can understand why she’s surprised, sometimes I can’t believe it too but I don’t regret getting married to Mngqobi he’s all I want and need.

“Yeap, the marriage certificate is out he’ll get it when he goes back to joburg, I can’t change my ID

as yet though”

She claps once

I guess she was not ready to hear that, I can just imagine how irate my brothers will be once this comes to light. I guarantee you that i'll be buried that day and they won't even mourn me.

We spend the whole day chit chatting until she has to go home.

[06/20, 18:26] Lynne: 47

QHAMU

I'm a little sad because Mngobi left but I'm also happy that it's his last year then he'll finally be coming home for good this time. His goal is to make the poultry business a success so once he's completed his degree he'll be focusing on that, but of course, I want him to get a job so he can be able to provide for me and our kids. Lol, that's a dream

but I can't help remain hopeful I know we will have kids eventually though so I want him to be able to provide for us. Let's hope that this business would be booming by then.

It's been a month since he left and I miss him but the phone calls and constant chats helps.

I'm tired but today being Sunday means I have to wake up and cook breakfast for my brothers.

I wake up and dress up in a dress, my jeans have gotten tighter now so I'm forced to wear nothing but dresses.

"good morning" I greet my brothers yawning

"hey, how are you feeling now" I've been sick lately not sure why because I took laxatives for my bile but I still get dizzy and I vomit a lot, at first I used to puke in the morning only but now it has gotten worse.

"I'm feeling much better thanks bhuti, I cleaned my stomach last week so I should be fine in a few days" Mondli nods looking at me inquisitively

I fry eggs, the smell is unbearable but I fry anyway.

I'm a few minutes I'm done. I'm not hungry so I settle for black coffee only.

It helps with my bile too.

My brother feast on the plain breakfast I've made and once they are done they all get on with their business except for Nqaba.

"where is lover boy" I roll my eyes and continue to wash dishes

If I wasn't in this gloomy state i would have forced them to wash them but I don't have the energy to beg so I'm just doing the job.

" I hope he's not busy with other girls in J oburg" isn't he just confusing

" I thought you hated him" I move my eyes from the dishes and look at him

He shrugs and takes a bite on his banana.

He just had a huge breakfast but he's now eating a banana

Shaking my head.

I wish I had such an appetite

” I hate him but you're my sister and I'd hate him more if he dares break your heart”

I laugh lightly and sit next to him

”so what you really saying is you'd be fine if I can get back together with him”

we didn't break up but my brothers don't know that

”im not a fool Qhamukile I know you still seeing him and I know he gave you that necklace”

my hand goes to my neck subconsciously and I brush my fingers lightly on the heart shape

I have never taken it off since he gave it to me for my birthday last year even when he admitted to how he wanted to use me to get to my brothers, I still wore it with confidence.

I don't know if Nqaba likes my husband genuinely or if he just tolerates him for my sake.

This love, hate thing he has towards Mngqobi is

confusing and fascinating at the same time.

"I swear I'm going to kill that boy should he break your heart"

I laugh nervously

I'm not sure if he is serious or joking but his voice is hard and it carries no hint of a joke so I guess he's serious about killing Mngqobi.

"how is school" he asks casually after some time

You'd swear he's not the same person that has just threatened to kill my boyfriend.

"school is good, I'm enjoying it. Soon I'll be able to cook gourmet food for you"

I'm really enjoying college.

I've made a friend, Nomthandazo, she's a cool girl and down to earth too.

"that's good to hear but I'll stick to my pap and mutton stew, there's no any gourmet meal that will replace that but I'm glad you're enjoying, we're paying a lot in that school"

I swear my eyes will soon roll back and never turn again

What he means is Misuzulu is paying a lot of money, he's paying with what money. He can barely afford his girlfriends, oh he broke up with Qondi, he said he was just using her beauty to chase Lucas away when I asked.

Imagine, but I guess he saw it as

no use because Lucas still comes here whether he has a girlfriend or not nevertheless do you see why I don't want any of my friends dating any of my brothers, they are all the same.

”yes bhuti and I appreciate everything you do for me”

He messes up my hair laughing and bites the last bit of his banana

“Oh Lucas is coming to do my hair a little bit later on”

His face changes immediately forcing a laugh out of me.

”does he have to come here”

He says dramatically

“I’m feeling under the weather so he’s rather coming here”

“Yeah, you look like you could use some sleep. Why not take a nap before loud mouth gets here and i’ll finish the dishes for you”

Isn’t my brother just the best?

Nqaba can be sweet when he wants to.

“And the driving lessons”

Him and Gcina are very patient with me which I can’t say about the rest.

“Don’t worry about that, I must say you getting there soon you’ll be a pro driver but for today relax and get some rest”

He said it, let me nap before “loud mouth” Lucas gets here.

-

“African beauty wake up” Lucas says shaking me softly

Eish why is he here so soon

I open my eyes and stretch myself.

He’s dressed to impress for someone who just came to do hair.

We agreed that he’ll come after three to do my hair but it’s not even after two because I’ve just laid my head on my pillow seconds ago yet here he is.

“Hey Luu, you look good, what’s the occasion”

I yawn and sit up straight

Who let him in?

“I’m dressed up for my man of course, pity he left the minute he saw me. Imagine he didn’t even compliment me—“ he wipes his invincible tears dramatically

“—your brother is hurting me you know” I wonder when will he get over Nqaba

“He said I should tell you not to cook—“ he says
rolling his eyes

I guess Nqaba is the one that let him in.

“I’ll cook for him though”

now it’s my turn to roll my eyes.

I know Nqaba will never be in the same room as
Lucas. I wouldn’t be surprised if he comes back
with a girl just to prove his manliness to Lucas.

“I thought you said you’ll come after three”

I literally took a nap minutes ago and why the hell is
he still wearing this cologne I begged him to stop
using it

It smells so bad

“Yes hun and it’s after four now, you don’t look too
good though”

four?

It was eleven when I took my nap so I’ve been
sleeping for five hours?

Yet I am still tired.

“I’m just tired that’s all”

He narrows his eye like I just said something out of the ordinary

“can you please do my hair tomorrow after school instead”

I give him my dashing smile.

He finally agreed to plait my hair after my long cries and begging so I doubt he’ll reschedule but I’m too tired to endure the pain now, I just need to get back to my sleep.

he looks at me disapprovingly before he scolds at me

“Qhamu I had other plans you know but noooo you literally went on your knees begging me to do your hair so stand up and grab a comb before you bore me”

There’s no winning or a room for protest so I am forced to stand up and grab an Afro comb on top of my dressing table

“Where is Zane”

I'm trying to uncoil my fuzzy Afro but I'm not succeeding, my hair is just too painful besides I'm too tired to do it right now.

"She's busy with homework's, she's talking matric so serious"

we both laugh

It was me last year.

He takes the comb from my hands and force me to sit in between his legs and starts combing painfully

"Ouch Lucas"

I inhale deeply trying to take in the pain but I regret it the minutes Lucas's cologne hits my nostrils.

I retch up a stream of thin vomit, I can't...

abruptly, I jump up. My hands already covering over my mouth restrain vomit from spitting out.

"Qhamu are you..." I don't wait for him to finish because an amount of uncontrollable vomit has risen up to my throat, I sprint to the bathroom and

puke my intestines out or at least that's how it feels like.

I vomit the little food I ate last night until my stomach hurts

Lucas comes in and hands me a glass of water and I rinse my mouth and flush the toilet

“African doll what's wrong”

I sigh loudly and look at him blankly

“Are you pregnant” he almost whispers

I can't be....

“I don't know” I say and go back to my bedroom after wiping my mouth

“Baby girl when last where you on your periods”

from missing my periods to sporting a little I lost track as to when did I really get normal periods.

“I don't know”

He sighs and sits next to me

“Have you told Mnqobi” I shake my head

I've been denying the possibility of me being pregnant for a while now.

I'm not stupid, I know my body has changed and it can't be because I've finally 'blossomed', and not forgetting the vomiting... the tiredness.... I know I'm pregnant but my mind somehow is blocking me from accepting this.

"Don't cry, you'll get through this. You have to tell Mngobi and you'll figure things out with him"

I didn't realize I'm crying until Lucas mentions it.

How can I be so stupid.

Why didn't Mngobi tell me in time that the condom busted then maybe I would have taken necessary precautions.

"My brothers are going to kill him Luu and I doubt I'll be alive to witness it either. They will kill us both, his brothers included"

Teenage pregnancy is something that's there, Thobile felt pregnant at sixteen but I've always been in denial that it would happen to me, somehow

I always thought I'm immune to falling pregnant at a young age but I guess I'm not indifferent to any other sexual active teenager out there.

“Don't jump the gun babe Tomorrow we will get a pregnancy test just to make sure and you'll figure things out from there”

Jump the gun?

He doesn't know my brothers but you do and you know every well that they are going to kill me. In as much as I deny this I know I'm pregnant my brain is having difficulties processing and accepting that.

I nod and wipe my tears

The repercussions of unprotected sex are always too damn stressful.

After comforting me Lucas leaves without doing my hair. I know part of him wanted to scold at me, tell me how irresponsible I am but I guess he doesn't kick an already wounded dog down unlike some of you.

After crying my sorrows away I go back to my sleep.

-

The following day....

“So I just pee on the stick and wait for five minutes”

I’m reading on the instructions paper that comes with the pregnancy test

I didn’t go to school today

because I have this issue that I need to deal with first. I woke up early like how I normally do when going to school. Gatsha gave me transport money enough for the I’m whole week so I took it and bought a pregnancy test.

Lucas was kind enough to invite me to his home and let me take the test here.

I can’t risk taking it at home just Incase my brothers see me.

“Yes babe and after that five minutes we will know

if you're baking or not" Lucas says handing me the stick

I'm shaking in my boots as I accept it and go to the bathroom.

I know what the results will be but I pee on the stick anyway and walk back to his room.

I'm frantically pacing around the room, I know what the results will be but I'm holding on to that little thread of hope.

I'm hoping body is deceiving me with all these sudden developments.

Lucas keeps on checking the clock but I know what the results will say.

Stay hopeful, you body might just be going through chances and nothing more. I tell myself inwardly as Lucas takes the stick test from the table

"Times up doll"

this has been the longest five minutes of my life.

I don't want to look at it so I tell him to check it.

“I’m sorry babe but—“

“It’s positive, I know” I finish his sentence

“Yeah, so what happens now” I’ll be buried before I can even give birth to this child I’m carrying

“I guess I’m having a child” tears are threatening my eyes

“I’m sorry love, what happened to using protection at all times”

his voice is not judgmental but I don’t want to hear it

“I thought I would never get pregnant I guess”

tears are now free flowing

I messed up and this baby will just send Mngqobi and I to our early grave

“I’m sorry”

“What if I abort it”

Abortion is the only way out.

I mean look at it this way, my brothers are going to

kill Mngqobi so abortion is the only best option I have.

“I’m not going to tell you what to do but shouldn’t you discuss that with your husband first”

Zanele told him?

I look at him

“Zanele” he nods lightly

“You two were so stupid in getting married in the first place but it’s done now so he deserves to know as your husband”

I guess there’s no denying that I married Mngqobi now besides I’ve got a foetus growing inside me that I need to worry about.

“No, I can’t tell him now and please don’t tell anyone else until I’ve figured out what to do”

he nods doubtfully

The more the abortion idea sinks in the more I think it’s the best option for the both of us. We both still young and we will have many more babies to come.

[06/20, 18:26] Lynne: 48

QHAMU

The more I think about this abortion issue the more it makes sense to me.

For one, my brothers will burn with fury should they find out I'm pregnant and worse pregnancy it's not something one can hide forever. I'll start showing soon and hell will break loose and I can't have that. There's too much violence happening already.

I'm tapping my foot on the tiled clinic floor frantically waiting to be called in.

It feels like a lifetime ago when I was here with Thobile and she was going through the same thing except I don't have any support.

I miss her so much and I know she's be holding my hand supporting me throughout but she's resting on her final bed right now and I know she's with me in spirit.

I've decided not to go tell Lucas about my decision, he disapproves and he made it clear. I don't trust Zanele to keep her mouth shut, not after she told Lucas about my marriage to Mngqobi so I'm here alone.

"next" the lady wearing a blue nurse uniform says
I'm next.

My heart is beating radically you'd swear it's about to jump out of my chest. I stand up and follow the arrow to a private room.

A young nurse is seated on the opposite chair behind the desk looking serious. Her stomach is protruding, out of all nurses here I had be attended by a pregnant one. She's wearing a big rock on her finger so her being pregnant is acceptable, i on the other hand. I'm nineteen, with no ring and pregnant.

Sighs

I sit down after exchanging greetings with her.

”How can I help young lady”

looks can be deceiving, she’s actually softly spoken and very sweet.

Most of these nurses have a tendency of being rude to young girls like myself.

”I’m pregnant—“ it’s funny how I’m admitting this out loud for the first time.

“I see, why do you think you’re pregnant”

Duh I took a test

“I took a test and it came out positive”

She’s busy writing on the clipboard, I now have a

clinic file.

“do you know how far along are you”

I don't but I assume I conceived towards the end of December that was when Mngqobi and I made love a lot, unprotected.

I regret it but there's no time to sit and dwell on the what if's or regrets, what's done it's done, anyway when I do my calculations I'm about two months pregnant meaning abortion is still legal at this stage.

“About three months” I tell her

She nods and give me a plastic cup.

I already know the drill so I excuse myself and go to the bathroom and pee in the cup. She dips the pregnancy test when I come back and I dispose the urine.

I already know the results so I'm not shocked when she confirms the results.

“So you need to start prenatal care but first we need to be sure how far along you are and we will take it from there”

she shows me a bed to get on and I lift my dress up to expose my perfectly flat stomach. I need to abort before I start showing.

She applied the cold gel on my abdomen and get the sonar ready.

I don't even want to look at the machine as she moves it around my stomach.

“You're sixteen weeks now”

I'm not good at maths but my brain manages to do a quick calculations.

It's the twenty ninth of March today so counting back I should be fourteen weeks not sixteen

“What—“ it cant be

“Are you sure, I should be fourteen weeks not sixteen”

“The machines doesn't lie baby girl, you're sixteen weeks”

I nod and wipe the gel from my stomach.

I don't want to attach any emotions to this fetus because soon I'll be rid of it.

“So what should I do if I want to get an abortion”

I bluntly ask

Each minute is crucial, the more time I wait the bigger the fetus grows and I can't have that.

She looks taken aback by my question but I couldn't care what she thinks right now.

“Well we are only authorized to perform the procedure if you're less than twelve weeks anything above that we refer to the hospital in town”

Great just great, now I have to do this in town, could this be a sign that this is not such a good idea, I mean abortion is a sin, it is wrong, it is an abomination...stop it Qhamu I reprimand myself inwardly.

I need to this and right now there's no time to dwell on my moral compass.

I'll be dead before I have this baby anyway so why should I continue with this pregnancy that's going to ruin my life furthering this baby won't even see a light of day.

“How old are you” the nurse startles me out of my train of thoughts

“Nineteen”

I thought I'd be at least twenty five before making babies but I guess nature had another plan for me.

You girls please protect yourself or better yet abstain from sex.

I should have learned from Thobile but I didn't, see where I am right now.

“Do you work—“ I shake my head

“does the father of the baby work” I shake my head

“He's doing his last year at wits”

She nods lightly

I hate the pity eyes she's looking at me with.

"Does he know you're pregnant" I shake my head

It's quite surprising how dry my eyes are but I guess it's crunch time now, I don't have time for tears.

"Are you planning on telling him" yet again I shake my head

"Mmmh why abortion my dear, you still young and I know it's going to be tough but I've got no doubt that you will be fine"

She says brushing her swollen stomach

If she's trying to get me to change my mind it's not

working and I'm not about to tell this woman my life story.

It's not like I have a choice, if I don't do this then Mngqobi is as good as dead

I take a deep breath letting her words sink in but nothing makes more sense than abortion right now.

“You parents will be angry but they will eventually forgive and they'll be loving that child more than anything, you'll end up being jealous I'm telling you”

I chuckle at the thought of my brothers loving Mngqobi Ngcobo's offspring... my child.

Lol... the thought is short lived when I think of the hatred they have towards the Ngcobos

I don't see my brothers loving my child not when he would have Ngcobo's blood running through his veins.

No, they will never accept a Ngcobo even if it's my child.

But maybe they might... stop fooling yourself
Qhamu.

You're carrying a Ngcobo, an enemy to the
Buthelezi's.

"I doubt it which is why I want to get this procedure
done. My family will never accept this child so I
don't want to waist your time, nothing you say will
change my mind. Can you please give me the
transcript for the hospital"

"I hear you, but think about it first. Having a life
grown inside you is the best feeling in the world.
This is my first child and I can't wait to hold her and
love her forever. I've got no doubt your family will
accept your baby eventually. Don't make any rushed
decision. Think about it first. I'm not going to tell
you what to do but being pregnant is the best,
feeling a life move inside you it so magical and I
would never trade this for anything"

My situation is so different from hers, I know I'm married but it's not like my family will recognize my marriage to Mngqobi in fact they force me to get a divorce if we are both still alive by then.

“I hear you but I've made my decision”

The more she talks is the more I doubt that this is the right decision and I can't second guess my plans now.

She scribbles on the referral letter, put it in a envelope and hands it to me.

I thank her and leave.

•

Couple of weeks later...

If you thought clinic queues are long then you don't know anything. I've been here since five in the morning and it's now after eleven and I'm still seating.

I'm scared I might meet Mnqobi's mother because she works here but Pietermaritzburg hospital is huge so that gives me some kind of relief.

An hour later I step into a private room. The nurse knows why I'm here so she doesn't ask any questions but request that I lift my shirt so she can see how far along am I.

I do that without protesting.

This nurse has attitude for days, she's speaks less but gives you an evil eye when you don't do what she wants.

"You're twenty one weeks" she says and writes on the paper

"Twenty one" I say incredulously

How the hell did I move from being sixteen to twenty one weeks in just a three weeks.

“Yes—“ shes not even alarmed by my shock

“But I was at Matsheni clinic a few weeks and I was told I’m sixteen weeks” I’m shocked really

This new revelations will hinder my plans of having a less risky procedure.

“Hey don’t tell me about Matsheni and their outdated machines, it’s shows you’re twenty one weeks”

She hands me the hand towel and I wipe the gel off.

She hands me two papers.

“This is an indemnity form, it states that we will not be held liable should something go wrong during the procedure, you need to understand that you’re now high risk as the fetus has developed and it’s almost human so by signing here you acknowledge that. Sign here and write your full names here—“

she points at the two dotted lines

“and hand in at the front desk. When you come back you need to bring towels because we don’t provide and the rest of the things you’ll need to bring are listed on that other paper”

that’s all she says before she calls in the next person.

I’m scared but I complete the indemnity form anyway and hand it to the lady at the front desk.

I’m a little skeptical about all this now but the image

of my brothers killing Mnqobi motivates me enough to proceed with my initial plan.

I'm doing this to save us.

Speaking of Mnqobi, he has been blowing up my phone today, I've ignored him for far too long.

"Baby" I answer

My spirit is down but I try and sound cheerful

"Finally she answers her phone. How are you my love"

his hoarse voice always manages to snap out of my gloomy state.

"I'm good and you"

“I’m missing my wife, I’m so glad I’ll be done with school in a few months then I’ll be coming home forever”

he’s so excited about coming home indefinitely.

“Yes, my love do you think our families will ever let us be”

Testing the waters here...

“What’s going on there, are they fighting again” him

“No my love it’s been peaceful since Gatsha accepted defeat”

Langa’s business is doing very well compared to my brothers, it’s saddening but the taxi business is doing very well for such, it’s bringing sufficient income to support the whole Mvubukazi village so

I'm not complaining.

He chuckles softly

“I just want peace I don't care whose making more money and to answer your question no my love, I doubt our families will let us be. Well, not now at least. We need to give them more time to work on their anger but I'm hopeful that in the end we will be together freely”

I nod like he's seeing me

“We married—“

“Which we need to keep a secret. I'm as good as dead should any of our brothers find out” he cuts me short

“I know but what if we were to make a baby, do you think—“ his loud laughter stops me mid-sentence

“Oh my love I know you want to carry my seeds but now it’s not the right time. Your brothers will surely kill me should I impregnate you and I’m sure you don’t want to be a widow so soon” he says

Well to bad I’m already carrying your seed.

The little hope I had vacates.

“Oh—“ words fail me

“Yes besides we both still young to be parents. We need to enjoy each other and our secret marriage before we can start making kids. Right now our main focus should be trying to bring peace between our families so we can tell them about our marriage”

I take a long deep breath

Mnqobi is making so much sense but I'm already pregnant.

“But don't worry I'll fill you up with Mnqobi junior the minute we have our families blessings but definitely not now”

Hearing him so adamant that having a baby right now is not ideal demolish the tiny hope I had that this baby might be what we need. Let me not kid myself, abortion is the only option.

He doesn't want a baby right now.

“Yeah you right”

my voice lacks conviction that the emptiness of my words echo in my mind.

“Yes my love”

I remain silent, I'm just trying to steady my breathing. I guess I wanted to hear him say he wants a baby then maybe I would dismiss the thought of having abortion but he's adamant that a baby will just add on to the pile of stress we already have.

I wipe away the lone tear that has escaped my eye, I don't want to cry. I don't want to feel any emotion throughout this whole process. I'm afraid that should I feel something for this baby then I'll want to keep it and that's not an option

“Qhamukile are you alright, I can hear you sniffing. Are you crying my love”

I take a deep breath and wipe my tears before answering

“I’m fine, I’m just a little emotional that’s all”

“Are you sure it’s only that”

I hate how he knows me like the back of his hand

“Yes my love, I have to go”

“Qhamukile I know there’s something you not telling me but I’m not going to pressure you. You’ll tell me when you ready”

thank goodness for that.

•

Lucas decides to show his face today after a few weeks of him ignoring me but I’m too tired to

entertain him, being at the hospital all day is more tiring than you'd think.

I've been skipping classes lately which is not a good thing so once I'm done with all this I need to play catch up, not only that but I need to focus too.

Lucas is paying no attention to me because he's sending himself music from my phone.

He complains that I listen to loud, oh no, he said ratchet music which puzzles me because he's sending the very same ratchets music to himself.

SMH

Is he just complicated, anyway, you know I don't understand a woman's body at times so before I knew I was pregnant I constantly got 'morning sickness' but the moment I took that pregnancy test everything changed.

I no longer get sick like I did and boy am I happy, my brothers were so close to taking me to a doctor.

thank god my morning sickness stopped before

that.

“So are you still going ahead with it” He says after checking the coast

I guess he’s done with sending himself music because he’s looking at me and not so focused on the phone anymore.

I’m too cautious now, I can’t afford to blurb my secrets away before ensuring that none of my brothers are in sight and Lucas does the same.

I shrug

I’m actually booked to get the procedure done tomorrow then I’ll be free.

Free?

Let me rather not get into that now, I have to detach myself from my moral compass if I don’t want to be emotionally scarred when I’m done with this abortion.

Right now the only thing I need to worry about is how will I convince my brothers that I'll be sleeping over at Zanele's house tomorrow. I'll be sleeping over at the hospital so I need to come up with a compelling story.

My brothers don't trust Lucas when it comes to sleep overs but they do trust Zanele which is dumb really because they are siblings and they live in the same house but I guess they feel better when I tell them I'm sleeping over at Zanele's.

Rolling my eyes....

“Yes I'm booked for tomorrow, I'm going to tell my brothers that I'll be sleeping over at your place”

He shakes his head disapprovingly

“So you are not going to tell Mngobi vele” not I'm not.

“Yes Lucas I’m not. I spoke to him earlier and he thinks having a child now will make things worse”

“But did you actually tell him you’re pregnant or you just concluded he doesn’t want this baby”

What difference does it make

“It doesn’t matter if he knows or not, he said he doesn’t want any kids right now and I respect that”

“It matter Qhamukile, I know it’s your body and all but he has to have some say in this. It’s his child too”

its so exasperating telling Lucas the same thing over and over again.

“Just tell him and hear what he says”

“Lucas I’ve made my decision and I’m not changing my mind. Mngobi doesn’t have to know I’m pregnant besides we are both still young” me

“I know but all that I’m saying is let him make the decision with you, I know you think you don’t need him right now but you will need his support. Abortion is not just a medical procedure which you get to do and forget about it, there are emotions involved and you’ll need his support”

He makes a compelling argument but I’ll worry about that later.

I’m packing a little bag getting ready for tomorrow I actually bought the towels, sanitary towels and the rest of the stuff I’ll need.

I goggled about abortions, just to know what to expect. It’s going to be painful from what I read but

nothing will be as painful as seeing my husband's body being lowered to the ground in a coffin besides I'm sure the pain will be bearable.

“There’s no convincing you otherwise huh” I shake my head.

I’ve made my decision.

[06/20, 18:27] Lynne: 49

QHAMU

The jarring alarm jolts me out of my thoughts, it's five in the morning but I haven't gotten any sleep, I've been thinking about this whole thing.

I'm twenty one weeks pregnant. There is a life in me that's getting ready for be born, this baby chose me to be it's mother and what do I do I want to kill it.

I'm not well, physically I'm fine but inside I'm

shattered maybe telling Mngqobi is not such a bad idea, after all, this is his child too at the end of the day.

I wake up, bath and prepare for today. I'm doing this, there's no turning back.

It's a little after six when I finish and I take a taxi to town.

Town is already buzzing, people everywhere going on about their business.

I have a bag packed and I'm ready to get rid of this child.

I don't know why was I told to come here early if I'll be spending the night but hey what can I say.

It didn't much to convince all the Buthelezi brood, so as far as they are concerned I'll be going to Zanele after school.

I've prayed for God to forgive me and I hope I'll be able to forgive myself.

Hospital are always full but I make my way to to the

correct ward and sit.

”is it your first one”

A lady I'm seating next to me asks and I nod

”mmmmh so you getting rid of it huh” I nod again

”How far along are you” I'm not so sure anymore

” twenty-one weeks” I tell her

”I'm only four weeks, the father of mine is my stepfather that's why I'm having an abortion. What about you”

What?

Did she just openly tell me she's having her father child?

And the father of mine does n't even know I'm pregnant

"he doesn't know"

She nods and stands up

"we going to sit here the whole day, they first have to clean the once which were here the previous night before they attend to us, let's get some fresh air"

I stand and follow behind her

It looks like it's going to rain today, it's cloudy.

She lights her cigarette

"you shouldn't be smoking" she's pregnant and I'm sure that's not good for the baby

"yes and I'm terminating so what's the use" oh ya

"mmmm" how embarrassing

"I'm Thumeka by the way"

I introduce myself too

"so Qhamu are you ready, you do know it's painful right" I nod

"yes I read about it"

She chuckles and puffs

"read about it, it's much worse believe me. It will feel like your insides are being pulled out of you and the emotional pain there after but this is my fourth abortion and the pain get worse everytime but

emotional i feel nothing”

fourth as in number four

”why not just use contraceptive or use a condom”

too rich coming from me I know but this is her fourth abortion besides she's way too young to have been pregnant four times already

she's about my age if not younger.

”my father hates condoms, he says he's a man and real man don't use plastic and well, as for contraceptives, my mother would never allow it. She said I'll abort until I can't bare any children because my womb is too welcoming”

what sick family is she from

”don't feel sorry for me, I'm a tough girl. When I finish school I'm going to look for a job then ill be

fine”

she pulls long before she throws the cigarette butt away.

“Why not report your parents or something”

“I tried but it only got worse for me. I depend on these people so if I try

anything I’ll be in deep shit. I’m used to it now, it’s been going on since I was nine so yeah”

Nine?

Who does that to a child though.

She’s so emotionally detached, she’s telling me this painful story and yet there’s no tears in sight in fact she just neutral which makes me second guess her but whom am I to argue what she’s telling me

” let's go” I'm left shocked for a lack of a better word

So her father is sleeping with her and her mother knows about this and she's actually ok with her child being raped?

Who does that, what kind of a mother is she but I guess I'm the last person to be passing judgments right now, not when I'm about to do what I'm about to.

I go back to my bench and listen to music to calm myself.

It's now after two and I'm hungry.

I walk to the canteen to get myself a muffin. I'm actually craving a cake but a muffin will do.

A chocolate one is close enough to a cake so I indulge until a young boy comes running in my direction making me spill my juice.

Dammit, parents shouldn't let kids play in places like this.

”sorry sisi” he says sweetly melting my heart
instantly

My anger diminishes and I smile at him.

He’s so cute.

” it's okay just watch where you going next time”

he nods and look at me inquisitively

”are you Qhamu” his voice is so sweet

I nod, I don't know how he knows my name but oh
well, I've got bigger fish to fry.

”yes I am Qhamu, how do you know my name”

He shrugs

”Mkhulu said I should tell you to hold on and be
strong”

kids and they're over imagination.

”what are you talking about, where is Mkhulu”

He shrugs both his shoulders and holds my hand.

Now this I have never seen.

Parents should teach their kids to stay away from strangers.

”Mkhulu says I should tell you to be strong, Where is Bhuti Mngqobi”

wait. What?

”where is Mngqobi?”

I frantically look around, Mngqobi can't know I'm pregnant or having an abortion for that matter but this child is scaring me

”how do you know Mnqobi, where is he” he shrugs his shoulder nonchalantly again

”Sma, there you are” a familiar voice shouts and looking up I see MaNgidi running and panting towards us

”Smangalis o I told you to wait in the car” she shouts at Sma.

Oh so this is the Sma my brothers almost killed.

”Qhamukile its you. This one wants to give me a heart attack, I thought I lost him, I've been looking for him everywhere”

Now that MaNgidi is here I see the resembles between Sma and the rest of his brothers but my mind is still daze from what he said about Mkhulu to hear anything that MaNgidi is saying.

Could the two men be communicating with me through Sma but Sma is a child they can't do that. I think I'm going crazy.

"his transport dropped him here from school but I'm going home now. What are you doing here anyway"

Wait... Sma said Mkhulu right?

did I hear him right or my mind is just playing tricks on me.

"Qhamu"

"oh I'm here to see a friend" I lie blatantly

"oh I can give you a lift home"

"no ill be fine ma, don't worry my brother will pick

me up” I try to sound as convincing as I can be.

”Alright then” she takes Sma’s hand and they leave.

I watch Sma until they disappear around the corridor.

I’m a little spooked to say the least when I walk back to the bench.

Oh Qhamu, Mngqobi is your husband, not a boyfriend.

It’s time you start acting like a married woman.

Mngqobi deserves to know about his child. He might be angry that you’re pregnant but he’ll get over it.

I tell myself inwardly.

My hand voluntarily goes to my stomach, Its still flat but I know there’s a life that’s growing in there and I can’t deny my child his birth right.

A nurse emerges from one of the rooms and tells us all enter

“This one pill you’re going to put under your tongue

until it dissolves, then another one will be pushed up your vagina to help speed up the process. When you start shivering just know it's working, you going to vomit but those are just the side effects" she us the little white pill, I'm watching as the the rest of the ladies open their packets and insert the pill under their tongues I guess there's no going back. It's now or never.

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MNQOBI

I feel jubilee, that what a soccer practice actually does to me. I'm re-energized which is a surprise considering how I've been tired these last few weeks.

I'm meeting us with Katlego, which reminds me I got the marriage certificate a while back so Qhamu is indeed my wife. It still feels surreal, it feels like I'll

wake up one day and all this will just be nothing but a faint dream. I sometimes have to actually pinch myself when I see my marriage certificate to make sure it isn't dream.

I don't regret getting married, I know Qhamu was going to be my wife so being married to her now rather than later makes no difference to me. She's my wife just like who she would have been twenty years from now. I love that girl with everything in me that sometimes it scared me, its abnormal to love someone the way I do her but again what's normal when it comes to the matters of the heart?

I know something is bothering her, I can feel and I definitely heard from the sound of her voice when we spoke yesterday but with Qhamu I've learned to be patient. She'll tell me when she's ready but I miss the sound of her voice.

I take out my phone from my gym bag to call but I have seventeen missed calls and eight messages from a number I don't recognize

”Mnqobi I've been trying to call you, please call me back”

Clearly this person knows me.

”This is a matter of life and death please call me”

I know nothing happened to my family or else one of them would've called and I'm sure it's not Qhamu as well because Zwelethu would've called me.

”dammit Mnqobi answer your bloody phone. You the only one that can get through to her”

I'm done reading all these messages.

I call the number back

It rings once before a voice comes through the speaker

”did you stop her, did she do it. I was late wasn't I, she went ahead with it—“

I don't know what's going on here but I'm not panicking

”whose this” I remain as calm as I can be

”oh sorry this is Lucas—“ my brows furrow

Why is Lucas calling me and where the hell did he get my numbers from.

“Lucas”

“Yes have you spoken to Qhamu, did she do it. Lord please don't tell me she did it. I called because I know you're the only person who can stop her but I think it's too late now”

“I don't know what you talking about, what did Qhamu do”

“The abortion, I sent you a message telling you she’s pregnant and she’s going to abort it”

What?

Abortion?

Who is pregnant, it can't be Qhamu not my Qhamu?

Pregnant?

No it's can't be.

“Qhamu is pregnant” I ask myself

“Yes, She found out a few weeks ago and wants to terminate it” I hung up and immediately call her

It rings once before she answers

“Mngobi I'm so sorry please forgive me” please don't tell me she did it.

she's not crying yet but desperation in her voice will evoke her tears

My own tears are a few blinks away, she actually
killed our child

“Did you do it” the hostility in my voice is too rife
She sniffs a few times

“Qhamukile did you do it”

“I wanted to so bad Mngqobi but I couldn’t, I couldn’t
kill our baby”

Relief pours down my body like rain, I don’t want a
child but the thought of her aborting my baby sends
me into a frenzy. We both remain quiet for a while
until her tears start flowing. I can’t see her but I
know my wife.

“So you’re pregnant”

i know she's nodding which is ridiculous because I can't see her

"We are so fucked" be both laugh

"We are as good as dead" I can't argue with that.

"How far are you"

"Twenty one weeks" with a quick calculation in the back on my head I take it she conceived the weekend she was here. The same weekend we got married.

That's was the best weekend of my entire life and a baby was even made.

"Fuck" I say again

I smile at the thought of seeing and holding my child for the first time.

I hope my child doesn't take after Qhamu's stubbornness I won't be able to deal with two Qhamu's at once.

I'm actually happy which is surprising but the reality of all this deprives me of being fully happy to embrace my forthcoming.

I'm going to be a father, there's someone whose going to call me baba soon and I know it will get bumpy before both our families accept this.

"Fuck" I'm having a child not just with anyone but with Qhamu.

"Fuck"

"Enough with that word, what are we going to do" she's done with the water walks and her feistiness has come out to play

“I don’t know but what I know is I’ll be with you every step of the way” I’m literally fucked but I can’t panic now, not when Qhamu needs assurance that everything will work out.

“I know you’ll be here for me, how did you find out” I laugh and tell her how many missed calls and messages her friend left.

“Lucas is something, I wonder where did he get your number from—“ she laughs lightly

“I’m sorry my love. I know I was wrong for not telling you I was just so scared and confused but now I realized I was wrong and I’m sorry”

Qhamukile Ngcobo is apologizing, heeee this I have never seen.

“You’re my husband and I shouldn’t be making decisions which affects the both of us alone. I’ll try and be the wife you need it’s going to take some time to get used to but I’m willing to do it for you”

She continues, I really thought she was going to stop at I'm sorry I guess my wife is really sorry for her to apologize so profusely.

“I hear baby, I know it’s not easy but I appreciate everything you just said. I want you to be yourself I like the stubbornness to an extent, it shows you have a strong will and I love it but it’s unnecessary at times. You just need to trust me as your husband. We need to work with each other and baby please don't keep things from me. If you cant be honest to me then who are you going to be honest to, I'm your husband and you should start seeing me as your partner but enough about that I'm just happy you didn't go ahead with it”

“I know right, my stomach is still flat for someone who is almost five months pregnant”

“I hope it stays that way until you give birth. I’m not ready to deal with our families, but how did you miss it my love didn’t you feel different a few weeks after we got married”

“I was in denial, I knew my body was changing but I guess my brain blocked out the possibility of pregnancy and I got my periods—“ she stops and continues a little panicked

“Mnqobi I got my periods and I shouldn’t have, what if something happened to the baby, oh Mnqobi I’ve been going on my periods since I feel pregnant what if—I know I didn’t want this baby but no—“

There she starts again

“Baby calm down, it does happen at times it maybe

because the embryo was implanting into the walls of your uterus, let's not jump into any conclusions"

I'm scared of the possibility that's she might have miscarried but I need to hold it together for her sake.

"What if I miscarried Mnqobi, maybe God is punishing me for wanting to abort in the first place"
I'm not even going to think about that.

"Qhamukile I'm sure the nurses would have known, they did the sonar right" I assume she's nodding

"So my love they would have told you if something was wrong. Easter is nearing, I'll come down and we will go see a doctor together if you can't go alone and I'm dying to know the gender. I know it's a girl" she's going to be a daddy's girl.

"Remember your dream. They said its a him" those old men said a lot of things which don't make sense

I know it's a girl.

“Don't rain on my parade please, we having a girl and that's it” I feel her smile she actually has to see a doctor urgently but I know she won't do it alone so I'll just have to go home to support her and make sure everything is fine with her and the baby.

I'm so doomed.

A pregnancy is not something you can't hide forever and I'm sure her brothers will go ballistic once her pregnancy is known but I remain hopeful.

This baby is part Buthelezi and part Ngcobo, she'll have both blood running through her veins and I know both families will never disown their own and this is how I know they will accept the situation for what it is.

It won't be easy but it will be alright in the end. Qhamu and I are indeed rewriting history, a Ngcobo has never had a child with a Buthelezi, this is the first time and who knows maybe this feud will finally come to an end.

” Listen my love need to go but I’ll call you later on”

We exchange I loves you’s and hang up.

A wide smile is plastered on my face as I go meet up with Katlego.

I’m having a baby?

I?

Me?

A baby?

Wow, I’m loss for words.

[06/20, 18:27] Lynne: 50

MNQOBI

I know Qhamu told me she’s pregnant but part of me still believed she’s not, I thought this was just another case of phantom pregnancy or something you know, just not an actual baby growing inside

her. I just didn't want to believe it even though she sent me pictures of about five different pregnancy tests I still didn't believe but being here and hearing how strong my baby's heartbeat is makes everything so real.

“Loud and strong”

the doctor says as she moves the sonar around Qhamu's flat stomach

I don't understand how can she be this flat whilst twenty-six weeks long

“It's just one baby right”

she asks a little frighten.

I'm surprised she's only asking now after all the sonar check-ups she went through when she tried to terminate the pregnancy

Funny I'm not even angry at that maybe it's because

part of me knows she wouldn't have gone through
with it anyway

I know my wife more than she knows herself.

“Yes it's just one right” I ask too.

having a child at this young age is too much
responsibility as it is now, imagine having two at the
same time.

I cant deal.

The doctor chuckles shaking her head

“It's just one heartbeat so you carrying just one
baby”

relief sprawls across Qhamu's face

It would be nice if she was carrying twins but we
not ready for that.

One baby is more than enough

“Maybe in future, you might have twins seeing the father here is a monozygotic twin and there’s a high chance that you might conceive twins but you’re safe for now”

We all laugh it out

“Don’t you want to know the gender”

I nod but as expected Qhamu shakes her head

Well, I don’t care what she wants I need to know.

“I want it to be a surprise” she says

I, on the other hand, don’t want any surprises, I want to prepare myself mentally and emotionally for all the drama that will follow should it be a girl and all the naughtiness I’ll endure should it be my replica

“I’d love to know” I say smiling

The thought of being a father is frightening and exciting at the same time

“No Mngobi” Qhamu says looking at me

“don’t tell him please” she turns her eyes to the beautiful African doctor

“Tell you what, I can write it in a piece of paper for his eyes only and he doesn’t have to tell you” I like that idea

“He wants a girl and I have a feeling it’s a girl too even though I want a boy so he’s going to gloat throughout this pregnancy”

I’m going to gloat vele...

“I promise I won’t gloat my love” I give her my most dashing smile, the one only reserved for her.

The doctor writes on a piece of paper and hands it to me.

A boy!

“Yes” I hiss out loud, air-punching

I’m having a boy, a whole Ngcobo heir. The one who's going to take over my legacy.

To say I’m happy would be an understatement
I’m ecstatic.

Funny I thought I wanted a girl but having a mini-me is exciting beyond imaginable.

I can already picture him looking like me with his mother's brown eyes.

He’s going to be beautiful.

“It’s a girl isn’t it, look how happy you are”

happiness evident in her voice too

We know this is going to anger our families but I don't want to think about that for now. I just want to enjoy this moment without any negative thoughts and I guess Qhamu too is blocking out the thought of our families ripping us apart.

People I'm having a baby and nothing will take away what I'm feeling right this moment.

I help wipe off the gel off her belly and help her get off the bed

“I'm glad you two are happy about this, pregnancy is very tough to go through especially for a woman but having a partner that supports you makes the journey bearable and enjoyable so I hope you two remain like this for the next few months because it might get tougher but again each pregnancy is different”

I smile and look at Qhamu

“She’s stuck with me for life” I say lovingly

Qhamu rolls her beautiful eyes and brushes her hand over mine.

My hand is still placed over the stomach.

I can’t wait for my baby to start kicking.

“You just happy because we having a girl” Qhamu says sulking

I kiss her temple before speaking

“We having a baby my love and that’s enough to make me happy”

She rolls her eyes again, her beauty is just impeccable. I sometimes still find it hard to phantom that she’s mine.

How did I land such an angel with the purest heart, she’s everything I need in a wife, compassionate, loving and caring. She’s just everything and more.

I’m so fortunate to call her my wife and soon I’ll be

calling her the mother of my child.

I'm so lucky.

She smiles sweetly at me and mimes "love you" before she goes into a separate room to change back into her clothes

"So doctor I'm a little worried, she mentioned she's still getting her periods which she shouldn't, we are over the first trimester so for her to continue getting her periods is alarming, Wouldn't that cause a miscarriage or any complications?"

Google has been my best friend ever since I learned Qhamu is pregnant.

"I'm sure it was just sporting which could be caused by various of things but that's shouldn't worry you for now, yes she might have complications when she delivers but it's still early to tell. I'll keep an eye on her to make sure everything goes well"

I nod

“she’s now twenty-six weeks but she’s not showing, could something be wrong, is the baby not growing or what”

Like I said I’ve been best of friends with Mr google and it mentioned that she should be showing by now. This has been weighing too much on me, with thoughts running through my mind. I also didn’t want to mention this in Qhamu’s presents just Incase she gets too neurotic and starts worrying too she’s already worried about what Thobile said on her dreams about our baby being an angel so I don’t want to add on that.

“Each pregnancy is different Mr. Ngcobo and from what we’ve seen the baby is growing at a normal pace, she might be this flat until she gives birth but protrudes within the first few weeks in her second pregnancy. I’ve got no doubt that she will soon show even though I don’t think she will be big but she will also start to feel some movements soon

and the cravings will start as well. I, however, recommend she eats healthier and take her medication as prescribed and everything will be fine”

Hearing that gives me some kind of relief

Once Qhamu is back we leave the gynecologist office.

I can't afford the expensive doctors but I had to make a plan for us to see a good one.

Now that I'm a father to be I have to worry about taking care of my family, financially I'm not there yet but a man has to do whatever he can to support his family.

The money I saved during the holidays is not enough but it was enough for today.

Now that my savings are depleting I have to make means of getting some income, at least I have a few months then I'll be done with my degree.

“Its a girl right” she asks as I drive to the mall
I need to feed her and my child

“I thought you wanted it to be a surprise”

“J ust tell me already I know you want to”
I shake my head laughing lightly

“It’s a baby, my love, you’re carrying my baby
whether boy or girl I’ll love this child
wholeheartedly”

I can’t help run my hand over her stomach
I’m going to be a father.
Reciting it in my head helps me believe it.

“Even lesbian or gay” my face involuntary frowns

No child of mine will be gay, I'm not homophobic or anything but not my child.

“I'm joking my love” she laughs at me

“I didn't think it would happen so soon though when are we going to tell them” Qhamu

I shrug both my shoulders

“How about we sit them down and tell them together, remember we also have to tell them we married”

As cliché as this may sound but I want to rectify my wrongs, Qhamu and I didn't get married in the most conventional way but maybe this is one thing we will get right.

“Or we could just run away and send them SMS's”

I laugh lightly

That would be an easy way out but it wouldn't solve anything, in fact, it would make matters worse

“Let's not worry ourselves about that for now, we will worry about it when you start showing—“ I know part of her means what she said about running away, I think we've all figured how impulsive my wife can be.

“—right now I need to feed my child”

she rolls her eyes and leans back on her seat.

I can't help glance at her as I continue to drive, her eyes are shut so she can't see me as I admire her beautiful features.

Her dark skin is flawless and radiant, pregnancy looks so good on her I swear I'm going to pump another seed in her once she delivers this baby if she allows it.

Lol who am I fooling, she'll never agree to it so soon.

So can you let me dream, please?

But I want to have as many kids as I can with her

I want to be surrounded by our offsprings that look exactly like her.

It takes another ten minutes before we get to the mall and I open the door for her and entwine her hand with mine as we walk into the mall.

It's the Easter weekend so it's full and for a change, we go to Nando's

If she wasn't pregnant we would probably be at KFC but their meat is now rotten.

Lol...

I order chips and chicken for myself and salads for her but the look she gives me is enough to make me change her order.

“The doctor said you need to eat healthy though”

”eat healthy not starve myself—“ she turns her head to the bored lady behind the counter and orders a

quarter leg chicken with chips and coke which I protest to so she settles for apple juice instead.

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NARRATIVE

It's been over a year since Zithulele made a move but now the time has finally come for him to avenge his brother and the shot out which resulted in Gatsha being shot and but Zithulele wants to avenge the men he lost that night. The business has been booming for him and more especially now that he's expanded into arms dealing, the Nigerians are his biggest business associates.

He gathered all his men just to brief them about the next mission they are about to embark on.

Nkanyezi who is his right-hand man has been with him throughout but little does he know that Zithulele is on to him. He knows someone close to

him is working with if not for the enemy and tonight he's going to find out who is spying for his rivals.

“They are ready for you boss” Nkanyezi says entering Zithulele's office without knocking, startling him.

Zithulele gulps down the hard liquor content in his glass and follows Nkanyezi out

“Gentlemen I think you know why you're all here, those fuckers think they now run these streets, they think I'm still licking my wounds but now the time has finally come for us to avenge our fallen brothers and take back what belongs to us. Makhosini and Misuzulu needs to know who runs the show but first I need to deal with this little pest amongst us that keeps handing them information—“ all his men start squirming shaking their heads

“Boss do you know who this traitor is, you need to deal with him” Nkanyezi says nervously

“No, not yet but soon I’ll know who it is” Zithulele gives him a gold stare and look back at his men

“So boys if you know who this person is please come to me and I promise, you will be rewarded but for now I want us to attack Makhosini and his brothers my intel tells me they are all in that little pub they opened. They are all there so if we do this write we won’t have any loopholes, they will all be dead and we will move on to the next target which is Misuzulu and his bloody brothers” all the men nod and get ready for the attack

Nkanyezi has no knowledge of this plan, Zithulele always runs everything with him before he tells the rest of the men and that gives him sufficient time to inform Makhosini of his plans.

“Boss you mean business hey” he says chuckling nervously

“Yes I want to get all of them, he’s already in a wheelchair so it should be easy right” Nkanyezi nods and walks away

“Ah where are you off to, I want us to discuss Akin’s proposal” Zithulele

“Just the toilet boss, those beers I had are finally catching up to me” Zithulele nods suspiciously

Nkanyezi quickly runs to the nearest toilet and text Makhosini informing him about the attack that Zithulele has planned tonight.

Once the SMS’s is delivered he opens the door to make his exit but he comes face to face with Zithulele’s fuming face

“Ah Boss I’m done we can go to your office” he says
shaking in his boots

His voice is trembling but he’s trying to keep a stoic
expression, not wanting to give anything away

“Nkanyezi whose my right-hand man” Zithulele is
calm which scared the hell out of Nkanyezi

“Ah Boss I’m your right-hand man”

“Are you to be trusted” Zithulele

“You know me, Boss, you can trust me”

“Do I pay you enough” Zithulele

“Sure sure Boss you do”

“Then why did you betray me” Zithulele

Nkanyezi eyes involuntarily open widely but not from what his boss has said but in the realization that Zithulele finally caught on his betrayal

“What kind of question is that Zee—“ that’s what Akin calls Zithulele

“And what do you mean why did I betray you, what are you talking about” he tries and act perplexed

“I mean why are you feeding Makhosini with information” he shouts banging on the wall

“I fucken made you and this is how you repay me” he draws out his gun

“Boss—“ the back of the hard steel lands on Nkanyezi head and instantly he bleeds from the force Zithulele used to hit him

“All I fucken ask for is loyalty in return, is that too much to ask” he drags him to the center of the wear house and instructs all his men to watch what he does to traitors

“It’s been my right-hand man all along” he says and cocks the gun

“Boss it’s not me, I didn’t do it” Nkanyezi plea falls on deaf ears

Bang! bang! bang!

Three bullets land on Nkanyezi’s skull and he falls on the ground

“And that’s how we deal with traitors around here, execution-style—“ he laughs sardonically and looks at all his men one by one before he continues

“—if I dare find any of you feeding those fuckers any information you’ll follow hi—“ bang! Bang! Bang! Bang! Bang!

He empties half his gun’s magazine on Nkanyezi’s head laughing

Once his gun is empty he hooks it back on his lower back and his belt holds it into position

All his men are scared of this Zithulele, they know loyalty means nothing to a man like Zithulele all you have to do is do what he tells you and you live.

They all gulp nothing as they watch blood flow from Nkanyezi’s head

Zithulele is not even affected by this which shows how little his men mean to him.

“Stokies clean this up and get rid of this piece of shit.”

He says and wipes the blood spatter from his face

“Relax boys, Makhosini probably got his army ready for us so we not attacking tonight but soon we will, go out fucks hoes and get drunk”

he says and walks back to his office.

He doesn't feel anything regarding what he just did, in fact, he's thrilled that he actually got rid of Nkanyezi he now knows that he will be able to execute his plan without anyone briefing his enemies.

He takes out his phone and text Akin who lands him Nokhaya from time to time to do as he pleases.

Today he is fired up and wants nothing but a good fuck and who better to give that than Nokhaya.

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Firstly I'd like to apologize if it may seem like I'm punishing people when I mention reactions, my intentions are just to urge people to react not punish my loyal ones. I appreciate all of you and I thank you tremendously for your support.

Good morning

[06/20, 18:27] Lynne: 51

(unedited)

NARRATIVE

It's been two months since Makhosini received a text from Nkanyezi saying Zithulele will be attacking and since then he's been talking precautions making sure that his family is not in any danger.

What's alarming is that Nkanyezi is unreachable he knows that Zithulele is one step ahead of him.

Misuzulu has done the same as well, making sure there are people always looking out for Qhamu even though she doesn't know.

All her brothers are suspecting that something is wrong with her even though they can't pinpoint it, she's been acting weird nowadays and she hardly pester them about spending time together like she always does but as you can imagine they are busy worrying about Zithulele plans to act on Qhamu strange behavior.

Gcina, however, has made it his mission to find out what's wrong with his younger sister.

Mid-year holidays are finally here and Mngqobi is around, he will be going back to joburg to finalize somethings before he comes back officially now

that he completed his degree. He will however graduate the following year.

Qhamu has been spending a lot of time with Zanele and Lucas just to avoid her brothers prying eyes and questioning looks.

Her belly is finally showing but she hides it with bigger clothing and this is the reason why she's been keeping a distance from her brothers.

she's scared they might see through her.

Her and Zanele enters the house as Gcina makes himself something to eat and as expected he stares at Zanele.

Partly, he's not pursuing Zanele out of respect for his sister but he also knows he's not ready to settle and Zanele's is one of the innocent, the ones so he doesn't want to hurt her but would love to play with.

“Ah Bhuti you're around” Qhamu says surprised

She was not expecting any of her brothers to be home

“Hello Ntombehle” Gcina says to the blushing Zanele

Gcina likes flirting with her even though he knows that’s as far as he can go

Qhamu rolls her eyes when Zanele cheeks reddens

“How are you Gcina” Zanele says sweetly

“I’m better now that I’m seeing your pretty face”
he says giving Zanele his charming smile which melts Zanele heart

“You’ll fine me in my bedroom”

Qhamu says and leave them standing there

They both laugh when Qhamu is out of their sight

“I like you Zanele so I want you to stop being friends with Qhamu so I can date you” Gcina says jokingly

“pity I love your sister more”

“Ouch are you trying to hurt me” Gcina

“Nothing like that, talk to your sister and maybe she’ll agree for us to date” She genuinely likes Gcina

when she sees him her heart melts into butter and her knees weakens

“She’s your friend” Gcina says and takes a bite at his bread

“Or we can date secretly” Zanele suggest

“If you can handle that then fine with me”

Zanele is happy to hear that and she can't even hide it

Gcina knows this won't be a serious relationship but he wants a taste of Zanele, he can't stop thinking about her perfectly round ass and her hour glass figure.

“But Zanele just know this is not serious, we both just having fun”

this is the same thing Qhamu is scared of, she knows that none of her brothers are loyal to one girl so she doesn't want any of her friends to date the Casanova's that are her brothers.

Gatsha failed to be loyal to the mother of his child what more Gcina whose only twenty and ready to date any passing skirt

“I know”

Zanele sounds sad but she masks her disappointment with a smile and excuses herself and follows Qhamu to her bedroom

She finds the semi-naked Qhamu changing into comfortable clothes

“Your brother is—“ she stopped mid-sentence when she sees what used to be Qhamu flat stomach now a swollen

“Wait—are you pregnant” she half shouts

Qhamu quickly puts on a baggy t-shirt and rushes to close the door

“Shhhh Gcina will hear you” she half shouts at Zanele

“Oh my God Qhamukile, you’re pregnant” she says

shocked

“Yes I’m pregnant”

“Oh my God, whose the father, Mnqobi” she can’t believe her eyes

“Duhh”

She steps closer to Qhamu and lift her t-shirt

“Do you mind” Qhamu shakes her head and Zanele puts her hand on her stomach

“It’s so hard, how many months are you”

“Seven and a week”

“What—and you didn’t tell me” Qhamu rolls her eyes at how dramatic her friends is

“I’m sorry but Mngqobi and I decided not to tell anyone”

“Until when, this is a child we talking about you can’t hide it forever. You will have to tell your brothers sooner or later” Zanele

“I know but I’m just not ready, Mis uzulu is going to kill me—“

She’s interrupted by Gcina budging in without knocking

“Why is Mis uzulu going to kill you” His eyes trail on Zanele hand that’s placed on Qhamu’s bare stomach

Luckily Qhamu’s back is facing the door so Gcina can’t see clearly what’s happening.

“And then” he says eying them questionably

“Nothing” Qhamu quickly removes Zanele’s hand roughly and pulls on her big winter jacket

It’s only the start of winter but to hide her ballooning stomach she constantly wears a big jacket that conceals her stomach

Girls are weird Gcina thinks to himself but dismisses the thought and continues to say what brought him to Qhamu’s room in the first place

“Qhamu, my favorite sister—“ Qhamu knows he wants something

“Ah huh Bhuti what do you want, please not your laundry again” Qhamu says sulking

“Please mtaka ka ma, I’ll pay you this time I promise”

“Pay me first or I’m not doing it”

“I’ll owe you”

“Nope”

“Fine, I have one fifty on my drawer but don’t use fabric softener again girls thinks my mother is doing my laundry and I can’t have that”

Zanele is a little hurt after hearing that

“I’ll do your laundry and I won’t use a fabric softer but let me go check if indeed there is a one fifty, phela wena you’re not to be trusted”

she quickly zips her jacket before fully turning to Gcina's direction

“Ouch, You don't trust me”

“No I don't” she says and walks to the back room that Gcina uses.

She doesn't usually enter her brothers bedroom particularly because her brothers are not neat and Gcina is the worst, as she thought there's clothes and shoes everywhere which Qhamu first clean up and put them inside the busked before she goes to the drawer but something catches her eyes....

pictures....

Pictures of her husband comforting Nokhaya. She looks at them one by one thoroughly before she lets anger engulf her, Mngobi looks a bit younger than he is now which tells they were taken a while back but what she doesn't understand is what are these pictures doing in his brothers drawer.

She forgets all that she came to do in Gcina room when she comes across a picture of Mngobi in bed with Nokhaya with Mngobi holding her close to him.

The Anger she tried to suppress builds up inside her but she manages to tame the beast inside her.

She stomps out the room and into the main house.

“Gcina what are you doing with these pictures” she half shouts

She’s trying so hard not to jump into conclusions, she trust her husband but the nature of the relationship he had with Nokhaya is not to be ignored so jealousy is starting to over cloud her sensible thoughts.

“What pict—“ she throws them to him before he could finish

Gcina’s reflex is slow so they fall on the floor

“Oh those” he says unbothered

“Yes” her arms involuntarily goes to her waist and she taps her foot on the floor impatiently waiting for an explanation

“As you can see it’s your boyfriend and his mistress”

her anger is building up quicker than she can handle

“I can see that but what are they doing in your room” this time she shouts

“Hey don’t you dare raise your voice at me, that boy was two timing you with that girl and we just wanted him to leave you alone”

“By taking pictures of him”

“Yes Qhamukile he was still dating you wasn't he but he couldn't stop himself when that girl came running to him. We are your brothers and it's our duty to look after you more especially when it comes to him. He is an enemy, we were not just going to sit and let him play you”

“Play me... do you know how absurd that sounds, Mngobi would never do that to me”

“Those pictures says something different to me”

“so what did you do, stalk him, threaten him”

Gcina shrugs lazily

“We did what we had to”

“What—God I can’t believe you. You’re all just the same, you and the Ngcobo’s are just the same”

“Hey don’t you dare compare us to them, we are nothing alike”

What angers Qhamu the most is the lengths his brother actually went through to break them up

“I thought you guys were better than them but clearly I was wrong, they stalked me and you stalk them, to me that’s the same thing”

“Qhamukile stop comparing us to them and what do mean they stalked you”

“Why, you’re all just the same yaz I thought Mngqobi was lying when he said you guys kidnapped Smagele but now I don’t know anymore”

“Hey that boyfriend of yours shouldn’t act righteous at all, we were never going to hurt Smagele and he knows it but of course he came running to you like a small spineless boy that he is”

Hearing his brother insults her husband like this angers her more

“He may be spineless but he would never hurt an innocent child, you know I thought his initial plan was the worst but hearing you admit how you guys used an innocent child repulses me”

Qhamu doesn’t understand how did this argument end up here

A part of her doesn’t want to believe that his brothers are capable of such cruelty. They used an innocent child to break her and Mngobi up but that’s not what’s hurting her or angering her. She always thought her brothers would never stood this low.

“What plan are you talking about”

Shit- tears form in her eyes

“Nothing”

“I said what plan!” Gcina’s voice comes out hard and angry

He’s just afraid of what the Ngcobo’s can do.

Worried that she has said too much already, Qhamu remains silent.

“I’m not going to ask again” now Gcina is the angry one and Qhamu knows her brother very well to know when not to mess with him.

“Qhamukile” He says calmly but his voice reeks of Vernon

“The Ngcobo wanted to use me to get to you guys

but Mngqobi fell in love with me”

“What—“ he huffs

“Start from the begin” Qhamu knows this is no time to come up with stories so tells him what Mngqobi told her briefly, leaving out a few details.

By the time Qhamu finishes Gcina is furious, the thought of any guy using his only sister for vile intentions kills him inside and worse a Ngcobo, their sworn enemy.

He refused believe even for a second that Mngqobi genuinely loves Qhamu when Qhamu tried to justify Mngqobi intentions now.

He thinks Mngqobi is still using her.

“You kidnapped Sma which makes you even now” she regrets ever saying anything about this ludicrous plan the moment the words “plan” left her mouth

“I’m going to kill that boyfriend of yours”

Gcina says grabbing the car keys and runs out

Scared of what Gcina might do to Mngqobi Qhamu runs behind him leaving Zanele alone in the house

“Bhuti stop” she keeps begging Gcina as he gets in the car

He’s just seeing red and nothing Qhamu says gets to him, he has blocked everything.

His only goal is to get his arms on Mngqobi.

How can he use his sister and get away with it.

He has always protected Ntonto from a young age, they were together hiding under the bed that fateful night when they lost their father and even then he protected her, his anger is not driven by the hate he has towards the Ngcobo’s but it’s driven by the love he has for his sister and hearing how Mngqobi and

his family were planning on using her to get to them leaves him even more livid.

Scared of what her brother might do to her husband, Qhamu impulsively shouts one thing in hope that it might stop his brother from doing something he might regret

“I’m pregnant Bhuti please don’t hurt Mnqobi” she regrets saying that the minute it leaves her lips

Gcina remains still for what feels like eternity before he starts the car

“Now I’m seriously going to kill him” and he’s gone.

•

QHAMU

I sometimes say a lot of things before thinking but this has got to be the worst, how can I blurb that I'm pregnant like that to Gcina. What the hell was I hoping for, I shouldn't have mentioned Mngqobi's plans in the first place but I said it out of anger and sometimes in a moment of heat we let our mouths run, now look where I am.

I watch as Gcina speeds until he disappears, he's going to hurt Mngqobi and I can't let that happen.

I quickly run inside the house to find a very scared Zanele standing on the door way looking at me in awe.

Yes Zanele, my brothers and I fight , especially with Gcina.

Had it been any of my other brothers I know I wouldn't have shouted at them like I did Gcina.

I think I sometimes speak to him like that because we are almost the same age but that's no excuses.

I shouldn't have said half of thing i said... no use

crying over spilled milk.

I rush to my room and grab a few coins on-top of my dressing table.

I'm rushing to Masheni where Gcina is speeding to, he's alone and going to fight a Ngcobo's in his home how stupid can he be.

"Qhamu calm down please" I don't have time to calm down.

The Ngcobo's might be killing my brother right now.

I lock the house and run to the taxi stop.

I have no choice but to call Misuzulu and inform him of the latest events, of courses he wants to know what happened but I tell him I don't know, I'll tell him the whole truth once he's managed to stop his angry brother.

Five minutes a taxi stops and I climb.

I'm impatient and the amount of stops we make along the way aren't helping either.

It takes the taxi a whole twenty minutes before I get to Matsheni.

Zanele has been following me not knowing what to say or do

“Zane go home, I’ll be fine. I’m sure Makhosini is there to stop him” I don’t know that for sure but I know he’s the only voice of reason in that household.

“Are you sure”

“Yes, I’m sure, Misuzulu is also on his way”

she nods and takes the opposite direction

I’m relieved that she didn’t protest, I don’t want her here.

I run to the Ngcobo homestead where I find Gcina fist to fist with Mangoba, I’m sure he doesn’t know

how to distinguish them so he thinks he's fighting Mngobi.

Misuzulu is also here along with Gatscha and Mondli.

Zwelethu and Mncedisi are also fighting Gcina.

It's just chaos.

I'm relieved that I'm not seeing Mngobi here.

Misuzulu manages to pull Gcina away from the fight, panting Gcina screams at Mangoba that he's going to kill him.

“Leave me alone Bhuti I want to kill him, they planned on using her to get to us” Gcina shouts trying to free himself from Misuzulu's hold.

As You can imagine, the whole of Matsheni has come out in full, ears and eyes all out wanting to see what's going on.

“Calm down Gcina and tell me what happened”

Misuzulu says shouting at Gcina

“Qhamukile tell him, tell him how they planned to use you, tell him”

tears gleaming in his eyes

the thought of me hurt, hurts Gcina more.

He has never displayed this kind of love towards me before I find this moment heart warming i just wish it was in different circumstances.

“Bhuti please” I say pleadingly

“You’re dead Mngqobi” Gcina manages to free himself from Misuzulu and runs to Manqoba and punch him straight in the face but Manqoba manages to run inside the the yard.

“Gatsha takes Gcina home, Qhamukile explain what happened and you better think about what you

going to tell me” now Misuzulu is angry at me

“Bhuti... I... Gcina... i don’t know—“ I stutter a lot when I lie.

“And you better not lie” his voice hard as it can be

“Mnqobi—“

“I want you all to leave” an angry Manqoba stops me mid-sentence

Not only is he angry but he’s holding a gun pointing it at us.

“I said leave” he shouts

What’s with these guys and guns, haven’t they learned anything from the last time Mnqobi got shot.

“Young man you better make sure that you use that gun you’re pointing at me with or else” Misuzulu

“Manqoba just put the gun down” Zwelethu shouts at his brother

“Zwelethu how can you allow them to disrespect us like this”

I don't know when did Gcina get out of the car but he walks slowly to Manqoba until the gun is pointed right at his forehead

“You want to kill me right, do it”

How can one person be so stupid

“Don't be stupid Gcina” Mncedisi says pleadingly

“You better make sure you kill me” Gcina says looking at Manqoba

Manqoba chuckles before he says

“You think I’m bluffing”

“Do it” Gcina

A few minutes of silence passes before Gcina and Manqoba start wrestling for the gun.

I don’t even know what’s happening now but they both on the floor fighting for the gun.

I see Misuzulu and Zwelethu rushing to them before a loud bang deafen my ears.

WTF!!

The gun went off!

[06/20, 18:28] Lynne: 52

NB:

My brain is fried after writing this insert, if there are any parts that don't make sense please make sense of them, I'm too tired to proofread.

MNQOBI

I'm slaving away, packing the heavy crates when Langa rushes in panting like he's been running.

"We need to go home," he shouts and walks out with no explanation or whatsoever.

This is out of character for him.

usually, he curses out, make a big scene but then he eventually talk so I'm a little worried that this is serious.

I have no choice but run after him panicking and ask him what's wrong

"I'm not sure but MaNgidi got a call from MaSithole—"

Urg, I calm down immediately.

“She says Manqoba is being attacked by the Bhuthelezi”

Mam’Sithole is our noisy neighbor, I wouldn't be surprised if she’s exaggerating everything. She's the type that knows what's happening, when and how it’s happening before everyone else in the neighborhood and as you can imagine she has a knack of adding salt for good taste too, you know her type right?

Well, I know whatever is happening is not so serious.

We first help Makhosini into the car before Langa jumps on the front seat.

“How the hell does Misuzulu come into our home to fight my brother” Langa

He and Manqoba have always been close, I’m not shocked by his reaction at all they get along like a house in fire.

I’m sure he thinks his brother is getting killed, on the contradictory had it been Zwelethu, Mncedisi or myself for that matter he would be saying we are big boys and can take care of ourselves.

SMH.

”calm down bafo” Makhosini tells the speeding
Langa

Makhosini knows the Bhuthelezi’s wouldn’t be that stupid and of course he thinks Langa is just being dramatic too.

“Manqoba needs us bafo” I almost roll my eyes.

Manqoba is a big boy like the rest of us and he can take care of himself too.

Besides just like MamSithole Manqoba has a knack of getting into trouble

I just wonder what has he done to the Buthelezi brood but again we don’t have to do anything for them to fight us.

Langa is speeding which I find a little over the top because I know the Buthelezi would never do any harm to him, not here in Matsheni anyway, this is our territory.

The first thing I see as Langa turns into our street is a group of people outside the yard

Abo mamgobozi!

MamSithole is not the only one I see.

"I'm seriously tired of those boys," Langa says and bangs hard on the steering wheel.

I hear a loud bang as he parks on the side of the road which forces the crowd to spread out running away.

That was a gunshot.

I quickly rush out and maneuver through the running crowd and into the heart of the gunshot.

My eyes first lands on Gcina and Manqoba who are on the ground, they are both holding the gun that has just gone off.

What's with Gcina and guns.

Clearly, I was wrong to think the Buthelezi's wouldn't hurt Manqoba here in Matsheni.

They came with a gun which proves their intentions.

Misuzulu rushes to them and grabs the gun after landing one hell of a jaw-breaking punch on each of

them.

“You two are so stupid” he shouts at them

“Ahhhh” a sharp voice painfully screams in agony

I know that voice very well, I’d even be able to identify it in my sleep.

I look behind me and my eyes fall on Qhamu, she’s standing holding on tightly to her jacket with tears streaming down her face.

I can’t help rush to her

“What’s wrong” she’s crying painfully

“Something just stings me and hurts so bad
Mnqobi”

she says inspecting herself

“Where, where” that’s Gats ha rushing to her aid but I’m already by her side and that’s when I feel her drenched jacket

“You’re wet” I check her and its blood I see

“Qhamu you’re bleeding”

Fuck she's bleeding from her left side

I start panicking right there.

We are all confused as what could have happened as she continues to cry

“Mngobi it hurts” she continues crying holding herself tightly

“Shit she's shot, she's shot” Mncedisi shouts

What?

No!

She can't be.

I'm scared to take off her jacket not because I think her brothers will see her protruding belly but because I fear where the bullet might have landed but this is no time to be a coward.

I quickly remove her jacket and lift her t-shirt, they can see her belly for all I care.

“She's pregnant” Gatsha shouts incredulously as I try to stop the blood oozing from the bullet hole that has landed on her rib.

“We need to take her to the hospital” I shout at his shocked self.

I’ll explain later.

Misuzulu rushes to open the car,

I scoop her up and rush to the car.

Gatsha is on the passenger seat while Misuzulu is the one driving and I’m on the back with the crying Qhamu.

“Mnqobi my baby”

I doubt she cares what her brothers are thinking at this moment.

“Shhhh our baby is fine and you’ll be fine as well” I assure her.

“She’s pregnant” Misuzulu repeats the same words Gatsha said not so long ago

“Like pregnant, pregnant” Gatsha

We have bigger problems than her being pregnant right now.

“Drive faster” I shout when Misuzulu slows down on

the red traffic light

“Mnqobi I know I didn’t want this child but he can’t die” she says crying

I’m surprised she’s hasn’t zoned out as yet.

“No one is dying” I tell her

“Whatever happens Mnqobiwesizwe Tell the doctor to save my child” her eyelids are slowly closing

“Fuck” I shout at on one in particular

My heart is slowly dropping to the pit of my stomach, I’m starting to feel my chest get heavy and I’m having trouble breathing.

“Baby don’t close your eyes” this feels like deja vu all over again but only that at first, I was the one she was begging not close my eyes.

“Save my baby please” her arms are covering her belly protectively

Nothing will happen, no one is dying, not Qhamukile and definitely not my child.

I haven’t even felt him kick, I need to hold him in my

arms and feel his soft skin and listen to his loud cries. He can't die, Qhamu will be devastated.

Soon we arrive at the hospital, Gatsha runs out and comes back with a doctor and few nurses pushing the bed stroller.

We manage to take the now unconscious Qhamu out of the car.

“Doctor, she's pregnant I don't know how far along she is. please save her and the baby” Misuzulu says

If I wasn't looking at him I'd be sure he's crying, his voice sounds broken, to say the least.

“We will do everything in our power to save both of them” the doctor says and rushes away.

I feel like screaming but this is not the right time. I need to be strong.

“UQhamukile ukhulelwe” Gatsha says and sits down on the steel bench

I'm surprised everyone hasn't punched me.

The rest of the brothers including mine comes in running

“Is she ok?” Zwelethu asks

My anger comes back tenfold when I see Gcina and rush to him and punch him

“Why the hell did you bring a gun after you almost killed me” I shout punching him

I’m restrained by Zwelethu but my anger powerful to be restrained.

I’m just seeing red.

Gcina brothers are just watching, not intending to come to his rescue.

“It’s not his gun, Manqoba took Makhosini’s gun” I stop fighting Zwelethu and gave Manqoba a deadly stare.

“You shot her” I say angrily

“It’s a mistake,” he says remorsefully

Luckily Zwelethu has let me go so I rush to him and punch him continuously until he’s on the floor.

None of the brothers stand still and watch as I assault Manqoba

I unleash my anger on him until security guards come to his rescue.

“Pray nothing happens to her or else you’re as good as dead” I say and wiggle myself out of the security guard stronghold.

“You need a smoke” Nqaba says patting my shoulder

I didn’t even see him come in but again my mind is too daze to check everyone around me.

I follow him out and light one cigarette after the other.

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Four hours later...

MNQOBI

Nothing travels slower like a hospital clock. I don't know how Qhamu felt like when I was the one on the operation table but I feel like my world has stopped rotating and everything has come to a complete halt.

It feels like a dark cloud is hanging over my head and it won't go away no matter how much I want it gone.

I think I was about five or six when I fell from my bicycle and broke my arm, I remember how worried Sgidi was if he could he probably would have mended my broken arm himself. Being here, moving from bench to bench reminds me how helpless he looked that day and that just how I feel.

Helpless.

We've been impatiently waiting for the doctor to emerge from the theater and tell us the good news.

I know she and the baby are fine, positive thoughts are the only thing keeping me sane.

For the first time, all the Buthelezi's and Ngcobo's offsprings are worried about one person.

Qhamukile.

My wife.

The mother of my child.

Makhosini and Misuzulu even gave me permission to kill Manqoba and Gcina should the worst happen but I refuse to think about that for now.

The wait is killing me.

I stand up and go to the receptionist.

“Sisi can you please find out what’s happening, the doctor has been gone for too long and we haven’t been updated” I almost shout.

She looks at me once and back at her cellphone

Clearly, she doesn’t know angry Mnqobi

“Hey wena I’m talk—“

“Chamukile Buthelezi” the Doctor says

The cliques are just difficult for some people anyway I leave this one and direct all my attention to the doctor

Misuzulu is the first one to stand as fast as lightning before the rest of them stand on their feet too.

“I’m her brother”

I know Makhosini would’ve been up on his feet too if it wasn’t for a wheelchair.

The doctor is amazed by all these men standing tall, claiming to be her brothers.

”I don't know if its luck or what but the bullet didn't do any harm, it hit her rib and luckily the rib bone was able to prevent it from penetrating into her organs. We just need to remove the bullet and the cracked bone will heal on its own—“ I sigh in relief. she’s fine, she’ll be fine.

“—and what about the baby” Zwelethu asks

My heart literally jumps to my throat

The doctor smiles

“the amniotic sac is still held in place which is a phenomenon consideration what she went through—“ I smile just hearing that my wife and

child are safe. “—however, her high blood is very high and that could pose some complications if not early labor—“ there goes the little faith I have.

“—We are trying to normalize it but if it doesn't come down we will be forced to perform a c-section”

“Doctor please save the baby” Misuzulu

“As I mentioned to you all, we are doing everything we can”

“What are the chances that the baby will survive” I ask

“At this stage, it's a fifty-fifty chance, she's thirty-six weeks and anything is possible at this stage. The fetus hasn't fully developed so the baby will be prone to many health issues but we will watch her blood pressure overnight and take from there” she says softly

“What's the worst that could happen should her blood pressure rise higher” I ask again

The doctor sighs

I know what that means

Death, Qhamu might die.

“Let’s see how she is tomorrow and we will take it from there” she says but I know better

“Doctor do everything you can to ensure the worst doesn’t happen even if it means having that c-section”

The doctor nods

“Mngobi come down, the Doctor will do everything she can to make sure that she will be fine and the baby as well, he’s a Buthelezi after all” Mondli

I guess he came with Nqaba

“No, that baby is a Ngcobo” Mncedisi

“Says who, your brother isn’t married to Qhamu so that baby is a Buthelezi” Nqaba again

“No, but the father is a Ngcobo which makes him a Ngcobo” Zwelethu

Here comes another argument.

I excuse myself from all the drama and get some air

and a good smoke.

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The following morning

NARRATIVE

Zwelethu has his men gathered once again and ready to brief them on the attack he planned.

“So boys that girl they love so much is in hospital, they shot her so they are all in hospital as we speak so this is how we going to do this—“

He stops to gulp down his whiskey

“A shot out—“

“How are we going to do that, hospitals are guarded,” one of his men asks

“Let me finish before you jump into my throat—“ he

pours himself another drink

“This will be easy since they are all together, in one place. They used four cars to go to the hospital two belongs to the Buthelezi brothers and the other two to the Ngcobo’s. I have someone following them and will inform us once they are out of the hospital and that’s where we will open fire at them”

“At broad daylight boss” another man asks

“Don’t be stupid wena, those guys will leave the hospital around nine pm just like yesterday, we going to use the dark night to our advantage and remember they are distracted at the moment they won’t see us coming”

they all nod

“So we need them to stop at the first traffic light for us to do this”

“That’s easy boss, it just needs timing that’s all. I’ll make sure all four cars stop at the red light” sticks says

He wants to be the Zithulele’s right-hand man since

Nkanyezi was killed.

“And how are you going to do that”

“Easy boss, once all four cars are out of the hospital I’ll cut in front and stall just until the robot turns red and that will be our window period. We need to be fast because the robot will close for a short time. Every bullet we fire has to land on someone’s skull” sticks is impressed at how brilliant he thinks

“I like gat idea, you heard him, boys. He will stall. All that you need to do is kill those bastards” they all nod again

“Be here at seven so we can go through the plan again?” he says and go back onto his office.

The mood is just somber at both the Buthelezi and the Ngcobo households. Mngqobi had to tell his mother about Qhamu being pregnant so today she is coming with them to the hospital.

Subconsciously both families are happy about the child that Qhamu is carrying even though they wish

they could've waited until she finished school but what's done is done now.

Misuzulu is angry at Mngqobi of course but not because he's a Ngcobo but because he's the guy that got his little sister pregnant.

Both him and Makhosini are disappointed in themselves that they let this feud go on for this long.

Yesterday argument about the child being a Ngcobo or a Buthelezi went on until they were kicked out of the hospital, Makhosini advised Mngqobi and pay damages as soon as the baby is born. It's funny how they are all fighting for this baby who is a Ngcobo as much as he is a Buthelezi. This child has both bloods running through its veins and both families will never forsake their blood.

The love they have for Qhamu's unborn child is too much to comprehend. They both don't understand how possible is it that they are able to love a human with the blood of an enemy running through its veins.

They have been at the hospital all morning and it's

now after three pm, visiting hours don't apply to these people.

The last time they got an update from the doctor about Qhamu's blood pressure was two hours ago and it was still high. The doctor mentioned that if it doesn't come down in a few hours they will be forced to perform a c-section.

Mnqobi is overly worried for his wife and child, the doctor walks in and they all stand up.

It's intriguing how well they have been behaving.

"Is the blood pressure down?" Mnqobi asks

"It's slightly coming down but unfortunately it's not as fast as I had hoped and at this point, she's still in danger"

"Then perform the c-section" Mnqobi says without thinking twice

"But it's coming down right" Langa

Hearing the worry laced in his voice

leaves Mnqobi astonished, to say the least

“Yes—“ the Doctor says pitying all of them

“Do the procedure” Mngqobi is adamant about this

“I just need you to understand everything before we go ahead”

“Doctor you mention her blood pressure is slightly coming down, can we not give it a day or two before you do this. She’s going to hate me should anything happen to that child but I will never forgive myself should anything happen to my sister” Misuzulu

The dilemma!

Sighs

“I understand sir, we can take a chance and wait it out for a day or two but I’m afraid if it doesn’t come down fast then her danger zone will only increase”

“You’re the Doctor What do you think it’s best”

Mncedisi

“At this stage, I think the c-section is best”

“I say we wait it out, it’s already coming down so I’m hopeful that she will be fine” Gatsha

“I agree with that” Misuzulu

“Doctor the baby is thirty-six weeks and there’s a high chance that he’ll live, Qhamu, however, is in great danger now and if you don’t do this now she might die” MaNgidi

She has witnessed new mothers dying from high blood pressure more times she can count and the doctor also knows that Qhamu might pass on if they don’t do the c-section now.

“I hear you Ma but doctor I’m Qhamu’s brother and her guardian and I say we wait” Misuzulu

Mnqobi is getting frustrated with each passing minute

“And as her husband and the father of that child I say go ahead doctor”

“Husband—awu Kahle wena” Nqaba says laughing soon everyone follows chuckling softly but Mnqobi remains aloof

“Qhamu and I are married and that gives me the right to make decisions on her behalf” Mnqobi

remains stoic

“Mnqobi this is no time for your nonsense”

Makhosini

“Bhuti Qhamu and I got married last year, Qhamukile is my wife, I know you won’t believe it but it’s true” Mnqobi says and runs his hands on his face.

Telling them now is the best decision he had made, he knows they won’t be able to act on it because Qhamu is still laying on a hospital bed with a bullet stick to her rib and not only that but pregnant and dying, they are all worried about her to act on this new revelations.

“You’re losing it now” Zwelethu

“You’re serious” Langa knows his brother and he knows he’s not lying and he knows Mnqobi would never lie about something so serious

“I’m serious Bhuti”

“No Zwelethu is right, I’m also convinced that you’re a demented boy” Mnqobi looks at Nqaba

exasperated and huffs

“The marriage certificate is at home hidden between the base and the mattress, everyone is welcome to go check it out”

“This is it, Doctor please admit this boy. He has totally lost it” Nqaba

The rest of the brothers also believe that Mnqobi is losing his mind

“Doctor I’m sure the hospital systems are linked to home affairs somehow can we confirm this”

The doctor doesn’t believe Mnqobi at first but seeing how he doesn’t protest to Mondli suggestion she tells the receptionist to check.

It’s silence as the receptionist press her computer, they hand her Qhamu’s ID when she asks for it

“Married, in community of property”

She says looking at all of them

“WHAT!!!!!!!!!!!!!!” Everyone says incredulously

“Yes they got married on the first of December last

year” she says turning her monitor screen for the brothers to see for themselves

To say they are shocked would be an understatement.

They are all just dumbfounded and can’t believe their eyes.

“Impossible” Nqaba says rubbing his eyes

“So Doctor can you please save my wife. She’s going to be so pissed at me for doing this but I’d rather have her alive and angry than dead and happy”

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[06/20, 18:28] Lynne: 53

QHAMU

Have you ever felt at peace, like you're floating on the clouds watching the rainbow dance happily and

you're feeling fresh breeze hit lightly against you skin, breathing in scented air, you know, I'm talking about that feeling you get when your soul and body feels light like you have no troubles whatsoever, well, I wish I could tell you that's how I'm feeling, it's quite the total opposite, yes, my body and soul might feel light and cleanse but my heart is heavy, I should be happy being in this beautiful monastery, with trees full of life, birds chipping and calm flowing rivers but no matter how much I want to enjoy the terrace, deep down I know this is just a chimera.

I know I'm dreaming because I can hear the beeping sounds and doctors saying incoherent things, I can feel their hands tugging my stomach, I can feel everything they are doing to me but my eyes won't open.

I think I'm having an out of body experience, that's the only explanation to what's happening here. I mean how possible is it that I'm in this beautiful garden and yet I feel my body is laying on the hospital bed being cut open.

Sighs

I'm not crazy, I know I'm not but I just can't explain what's happening to me.

A beautiful woman wearing a flowing white dress appears from the river banks walking slowly towards me.

For some reason, I'm not scared, instead, her demeanor pulls me in. There's something about her aura that screams purity.

She takes her long strides patiently towards me holding her head up high. I love this feeling I'm getting with each step she takes towards me.

I watch her unmoved until she's right in front of me.

"Ntonto" her voice is melodic and not only that but it sounds familiar too.

"hello" I greet her smiling

"You've grown so much Ntonto, I'm really proud of Misuzulu" she says touching my cheeks with the palm of her warm, soft hands

"how do you know him, who are you" I ask softly

"ooh my baby"

she starts singing a old song my father used to sing to me whenever I'd ask where my mother is.

I was too young to understand death.

Her voice reminds me of someone I don't know, as weird and impossible as that sounds, it's true.

She continues to sing uninterrupted until she finishes

She's been looking at me fondly throughout.

"your father taught me that song but I was always a better singer than him" it's true she's a much better singer

"ubaba" a tear escapes from my eye

I miss him so much.

"Yes, your father" the more I look at her the more I get this feeling that I know her, I don't remember where did I see her before but I'm convinced she's someone I used to know.

”do I know you from somewhere” she smiles
shaking her head

”you’ve never seen me before but I’m always with
you”

”how”

”A lioness always protects its cubs, and just like a
lioness I always protect my children” I’m confused

”huh...” I give her a confused look, my mother died
after giving birth to me

”ma, are you my mother” it took me a minute to fully
understand what she means

She nods slightly and gives me a bone-crushing
hug and kisses me lightly on my cheek.

”You’re my one and only daughter”

she’s happy to see me but not as happy as I am

”Ma—“ I shout after hearing her admit to being my
mother

“—How are you here. Shouldn’t you be in heaven”

she died nineteen years ago.

She chuckles softly and shows me a ledge to sit on.

“I’m where-ever you and your brothers are”

she says after we’ve both taken a seat

“I’m sorry Ma, I know it’s my fault that you died. Had it not been for me you would be alive and well and for that, I’m sorry”

tears are already flowing down my face.

A part of me has always blamed myself for her passing, I know I once told you I got over it but that’s not true.

How do I live with myself knowing I’m the reason my brothers were left motherless, had I been the one that died that day then they would be hurting less. Unlike me they know our mother’s love, they’ve felt it. They also felt her touches, soft kisses, and her angelic voice but I, I don’t know any of those things.

She holds on to me tightly until I’m done crying

“Ntonto my baby, nothing was your fault. I don’t blame you for anything that happened. Your father

doesn't blame you and neither does your brothers. You need to make peace with what happened when you were born. Baby, I'm happy that you are alive so, please, stop blaming yourself. You know even if we were to travel back in time, I wouldn't change a thing. I'd still give my life up just so you can live, so hush it now, all of well"

I know she's just saying this to make me feel better.

"But Ma—"

"No buts—" she cuts me off

"You must understand that everyone in this life has a purpose and I fulfilled mine when I brought you into this world. I know you won't believe me but my time was over baby, I knew the moment I looked you in those beautiful eyes you have that you were going to be fine without me."

"But I need you"

"And I'm always here for you, Qhamukile you are your mother's daughter and I know how strong you are so baby please don't give up when life throws you lemons. I know you're stronger than you let on,

you just need to believe in yourself. You don't need me to be physically there with you you, you're stronger on your own and I've got no doubt that you'll be fine—“

I'm speechless really, I don't see nor feel this power she speaks of within me, in fact, all that I want to do is stay here and never go back to the real world.

The real world is full of pain and my heart is unable to endure any more pain.

I'm emotionally drained.

“—especially with that Ngcobo boy by your side” I raise my head to look at her

“I know and see everything” she says rolling her eyes

I'm embarrassed, to say the least, does she know anything about my sexual escapades with Mngqobi.

“He's good for you and the love he has for you is just implacable and heartwarming to witness. Love him and respect him as your husband, never shut him out Qhamukile phela wena I know you, you're

way too hardheaded for your own good. That boy is your soul mate and no one can change that”

Okay, hold up.

why is everyone calling my husband “that boy”

He’s Mngobiwesizwe Ngcobo.

A little respect, please.

“—You two are going to need each other like never before now, this will yet be the biggest test of your relationship but I’m not worried because I know you two will conquer it all and baby remember everything happens for a reason. Never question God and his ways but ask him to heal your wounds and give you the strength and wisdom to move forward.” It’s amazing how much I love her though I’ve never seen her before.

I can’t explain it but what I know is that my heart is swelling up with love and happiness right this minute.

I’m now feeling a sense of contentment about what happened to her. I no longer blame myself for her

passing, I know she doesn't regret having me and I have no doubt that she would have given up her life for mine had I been the one to die and if that's not a mother's love then I don't know what it is.

"I don't have much time and you also need to go now, you can't stay here for too long. Mngqobi is probably losing his mind overly worrying about you and my grandson"

Thobile's words echo in my head "Mxolisi will have a friend to play with soon"

I don't know what to make of those words but I can't help feeling that something might happen to my child.

Part of me doesn't want to believe in any of this, I mean all those dreams about my great grandfather and everything the seer said. I don't want to believe in these supernatural things that have been happening but yet again I'm conscious enough to know this is real.

I'm not dreaming nor is this a hallucination, I'm also not losing my mind so the reality of all this is the

only thing that makes sense.

“Ma, Thobile once said—“

“Baby everything happens for a reason and everyone has their own purpose in this life. Your son has his own purpose too—“ What’s does that mean

“Ma, his purpose. What are talking about”

“Qhamukile you’re asking too much now, everything will be revealed soon. Just know that sometimes even the most feared lionesses losses it’s cubs to other predators but she doesn’t let that break her down”

I don’t see how predators and lionesses resonate to what Thobile said in my dream

“Ok—“ I’m so confused right now

She stands up and kisses my forehead

“Name him Qedusizi (end misery) he’s the end of all the pain and suffering we all went through because of this feud. He’s the light in this darkness. He is your little angel”

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MNQOBI

I'm outside watching Nqaba as he pollutes his lungs like how Qhamu always says, for once I'm not the one smoking, in fact, I'm standing a few meters away from Nqaba but only because I don't want to be smelling like a Chinnery when I go into the theater room to witness my son being born.

The doctors are still prepping Qhamu for the cesarean procedure she's about to go through.

I won't lie, I'm nervous, I've known for a few months now that Qhamu is pregnant but being just a few hours away from seeing my child is so overwhelming.

I'm about to be a father, like, there's going to be a whole human being who's going to call me dad.

I feel my heart fill up with happiness and worry at

the same time. Will I be able to care for him, what kind of a father will I be, will I be able to discipline him, God parenting feels like such a huge responsibility. That boy will be my responsibility for life, I'd have to feed him, clothe him and make sure there's always a roof over his head.

How do you guys do it?

Tips anyone?

Let me calm down...

In the midst of my worrying self, I manage to see Bab'Themba walking towards our direction walking fast...

I'm in trouble, I forgot he's a deputy father to Qhamu.

"Hey wena Nqaba" he shouts before he even reaches us

Nqaba hastily throws his cigarette away and stand up straight

"Baba" he sounds surprised to see him and fear in his voice is evident even to a deaf man.

It's good to know there is someone he fears after all

“Baba, Baba, is that all you can say. How many times must I tell you to stop smoking”

he sounds like his father indeed

”I’m sorry Baba”

it's a pity this situation doesn't allow me to laugh my ass off at how frightened Nqaba is.

Had it been anyone else either than Bab’Themba shouting at Nqaba like this I’d take a video and probably blackmail him with it when he starts acting all macho and bossy.

Bab’Themba has been screaming all the way from a distance but now he’s finally reached where Nqaba and I are standing

“And what’s this I hear about Qhamu being here”

“She was admitted yesterday but she’ll be fine” I say

He looks at me once

”I’m sorry, Sawubona baba(greetings)” he's look is enough to bury me.

”Was the question directed at you” YOH!!

Let me keep my mouth shut

he turns back his furious gaze back at Nqaba

“I had to hear from people that Qhamu is in hospital while you’re much capable of calling me, I see you have forgotten me”

“We were going to call you, we’ve just been—“

“Hey I don’t want to hear it marn, Qhamu go shot yesterday and I only heard this minutes ago” he shouts and walks inside the hospital

We look at him quietly until the censor doors open for him

I can’t help laugh at Nqaba

“Hey now I know who to call when you’re being a pain in my ass”

“Phuma kim wena” I laugh out loud, imitating him when he said ‘I’m sorry Baba’ like a small boy who's been caught stealing.

That was fun to witness but I need to get back inside and be with my wife.

The doctor is already waiting for me when I emerge and I follow behind her to the theater.

I first have to wear the sterile surgical gown to prevent the transfer of any harmful microorganism and chemicals to and from Qhamu.

That's not all, I also have to wear

over-shoes covers, surgical caps and I'm even asked to wash and sanitize my hands before putting on the gloves.

Now that I'm fully suited up I'm allowed to step in the room.

I'm a little saddened by seeing all the tubes connected to her but I'm happy she's breathing on her own.

I'm too much of a coward to peep over the surgical drape blocking me from witnessing the birth of my son so I'm holding on to Qhamu's hand tightly and for the first time I'm inwardly saying a prayer.

The doctor explained that general anesthesia was used to put Qhamu to sleep throughout the

procedure.

It feels like forever before I hear a loud wail from my son, his little cries forces me to look over the drape

“It’s a boy” the doctor says

Of course, it’s a boy.

Ahhh...

Do you believe in love at first sight, because I didn’t up until this moment.

If this is what it’s meant by love at first sight then I want to experience it every day, nothing I mean nothing amounts to this moment.

My heart is engulfed with joy.

The more I look at him, the more I fall in love. His cries sound like joyful music to my ears.

I don’t know about all other parents out there but this literally feels like my heart has been reborn in another human form.

My heart now has a tiny face, tiny little ten fingers, and toes.

Now I can attest to this famous parent line “having a child is like having your heart outside your own body”

Dammit, I’m a father.

My son is my heart in a human form.

The nurse hands me the scissors to cut the umbilical cord and I cut it happily.

He’s still wailing when they weigh him

“2,4 kg”

I was expecting him to weigh a lot less than that but he’s true Ngcobo indeed, we are conquerors.

He’s strong like his father.

The little worry I had in me vacates immediately, I was worried about his weight seeing that Qhamu wasn’t big for someone who was thirty-six weeks long.

I’m also relieved that there were no complications with my wife. She’ll be awake in no time to see her son for the first time.

I remain with my wife as they close her incision up while the baby is taken to the NICU.

I manage to kiss her dry lips before she's taken to her ward where she'll recover from and I go to the neonatal intensive care unit once I've made sure that she's comfortable.

I just want to see my son, the doctor will just have to inform the rest of the family how everything went.

I find the nurse prepping him up for the incubator.

He is pouting his lips looking all cute like his father.

Lol... of course, he's cute. I'm his father after all.

The pediatrician explains that he needs to be in the incubator for a week or so just to monitor him, I'm told he might have problems feeding from the bottle or breast because he's not yet fully matured to coordinate sucking, breathing and swallowing but he assured me that he's fine. The incubator will also ensure that he receives the right balance of fluids and nutrients as he was born late preterm.

I watch him until he falls asleep

“Sir you can come back later, he’s sleeping right now” the nurse says

I hate to leave him but I also need to go see the rest of the family.

I took off the surgical outfit already so I leave my son and go to the waiting area where I left everyone.

I think the doctor has briefed all of them because they are all happy.

Gatsha is even having a full-on conversation with Langa which I find surprising because they are always in each other’s throats.

Gcina and Manqoba are seating in the corner looking miserable

“You must both thank your lucky star” I say pointing at the both of them

“Ah he’s finally here” Zwelethu

“I hear they both fine” Makhosini

I nod smiling

Nqaba walks to me smiling shaking his head

coming to congratulate me I guess but a hard fist
blow lands on my jaw and followed by another on
my abdomen

What the hell...

“The hell..” I cough

“That was for marrying my sister and getting her
pregnant,” he says and gives me a manly hug

Everyone finds all this funny except for me as I’m in
so much pain.

This fucker actually throws some mean punches I
tell you.

“He’s not bleeding, you didn’t punch him hard
enough” Makhosini

Even my own blood is turning against me now

Lol, I’m glad they are getting along.

“I’m still yet to throw my own punches” Bab’Themba

“My son was just born an hour ago, can we all
please try not to make him fatherless so soon” I
plead my case

Everyone is just joking around happily for now but I know I'm in deep trouble.

I might have a few broken bones and swollen eyes when they are through with me, it's only a matter of time.

They soon all go see the baby, my brothers can't stop talking about how much he looks like us which gets the Buthelezi's jealous of course but what can I say.

The genes are just too strong.

I don't know about you but I've realized that whenever the Ngcobo's and the Buthelezi's are all gathered in one hospital things don't always end well so as expected we are all kicked out because of our noise levels.

It's a little after nine pm now but I'm sleeping here. I refuse to leave my still unconscious wife and son here alone.

I'll be the face Qhamu first sees when she opens her eyes.

We manage to say our goodbyes before they all prepare to walk out but a bunch of police officers stops us and a few people going out at the door.

Everyone is startled and most of the nurses have come out of their posts to check what's going on.

It's very rare to see so many police officers in a hospital and they look like they mean business I feel sorry for whoever they are after

“Mapholoba” it's one of Makhosini's 'guy'

When you're involved in half of the things my brother is involved in you'll need a few officers of the law on your side.

“Mthetwa” Makhosini greets

“Good, you're all here” another officer says harshly

I'm starting to think they found whoever

they were looking for because they've let other people to go except for us all.

“We have a warrant for arrest”

wait.. what?

A warrant for whose arrest?

“Themba, Mondli Buthelezi, and Zwelethu Ngcobo
you’re all under arrest for the murder of Khayaalethu
Zwane”

Oh fuck!!!

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The people have asked and I listened, Misuzulu’s
POV will be next.

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[06/20, 18:29] Lynne: 54

Misuzulu

“WHAT?” That’s Makhosini next to me.

“Zwelethu, What is he talking about” he asks as the

police officers roughly cuff them.

“Hai marn you can see I’m not fighting”
bab”Themba says fidgeting forcing the cuffs off
himself.

He has always been stubborn, even when he finds
himself in such a predicament he doesn’t cease
being his hardheaded self.

“Mondli” I say as sternly as I can looking at him
I want to see truth in his eyes but deep down I’m
hoping this is just a big misunderstanding.

Mondli is not a killer, he’s not capable of vile doings
like the rest of us, Mondli is the caring one, loving by
nature and this is how I know he’d never do
something like this but again they say the quiet
one’s are the most dangerous ones but I refuse to
think that of Mondli, one of us has to be different
from our father.

One of us has to be the good one and that is Mondli.

“Mondli look at me” I just need to look into his eyes
to know the truth, he is my father’s child after all.

He gives me that 'I'm sorry look' before he drops his head again.

This can't be, Not Mondli, I expect this from any of my brothers, heck even Gcina is capable of this but not Mondli.

As an older brother it has always been my duty to take care of my siblings and I've been doing a great job so far I'd like to believe. I had to step up from a young age and play a father and a mother role to all my siblings and never have I ever regretted it or even wished things were different yes sometimes I wish ma was still alive to care for the younger once especially Qhamu but I dismiss that thought the moment an image of her dying on a hospital flashes my mind. She's gone and I saw our father die in front of us too so I know I'm the only one they have but looking at Mondli being handcuffed like this makes me think I failed somewhere along the way.

Makhosini keeps cursing and shouting at Zwelethu as the police officers push them out the door and into the police van.

I take out my phone and call one of my guys.

“Shabangu, Mondli Buthelezi has been arrested, that docket needs to disappear by morning”

“Arrested for what” he sounds like he’s sleeping

“Murder” it doesn’t feel real saying Mondli’s name and murder in the same sentence

“Ah Buthelezi that’s going to cost you a lot” money is not an issue and he knows this

“Shabangu just make sure you’re at the station when I arrive there” I say and hang up

I pay him a lot to explain myself, this outrageous charge needs to be cleared before sunrise.

I rush to my car and drive behind the police van.

Gatsha knows he needs to remain here while I deal with this, growing up he always understood that he needs to be my right hand man. We are both parents to our siblings and true to his name he's

always been a brunch that's supporting me throughout.

Twenty minutes later I'm seated on a hard police station bench waiting for detective Manqhele to come brief me on the charges.

I'm not sure where is Makhosini because he was following me with Langa but that's the least of my worries, I hear Manqhele is the best at his job, all his arrest get multiple life conviction and if you're lucky you might get over fifty years. I can't let Mondli rot in a prison cell for that long.

Shabangu enters just as I stand up and he indicated with his eyes that I should follow him.

“Damn Buthelezi, Manqhele has compelling evidence against your brother, I don't know—“

“Nhlaka I need solutions here, not more uncertainty. Mondli is not spending a night here and you better make sure of that”

“Misuzulu you're aware that your brother is charged under so many accounts that I lost count, everyone's eyes are watching like a hawk because

this is one of Manqhele cases so I need more time to make this go away, I'm risking my job here so a little time is needed. It's not like I can just go and bribe Manqhele like others, he doesn't take shit"

I shake my head

"Just make sure this disappears before my brother is convicted" he gives me a light nod

"I need to see him" Mondli has some explaining to do.

"Not possible"

"Make it possible" I say and hand him a few notes and walk back inside the station.

Makhosini has arrived and he's now fighting with the lady behind the front desk

"Monday!" He shouts

Im sure that lady is telling him the same story she told me when I asked to see Mondli.

"Yes, you have to wait for Monday when they appear in court"

I too, have heard that line too many times to care.

“Sisi where is Manqhele, he was here wasn't he, call him and tell him I demand to see him instantly” I join in

The lady is adamant about waiting for Manqhele so we sit back on the bench and wait.

hours later we still seating and there's still no Manqhele.

Shabangu is still trying to talk Manqhele to let me see Mondli but time is not on my side.

I stand up and walk to her again calmer this time, sometimes showing how muscular one is can be unnecessary

What's the saying again, a pen is mightier than a sword. You must forgive me I'm not sure if that idiom fits in this context but you get my point.

Ng'cela uMageba so that's the only language I know very well.

“Sisi I understand you're doing your job but I just need to see my brother for a couple of minutes then

I'll be gone" I say giving her a smile

No one can resist the Buthelezi charm.

She smiles sweetly

"I'll get into trouble you know"

"No one has to know" I wink at her

She's already melting under my gaze, I don't know why didn't I use this charm to get to her in the first place.

She plays hard to get for a while which I play along to impatiently until she relents and let us see them.

"What happened" Langa

That's the first he asks when they step into a private room we are in.

"Bafo that guy didn't have a right to touch Qhamukile like that, you didn't see what he did to her so I had to do something about it" Zwelethu blurbs very fast

"You killed him Zwelethu" Langa

"I didn't" he says defensively

“He was already dying when I got there” this means Mondli got to him first

I turn my head to his direction

“Start talking”

“Bhuti I had to do something—“ he stops right there
Mondli can be Mondli when he wants to

“I want to hear everything, how did you do it” I’m calmer now because I know my brothers well enough to know when to be harsh and not besides Mondli is not like the rest of us.

“I asked around, big boy knew who he was so I followed him for a few days. I was not intending on killing him but when he started bragging at some tarven about how he sleeps with young girls he ticked me off. I made a comment about his small penis then as expected he took the bait and we fought—“

“Mondli how did it get to a point where you killed him”

“He followed me after I beat up his ass, I swear

Bhuti i didn't mean to kill him but he took out a knife, imagine he pointed me with a knife huh—" don't tell me he killed him because he pointed a knife at him

"So that's reason enough for you to kill him"

"No, he made a comment about sleeping with Qhamukile. Bhuti you should've seen him, the arrogance. I wanted to teach him a lesson so I shot him on his arm but I missed and shot him on his head instead" I expect Mondli to be scared but instead I'm getting the total opposite

He's too calm for someone facing life imprisonment

"bhuti when bana died, he asked us to take care of Qhamu and out of anger I thought k was doing just that. I don't regret killing him, I'd kill anyone that hurts one of you. We are all that we have we have no one but us and I was taking care of one of us"

Funny thing is I was going to take care of this Khaya myself

"Mondli you know I wasn't going to just sit and watch. I was going to deal with him"

He shrugs both his shoulders looking down

” I got to him first”

”then bab’Themba”

“I’m not used to handling guns so I panicked and called him,” he says still looking down

“Why not me or Gats ha”

“I couldn’t disappoint you Bhuti, you continuously do everything in your power to shield us away from this life and I just couldn’t look at you knowing I disappointed you”

Sighs

“I’m sorry i turned out to be something you didn’t groom, I’m sorry i disappointed you” listening to how sincere and sorry he is gives me a little hope that I didn’t loose my brother

“But I’m not sorry I killed him, the world is better off without him”

I’m speechless

Never think someone is not capable of murder, we

all are and Mondli just proved it.

“And wena, how did you end up getting involved”

Makhosini shouts at Zwelethu

“Bafo—“ he inhales and exhales before he continues

“I too followed him for a couple of day. I just wanted him to pay for what he did to Qhamu but Mondli got to him first”

“We know that already, how did you get involved”

Langa

The Ngcobo brothers are furious

“I followed them but then Mondli did a lousy job, that fucker didn’t die from the shot so when I saw everything I new Mondli was not going to finish him off that’s when I helped him out. We shot him a few times and threw him in the river”

So a Ngcobo helped a Buthelezi to murder someone.

I’m defeated.

I lay back to my chair and watch as Makhosini shouts at both of them.

I need to come up with a plan to make this go away for all three of them.

“So bab”Themba—“

“He helped us get rid of his car” Zwelethu I’m totally defeated

Shabangu steps in after a while, Makhosini and I follow behind him.

“Buthelezi I tried but this case is tight, we have to wait for Monday. I’ll make sure they at least get bail then we will take it from there”

That’s something I don’t want to hear

“Unless—“ he runs his hands on his face

“Unless what” Makhosini

“Unless you show Manqhele how serious you guys are” I know what this means and I’m not ready for another war, we still have Zithulele to deal with.

An sms from Gatsha comes through saying Qhamu is awake and wants to speak to us all.

That’s another problem I still have to deal with I’m

going to kill her, resurrect her just to kill her again.

“Shabangu we will do whatever it takes to ensure those boys don’t end up in jail” Makhosini

The intensity in his voice tells me he means every word.

“Mapholoba we will deal with that later, Qhamukile is awake and I need to kill her along with that brother of yours”

He chuckles softly

“Make that both us, those two will give us grey hair before our time”

“Lucky me because you already have grey hair” we both chuckle softly

“Shabangu make sure those three are comfortable. I’ll be back during the day to check them” I say and we all leave.

Morning light has finally crept in and the sun is out, shining brightly.

I can't believe we spend all night at a police station.

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QHAMU

“Qeda’usizi”

I’m seeing my son for the first time and there is nothing in this world I love more than this little human that’s sucking on his fingers sleeping peacefully.

Tears of joy are streaming down my face as I look at him, my heart is filled with so much love.

I didn’t think it’s possible to love another human being like I love this life I created.

“I love it, it’s so befitting” I first told him the story behind that name so I think he's just compelled to say he loves it because he was named by my mother.

Isn't that just weird.

Qeda'usizi is a very deep name with substance yes but let me be honest with you, I wouldn't have named him that.

“I'm naming the next one though” what did I say.

He doesn't love it as much as he claims

“Of course” I say learning on his hand that's on my shoulder

“I love him so much”

“I know right, you can't help fall in love with him at first glance”

He's right

I feel in love the minute I laid my eyes on him.

“He looks so much like you though” of course he had to be a total replica of his father.

“Of course, I'm his father—“ rolling my eyes

“—Zadlalwa ingane zabantu”

only he can say something like that and no child of mine will playgirls out there

I'll teach him to value women and love them genuinely.

I can't help give Mngqobi that look, you know that look that says "oh please"

"What, you fell for my charm as well, phela amadoda akwa Ngcobo are irresistible"

now I sway at his hand lightly rolling my eyes

My husband is so full of himself.

I turn my attention back at the little man that has managed to give my life a whole new different purpose

"He's so tiny and yet he has managed to capture my heart and soul"

"I know how you feel, this is exactly how I felt when I first saw him" Mngqobi says and kisses my temple

"I want to hold him" he's in the incubator yes but I want to feel him close to my chest

"You will my love, soon we will have sleepless nights, you will be changing diapers and all"

I laugh at that

“You’ll also be changing diapers”

He shakes his head frowning

Shaking my head...

it’s funny how we saying all this and we haven’t even figured out any living arrangements or anything else for that matter because Sizi came earlier than expected but I’m sure we will figure it all out plus Mngobi will be paying damages once we get out of here. I’m just hoping and praying that my brothers make peace with this situation.

Eish this little man needs clothes and baby stuff that I haven’t even thought of getting up until this moment.

“I’m not ready for all of that” he says playing with my hair

He will changes the diapers shem.

“I’m also not ready for the naughtiness” he says again

“He’s your son after all, I’m expecting a lot of

mischievous” I’m seated in a wheelchair and he’s standing behind me with his hands around my neck and we both looking at our son lovingly

“What are you saying Qhamu, that I’m mischievous” he told me he had to tell our brothers about our marriage, I’m surprised he’s still breathing.

“Nothing love, I’m not saying anything” my stitches hurt when I laugh but it’s refreshing listening to Mngqobi’s boastful self.

The bullet from my rib was removed so I’m feeling the pain times two but I don’t have much of a choice but soldier on.

We remain silent for a while just watching our son with smiles plastered on our faces until he breaks the silence

“I’m sure the big brothers are here, let’s go talk to them”

I’m not ready to face my brother but I have to.

I’m a little sad leaving my son but Mngqobi assures me that we will be back once we’ve spoken to our

brothers.

He pushes me back to my ward and helps me get comfortable on the bed before all the brothers including his get in.

I greet everyone respectfully but

“Where is Mondli and Zwelethu” I want everyone to hear what I have to say

MaNgidi had to leave to take care of Sma but I saw her before she left.

She gave me an earful about getting married and having a child which I obviously expected, I'm thankful she's gone.

“They have something to do” Misuzulu

I'm not convinced

“Bhuti I want you all to be here, this is really important”

“Qhamukile please say your peace we are tired, we want to go sleep” Nqaba

I'm guessing they've been here all night

It's now after eleven so I understand they are tired.

“Yebo Bhuti but—“

“Mngobi and Zwelethu were arrested, now can you get on with it” Langa

I'm not surprised he's this angry

But what does he mean they are arrested?

“Arrested for what, what did they do” isn't it coincidental that they are both arrested at the same time Unless if they fought and got arrested for disturbing the leave or something, if that's the case Zwelethu must've provoked Mondli, my brother would never do anything that can actually land him in jail

“What did Zwelethu do to Mondli Bhuti, I know Mondli was provoked”

“Why the hell do you think Zwelethu did something to Mondli” Mncedisi

Zwelethu must have done something, that's the only logical explanation and besides knowing Zwelethu he must be said something jokingly and Mondli

took it seriously.

“Our brother is facing a murder charge because of you”

Wait... murder...me?

“What do you mean”

Makhosini narrates the whole story about how they both killed Khaya for me, to say I'm shocked would be an understatement.

Mondli a murderer?

No, they must've mistaken him for someone else

“Qhamukile as you can see we have bigger things to worry about so—“ Makhosini

I wipe my tears and look at all of them

”After I say this I'd like for you all to work together and help them”

Langa scoffs but remains silence

“I first want to apologize for getting you all in this situation, had it not been for me none of you would be here right now” I stop and take a deep breath

“Bhuti—“ I’m looking at Misuzulu

“I’d like to apologize for disrespect you like I have, I got married—“

“I’m still going to kill you for that” Gatsha “let her finish” Misuzulu

Clearing my throat I continue

“—I got married without your blessings and for that I’m sorry. I’m also sorry for getting pregnant. I know I disappointed yo. No amount of sorry can begin to tell you how deeply sorry I am”

I stop to look at Mngqobi

“I don't want you to blame Qhamukile for this if there’s someone you need to punish is me. I take full responsibility and blame for getting married without your knowledge. I’d also like to apologize for planting my seed in a your garden, I’ve shown great disrespect to you all and for that I apologize”
Mngqobi says with respect

“Bhuti a life was created, our son has both our blood running through his veins. He is a Ngcobo

just like he's a Buthelezi, I want you all to tell me who is he going to fight against when he grows up, which blood is he going to turn his back against when he has both blood running through his veins. Who's legacy is he going to inherit, I don't want my child to inherit this hatred we all have towards each other”

Mnqobi takes my hand in his as I continue to speak
I'm surprised I'm not crying

“This war has gone for far too long, we've lost people who mean the world to us and we've done bad things to each other but that little boy is what interlinks us all. I want him to grow up in a loving home and his home is with us all. I know we all hate each other but what am I going to teach my son, to hate half of his blood. I'm begging you to please end all this, I'm pleading with you to stop all this for that boy who I know you all love so much. I can't teach him to love a part of him but hate the other. He can't continue fighting this war, he's the only thing that's part of us all and I'm sure you don't want him to hate any of you”

They all just looking and listen to what I'm saying
I can only hope I'm making sense to all of them
I hope I don't regret saying what I'm about to say
next

"Bhuti Makhosini I know initially Mnqobi was sent
as a tool to get to my brothers and Bhuti I know you
guys used Sma to get Mnqobi to break up with me
but that's all in the last now. I want us to start
afresh and rebuild what was lost" I stop to take a
deep breath

I'm surprised none of them has stopped me instead
they are all looking at me awestricken

"I named him Qeda'usizi, he is ending all this hatred
between us, he's the only person linking us all
together and I don't know about you but I want him
to be part of each and everyone in this room lives.
Just look at us, we hate each other and yet we don't
know why. Sizi needs all his fathers not just some
but he needs you all so I'm asking you all to please
end this for his sake"

I don't want to say much just in case something is

lost in translation so I lean back and watch them as they ponder on what I have just said.

We remain silent for what feels like an eternity before Langa speaks proudly

“That boy is a Ngcobo”

“No, he’s a Buthelezi” Nqaba

The argument goes on for a while before Misuzulu commands everyone to stop talking

“Qhamu, you and this boy have disrespected us beyond measures. You went and got married without us knowing and I’m still going to beat you up for that I don’t care if you’re a mother or his wife, in fact, you’re not his wife until he does things traditionally which is the right way. you’ll always be my little sister and I will discipline you if needs be. Mngobiwesizwe I’m still going to kill you when I’m done here” he stands up and look at us all one by one before his gaze stops at Makhosini direction

“I can’t deny that boy his birth right, you’re his father as much as I am so for him I’m will to bend the knee” he says giving out his hand

Wait.. is this my stubborn brother?

Misuzulu?

My eyes must be deceiving me.

You know when I had this speech prepared in my mind I thought I'd have to say a lot more to convince all of them that they have to make peace.

“For his sake I'm willing to put all this hatred behind us” my brother says proudly

I wish I could record this moment and replay it each time I start to think this was all a dream.

Makhosini looks at his hand long and hard that I start to think he's not going to shake it

“Buthelezi I want to look you in the eye this way ill know you're not bulls hitting me” Makhosini says and starts fidgeting in his seat.

He first removes both his feet from the leg rest of the wheelchair and grabs on tightly on the sides forcing himself to stand up

He refuses when Manqoba tries to help him out

“I don’t want Misuzulu to think I’m weak” he says
chuckling standing straight

It’s a day of miracles.

“I want you to look me in the eye and tell me we will
see that boy whenever we want to” he says
standing tall

I think all his brothers are still shocked because
they are all just looking at him with their eyes ready
to poop out

“This bastard, so you can walk” Misuzulu says
shocked himself

Makhosini shrugs both his shoulders nonchalantly

“That boy is yours as much as he’s mine” my
brother says

They both shake their hands.

Nothing can describe this moment, my tears fall
freely as I watch them look at each other straight in
the eyes shaking their hands.

At last peace reigns.

“We now declare this war over” they both says in unison telling the rest of the brothers.

Mnqobi kisses my trembling hands softly and whispers how much he loves me.

This war is officially over.

“Now that we no longer enemies can you please all work together and get Mondli and Zwelethu out of jail, Qeda’usizi is dying to meet all his fathers” I say

“Yes, my son wants to see their ugly faces as well”

Mnqobi

“Hey wena don’t talk to us like we are not your peers, show some respect” Nqaba will forever bully

Mnqobi

“Nqaba I’m a father now, so please” Mnqobi

“Just because—you know what let me shut up before I say something that will hurt Qhamu” I roll my eyes at Nqaba

“Wena Mfana I’m still going to break your bones, Qeda’usizi will be begging me to stop by the time I’m through with you” Misuzulu

I'm not expecting him to forgive Mngqobi and I so easily, I'm sure he's still going to deal with us.

“We have to go deal with Zwelethu and Mondli's case for now, the rest of you can go home and we will be back later” Makhosini

He still can't walk for long so he goes back to his wheelchair and they all walk out.

Happy can't even begin to imagine what I'm feeling, the Ngcobo's and the Buthelezi's have made peace, finally.

Mngqobi refused to leave me alone so he's laying next to me playing with my hair when we are interrupted by a loud voice that could only belong to Nomcebo. I first see the big balloons and the flowers in her hands before seeing her.

“Mzala I heard you have a child” she says coming in.

WTF?

A face I never want to see is following behind her.

Lungelo.

What the hell is he doing here?

[06/20, 18:29] Lynne: 55

(Unedited)

Narrated

The shock on Qhamu's face is evident when lungelo enters her ward carrying a plastic bag full of chocolates and fruits

"Lungelo" Qhamu whispers out of disbelief, lifting up her head from her husband chest

"what are you doing here" she asks looking at Nomcebo

Nomcebo sway her hand mid air while Mngqobi is observing how Lungelo is looking at his wife.

"i came to see you, yaz Qhamukile you're so secretive. You didn't even tell me you were pregnant, I'm seriously hurt cause I thought I was your favorite cousin—" Nomcebo is always dramatic

Qhamu thinks to herself shaking her head

“—from what I heard from uma, Bhuti didn't know either which is worse shem” Misuzulu had to call his aunt to inform her about Qhamu's shooting and pregnancy.

”i was going to tell you, where is aunty by the way”

”knowing you, I doubt it. Your aunty is in Joburg, you know she's hardly home but she's coming tomorrow.”

noticing how tense and awkward things are
Nomcebo quickly adds

”you know how ma is always on the road—“ she says rolling her eyes

“I couldn't wait for her so I had to beg Lungelo to bring me here” she says dramatically pointing at Lungelo

“She's scared of driving” Lungelo says chuckling

He hands Qhamu the plastic bag and greets Mnqobi.

Mnqobi feels his face looks familiar though he can't pinpoint where he's seen him from.

”sho sho” Mngqobi says bobbing his head lightly

”Qhamu how are you feeling” Lungelo asks

”I’m good, he’s talking care of me” she says running her fingers on Mngqobi’s side

”I’m glad you good” Lungelo

”So where is the little guy, I’m sure he’s cute”
Nomcebo says excitedly

”Of course he is” Mngqobi is so excited

”So where is he, I want to kiss his cheek” Lungelo has been standing and staring at Qhamu unblinkingly. Deep down he knows he can’t have her but he still loves her after all this time.

”He’s in the NICU for now” Qhamu

”Am I allowed to see him”

”I’m not sure, you know how doctors are so I doubt”
Qhamu

”I’m sure the doctor can let me see him for two minutes besides no one says no to me. Let’s go see him” Qhamu tries to stand but she hurts herself

causing her to hiss in pain

“Sthandwa sam, sit back I’ll take show her where he is” Mngobi says helping Qhamu back to her position in bed.

Once he’s ensured that Qhamu is comfortable he leaves with Nomcebo. He doesn’t feel entirely happy about leaving his wife with Lungelo, he hates it when other guys look at his wife the way Lungelo is gawking at Qhamu.

He gets jealous and he knows it but he can’t help himself either.

Qhamu is his and his alone. He trust his wife but it’s Lungelo he doesn’t trust.

“What are you doing here, I thought I made myself clear that I never want to see you again” Qhamu hiss the minute Mngobi and Nomcebo are out of the room

“Relax Qhamu I just drove Nomcebo here”

“Like hell you were”

“Ok fine, I wanted to see you. You blocked my calls

and you also block me everywhere else on social media so I'm sorry I jumped at the opportunity to come see you. I'm sorry about what happened that—" Qhamu stops him mid-sentence angrily

"Nothing happened that day, you need to just forget about it and move on"

"Qhamu we kissed and almost made love and I know you felt what I felt"

Qhamu's anger becomes eminent instantly

"Lungelo nothing happened let's drop this before I say things I might regret. I don't even know why you're here"

Lungelo steps closer to her causing Qhamu to frown

"don't come any closer" she hisses not wanting to raise her voice just in case someone hears her

"That boy could've been mine and you know it"

"thank God he's not yours so stay the hell away from me and my child" she shouts angrily

"Qhamukile I love you, even after leaning that your

brothers killed my brother in law I still love you”

”Hey boy, she said to leave her alone” a deep voice straddles then both

”Bhuti” Qhamu says horrified

They were both not aware that there was someone outside listening to them

”Qhamukile what is he talking about” he says sizing up Lungelo, belittle him.

”I don't know Langa” she says not looking him in the eye

Langa scoffs shaking his head

“Wena get out of here” Lungelo sheepishly walks out

“Don't forget your plastic” Langa says throwing him the plastic bag he came with but it falls on the floor tearing up before Lungelo catches it causing all the content to spill out

“Just get out” Langa shouts at him while he tries to pick up the fruits and chocolates

“Qhamukile did you cheat on Mngqobi with that boy”
he asks calmly

“No I would never do that” she defends

“Then what does he mean that Sizi could’ve been his, did you sleep with him” Langa is suppressing his anger, trying to understand what the hell Lungelo meant by his statement.

He had to come to the hospital from the police station under Makhosini’s instructions just to make sure that Mngqobi doesn’t need anything.

“No I didn’t sleep with him, I swear. Lungelo is just a friend of mine and that’s all”

“I don’t know if Mngqobi is aware that you now friends with other guys but this friendship needs to end this minute. I never want to see you with that boy” he says and walks out.

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MNQOBI

I'm here again with Nomcebo looking at my son's little face when a nurse enters holding a file.

Nurse Betty Mlotshwa her name badge reads, she's new here because I've never seen her before.

Nomcebo made a big scene when the doctor told her she can't see the baby but in the end she was allowed to see him even though the doctor said she can only see him for a few minutes.

"He needs to rest, you guys need to go now" I don't know what rest is she talking about because all that Sizi does is sleep.

"Can't we not just watch him sleep" Nomcebo

She's fallen in love with my son like everyone else

"Unfortunately you can't"

I'm met by an angry looking Langa just after we walk out of the NICU

"Bafo, is he okay"

I nod

“He’s sleeping, this is Nomcebo. Qhamu’s cousin” I introduce them

Nomcebo is drooling over Langa, why am I not surprised. Langa has that thing you know, I can’t explain it but every girl drools over him

“Hello” He says coldly

I’m astonished by how Nomcebo is smiling at this cold iced man standing in-front of her

“Sawubona bhuti” I guess looks can be deceiving because she doesn’t look like the type that would bow down to any man

Langa looks at her once and give me the eye which I shrug to because I’m confused myself

“Bafo, Makhosini wants you to come home tonight to discuss a few things” I know he wants us to discuss Sizi’s damages.

I too want to get this over and done with so I can be able to see my son whenever I wish too.

I’m hoping Misuzulu will allow me to do what’s right by Qhamukile too.

“I’ll see him later”

The sound of beeping machines flare-up in the NICU and soon there are doctors and nurses rushing in.

”no you can’t come in” one nurse pushes me back when I run in myself.

”my son is in there” I push past her and manage to get in

The erratic beeping comes from the machine connected to Sizi’s incubator

This sight alone puts me into a turmoil, I feel my heart beat quickening instantly

One doctor shouts for the nurse to put me out but I’m fighting wanting to make sure that my son is well.

”sir please go out”

”sisi that's my son”

I manage to see as they take my son out of the incubator and put a ventilator on him before I’m successfully pushed out.

”whats happening” Langa asks panicking

” I don't know” I shout

” I don't fucken know” I say and punch the wall

The physical pain I feel is better than thinking about the worst that could happen.

I'm pacing the corridor worriedly because it's been minutes and no one has told us what the hell is going on.

My thoughts are running wild but I remain positive.

I haven't gone to see Qhamu as yet partly because I don't want to worry her.

Our son will be fine so why worry her for nothing.

Langa instructed Nomcebo to go check on her but not say anything about what's happening here.

It feels like forever before a pediatrician walks out with his head low

”is my son okay” Langa asks before I could

”can we please step into my office”

We both follow him quietly

My heart is beating right out of my chest for some reason but I know my son is fine. I'm sure the doctor just wants to explain the reason why the machines were beeping as loudly as they were.

We both take a seat on the chairs opposite him and listen

”as you all know the baby was born before the thirty-eight weeks gestation and in most cases infant born preterm are prone to breathing problems—“

“Doctor is my son okay” I ask

“Umh—“ I've gotten to like this old man but right now he's starting to work on my nerves

“Mr Ngcobo your son has a breathing disorder named (BPD) bronchopulmonary dysplasia—“

“Broncho What—“ Langa

“Let me explain. This is when there are abnormal changes in the structure of a group of cells so these changes take place in the smaller airways and lung alveoli making breathing difficult and also causing

problems with lung function”

“Doctor I don’t understand half of what you’ve just said. So my son has breathing problems” Langa

I’m just quiet mainly because I’m not interested in hearing all this I just want to know if my child is well.

“Yes, and male infants seem to be at greater risk for developing BPD. We took x-rays and everything was fine but over the hours the baby developed pulmonary adema which is excess fluid buildup in the lungs which makes it more difficult for air to travel through the airways”

“Okay but he’s going to be fine right”

He pauses a bit prong longing my anguish

“Mr Ngcobo we did all we could—“ my hearts falls to the pit of my stomach instantly

“The vessels that carry blood from the heart to the lungs became narrowed causing lung failure”

“What” I want him to repeat what he said just in case I missed something

He said his lung failure right.

“I’m so sorry, unfortunately your son has left us” it’s only now that what he’s been saying to us makes sense

I abruptly stand up and walk back to the NICU

I find the nurse busy with I don’t know what

“Where is my son” I shout

She looks frightened

“Sir. the Doctor, I’ll get you the doctor”

“I don’t want the doctor I want my son, where is he”

Langa comes in rushing with the doctor behind him

“Bafo, calm down” he manages to pull me outside

“He said he left us I want to see him” I heard what the doctor told me but I know my son is fine, he was healthy as a horse which is why he can’t be dead

He just can’t be

“Bafo, you’ll see him but first you need to tell Qhamukile”

How do I tell her that her son is gone, a son she

gave birth to only a day ago.

I feel tears erupting from the back of my eyes but I remain stoic like how a man should.

After the doctor explains everything I go to Qhamu.

I'm sure langa will inform the rest of the family about what just transpired.

I find Qhamu sleeping peacefully.

I'm sure Nomcebo is out there somewhere getting up to no good but she's the least of my worries.

I sit near her bed watching as she breathes for a long time. How is she going to accept all this?

How I do even start breaking such agonizing news to her?

Uhm baby the child you gave birth to a couple of hours ago has died.. God why couldn't it be me instead.

I wipe away my tears before shaking her awake. She flaps her long eyes lashes a few times before fully opening her eyes. Her eyes always manage to pull me out of my gloomy trance but right now I

can't even look at her.

A tear falls down my face as I look at her.

“Mngobi are you okay”

“Yes I'm good my love, there's something I have to tell you” why must I delay this.

I don't want to tell her but I have to.

“What's wrong, did something happen to Mondli or Zwelethu” I even forgot about those two

I shake my head and help her sit up straight

“Baby there's no easy way to say this—“ I'm forced to pause to take a deep breath.

“Mngobi you starting me”

I smile feebly at her and begin to explain what the doctor explained, I can see she's confused but she remains quiet nonetheless.

“So sthamdwa sam Qedusizi was unable to breathe on his own” tears are already following down my face

“But he's fine right” her voice stricken with worry

Someone please tell me, how do I look my wife and
the eye and tell her her son left us?

I shake my head before answering

“He left us”

more tears come gushing down my cheeks

“No Mnqobi no, you lying. My child is fine” she
abruptly get off the bed

“Those bloody doctors made a mistake” she says
running out

I’m sure her stitches are hurting but not as much as
hearing that her son passed on.

I’m sure when did Langa get in her ears but he runs
after her because my knees are too weak to follow
her

Im left weeping, asking myself why it had to be him.
I’m questioning as to why would God allow such to
happen to us.

My son was a redeemer, a new beginning. He was
going to rewrite our history.

I'm forced to stand up when my fathers voice echos
in my head

Men don't cry, I have to be strong not only for me
but Qhamu needs me now more than ever before.

I know she went to NICU so I follow the arrows that
directs there.

I find her at the door wailing, her cries are too
painful to hear but I've got no choice but be here for
her.

Only I know the pain she's feeling.

We both lost a son.

I rush to her and hold her tightly as she cries.

My own tears streaming down my face.

She manages to calm down after a while.

"I want to see him" she says standing up straight
and wiping her tears

"We need to re-suture your stitches first"

Flip I didn't even notice she was bleeding

She shakes her head

“I want to see my son first” I know when not to argue with her but the doctor is hearing none of that.

“Doctor I don’t want anything but my son. I don’t want to get those bloody stitches again I want to see my son. I know you’re lying”

She soon cry’s hysterical demanding to see Qedusizi.

I don’t know what to say to comfort her because I too want to be as hysterical as she is.

One doctor gives her an injection that helps her calm down and she’s taken to get her stitches fixed.

An hour later the hospital is filled with the Buthelezi and Ngcobo brood.

I’m too tired to talk, Langa is the one that explains what the doctor said.

I’ve resorted to smoking my lungs out.

That injection managed to knock Qhamu out which I’m glad because I can’t bare seeing her broken.

After smoking my last cigarette I walk back to her ward where she's sleeping peacefully.

All the brothers are watching her, if it were any other day I'd find this very creepy but I now why they are all here. Qhamu has become everyone's responsibility to look after, even my own brothers love her like their own.

The mood is somber to say the least.

I thought smoking would somehow take away the pain in feeling but instead I'm sinking into darkness with each smoke I puff.

I want to blow life back into our son's body so when Qhamu wakes up this feels like nothing but a dream.

I want her to hold her son and watch him grow but that's just a foreign dream because Qedusizi is gone and we will never get to watch him grow.

The sound of Qhamu cries manage to straddle me out of my train of thoughts.

She's crying in her sleep.

I shake her until she's fully awake.

“Mnqobi I had such a bad dream, i dreamt that Qedusizi had died” says crying holding on to me vigorously crying

“Shhhh my love, it will be alright” I help her wipe away her tears

“Ntonto” Misuzulu

Qhamu quickly pushes me back afraid of her brother.

I doubt Misuzulu cares that she’s holding me right now.

“Bhuti I didn’t notice that you’re all here”

“We came as soon as we heard” Gatsha

“Heard what” she says sitting up straight

They all look at me

Dammit, why am I the one that has to break her heart all over again.

“Baby your dream—“ I look up trying to suppress my tears

“Yes”

“It’s not a dream, our son left us” I can’t contain my tears any longer

“No Mnqobi, my son is fine” she stands up and walks to the NICU

We are all just following her as she walks around like a mad woman.

She’s bare foot and her hair looks all crazy because she was fighting the doctors when they were trying to inject her.

“Where is he” she’s looking at me.

“Mnqobiwesizwe where is my child”

I’m not sure who called her doctor but it gives me some kind of relief when I see him walking towards us

“Miss Buthelezi, you need to get back on your bed” he says softly

“Doctor don’t tell me about that bed, where is my son. I need to see him”

The doctors first explains how people react differently to grief before he suggest she’s allowed

to see him for closure.

I don't know when was Qedusizi taken to the mortuary but the porter pushing Qhamu in a wheelchair directs us there.

We are all shown where he is with no fuss but the rest of us the brothers remain outside while Qhamu and I walk in to the mortuary.

The room is cold as expected but never have I ever thought I'd step into a mortuary to see my own child.

His small body lays on a cold steel table.

"Mnqobi, he looks just like him" Qhamu says clinging tightly on me

"I'm so sorry my love" I hold her tightly partly because I want to soothe her pain but mainly because I need to feel her close to me for my own solace.

We both step closer to the table.

I can't bring myself to touch him but Qhamu brushes his cheeks smiling

"He's cold" she forces me to take off my t-shirt and

wraps it around him up with it.

“He looks so much like you” she says with her voice breaking

She’s holding him close to her chest

“Hey baby, mommy is here” she says brushing his back

I watch as she runs her hand on his back for too long before I take him from her.

“Hey mfana ka baba—“ I think seeing how Qhamu is holding him gives me enough courage to want to hold him too.

“Ubaba loves you and forever will, I’m so sorry you couldn’t be with us here but I know you’re in a better place”

I take a deep breath

“Your mother loves you so much” Qhamu is just watching me as I look at him fondly with my eyes shedding unending tears.

“You’re now my little angel and I know you going to help me look after mommy” I can’t help kiss his little

lips before I hand him back to Qhamu

“My angel, your father is right I love you so much”
her tears are now flowing

I know part of her has come into realization that this is our reality though part of her is still in denial.

“Your father and the doctor said you’re no more but I know you’re still here.”

part of me wants to hold her tight and whisper lies to her, tell her this is just a nightmare she will wake up from soon but how do I do that when all this feels like a nightmare to me too.

“Wake up my love, I know you can hear me. Open your eyes for mommy please”

She says shaking him

“Qhamu, sthandwa Sam. He’s no more” I try and hold her but she pushes me away

“Mnqobi I know he’s still alive, he will open his eyes I know this. Look at him he’s still breathing” I hate seeing her like this.

“He’s gone Qhamu our son is gone” she kissed his

lips and holds him tightly against her chest

“He can’t be”

“Baby I know you don’t want to believe it but he’s gone” I let her cry for eternity holding on to our son’s tiny body until she starts believing

“Mnqobi our baby is gone, he’s gone” she places him gently on the table and lets me hold her.

“He’s gone, I didn’t even get to hold him and now he’s gone.” I’m crying too now

“When am I going to find my happiness, why is my happiness always short lived. Mnqobi I can’t, I can’t do this. I don’t want to feel anymore. Please take my heart out I don’t want it. It’s hurts so bad” I know where it hurts and I know how it’s hurts

If it was possible I’d take her heart out so she die t feel this turmoil.

I’d feel for her, I’d carry her pain my heart if it was possible.

“Mnqobi are we ever going to find peace” she manages to say through her tears.

We remain unmoved just crying for long before we are kicked out of the mortuary.

Our brothers are just looking at us as I carry her back to her ward and into her bed.

Nomcebo is now here with everyone.

Her eyes are red just like Manqoba and Gcina's eyes.

"Mnqobi please take away this pain" Qhamu says trying to rip her chest apart

Her brothers tried comforting her but she doesn't want to be held by any of them the only person she want is me.

"I would if I could my love" I say and kiss her forehead.

"I'd give my life for his just so you don't feel this pain if I could. Qhamukile you're my life and seeing you hurt like this hurts me more than you can imagine. I'd take his place any day my love"

"I know, I know you would" she says and snuggle closer to me. I love how her hot breath feel like as it

hits the crook of my neck.

“Mngobi please don't leave me too”

“Sleep my love tomorrow is another day”

“I don't want to see another day. I want to be buried with our son”

The firmness in her voice tells me she means it

“Sleep my love” I hate how adamant she sounds.

I can't leave without her.

I listen to her shallow breathe until sleep take over.

I don't know why things turned out the way they did.

I hate god for allow this to happen, our ancestors were suppose to look after him and made sure he's okay but I guess that didn't happen.

They took him away from us, God took him from us.

He took away the only good that in our lives and I don't know how are we going to survive this but one thing I know for sure is that Qhamukile is my life and where she's goes I go.

We will be buried in the same grave.

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Good people I still don't have a phone but I managed to post this for today.

I'm not sure when will I be able to post again.

I'll have a phone after the 20th.

[06/20, 18:30] Lynne: 56

Unedited

MAKHOSINI

Death

A thief of the living.

The stealer of life.

The one thing that's guaranteed in life and yet we

never get used to it not does it hurt less when a loved one is lost to death.

I'm sad that I never got to hold or even touch my son, I say son because he was indeed my flesh and blood but I'm sure the pain I'm feeling amounts nothing to what Mnqobi and Mashenge are going through, they are devastated.

I lost a son but they lost so much more.

As a family this has been the greatest loss of all, Qedusizi was the glue that glued up all the broken pieces together. He made us all look like a picture perfect.

The hatred we had for each other diminished the moment he was born and he instantly became peace we needed.

He is what brought us together as the Ngcobo's and the Buthelezi's and for that he shall forever be loved and cherished.

He brought our lives a whole new purpose, a whole new meaning.

We are better off as friends than enemies because together we are stronger, we are unstoppable which is why I'm confident our little angel has served his purpose and it was his time.

That alone gives me some kind of solace and courage to be stronger for the weaker one's.

We are all watching as Mnqobi comforts her to sleep.

You know growing up I thought this kind of love only exist in movies but Mnqobi has shown me that true love still exist. I admire how he fights and chooses her above everything. It's very heartwarming to witness really.

"I'd give my life away only for him to come back to you" Mnqobi has been reciting that line far too long to keep track as to how many times he whispered softly in Qhamu's ears

She is asleep but I'm sure she's hearing the sincerity and conviction in his voice.

I have never seen any of my brothers love a woman the way Mngqobi loves Qhamu heck ive never been this in love myself and I've been around the block way long before Mngqobi was born but this kind of love I have never experienced. It's rare and true.

Qhamu whimpers in her sleep begging for Mngqobi not to leave her.

The more she cries the tighter he holds her.

Misuzulu is the first one to chuckle next to me.

This situation doesn't allow me to laugh so I look at him

"Mngqobi" Misuzulu says looking at him.

Mngqobi only moves his eyes to look at him

"you seriously love her uh"

"more than anything" Mngqobi says and smells her hair.

Weird.

"Mapholoba let's walk" i'd laugh if we weren't this sad.

This ass knows I can't walk yet but he's this.

I shake my head and push my wheelchair behind him until we are out.

”so we need to start with the funeral arrangements”

”yes, I was hoping we would bury him as a Ngcobo”
I'm grasping at straws because I know traditionally he's still a Buthelezi but between is all, not everything is done in an orthodox way look at Mnqobi and Qhamu, they went and gif married without us knowing.

”but—“

“I know I'm asking for too much but he died before we could do the right thing, you know we were just waiting for them to be discharged”

“So now you're asking me bend tradition”

“No, I'm asking you to let him be buried with the rest of Ngcobo men like he should be. I'm not sure if traditionally permits it but I'd still love to do the right thing, this is too much to ask but—“

“I'll speak to the elders and hear if it's possible then

we will revisit this later today—“ by elders he’s referring to bab’Themba

This feud has taken too many people that we are left with only our brothers and no elder who knows our heritage and the practices of our tradition.

“For now we need to get Mondli and Zwelethu out of that hell hole. Bab’Themba was released a few hours ago, they said it’s lack of evidence but those two are still in there” we have so much to deal with as it is

“I spoke to my police informant, he says Manqhele is not so clean. We just need to pay the right amount to get our answers. I’m meeting up with one of his people let’s hope the money I have will be enough for him to give me something I’ll be able to use”

“I’m coming with you” I was expecting him to say this

“One of us has to be here for Qhamu, MaNgidi will be here any minute as well but she needs you too”

“Fine, just make sure you get something out of that

guy, we can't let those two rot in prison"

"I agree, we need to start with the funeral arrangements so speak to the elders and we will take it from there"

He nods agreeing lights

"Ya, I'll also have to speak to Qhamu about this. It's up to her at the end of the day" him

"Alright, let me get going."

We both part ways after that.

Misuzulu will take care of Qedusizi's buried while I take care of Zwelethu and Mondli's issues.

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QHAMU

Two days later...

Have you ever missed someone you don't know, long for their touch, miss the sound their voice or wish you could have just a moment with them?

well, I miss my mother. I want her to hold me tight and assure me that all is well. I want to feel her presence, I want to feel her love.

I want her to listen to my painful cries as I continue to weep for my son but mostly I miss the one man I know would slay dragons for me, the man who would cradle and sing me to sleep, the man who showed me true love from the beginning.

The man who wiped my tears and healed my wounds.

My father.

Not only did I lose a mother, a father but I lost a son, now I have to bury him.

Losing a child is unbearable, the pain consumes you, it's all you feel and breathe.

I don't wish this to happen even to my worst enemy.

Tell me.

When will it all end?

When will I stop burying the people who means the world to me, whose next?

Mnqobi?

Misuzulu?

Who, because it looks like I'm destined to hurt, my purpose in life is to bury the ones I hold dearly to my heart, so whose next?

Gatsha or my Mondli?

At this point I'm expecting anything who knows it might be Gcina or Nqaba.

I want to pray but my pain doesn't allow me to.

MaNgidi, Nomcebo and my aunt haven't left my sight for these past two days but I still want my mother.

I NEED her.

Never in my life have I needed her like I need her now.

Mnqobi has been very supportive I must say but he needs me too. He's trying to act tough but I see right through him, he's not coping.

He smokes more frequently than ever before and his eyes are always red which tells me he cries just as much.

He lost his son too but I don't know how to be there for him. When I look at him all I see is the cold lifeless body of what used to be our son laying in a mortuary hard steel table.

Why do they have to look so much alike, now I can't look at Mnqobi and not think of Sizi.

"Sisi you have to eat something" My aunt has been forcing food down my throat ever since I got discharged from hospital.

"Aunty I'm not hungry" I don't have any appetite

I take out my phone and text Mnqobi.

funeral preparation are going very well I must say Mnqobi has chosen the tombstones, we need to chose the coffin but I haven't had any courage to do

so.

The funeral will be held at Mphophomeni where my son will be laid to rest with the rest of his grandfathers. I don't know the nitty gritty discussed by the older brothers for him to be buried there but I don't have any problem with it either.

Mnqobi and I are planning on building a house there anyway.

Misuzulu explained what had to be done traditionally but my mind was not there, I didn't hear half of the things he said all that I constantly think about is how little and beautiful he was.

I wipe away my tears and stand up.

I need to be strong now.

"Aunty can you please take me to the funeral home, I need to choose the coffin" I say after reading Mnqobi reply.

We are meeting at the funeral home to choose a coffin for our son.

we are burying him on Sunday and today is

Thursday.

Time is of the essence everything needs to be in order before then.

My aunt from my mother's is also here but I haven't spoken to her particularly because I didn't even know she existed to begin with.

"Are you sure"

I nod and wipe away remains of my tears.

My mother's voice keeps echoing in my head, telling me I'm strong and that everything happens for a reason.

Everyone has a purpose in life, I guess my son had his purpose as well and his time on earth is over.

"I'm sure Aunty" I say already walking out the door.

I find Thobile's mother with aunty Nomthandazo in the kitchen.

"Sawubona ma" I haven't seen Thobile's mother in a while

"How are holding up ntombi yam"

“I’m getting there ma, I’ll see you later I need to get a few things in order before Sunday” I’m already out before she could ask more questions

I hate the pity look she’s giving me.

The drive to the funeral home is long and boring because my aunt is playing American gospel trying to lift my spirits up but I just need quietness.

It’s after eleven in the morning but I’m already drained.

I find Mngqobi waiting along side Langa and Manqoba. He looks thin, I bet he hasn’t been eating.

After exchanging pleasantries we enter.

The lady is welcoming.

Misuzulu has been the one handling most of the things on our side but this I have to do myself.

“We are here to choose a coffin” I say

She shows us a few coffins for infants and Mngqobi and I agree on a white one that has gold embellishment on the side.

White symbolizes pureness so this coffin is perfect.

“So sisi everything is set for Sunday right” I ask

“Yes, your brother took care of everything” I nod and we leave

“Mnqobi when last did you eat” he shrugs his shoulders

“You need to eat, you starting to lose weight”

“I should be telling that to you. How are your stitches. You didn’t have to come here Qhamu, you need to rest so you can heal”

“I’m fine” these stitches don’t even hurt

“You coming with us, Auntie cooked lets go” he wants to protest but of course he knows he won’t win this one so he relents and he joins my aunt and I in the car.

We are both seated in the back and he’s playing with my fingers and my aunt drives at least she’s not playing her music. The trip is less boring now.

Mnqobi is skeptical to enter the yard at first but he eventually does and I dish for him a full plate and

watch him eat.

We are hiding at the back of the house because I know everyone will keep disturbing us.

“I’m not hungry” I decline when he tried to feed me

“I’m not hungry and yet I’m forced to eat so you must eat with me” I roll my eyes and let him feed me.

We eat silently until the plate is clean, we sure ate for people who were not hungry.

“So sthandwa sam how are you” I know he wants to truth

He wants the bare hard truth.

“It hurt less when I’m with you” and yet he reminds me so much of our son

“I know what you mean. Don’t hold back any tears, cry if you feel like crying and remember I’m just a phone call away. Call me even at midnight and I’ll come running” this I know he will

“How are you”

“I’m okay my love, everything is coming together. I will travel to Mpophomeni tomorrow and you will follow on Saturday.”

“Yes. I want this to be over so we can move on”

“Yes, our son will forever be in our hearts. He knows we love him” I nod because I no longer want to talk about him.

“I have to get going before Nqaba gets here, he said I can’t come here whenever I want to cause I haven’t paid dowry for you. Ey Your brother is a pain in my a..”

he stops mid-sentence when I give him the eye

“my life, he’s a pain in my life” we both chuckle softly

His laughter feels like music to my ears.

He has to use a taxi back home.

“MaNgidi will come later on to check up on you, I asked her to bring pain meds for you as well”

“Thank you”

We share a peck and he leaves.

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I can't edit cause i'm only given minimal time on the phone.

[06/20, 18:30] Lynne: 57

(Friday)

QHAMU

I feel the wintery air blowing on my face, it's freezing but the ice-kissed weather is welcomed. There are snowflakes leisurely falling from the sky, how I love winter mornings. Morning dew still lingers on the dead grasses and the lifeless trees resemble what I feel internal.

Empty.

I'm standing next to my window watching the foggy weather morning, it's going to be a cold day.

I love winter days because they remind me of my father, so, he made bonfire fire every winter evening where we would all gather around and listen to his tales.

“You see my children, back in my days I used to walk in snow barefoot” I'd roll my eyes inwardly at that line

“Which is why I work so hard, everything I do is so you can have better lives than I did”

Mind you we would be eating beans and dumpling he bought from one of the cooks in town. That man couldn't cook to save his life, I thank those women who cook for taxi drivers because we never went to bed on a hungry stomach.

Those were the perfect days.

A knock startles me back to reality.

“Qhamu”

I haven't spoken to him since this whole ordeal started.

"How are you"

"Eish, I'm sorry that's a stupid question. I'm sure you not okay" he says scratching his head with one hand while the other holds the tray firmly

The porridge smells really good I must say.

There's already chatter of noise coming from the kitchen meaning everyone is awake, I didn't get much sleep so I want nothing but to go back into my blankets and shut the world out but I can't do that. I have to face my demons head-on. Starting with this one.

"I brought you your favorite" he says stuttering

He knows I love brown grain porridge.

"I wasn't sure if you wanted coffee or tea" he's drilling the floor with his eyes, I'd be nervous too if I were him.

I smile feebly at him to ease the tension and accept the tray.

He made rooibos tea. He knows me too well.

“Thanks”

We haven't spoken since the fight we had, not because I hate him or blame him for what happened but only because we haven't gotten time to talk.

“How are you holding on”

“I'm good Gcina, how are you”

He shrugs both his shoulders nonchalantly

“I've been better—“ he sighs

“Qhamukile, I'm here to apologize to you. none of this would have happened if it wasn't for me and I'm sorry”

I blamed him too but I've realized looking for someone to blame was just a coping mechanism. The doctor explained what happened to Qesusizi and it could've happened to anyone. Even full-term babies do develop P what, these terms doctors use are difficult to remember but none of this is his fault.

I know what you thinking, but blaming him will only add on to this misery I'm in, the only way forward is

to accept and make peace with what happened.

My son is gone, no amount of hate nor resentment will bring him back. As hard as it is I'm learning to accept it but pointing fingers will just hinder my healing process.

“It's not your fault”

He shakes his head, now pacing around

“No it is, had I not went to Mats hen i in the first place then none of this would have happened. Qedusizi would have been alive. I'm so sorry Qhamukile. I regret everything I did, I shouldn't have reacted the way I did and look what happened now and it's all my fault”

His voice is breaking and his eyes are glistening with tears he's trying to restrain himself from letting out a loud wail.

“Gcina I assure you none of this was your fault, I admit at first I blamed you but I've realized this was God's plan, so please don't blame yourself” my tears are just a blink away

“Qhamu, please forgive me”

“There’s nothing to forgive but I forgive you” I let the tears fall

“I’m so sorry” he whispers letting the tears he’s been restraining fall.

I haven’t seen Gcina cry in a long time but seeing him like this breaks my heart.

I don’t want him to blame himself, this is not his fault of anything it’s mine. Had I not gotten pregnant in the first place then all this wouldn’t have happened.

I’m to blame.

Blame me.

I wipe away my tears and stand tall

“Gcina don’t cry, this is all my fault, not yours”

“No—please don’t say that, this is all on me”

“Gcina I forgive you and thanks for the porridge” this is me telling him to excuse me politely, thank goodness he nods and walks out.

I don't have any appetite but I force myself to at least eat three spoons before taking the dishes to the kitchen.

“Qhamukile you should be seated on a mattress, I told you not to worry yourself about all this.

Nomcebo was going to collect those dishes. Where is she by the way”

my aunt wants me to seat on that mattress unmoved but I'm tired of seating and watching each and every candle burn down, it's like each dying flame dies with a piece of me and I feel like my soul is dying. I'm tired of listening to people saying how sorry they are, I'm tired of reading all the condolences messages from old classmates. I no longer want to feel this sad and empty, no, I just no longer want to feel.

I look at my aunt long and hard before walking back to my room, to sit on the mattress that's slowly ripping my soul out of my body.

I take out my phone and call my big brother.

“Ntonto” his voice forever sounding sweet

“Bhuti”

We both remain silent for a minute before I break it

“Bhuti tomorrow it’s the funeral and I’d like for Mondli and Zwelethu to be there too—“

“I know Ntonto, we are trying everything in our power to get them out”

“I know you are and I trust that you will” He sighs loudly

That’s never a good sign

“What’s wrong Bhuti”

“Nothing” I always say this, nothing doesn’t exist.

“Bhuti please talk to me, what’s wrong” he sighs again before talking

“Qhamukile I don’t want to lie to you—“

“Then don’t” I say hurriedly

Sighs

“It’s not looking good, this case is airtight. The police have compelling evidence against them.”

“So they might go to prison”

“Bhuti please tell me the truth, they will be jailed” I say when he doesn’t say anything

“Qhamukile I don’t want you to worry about this, we are doing everything we can to help them”

“Bhuti how long will they be prisoned for” “for how long” it seems I have to ask twice to get him to divulge any information

“I don’t know” his voice tells me he knows but he doesn’t want to say to protect me or maybe he doesn’t want to accept it.

“Its life isn’t it, they might go to prison for life.”

“Don’t worry about all that”

It’s confirmed, my brother will be jailed for life.

“Bhuti you can’t let him rot in jail, you just can’t. You have to do everything you can to get him out”

“Don’t worry”

“No, promise me you’ll get them out. They have to bury their nephew and I also have to say my

goodbyes so please promise me that they will be out before we bury him” I know I’m asking too much but they have to be there

“We trying—wait—what goodbyes are you talking about. Where are you going”

“Bhuti promise me they will be out tonight” he huffs frustrated

“You have to do anything you can, even if it’s illegal I don’t care just get him out”

“Do you mean that” I hate it when they do illegal dealings but that never stopped them so why to stop now

“I mean every word” I say with conviction and hang up.

Mondli has to say his goodbyes to my son and I also have to see him for one last time.

I sit back on my mattress and

watch the white candle burn until it dies, leaving me tormented and unhappy but not for long, it’s not long until I’m gone too. I feel my life slowly slipping

away into the darkness with each passing minute
but it's not long till it is all over.

I will never hurt again, I'll never feel sad again, soon.

Soon, I'll never have to feel again.

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(Once off)

ZITHULELE

“So there are no loose ends right, those two are
going to rot in there” I ask

I've been trying to get to the Buthelezi's and the
Ngcobo's for far too long. I can't believe I finally got
my break. This is my one chance of burying them
alive after what they did to my brother. I know
family means everything to them so what better
way than to hit them where it hurts the most.

Their little brothers will rot in jail and I'll deal with them one by one. They will know who I am. By the time I'm done with them they'll be begging me to kill them.

"Yes, all the evidence you gave me is legit so you have nothing to worry about" I nod and give him my sinister smile after downing my hard liquor.

I no longer feel the bitter taste or the burning sensation down my throat anymore in-fact I love the thrill I get from drinking, I get more sinister and evil with each drink I down.

I think the burning liquor burned down my heart because I no longer feel anything.

I'd tell you where it all began but I'm afraid time is not on my side, I have my brother to avenge and talking about some sappy sad story won't help in any way.

"I hope so Manqhele, I'd hate for you to add on to the list of the people I want to kill. I want all those boys gone"

he knows human life means nothing to me. I've

killed too many times to have any conscious thoughts left.

“No need for threats Zithulele I promise, those two will rot in jail until you decide otherwise”

I might just kill them too.

Manqhele has been a good partner of mine for a long time, in Zulu we say izandla ziy'gezana. I give him enough falsified evidence, he doesn't need to know that but he gets to make his arrest and I get to do the hell I want without worrying about stupid police knocking on my door. See what I mean when I say izandla ziy'gezana.

“I do not make any threats” if it wasn't for me he wouldn't be where he is, I made him and in a snap of a finger I can also make his life a mess and he knows it.

This is a cruel world, either get killed or kill and I choose to kill each time.

“Just don't try me, I want to hit Makhosini and his lap dog where it hurts the most, family. I want to kill each and everyone they love before I get to them—“

A knock from sticks comes through disturbing me, I know it's him because I've been expecting him.

He has proven to be trustworthy and loyal and I like his intelligence, pity his plan was disrupted by this nincompoop named Manqhele when he made the arrest at the hospital. If that's wasn't for him they would all be gone, I mean all of them.

"Boss, I have some good info" see why I like him, he always brings me good news

"Talk to me" judging for his smile he is about to make my day even better

"So the funeral is tomorrow which will be held in Mpophomeni"

"I don't see how is that good news to me"

"boss, we can attack them there. They will be vulnerable at that time, I'm sure they are busy wiping their tears right now so they won't have time to check which is a perfect time for us to attack"

I smile and pour myself another drink

"Sticks I like how you think, kick the dog while it's

still laying down. This is perfect, now you know why you're my right-hand man."

I had to make him my right hand man after that fool Nkanyezi tried crossing me but no one double crosses Zithulele and gets to tell the tale.

I first wanted to get to the smaller brothers before killing the older one's but why not kill them all. This is the perfect plan.

"But there will be casualties there, innocent people might die"

"And how is that my problem Manqhele, innocent people die all the time. Sticks make sure all the boys are ready for tomorrow and tell them to kill everyone that gets in their way. I want all of them dead but don't kill the girl, I want her alive, she will make me a lot of money but kill her if she's any problem"

sticks nods

"We will make sure they are all dead Boss" he says and walks out

“Things are finally working in my favor, I’m finally going to revenge my brother” I pour Manqhele a drink and click his glass with mine

“I’m not on board with this plan, remember your fight is with the brothers, not innocent people and how are you going to kill them at broad daylight. There will be lots of witnesses, you will get caught”

“Which is why you’re here, to make sure I don’t go to prison”

“You can’t just go there and start shooting at everyone”

“I’ll do just that Manqhele, it’s going to be a massacre, by the time I’m through on one will dare mess with me and like I said people die all the time”

I don’t know why is he getting soft on me now, my hate for those two families is perpetuated by what they did to my brother.

“But I feel like—“

“Hey, I’m not your shrink who you discuss feelings with. Your job is to keep me out of prison, stick to

that and let me worry about who dies” I don’t like it when someone questions me and he knows this. Tomorrow there will be a shoot out at that funeral, Manqhele can go speak to someone who cares to listen.

“Tomorrow this time this world will be rid of Makhosini and his stupid followers” I say and gulp down the drink.

They say never count your eggs before they hatch but I’m already tasting victory and it tastes fucking amazing.

Manqhele’s phone rings in his pocket and he answers.

“What—I’m coming right now” he says frantically

“I have to go, that was my daughter’s nanny, she’s at the station, my daughter is missing” this is one of the reasons I’m never having kids besides I’m not capable of being anything close to a father.

He runs out before I could offer to help look for her.

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NARRATED

The little talk Misuzulu had with Qhamu was motivation enough for him to put the plan in motion. They are all emotional because of the death of little Sizi and this arrest is just adding on to their already filled plate. He was waiting for the funeral to pass so he can start planning on getting Mondli and Zwelethu out of prison but now that he spoke to Qhamu who wants both Mondli and Zwelethu at the funeral he feels like it's his duty to get them out now.

They drive moderately teasing each other until they reach bra Joe's garage.

"If I didn't know any better I'd say you two are now dating" Joe says this because for the past couple of days he's been seeing langa alongside Gatsha.

They have been running errands together for the

funeral while the big brothers handle the police issue but Misuzulu asked them to do this for them as he and Makhosini can't be at two places at once, besides everything for the funeral is in place with MaNgidi back in Mpophomeni to oversee all the preparations as well.

“Not now Joe, we need your help” Gatscha says

Langa remains quiet but he shakes his head at Joe's remark

“Why am I not surprised, what do you want now”

“As I said on the phone, we want you to keep something for us for a few hours” Gatscha again.

“Well... I don't have all day boys” Joe says when Langa and Gatscha remain glued to the floor not moving

Langa scratches his beard before he moves to the back door of the car.

The windows are tinted concealing what's inside but judging from how nervous they are it's something big.

“Well—“ Langa says opening the door
there’s a little girl about nine years sitting there with
tears in her eyes.

“What is this”

“The package we spoke off” Langa

Joe looks at both of them shocked.

when they said package he thought of illegal guns
but never a whole human being.

“Is this a joke”

“Please keep her for a couple of hours, we will be
back for her”

“Gatsha tell me this is a joke” Joe says disregarding
what Langa just asked him

“No Joe, this is one of Misuzulu’s ridiculous plan to
get Mondli and Zwelethu out of prison and a garage
is the last place police would look for her”

“You guys are crazy, who is she anyway” Joe

“She’s the daughter of the officer that arrested
them” Langa

“No no no no no, don’t tell me you kidnapped the daughter of the most dangerous police officer. That guy works with Zithulele and you know how dangerous he is. Take her somewhere else I don’t want any troubles here” Joe is genuinely scared

“What do you mean he’s working with Zithulele”
Gatsha

“Word on the street brother and if it’s true I don’t want to be associated with all this”

“Joe I wouldn’t have come here knowing this might get you in trouble, trust me brother, nothing will happen. It’s just for a few hours then we will come for her”

“Few hours Gatsha, a few hours then you come for her”

“I cross my heart hope to die” Gatsha says drawing an invisible cross over his heart

“Get out of here” Joe says chuckling shaking his head.

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Meanwhile at the police station...

Misuzulu and Makhosini have been waiting for detective Manqhele in his office.

They had to do what they had to for their brothers.

Makhosini's phone rings

“Apparently Manqhele is working with Zithulele”

Langa tells him once he answers

“How sure are you” he asks

“I'm not but if he is then this means he is as dirty as that scumbag and we can use that to our advantage”

Manqhele enters breathing heavily

“I hear you two know where my daughter is, did you take her” he shouts

His colleagues told him that Makhosini and

Misuzulu have information about the whereabouts of his daughter and they were asked to wait for him in his office.

“Let me call you back” Makhosini says to Langa and hangs up

“calm down before you give yourself a heart attack Manqhele, breathe please” Misuzulu says calmly

”don't tell me to calm the fuck down, where is my daughter I know you took her. Where is she”

Manqhele is sweating

His daughter means everything to me.

Makhosini shakes his head at Misuzulu, he's not going to waste time in toying with Manqhele. He wants him to release Zwelethu and Mondli so they can travel to Mpophomeni tonight.

”Manqhele I'm not here to waste your time, release those two boys and I'll tell you who has your daughter”

”bastard”

” I see no need for name-calling but like he said we

don't have time so I'll let that go. Speaking of time, your daughter doesn't have much time too who knows if she's still breathing wherever she is”

Misuzulu

”release those two before it's too late” Makhosini

Manqhele knows what these two are capable of, he knows they don't bluff when it comes to family and just like them he loves his daughter and wouldn't want anything to happen to her but he also doesn't want to anger Zithulele.

”you won't get away with this” he says wiping his sweat from his forehead

”spare us—“ Misuzulu can be rude when he wants to be

“We don't have all day, we have a son that we have to bury so we need to get going” Makhosini's is not a patient man by nature

“I can't get them out today, it's impossible they were transferred to sevontein yesterday”

“I'm sure it's possible, make a plan or else you not

only going to loose your daughter but this will be the end of your career as well” Makhosini

“You don’t scare me” Manqhele

“Maybe but I wonder what will your boss say when he learns that you’ve been working with the most wanted criminal, Zithulele—“ the shock plastered on Manqhele face is the confirmation Makhosini wanted but Manqhele quickly hides his shock with anger

“What” Misuzulu is also shocked just like Manqhele

“What are you talking about, I don’t work with Zithulele” Manqhele shouts

“Save the dramatics for your boss, you don’t need to convince me. I know you’ve been working with him, I wouldn’t be surprised if he’s the reason my brothers are in jail right now but I don’t care about that I just want them out” Makhosini’s face hard

“Makhosini you messed with the wrong person this time, I will personally make sure I put you behind bars where you belong”

“Manqhele I don’t have all day. Are you going to release them or should I call your boss”

“You’re bluffing you won’t call him”

Makhosini shrugs lazily furrowing his eyebrows together.

“let’s not forget I have your little girl and I’d hate for you to bury her remains” Makhosini

His demeanor is scary and Manqhele knows that he’s not bluffing, he will kill his daughter if he doesn’t get what he want. Manqhele is just grasping at straws.

“I would test him if I were you, we both know he will call your boss and probably kill your daughter too”
Misuzulu

“How sure am I that you won’t kill her after I release them”

“That’s a chance you’ll have to take” Misuzulu

“You’ll get her once I walk out of that door with Zwelethu and Mondli” Makhosini

Manqhele sighs because he knows he is cornered,

he has no choice but call in a few favors and make a few promises before the two boys are released. This is going to cost him too much but he knows how ruthless these two can be but he also knows should Zithulele hear about this it will be the end of his career if not his life but he's doing it for his daughter.

"They are on their way" he says when after hanging up

"Not so hard was it" Misuzulu is being the funny one today.

It's funny how these two exchange power when in situations like these. They know they both can't lead at the same time so they allow each other to lead when needs be and that's what makes them a great team.

Misuzulu had to let Makhosini lead without feeling inferior to get the job done.

Two hours later Mondli and Zwelethu are brought in by two police officers.

"There, you have your brothers where is my

daughter”

“I’ll send you an address”

“I don’t trust you, I want to see her now unharmed”

“Unlike you Manqhele I’m true to my word. Your daughter will be waiting for you at that address”

Manqhele is shaking his head unbelievably.

Makhosini and Misuzulu walked into a police station to threaten him and they are now walking out freely.

No one would dare to pull a stunt like this but Makhosini is as bold as Misuzulu. They do things that are out of the ordinary and that’s what makes them fearful.

The disrespect they have displayed today is beyond comprehension.

“I must tell you. You’re all as good as dead. You are all going to die”

Manqhele shouts as they walk out of his office

“No one does what you did and get away with it, your days are numbered I promise you”

“Save the energy Manqhele” Zwelethu says laughing.

[06/20, 18:31] Lynne: 58

MNQOBI

(Funeral day)

Unedited

In life we go through different kinds of pains and sadly there's no manual to teach us how to get through it all or an on and off button to turn the pain off when it becomes too unbearable. We have no choice but to live through it.

I remember how painful it was growing up without my biological mother.

I asked myself unanswered questions about what we went wrong, if maybe we were too much for her

to handle, did she hate us that much to turn her back on us, does she ever think about us but as time went by I got through it, I learned to accept that she was never coming back and I moved on but then the unfortunate happened.

My father disappeared, it felt like the world as I knew it had come to a complete end. I prayed every night asking God to bring him back, again I thought nothing could be as painful as losing a father, a pillar of our home was gone. Someone I called ubaba was gone forever and again I had lost another parent I was devastated to say the least but I managed to live through it. But now here I am again, saying nothing hurts more than watching my child being lowered to his grave. A child I never got to hold. A child who managed to consume my entire life the moment he was born, now have to bury him.

I don't know if there will ever be anything that will amount to this pain I'm feeling, nothing is as heart shattering as having to bury your own child, not my mother's absents, not my fathers disappearance but saying goodbye to Sizi has been the most

painful thing I've had to endure. I feel like I'm losing my mind and more especially because my wife is just numb, she has not shed even a single tear as we watch our son get consumed by a hole we shall now call his home. She is unmoved by everyone's tears.

she's just quietly watching as the grave mounds up with soil.

I want her to cry her pain away, I know she's feeling my pain and it hurts me to see her this emotionless.

"let the children come to me, and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God" the pastor preaches on but I doubt Qhamu is listening to a word he's saying. Her body is here with us but her thoughts are miles away.

I don't blame her this is too painful for anyone to endure. The preacher continues evangelizing as more tears stream down my face.

I don't care if that makes me look weak, I'm crying for my child and no one should tell me how to mourn.

This funeral was supposed to be secret according to Makhosini and Misuzulu, you know how dramatic they can be so they only wanted family members to attend but how do I stop friends from coming to show their support?

Katlego drove down with some of the guys I used to chill with back in Joburg, Simphiwe also traveled all the way from Swaziland. Lucas and his sister are also here and how can I forget Nokhaya and Nontombi, I haven't seen them in a while but I'm happy they are all here to support Qhamu and me.

”Mngqobi, Qhamu—“ the pastor says looking at us.

I force my dewy-eyes to rise up from the hillock grave to look at him.

“—my children the Lord says do not fear, for I am with you. Do not dismay, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you. I will uphold you with my righteous right hand. Seek the Lord and his strength; seek his presence continually and trust him to mend your broken hearts. Seek refuge in him and all shall be well. Be strong my children for

this too shall pass” if only those words can be as comforting to Qhamu as they are to me.

Makhosini and the rest of the brothers help cement the white marble cross tombstone over the grave while the rest of the people sing the gospel.

”let’s close our eyes” the pastor says once they are done.

”lala ngoxolo Mapholoba” I hear Makhosini whisper before I close my eyes.

The pastor starts praying.

I can’t keep my eyes closed so I open them to find Qhamu looking at the grave.

She manages to lift the corner of her lips into a faint smile when our eyes meet.

“I love you” I mime to her because I want to give her some kind assurance

she mimes I know. Maybe she hasn’t totally lost touch with us but if she continues like this I am afraid she will only sink deeper into this dark hole she’s in and I am afraid I won’t know how to pull her

out. The is this dark cloud surrounding her and I'm afraid she's loosing herself in it.

“And the Lord God formed man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul—“ I'm sure that's some scripture from the Bible, the one book I don't have any interest in reading

“—in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground, for out of it wast thou taken, for dust thou art, and into dust shalt thou return” the pastor continues

I glance around and see people wipe their tears as the pastor concludes the ceremony with a prayer.

The mood is melancholy and mournful as expectedly, I'm sure being here reminds everyone of their loved once's which they lost.

The pastor concludes the prayer and everyone opens their eyes.

” I'd like to thank everyone for coming to support us through this difficult time—“ I don't hear the rest of what Uncle Maphikelela is saying because I'm

watching the crowd as they scatter around, some going back to the homestead which is a mile away and some going to Qhamu whose standing unmoved.

"Zulu boy" I didn't even see Katlego and the rest of the guys come my direction

"hey boy, thanks for coming I appreciate it" I say after breaking the man hug we've just shared.

"its nothing, you're my boy"

"yes it's nothing man, I'm really sorry about the little one. How is Qhamu doing" Simphiwe says and we all turn our heads in her direction.

She's now standing with Lucas and Zanele.

Katleho being Katlego is the first one to walk to their direction and we follow after him.

"Zulu girl"

"Katlego" she gives him a hug.

I'm sure Makhosini is angry that we remained behind but I can't leave Qhamu here.

”how do you stay this beautiful while married to this one, I was sure his ugliness would've rubbed off on you by now” we all chuckle at the silly Katlego

”Mngobi? Ugly? Never shem” I trust my wife to come to my rescue

”tell him baby” I kiss her temple

“MaShenge someone once told me time heals all kind of wounds and that in time we will forget about a fallen loved one but I beg to differ. As time goes by we simply learn to live life without a loved one and somehow that makes the pain bearable.”

I think this is the most profound statement that has ever come out off Katlego’s mouth and the fact that he said it in Zulu makes it more meaningful I suppose.

I wouldn’t be surprised of he googled that on his way here, he’s not particularly good with words.

“I’m sorry for your loss. I pray you find the strength and courage you need to help you move forward” he says lastly and give Qhamu a warm hug.

Had the situation been different I'd be in stitches.

Everyone manages to give a few words of encouragement before I ask them to excuse us

"go eat guys, we will catch up with you" the homestead is downhill from the Ngcobo cemetery so we both watch everyone walk down until they reach the gates before we turn back to our son's grave.

"he's really gone" she wraps her hands around herself restraining her tears

"he'll forever be in our hearts" we both sit on the ground never mind that she's wearing a white dress.

Thank God this is a private cemetery I doubt we were going to be able to sit like this had it been a public one.

we both sit quietly next to each other even though there's a lot that's unsaid.

"There is no foot so small that it cannot leave an imprint on this world, sleep well son, you will forever be in our hearts" the inscribed gravestone reads

and below that it's my son's names and the date he was born.

Those words are befitting. He was so small yet he left such a huge imprint in my world.

Somehow my word is incomplete. I feel like a piece of me is buried deep in that grave alongside with him but maybe if I convince myself hard enough that he's at peace then ill be at peace too, maybe that will somehow give me the solace I desperately need to go on.

”Mnqobi—“ Qhamu interrupts my trail of thoughts
“—is this God’s way of punishing me” I shift my body to fully face her.

“Why do you say that”

”I didn't want him. I wanted to abort him. It feels like God is punishing me for not wanting him in the first place”

Oh my poor wife.

I should have known she'd have these kind of thoughts.

”if it's true what they say about God, that he knows our lives before we are born then I think he knew this would've happened”

“But—“

“No buts my love. You know yourself and I know you, you were scared yes but I know you wouldn't have went through with it and I think God knows it too. He knows you love our son with everything in you so no baby, he's not punishing you”

”Then why does it feel like he is”

”because you're hurt and in pain. you are probably looking for some explanation as to why he had to leave us but baby God would never punish you. He knew this was going to happen, he wanted our son to be an angel to watch over us. I feel your pain my love, I too feel like all this is my fault. had I not pursued you in the first place then we wouldn't be here but baby we are here we just need to accept that he is gone and keep him in our hearts forever”

I don't know what to say to make her feel better.

”our son knows you love him and I'm sure he's at

peace wherever he is, what we need to do is be there for each other and try to accept all this. Not for us but for him so he can rest in peace. I'm sure he doesn't want to see his mom crying all the time" I kiss her temple and whisper

"in time we will heal"

She wipes away her tears and looks at me smiling

"let's go. I'm sure our brothers are worried"

"Can I just have a moment with him, I promise I'll follow you" I nod and stand up.

Maybe a moment with him will do her some good.

•

QHAMU

"Qedusizi my child, I'm sorry I ever thought of terminating you. I knew I loved you the moment I knew you were growing in my tummy even though it

took me a while to accept it. I'd love to have felt your kicks but I guess you were too lazy uh. Baby I'm asking for your forgiveness. I love you and If I could I would blow my own life into yours so that you can live again. I don't know how to accept that you're gone baby. Your father says I need to accept it so you can Rest In Peace but it's hard. I want to hold you in my arms and tell you how much I love you but I can't. I love you so much Qedusizi Ngcobo and now that your my little angel please help me look after your father. He's hurting and I don't know how to be there for him. I'll try and accept that you're gone but I'll never stop loving you"

I know I have to go back to the homestead so I can be with the rest of the family but being here with my son gives me some sort of peace. I don't want to leave but I have to.

"Rest well my son, until we meet again" I first fix the flowers on top of the headstone before standing up

and dust off the dead grass stands off my dress.

I see Manqoba walking up the cemetery as I prepare to walk down.

It's funny how I can tell them apart even from a distance while their own brothers have troubles distinguishing them apart at times.

I watch him walk my direction until he's a few meters away.

"You know your brother might kill you should he see you here" I say once he's standing in front of me Mnqobi and his neurotic self.

I told him thousands of times that Manqoba is over me I mean he doesn't look at me the way he used to. I know he doesn't have any romantic feelings for me anymore now he sees me as a sister but Mnqobi said that's a chance he's not willing to take.

Isn't he just dramatic?

"Your husband needs to relax. Can we talk"

I nod

He's the first one to sit on the ground. This is going to take a while I guess so I join him on the floor.

“Qhamukile—“ he's rubbing the plump of his hand together and I've noticed that's what they all do when they are nervous

“I first want to apologize for everything. It's my fault that all this happened” I don't think this is the right time for all of this

“Manqoba look, can we talk about this some other time”

“I'm sorry but this can't wait. It's been eating me up since you got into hospital—“ he stops to take deep breath

“I have never gotten a chance to apologize”

“It's alright, it's now water under the bridge” I know he wants to apologize about all this but frankly I'm tired of hearing how sorry everyone is.

I lost a child no amount of sorries will bring him back.

“No Qhamu, you don't understand. From a young

age I always wanted everything Mngqobi had, i wanted his looks. As funny as that sounds because we look alike I wanted to be him. I idolized him. he got good grades, played every sport well, he got all the good looking girls and I guess it frustrated me that everyone loved him but me. I was invisible to everyone when he was around he took all the shine and I envied him but as we grew older this envy turned into jealousy. It got even worse when he was sent to be the one you fall in love with. I knew I was going to pull it off but that didn't stop my jealousy from growing. I started noticing that he had fallen deeply in love with you that's when I started following the two of you around, wanting to see whats so special with you. An enemy for that matter, but then I saw how you looked at him. I knew you had fallen for him just as deep and my jealousy grew even more that my twisted brain started believing I was in love with you.

I've been leaving under Mngqobi's shadow for too long that I've lost myself along the way. Qhamu I'm sorry I ever kissed you, I was wrong. I now realized I

never loved you but I just wanted what Mnqobi had out of jealousy and for that I'm truly sorry. I've done you wrong so many times and I'm so sorry. Please forgive me. I know it's my fault you lost Sizi and I'm tremendously sorry about that. I didn't mean to get a gun, had I not did what I did Sizi would still be alive."

Tears have managed to escape my eyes. I never knew Manqoba felt this way.

"It's not your fault"

He smiles feebly shaking his head

"It is and I'm sorry."

"I forgive you Manqoba, for everything. Please speak to Mnqobi and tell him how you feel"

He shakes his head

"It's already to late but please promise me that you

will take care of him. He acts like he's okay but he's not. He cry's when no one is looking I know he's hurting but won't admit it to anyone even himself so please promise me you'll be there for him"

"I promise" I say

"Thank you." He turns his direction to the grave.

"If it wasn't for me you would be here with us and I'm sorry for what I did. Please forgive me son."

He's not crying but I have never seen Manqoba this emotional

"Rest well Mapholoba" He says and mines thank you at me before we both stand up and start walking towards the homestead.

I love how cemeteries are jus my a walk away from home here so I can always visit my son whenever I want, especially now that I want to move here.

I haven't discussed it with Mnqobi as yet but I'd like for us to build a perfect house with white picket fence a place we will call home.

He loves the fast life so I'll have to do some serious

convincing for him to agree to live here.

Mpophemeni is in the bundus people.

There's no tent so most people are seating under a shade of the big tree in the yard and they are eating.

I've noticed a white quantum busy driving past here quite a few times since morning. At first I thought it was people who came for the funeral but that was not the case because it's after three pm but they haven't set foot in the yard.

"I think those people are lost" I say pointing at the same quantum driving our direction.

"I think so too." He says as we enter the gate.

"MANQOBA" angry Mnqobi shouts coming to us but Nqaba manages to pull him behind the rondavel. I think he doesn't want Mnqobi to make a scene and inwardly I'm saying a silent prayer too.

Mnqobi can be unruly and I'm in to mood to entertain his jealousy.

"I'm dead" Manqoba says jokingly

pity I don't laugh at the joke because Mnqobi will

seriously kill him.

Mnqobi told Manqoba to stay away from me more times than I can count. He doesn't want him close to me at all.

I don't blame him though, I'd behave the same towards any girl who would dare kiss him.

Oh, that quantum stops right at the gate this time I'm sure they've come to ask for directions.

The driver is the first one to get out of the car first, holding something in his hand.... Wait is that a gun?

"Manqo.."

"GET DOWN" Manqoba pulls me roughly behind him before I hear a loud BANG

And soon more gunshots are fired.

Trrrrrrrrr... Trrrrrrrrr.....trrrrrrrrrrr it sounds like a machine gun.

"stay behind me" I hear Manqoba say through the mist of all the gunfire.

I don't know when did I fall to the ground but there's

a heavy Manqoba on top of me bleeding through his mouth.

Everything is happening so slow but my mind is still daze to figure out what's happening.

I'm shaking like a leaf beneath Manqoba but from the corner of my eye, I see as more men get out of the taxi and start to shots at everyone.

Plates and chairs are flying on the air as people run to take cover.

This is a shootout.

More shots are fired and I see more people falling on the ground like flies. My aunt from my mother's side is laying on the floor unmoved bleeding on her chest. No, she can't be dead.

tears are blinding my eye sight and I'm trying to push Manqoba off me but he's too heavy.

I don't know where Mis uzulu, Langa, Gatsha, Nqaba, Zwelethu and some of the guys I don't know emerge from but they have all drawn their guns out too and they are shooting at the guys who came in a

quantum.

It's a battlefield I tell you.

I have only seen anything like this in movies.

Gunshots continue flaring up until a few guys from the quantum fall to the ground. One of them is bleeding from his forehead.

They run back to their taxi once they see they are outnumbered and speed away.

I'm covered in Manqoba's blood.

I have never seen so much blood in my life.

He's gasping for air, I think he's shot.

"Manqoba"

I try and push Manqoba off me and crawl around looking for Mnqobi.

I need to know if he's okay. I need to make sure that all my brothers are fine too.

Oh God This is not happening. Not today off all day.

I just buried my son and now this.

I have to jump over a few people laying on the floor unconsciously to get to the other side of the main house.

Mnqobi has to be fine.

"Mnqobi" I shout when I don't see him amongst the crowd.

The survivors are on their feet trying to help the injured once

"Mnqobi" I shout his name again.

My knees are too weak but I force myself to get on my feet and I run around looking for him.

"Qhamu" I hear his voice coming from behind the rondavel

The sound of his voice manages to give me some relief

He's fine.

"are you okay, have you been shot" I shake my head and pull him towards the gate where I left Manqoba who was still gasping for air.

”fuck” Mnqobi says when he see him.

”fuck Qhamu he's shot” I don't know what to do so I'm pressing on his bullet holes that's oozing of blood.

I don't know how many times has he been shot but it's too many to count.

I hear police sirens from a distance

”Bafo—“

“Shhh don't say anything” I stop Manqoba from talking.

More blood is coming out of his mouth when he talks.

“Why did you hide me, those bullets where meant for me” I'm angry he shielded me from the firing line but I'm also happy I'm fine.

“I'd... d...do.... it.... a...gain” he says and pulls a long deep breath before his chest cease to rise and fall.

No no no no no no...

“Manqoba” I scream shaking his lifeless body.

He can't die

He can't just die.

“Manqoba” I continue shaking his body.

“He's gone. Qhamu he's gone. My brother is gone”

Mnqobi says shaking him as well

“Wake up Manqoba, wake up maan” he says
shaking him.

Shortly the brothers surround us except for
Misuzulu and Makhosini

I quickly wipe my tears

“Where is Misuzulu and Makhosini” they can't be
dead too.

“Help” Makhosini's is crawling on the floor coming
to our direction

“Misuzulu has been shot” my whole world comes in
to a complete halt in a second.

He said my brother is shot.

I stand up quickly and run to the direction he's
crawling from.

I was never ready to witness such my brother is on the floor bleeding from his shoulder, his leg and his side of the head.

My knees get weak instantly.

I feel my chest closing up. I can't breathe.

This reminds me of watching my father burn to ashes but this time only worse.

Misuzulu has become the father I lost.

I can't lose him too.

"No no no no not ubhuti" I hear Mondli shouts before I fall on the ground.

[06/20, 18:31] Lynne: 59

Death at a funeral.

I don't know about you but never in my wildest dreams have I thought something like this would be my reality.

I lost a son and I also lost people close to me at his funeral, when do I mourn him when I'll be burying

other in a few days time.

My aunt from my mother's side was declared dead on the scene along with five other people.

I doubt you have ever thought you would die while at a funeral but look what happened today.

People died while at a funeral.

“Here's another body” make that seven dead people.

it's one of the guys that came with Katlego from joburg.

My heart goes out to everyone that lost their lives today, I don't want to imagine what their families will go through once these news finds their ears.

You know when those two old men said the storm is here, I didn't think they meant this.

This is beyond me.

I know storms have gusty winds and often come with heavy rain and during the storms we try to shelter away under anything that can provide some

sort safety until everything settles. But never have I thought Mangoba would be my shelter, his body became a roof that I hid my head under as the storm raged on.

We all thought he was gone when he stopped breathing heavily so you can imagine the joy I felt when the paramedic felt his faint pulse. He was rushed to the nearest hospital with Misuzulu.

Im sad, furious and broken to say the least but after the dust settles, you need to stand up. Rebuild what needs to be rebuilt and try to let go of what went away with the storm.

we are trying to pick up the pieces to glue our lives back together but once something is broken it will forever have cracks and imperfections no matter how much you try to make it look beautiful again.

What happened today will haunt us all the days of our lives and I don't see how we will move past it.

Everyone that survived is shaken up as expected, today was a battlefield.

Lives were lost, hatred was evoked and mostly

revengeful thoughts linger on each and everyone's thought.

I can still see the hate on those men faces as they kept shooting at us.

Makhosini says Misuzulu got shot protecting him, those guys were ready to shot at Makhosini and because he's in a wheelchair he couldn't really fend for himself and that's when Misuzulu came to his rescue but unfortunately, he got shot instead.

I'm in a car with Makhosini, Mnqobi, MaNgidi and my aunt and we rushing behind the ambulance carrying Mncedisi and Nqaba. Nqaba was gazed by a bullet on his thigh while Mncedisi is shot on his arm but it's nothing he wouldn't survive.

Nomcebo is driving behind us with the rest of the brothers and thank God they were not hurt.

There's a lot of people who are injured but not as servilely as Misuzulu and Manqoba.

I'm angry more than anything and the fact that there's no tears stinging my eyes helps me be strong.

MaNgidi is the one driving so she drives carefully until we reach the hospital. Misuzulu and Manqoba have already ready being taken to theater.

We wait for about three long hours before a doctor comes to us.

“Hi I'm doctor Adebayo—“ he has a very thick Nigerian accent.

Mncedisi has been stitched up so we are all here.

“I'm the trauma neurosurgeon, I don't know what you know but Misuzulu has sustained severe injuries uhm, gunshots wounds on both his shoulders and his lower extremity on his right side but what concerns us mostly is that one of the bullets exploded in his head”

I feel my knees get weak but I remain aloof

“And I needed to do an emergency surgery on him. It was a bit complex. There are several bullet

fragments close to his brain stem”

“What does it means” Gats ha

“It means if he survives, we will have to perform another surgery but his condition is very critical”

“Will he live” Mondli

“We are doing everything we can”

“What about Manqoba—“

“the young man he came with,” Langa says when he sees the doctor is confused.

“I’ll call doctor Mohammed to brief you on his situation” we all nod and he leaves

Ten minutes later a very old Indian doctor joins us

“How is he, how is my son” MaNgidi

She's strong for a mother whose child is laying on his death bed fighting for his life.

“As you all know Manqoba sustained a number of gunshots and he also suffered a head trauma—“ this must have been when he fell.

“Which caused blood to travel to his brain. I’m afraid he’s brain dead and at this stage we just waiting for his heart to stop beating” all air leaves my lungs instantly.

Manqoba can’t die.

Mnqobi won’t survive it.

“Doctor I’m not sure if I’m hearing you right, are you saying my brother is dead” Zwelethu.

“No, his heart is still beating for now. I’m just preparing you for what’s going to happen next”

Mnqobi is the first one to walk out.

I don’t know if I should follow him or give him some space to deal with all this but what I know is he's hurting very much. He just buried a son now he has to bury his brother as well.

“I’m sorry” the doctor says and leave.

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Following day

MAKHOSINI

MaNgidi has just received a call from the hospital saying Manqoba has left us, his heart stopped beating at 6:47 and we now driving to the hospital to arrange for his body to be taken to the mortuary.

I can't allow myself to feel anything at this point. I have to do everything that I can to see to it that we bury him and when I'm done I'll deal with Zithulele and maybe once I see his body burn to ashes then I'll feel something.

Zithulele will wish for death by the time I'm through with him but for now, my focus is on dealing with this.

The Buthelezi boys are driving with us to the hospital, we all spend the night at Mpophemeni where we were cleaning up and fixing stuff that needed to be fixed.

We arrive at the hospital just after seven thirty and doctors are running up and down.

“He’s having a cardiac arrest”

They all run into Misuzulu’s ward. Gatscha following behind them but he’s stopped from entering the ward.

I don’t want to think of the worst but we can’t have two funeral.

We are all frantic as we waiting for a doctor to come tell us what’s going on.

An hour later we are joined by a cardiac surgeon who explains that Misuzulu suffered a cardiac arrest caused by ventricular arrhythmia. This is when the the heart starts beating irregular and it cannot pump blood to the brain, lungs and other organs.

“We managed to stabilize him but he needs a heart transplant urgently or the worst might happen” doctor McQueen says

“How long will it take for you to get a heart” Mondli

“Hard to say, it may take six months to a year—“

“But does Misuzulu have a year” I ask

“I’m afraid he doesn’t, he needs a heart as soon as possible”

“Doctor money is not a problem, we can pay any amount as long as you get him a heart” Gatscha.

“I’m afraid it doesn’t work that way, he needs to be added on the list like everyone else”

“So he will die” Nqaba says frustrated and limps out angrily.

“We have a heart, my brother died this morning. Give Misuzulu his heart” I say without thinking twice.

Misuzulu got shot protecting me and besides Manqoba is already dead. Keeping his heart will not bring him back but it can save another life.

“What” everyone shouts incredulously

“Yes Manqoba was healthy, take it doctor. Give Misuzulu the heart” I say

“Over my dead body” a voice I haven’t heard in over

twenty years shouts from behind and we all turn around. It takes me longer because I'm seating on a wheelchair but eventually I manage.

“Ma” Langa shouts unbelievably.

He almost sounds excited but that's short lived as he realizes that this is our mother, the same woman who turned her back on such without thinking twice and fury engulf him.

I think my eyes are deceiving me, I'm still shocked to feel anything towards her.

“I thought you were dead” Langa again, this time he is furious.

“MaTwala” MaNgidi says just as shocked

“I came here as soon as I heard on the news that you were attacked and Manqoba got shot—“ she has crocodile tears in her eyes.

“No one is talking my son's heart” she says now letting her tears fall

She deserves an award for acting as if she cares.

Where was she when Manqoba needed her all those

years?

“Your son” I sneer, shaking my head.

She looks nothing like a mother I knew. Her full figure I knew has vanished and I only see her bone structure. The dark chocolate skin she had is also gone and only dark circles of misery remain.

Growing up I always imagined what it would be like seeing her again and those thoughts always made me happy and gave me strength to go on but seeing her here, gets me angry.

I had to care for her children while she was alive, she left Manqoba and Mnqobi when they were just months old and now she’s saying Manqoba is her son.

feelings I’ve been suppressing are evoked and I’m afraid I can’t control them

“Are you talking about the same son you left when

he was still a baby, uh. Manqoba was not your son, you don't have any children”

“Makhosini stop it, I didn't raise you to disrespect your elders” MaNgisi shouts

“But he's right Ma, MaTwala is not Manqoba's mother is anything, you should say what we do with his heart. He was your son” Langa is heartbroken more and I'm angry at this woman standing before me claiming to be a mother to a son she left.

“My children—“

“Don't call me that, I'm not your child or else you wouldn't have left me” Mncedisi

I'm shocked he is this angry too.

“Mncedisi stop it, all of you stop it” she half shouts

“MaNgidi she left us, she turned her back on us without thinking twice and now that she's here we supposed to welcome her with worm open arms. No ma” Langa

He grew up bitter and angry because our mother left

us so I'm not surprised by his behavior.

"I know you're all angry but this is no time for us to be bickering over the past. MaTwala Manqoba is gone, I know it hurts he's my son as much as he is yours. Misuzulu got shot while protecting Makhosini, you son too and we have a chance to save his life so let's all stop fighting and do what's right. Manqoba wouldn't want us all fighting"

MaTwala wails loudly and drops to the floor. The doctor goes to her because none of my brothers are willing to help her.

And I think the Buthelezi are feeling the anger we feeling too so they just remain unmoved and watch her as she continues crying her eyes out.

"my son, my baby" she keeps repeating.

It's shocking how unmoved I am by her tears, it's like I'm dead inside.

"Crying won't bring him back but his heart might bring Misuzulu back" Langa says and walks out.

MaTwala continues crying shouting how she

regrets ever leaving.

We all watch her until she's calm.

“MaTwala I'm only asking this because of MaNgidi and not because you have any rights over Manqoba but can we give Misuzulu his heart”

“Makhosini my child, Misuzulu is a Buthelezi. How can you want to give him your brothers heart”

My patience is running thin.

“Yes he's a Buthelezi, the same Buthelezi that was willing to die for me which I can't say the same about you” I'm done talking to her.

“Doctor, you can have Manqoba's heart” I say

The doctor looks around waiting for someone to object but everyone remains silent

“I'll get the paperwork but I want you to know this is a chance. There's no certainty that Misuzulu will be fine after the surgery, his body might regret the heart for all we know but it's a chance we have to take” the doc says before walking away.

“I don't know why you came back because we are

doing just fine without you” Mnqobi says and walks out.

He’s been too closed off since this whole ordeal happened and I’m afraid our mother being here will just drive him off the edge.

He hasn’t said anything about Manqoba, they had their issues as brothers but their bond was inseparable and I don’t know how he’s going to cope with the death of his other half.

Qhamu is the only one who can get through to him but I’m afraid she might not be able to this time.

It would be selfish of me to ask any of my brothers to follow him because they are hurting just as much so I push my wheelchair and follow behind him.

[06/20, 18:31] Lynne: 60

Two months later..

QHAMU

Have you ever watched someone drown deeper in the depth of the ocean that's bathed in nothing but darkness and no matter how much try you can't seem to bring them back to the surface?

That's what happening to Mngobi, he's drowning and I can't help him no matter how much I try. I'm afraid if this persist something bad might happen.

Lol,

Excuse me, I'm not laughing. In zulu we say "ukufa kuyinhlekisa" (even in death we laugh, laughter is palliative)

It's funny how life events turn out, not so long ago I was the one drowning in the deepest dark sea and I couldn't see the shores. I mean I was prepared to take my own life because my heart was heavy with burdens but now, seeing how desolate and bereft Mngobi it makes me think he has more reason to end his life than I did. Again, what's the saying. An elephant's trunk is never too heavy for it to carry, I don't know the exact lines so please, correct me if

I'm wrong but I think you get the gist. God would never put us in situations beyond our capabilities, he knows what we can handle and what we can't.

But Mngqobi did not only lose a son he also lost a brother, his half, his own reflection and I don't know how does one recover from that.

He's lost so much more and I'm afraid he's becoming an empty, shallow and emotionless person I will never recognize.

He lost a tremendous amount of weight, his bulky body is gone in just a two months but an amount of hatred and anger has erupted from within him. I've tried talking to him but I can't get through to him no matter how much I try.

His brothers have tried but failed, what makes matters worse is that his biological mother, MaTwala is still around and by the look of things she's here to stay.

She didn't give any explanation as to why she's been gone for such a long time but when listening to her apologies she sounds sincere but her

apologies have been falling on deaf ears. The hatred the Ngcobo brothers have for her is beyond my understanding but I stand by my husband.

His enemy is my enemy, I could never accept nor love someone whom he loathes. Maybe in the near future they might give her a chance and accept her but for now anger still roams in their hearts when it comes to her and unfortunately I don't have the power to mend their relationship.

As a mother I can imagine how hurt she feels, being hated by your own children is not easy I presume but I also understand why all the brothers are reacting this way towards her.

She left them to fend for themselves, the one person who was supposed to love and protect them left and things could never be the same again.

MaTwala cried too much at Mangoba's funeral which I can't say about Mnqobi, he was just numb. it's like he was not even there at all.

I've witnessed him cry when Qedusizi died but not with Mangoba and believe me when I say I'd know if

he cried when no one was looking.

I've realized crying somehow soothes you and I don't want him to deal with his grief alone.

I'm here for him.

The burial was very emotional and painful more especially because he's buried right next to Qedusizi nonetheless, Manqoba was buried with dignity and the respect he deserves.

I'll forever be appreciative of the fact that his heart rose my brother from the dead.

Misuzulu is recovering really well, his body accepted the heart and everything is going great but how do I rejoice when a loved one was the one who had to die for another to live.

"A life for a life" those words echo in my head like a classic tune. Who would have thought those two old men actually meant this?

But it's true when they say "Ukumos heka kwento, ukulunga kwenye" all this turmoil we went through these past few months has solidified the

relationship we have with the Ngcobo's, no man can ever break what we have rebuilt at least all lives lost were not lost in vain.

May their souls Rest In Peace.

We are all actually in Misuzulu's ward, listening to Gatsha's crazy tales. Mngqobi is here out of obligation I assume because almost everyone is engaging in small conversation except for him.

"Mapholoba i'll forever be indebted to you and I'm sorry I was not there to help with the funeral"
Misuzulu says looking at Makhosini.

He was in hospital when Mangoba was buried.

The mood suddenly changes, I know it's still sour to talk about Mangoba.

"if tables were turned I know you would've done the same" Makhosini is on his feet, using a cane to balance himself.

I'm sure some if not all of you will be pleased to know he's finally walking.

No more wheelchair for the big old Makhosini and boy isn't he happy.

"thank you bafo, I'll take good care of this heart"

Bafo?

See what I mean, we are family now.

"you better or else I'll order Manqoba to ghost you"
Zwelethu always manages to ease the tension and what do you know they all chuckle softly except for Mnqobi.

I told you he is here physically but his mind is miles away.

It breaks my heart to watch him like this, I wish I knew how to help him.

"seeing that you're now fit, we need to deal with this two" Makhosini says looking at Mnqobi and I.

"you think we forgot you two are married" oh dammit.

I totally forgot we still need to deal with that.

"i'm ready to kill this boy" Nqaba the clown says

folding his jersey up to his elbows

I'd roll my eyes but I don't want to die as yet.

If only he could stop referring to Mnqobi as a boy.
He is a husband and someone's father.

I guess everyone finds him amusing because they
are laughing.

"not before I deal with MaShenge, I expect Mnqobi
to be foolish I just didn't think she would be as well.
I won't lie I'm disappointed in you MaShenge."

Makhosini

"fools in love" I've noticed Mncedisi can be funny
when he wants to.

Laughter erupts.

"we will have a formal meeting to deal with them for
now let's be jolly that Misuzulu rose from the dead"
how I could kiss Zweletgu right now.

"Can we all just stop pretending!." Mnqobi shouts
angrily

We are all alarmed by his outburst, he hasn't said a
word to anyone, even myself since Manqoba died

so we are all just watching him with our eyes ready to pop out of their sockets

”Kumnadi niyahleka huh-”

”Mnqobi I understand you're angry but this is not a way to speak” Langa

”no bhuti, our brother died and Misuzulu got to live. How fair is that” I see tears glistening in his eyes as he continues to shout

”Manqoba shouldn't have died, he shouldn't have. I know he was killed by Zithulele so when are we killing him” he’s shouting to the top of his lungs

“Keep your voice down maan” Zwelethu says

“How do you know Zithulele ” Langa asks

The rest of the bigger brothers are too shocked to ask

Mnqobi looks at me long and hard before looking back at his brothers.

“It doesn't matter, you are all welcome to sit here and talk about my unorthodox marriage to Qhamu while I go avenge all that bastard took from me” he

says angrily, grinding his teeth and walk out.

We are left dumbfounded to say the least. This is very unexpected but the name Zithulele rings a bell I just don't remember where I heard it from.

Makhosini and Misuzulu exchange unspoken words... Wait Zithulele...

My anger comes back tenfold when clear memories of who this Zithulele is comes back. Now I understand why Mngqobi is so angry. This guy has taken so much from us, his brother drugged and almost molested me. I was nearly sold in his human trafficking dealings but mostly he took Manqoba away from us.

He killed one of us and that I cannot forgive.

There's only one way to mend our broken hearts.

I look at the astonished Makhosini and Misuzulu I'm thinking they are still shocked that Mngqobi knows who killed Manqoba.

"bhuti I need you to kill this Zithulele person, he has taken so much from us and I refuse for him to try

again. Make his death as painful as it can be—“

”Qhamukile” Mondli tries to be as reprimanding as he can be

”bhuti, don't do it for me but do it for all of us. We are one now and I know we all want this. Make him beg for death” I say and run out

I need to find my husband. Now it makes so much sense as to why he's been so closed off.

Zithulele didn't only kill his brother but he hurt me as well, he almost took the one thing that Mngqobi loves more than his own life. Me.

He can't survive without me just like I can't survive without him.

He's in the car ready to drive off when I get to the parking lot.

He is pissed off I tell you. His chest is moving up and down rapidly because he's breathing heavily while suppressing his tears.

“Qhamukile get the fuck out off my way” he locked all doors so I can't get in the car and I'm not willing

to let him drive this angry.

“I’m not moving unless you let me drive you where ever you want to go” I’m standing in front of the car preventing him from driving out.

“Qhamukile I need to be alone dammit, just move” I shake my head and remain unmoved.

He looks at me frustrated to the core before he relents and moves to the passenger seat.

My stubbornness does help at times.

I haven’t perfected my driving but I manage to drive us out of the hospital and all the way to Mvubukazi, under the bamboo tree.

Our sanctuary.

“Talk to me” I’m hoping we do talk this time unlike the past two months where we would just sit quietly until I have to go back home.

We are seating in the back seat like we do most times.

“Mnqobiwesizwe talk to me, please” I’m frustrated so the pitch of my voice comes out high.

“Mnqobi I’m your wife. Don’t shut me out. Scream, cry, shout at me for all I care just say something”

He’s just looking forward like a zombie

“You told me to always talk to you and not shut you out but you’re—“

He roughly pulls me close to him and shuts me up with a rough kiss, biting my lip in the process.

I can literally taste the blood.

He has never been this rough with me before especially when we are intimate so I’m shocked if not scared of this creature that has possessed my husband’s body.

This is not my Mnqobi. He would never touch me in this manner.

“Mnqobi” I feel his hand tugging at my jacket zipper and he breaks it as he forces me out of it and pulls it out along with my t-shirt and moves to the Jean zipper where he repeats the same act of violence.

In a speed of lightning I’m naked, everything was done so fast and mind you I’m still dazed trying to

figure out what's going on

“Mnqobi” I try to push him away but he's stronger and dominating so my little brawn is no match to his.

He manages to pull down my jeans with my panty to my ankles before roughly getting on top of me.

His demeanor is belligerent and it scares the hell out of me.

“Make me feel good again, take this pain away” he says aggressively pinching my nipples.

I don't know when did he unbuckle his jeans but they are down up to his knees but he's still covered on his upper body.

“I'm going to feel good again, you'll take the pain away” He parts my legs with his knee and sink his waist in.

I can't help wonder who is this man on top of me cause I don't know him.

My womanhood is very dry but he manages to force his manhood in me with just a single violent thrust.

The pain I feel is nothing compared to what I'm feeling inside.

How can someone display such brutality to someone he claims to love.

How can he do this to me, I'm his wife. I can give him sex whenever he wants to but not like this.

He continues to pound hard that I start to get wet.

My body and my thoughts are in battle because my body wants his but I'm also conscious to know what's happening is wrong.

A feel my tears doing down on the each side of my face.

He always rotates his waist anti-clockwise when making love because he knows I love it but he's not doing that today, instead, he's plunging his penis in and out of me painfully but part of me is seemingly enjoying it.

The gentleness he always shows is gone and replaced with this violence I've never seen before but I love the pain and pleasure he's giving me.

He groans loudly trying to steady his breathing.
He's actually breathing heavily fighting the demon
in him as he thrust.

I'm now dripping wet, my body failing me.

My body knows his body but I don't know this man
on top of me.

"Mnqobi" this time I moan his name holding on to
tightly him for some sort of solace.

It's funny how I'm looking for comfort from the
same person hurting me.

I know part of me is hating what he's doing to me
but I also want him to fill me up with his penis. I
want to give him something that will make him feel
good. I want him to have all of me.

I think I'm messed up psychologically, who in their
right mind enjoys such.

He lifts both my legs over his shoulder and thrust
even deeper forcing another long moan out of me.

We haven't been intimate for a while now but I was
not expecting it to be like this.

I get this feeling like I'm going to combust, I'm just not sure if it's an orgasm erupting or if I'm just clogged up with emotions.

"Mngobi" I scream his name as he continues to thrust roughly until a wave of orgasm hits me, leaving me tired.

"Fuck" he screams when his own orgasm hit him like a wave.

We remain unmoved and quiet for a long time before I feel his shoulders move vigorously on top of me and his tears wet my neck.

His cries starts silently but increases as he cries more

"I'm sorry" he says after a while

"I'm so sorry, I didn't mean to hurt you like that" this is the Mngobi I know, not the beast that was pounding on top of me.

"Qhamu I'm sorry" he lifts his head from my neck and I see the stream of tears flowing down his cheeks.

“Cry it out” it breaks my hearts seeing him this broken but I also can’t utter the three words he wants to hear.

The three words that will ease his pain for what he did to me.

I can’t....

‘I forgive you’ how I do I tell him that if I’d be lying.

I don’t want to comfort him with a lie and yet I don’t want to hurt him with the truth and truth is he hurt me, I hate him for what he did but I can’t tell him that. I love him too much to tell him.

“Don’t hold back your tears, cry the pain out” I’m still under him with his penis inside me.

“I wanted to feel good, I wanted something to help me numb the pain. I didn’t mean to hurt you. I’m sorry my love”

“I know you didn’t mean to hurt me” my own tears are now flowing. And yes, I know his intentions was never to hurt me.

He let his emotions take control over him and he

didn't know how to react. That's the only explanation I have for his act of violence he showed towards me. I'm convincing myself this because I don't want to resent my husband.

"Why does it hurt this bad" I don't know what to say and his unending cries are painful to listen to but I'd rather be here with him than anywhere else without him.

We in this together.

His pain is my pain.

His cries are my cries.

His agony is my agony.

And I know this too shall pass and his joy will become my joy again, his happiness will be my happiness too.

"Does it make me a bad brother that I'm happy he took those bullets for you. I don't know what I could've done had it been you"

He stops to take a breath

"Qhamuke I can't live without you, you're my life. I'll

never survive should you leave me” he’s holding on to me like I said I’m leaving him.

“Its just not fair, it’s not fair that we lost a child but we lost a brother too. When will it all end” his cries are unendurable but I don’t want to stop him from letting his pain out

I’m brushing his back as he continues to cry.

“Are we ever going to be happy” I’m the one who always ask that question

“It hurts Qhamu it hurts so bad. Please promise me you won’t die and leave me here alone”

eternal life is not promised to anyone, we can only hope to live as long as we can

“I promise, I’m not leaving you. I’m not going anywhere without you” I promise

he’s holding on to me very tightly not wanting to let go

I let him cry out his pain for what feels like a lifetime before he calms down and lift his head from my neckline.

The necklace he presented me with is drenched in his tears.

“Mnqobi I blame myself everyday for what happened to Manqoba. Maybe had I went back home with everyone then those guys wouldn’t have tried shooting me at that point, Manqoba wouldn’t have came to the cemetery I’m sorry you lost a brother because of me. I’m so sorry. This is all my fault” I’m a crying mess now

“It’s not your fault my love, he protected you. I’m just angry he died before I could tell him I forgive him for ever crossing the line with you. I was his brother I shouldn’t have pushed him away like I did” now I understand, it’s not the world he’s angry at it’s himself.

I’m sure Manqoba understood why Mnqobi was angry at him. Now Mnqobi needs to forgive himself in order to heal and move on.

“I’m sure Manqoba was never angry at you. He was your brother and I know for sure he loved you. He was just confused but in the end he realized he

didn't love me. Forgive yourself Mnqobi, Manqoba forgave you a long time ago. Forgive yourself so he can Rest In Peace”

He manages to calm down after a while but we both quiet just listening to our thoughts

I still can't believe he forced himself on me.

I understand his anguish and I feel his pain but for him to do that to me is just unacceptable.

The August wind is not as cold but at night it's as cold as June.

I pull my t-shirt on after pushing Mnqobi off me and I drag my jean up along with my panty and secure it around my waist silently.

“I need to get home” I tell him once I'm fully dressed breaking the silence.

He scratches his head not wanting to make eye contact.

“I'm sorry my love, I'd understand if you never want us to be intimate again” I shake my head suppressing my own tears

“Let’s not talk about it, not today. I’m sure everyone is worried lets just go home” I don’t want to leave him like this but I’m also feeling some anger brewing.

He hurt me.

“Please shout at me, hit me if you must”

I don’t want to talk about it.

“Let’s not talk about it okay”

“Qhamukile I’m not letting you leave while you’re angry at me, shout at me sthandwa Sam, swear at me for all I care just do something”

My anger has become too powerful to subdue

“Mnqobi you hurt me, you forced yourself on me and I don’t know if I’ll ever forget it. Let’s just go home we will talk some other time”

“I’m sorry” the more he says sorry the more I get mad

How dare he, is sorry suppose to make everything alright?

“Sorry, Mngqobi I was afraid of you. I was not even sure if that was you. You were a wild untamed beast I didn’t recognize you. I won’t lie you scared me and if that’s how it’s going to be every time you’re in pain then I’m afraid I won’t stick around” and I mean it, he needs to know that I’m not going to stay just because I love him.

“I understand but please don’t leave, I promise I’ll never do it again” he sounds remorseful

“I swear if you ever do that again I’ll leave you without thinking twice” I don’t know why it is so easy to forgive him while I’m still this furious.

“I know and I’m sorry my love”

“I mean it, dare it again and you’ll see”

“You’ll leave me I know my love, believe me I’ll never do it again”

“Good then, go home and get some sleep”

I’m still angry at him but I’m happy he opened up to me. It’s been a tough two months and by the look of things there’s still more stuff we need to deal with

starting with our marriage.

Hopefully my brothers will allow him to do the right thing so that we can finally live happily ever after.

[06/20, 18:33] Lynne: 61

MNQOBI

I'm sure all of you hate me right now but not as much as I hate myself. What I did to Qhamu is despicable and beastly. I claim I love her but what kind of love is that, love has never been so heinous. I'm repellent by my actions but mostly I'm ashamed. How could I let my emotions get the better of me like that?

I hate myself for what I did to her.

My excuse would be that I wanted something to feed my anger on, I wanted to feel good and be happy again but I'm not a man of excuses what I did was repulsive no questions asked and I'm truly sorry.

I know she somewhat forgave me but I can't forgive myself.

How do I when I've hurt the one person I vowed not to hurt.

I haven't gathered enough bravery or courage to look at her so I've been ignoring her for the past two weeks.

Cowardly of me, I know.

She calls but our conversation never goes beyond pleasantries, I've become a stranger, something she doesn't know and I'm afraid I don't know who I've become as well.

Speaking of calls, my phone rings and The Mrs flashes my screen

"Hello" I don't know if my voice is as cold as it sounds to me

"Mnqobi. How are you" her's sweet as always

I huff before answering

“I’ve been better, how are you”

“I’m good. Look we need to talk. Do you think you could come see me after school”

we need to talk?

about what?

Is she breaking up with me?

“Oh” This is how dry and emotionless our conversations have become these days and I know I’m too blame.

“Will you be able to make it”

“No... I mean I’ll be busy.”

“With what”

“U-uh with uh, stuff. I mean I’ll be busy at the pub and—“

She interjects stopping me mid-excuse

“Mnqobi, you may not need me but I do you—“

Taking a deep breath she continues

“I just fear I’m learning to move on without you” she says and hangs up

I’m afraid I’m losing her and I won’t be able to get her back this time.

Makhosini walks limping which is temporary for

him but I can't say the same about Misuzulu. The bullet which penetrate his leg fractured his muscles so he'll never be able to walk straight again. I'm just thankful he's alive, his death would've killed Qhamu more than it could've him.

“Mngobi”

“Bhuti”

He looks at me long before he switches the tv on

“What did you do” he asks after some time looking at the tv

I hate how well my brothers knows me

“Something very bad”

He nods still looking at the tv

“What’s worse is that Qhamu forgave me”

“How is that the worst” he asks a little confused

“Because I don’t think I’ll ever forgive myself”

He nods still not looking at me

“In that case it’s best you don’t tell me the details. I might just hurt you but whatever it is, fix it.”

“I will”

“Your uncle and I are formally going to the Buthelezi’s to talk about your marriage on Saturday, I want to know if we should bring up the Lobola conversation”

“Right now, I don’t know” he nods and stands up

“You know Mngobi, I have never seen you as happy as you are when you are with her and surprisingly I know she’s happy when she’s with you. I’ve see the way she looks at you she loves you brother—“

He pats my shoulder before he continues

“I may not know what you did to her but what I know is you two are meant to be. Man up Mngobi, ignoring her won’t undo your wrongs but talking to her might” he says lastly and walks out.

I guess it’s time I man up and re-write my wrongs.

I take out my phone and send her a text

I’m neurotic the rest of the day with multiple possibilities going through my head.

she might have told her brothers what I did to her but I doubt or else I’d be dead or maybe she want us

to separate. That ponders more in my head.

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QHAMU

Im with Lucas and he's plaiting my hair, painfully so
I might add.

'Qhamukile I'm waiting' a text from Mnqobi reads.

I blue tick him and put my phone back into my
pocket

"Gentle Lu gentle please"

I can't see Lucas facial expression because I'm
seating in between his thighs but no doubt he's
rolling his eyes

"If you took care of your hair often then I wouldn't
need to use force to part it"

Now it's my turn to roll my eyes.

I plait my hair before I sleep, I wash and moisturize it frequently so what more can I do.

Rolling my eyes yet again

My phones rings

I know it's Mngqobi so I let it ring.

I called him in the morning wanting to meet but he blew me off and now that he's freed his schedule I'm suppose to jump. Nope. He needs to learn that I can't always tip toe around him.

I told him I'm over what he did to me, as cruel and violent as he was I forgave him, not all that but I've been trying to fix us as well but what does he do. He continues to mopes around like he was the one that was violated. And now that he has snapped out of his pity party I'm suppose to dance to his tune.

Well he has another thing coming.

“You can try and be gentle”

It's much more painful than you think

“Oh yeah” he says pulling my hair.

He's angry that Nqaba blew him off when he arrived so he's taking it out on my hair

"Hey, don't take out your frustration on my head. I'm sorry Nqaba blew you off my choms but please try and be just a little gentle" he huffs and plait the last con-row

"He seriously doesn't like me uh" Thank god my hair is done.

"I'm sorry Lu but you know he's not gay right"

"I know, I know. I thought maybe he'd change, you know. I really like your brother"

I knew he liked my brother but not this much.

"I'm sorry babe. Maybe you need to get a boyfriend and just get over him"

"Maybe"

My phone again

"What did he do this time" Lucas asks when he sees me dropping the call.

Mnqobi can go jump.

“He’s been ignoring me so I’m just returning the sentiment”

He rolls his eyes and dramatically walks to the bathroom to wash his hands

“This is why I don’t date, relationships are too much work”

Tell me about it

“Is that why you don’t want Nqaba”

“Why don’t you just go ahead and rub salt to the wound Que. I’m hurt. Nqaba and I could’ve been the it couple you know—“

He ferns himself dramatically ripping away invincible tears

“Mmmm I can just picture us, all that chocolate. His loss... Nqaba Nqaba Nqaba”

“Don’t you two have something else to talk about”
Nqaba appears from my bedroom door looking annoyed

”hey you” poor Lucas.

I'm saddened by how bored Nqaba looks at him.

“Qhamukile your boyfriend has been blowing up my phone like I owe him. Tell him to stop calling me—“

Where the hell did Mngqobi get Nqaba's number

“He's outside but if he dares enter this house I'll break his nose” he says and walks away

What the hell is Mngqobi doing here, does he have a death wish or something.

Lucas is amused by Nqaba's hostility towards my relationship with Mngqobi, no surprise there. Lucas is impressed by anything Nqaba does or says.

Love... Shaking my head.

“He's your brother doll. It's his duty to be mean any guy you date. I bet he'd still be this mean if you were dating Jesus himself”

I involuntarily huff to that statement and walkout

I'm happy we moved passed what happed at the funeral, Lucas was so traumatized but again who wouldn't be.

”Lucas can we talk” Nqaba says when Lucas and I emerge from my bedroom.

Lucas looks excited let's hope Nqaba won't be too mean.

Mnqobi is frantically pacing at the gate.

”what are you doing here”

” I sent you a text”

”I saw it but that doesn't explain why you are here” seeing him bring back my anger.

How dare he ignores me for so long.

”Qhamu you asked that we meet” he says lightly

Well that was before he blew me off.

”Yes and you said you'd be busy” I give him that duh look

”look I'm sorry okay,

”Mnqobi in case you haven't noticed I'm pissed at you. You hurt me and you get to mope around and be sad. Has it ever occurred to you that I'm sad too” I didn't want to talk about this ever again but clearly

I was wrong

”you raped me” he flinches

Must be the R-word I've been dreading to say

”yes Mngqobi you hurt me but because I understand your pain I let it pass and what do you do. You ignore me for two weeks, two weeks like I did something wrong”

”Qhamu, I'm sorry baby”

”stop apologizing, I don't need your apologies but I need you here, with me. Not ignoring me because you can't face what you did. I get that you also hurting but imagine how I feel” I'm not crying which is a first

”How can you forgive me so easily” I some have time for self-pity, Mngqobi fucked up. He needs to fix us not me.

”I think we need some time apart” he needs to forgive himself first and I think some time apart will do him good.

I know we haven't seen each other in two weeks but

it's clear we still need some time apart.

”What, are you breaking up with me”

”what no, we just need some time apart”

”I'm confused Qhamukile. You say you need me but we need time apart”

I'm confused myself.

” I need you, yes but I think we need some time apart more”

”mmmh” he's still confused

”Makhosini is coming on Saturday to discuss a way forward regarding our marriage and he wants to know if he should bring up lobola”

”yes, unless if you don't want to”

”Are you sure” I roll my eyes

”damn yes I'm sure but I'm still angry at you”

I leave him standing there but not before I hear him say women are confusing.

Lucas is a little heartbroken when I take him to the taxis I'm guessing his talk with Nqaba doesn't go so well.

I'm too afraid to ask but I know he'll tell once he's called down.

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Midnight at the Buthelezi's homestead.

NARRATED

All the Ngcobo and the Buthelezi are gathered in Gatsha's room going through a plan on how they are going to get to Zithuleke

"we know that he's working with Manqhele, we can use him to get to Zithulele" Zwelethu

"too risky, he might just alert that bastard and we can't have that. This time we need to make sure that

he dies” Misuzulu

”i agree, the less people know the better. I say we go in tomorrow, I hear there's a party at one of his associates bars so I suggest we go in gun blazing and kill them all.” Nqaba

”our war is with Zithulele, not his goons” Misuzulu

”but they are kidnapping young girls and forcing them into sex trafficking. The world would be better off without them” Nqaba again

”yes but there's police for that” Zwelethu

”they are working with police officers like Manqhele and where is justice in that” Nqaba

”okay we get it you two. Let's focus on Zithulele for now and we will talk about the rest later. So bafo what's the plan” Langa

Makhosini and Misuzulu have gone through the plan thoroughly, now what's left is for them to execute it.

”Soon Zithulele will meet his maker.” Makhosini says before telling the rest of them the plan.

[06/20, 18:33] Lynne: 62

QHAMU

It's been a long week, to say the least, with school and asking Mnqobi for a break to learning that his brother wants to discuss the lobola issue but I guess that has been in a pipeline for a while now. I won't lie I'm excited if not nervous about today's meeting part of me can't help wonder if I did the right thing by marrying Mnqobi in the first place. Don't get me wrong, I love Mnqobi but is love ever enough?

I can't help wonder if he will act like he did whenever we go through a similar turmoil again.

Death is one thing that's inevitable in life. I'm going to die someday, you're going to die too. We are all going to die so is he going to let his beastly behavior out whenever he loses someone close to him? Because if so, then I'd rather call it quits now than later.

Let me stop overthinking things.

He loves me and I know he will never act like that ever again, he promised me.

I dress up in a long skirt, it's finally summer so I'm not dressed heavily instead I paired up the skirt with a long sleeve t-shirt. I can't show my shoulders, not today at least. The Ngcobo's are coming to discuss this pending issue about my marriage to Mngqobi. Somewhat I have this feeling of regret.

It's only natural, right? to second guess your choices?

Qhamu stop I reprimand myself inwardly. I did what I did out of love and yes I want to spend the rest of my life with Mngqobi but maybe had I waited a bit then things would be different.

But It's too late for regrets now huh?

I wear head scuff and exit my bedroom.

All my brothers are around including bab'Themba who's been in my case since he arrived in the wee hours of the morning.

”How can you get married without telling us” he keeps shouting. Thank God Misuzulu is not backing him up but I know he'll get his chance when the meeting starts.

I miss the days when we were a worry and stress-free family but so much has happened to our family and I'm afraid we are all changing.

Mondli was fired because of the arrest so he's forced to work on the family business.

Gcina has gone back to his ways, just when I thought he found himself.

Nqaba is always up to no good but that's nothing new.

But through it all, we are still a family that's fighting for its place in this world. Oh before I forget Gats ha is back together with Yobanathi and not only that she's pregnant, again.

Poor baby bee, he's only two and a half years old and already he'll be a big brother soon.

Shaking my head... At least my brother is doing the

right thing this time.

In a couple of months, Yobanathi will be a Buthelezi bride and I couldn't be happier. Her Lobola will be paid in December.

I had to wake up early to cook up a storm for today's meeting, I know it's just a meeting but I couldn't help myself. The Ngcobo's are my in-laws, right?

besides cooking for your visitors is one way to show politeness.

"you must stay in your room until you're called" I almost roll my eyes at how stressful bab'Themba is.

"yebo baba" now I regret ever leaving my room.

He came here at 5 am and it's now 7 meaning the Ngcobo's will be here anytime.

I haven't spoken to Mngqobi since I asked for time out and for a change he's been very cooperative. He only texted me this morning telling me that his brothers will be here around this time. I miss our

midnight conversation and his kisses but we can't be together now, not when he still needs to deal with the demon in him.

Sighs

Here's another issue that's been bothering me, my mother's side of the family.

So Misizulu is the only one who knows that side of the family and I was a little happy that my aunt was around when my baby died but that was shortlived because after she was laid to rest the whole family cut ties with Misuzulu sadly the rest of us could not attend the funeral because we were not allowed. I don't know how can they blame us for her death but hey that family never wanted us in the first place. I hear my mother got married to my dad without their approval so she was disowned. Ugh, let me not bore you with details.

I sheepishly walk back to my room because the Ngcobo's are here.

I'm not sure who went to welcome them at the gate but soon I hear bab'Maphikelela's greetings.

I'm so nervous, my mind is going crazy with all sorts of unanswered questions.

I'm pacing back and forth in my room for what feels like forever before Misuzulu demands my presents.

Mnqobi is seating on a two-seater couch if it were any other day I'd rush to be by his side but not today, I sit on the floor instead. Fighting the urge to be close to him wasn't so bad after all.

"Qhamukile as you know the Ngcobo's are here to discuss this ludicrous marriage of yours and Mnqobi" bab'Themba

He's trying to contain his anger but he's failing.

"We don't recognize it because we were not part of it, the Buthelezi ancestors are as blind as we are when it comes to this. Tell me what we're you thinking"

"that was not rhetorical" he shouts when I don't answer

"I was not thinking baba"

"Clearly, I'm so disappointed in both of you,

especially in you Qhamu. You should know better.”
he continues shouting about how stupid we are.

Bab’Themba’s anger will raise his bp I tell you. Part of me knew they would be this pissed off, in fact, I was expecting them to whip my behind.

”Mngobi you disrespected the Buthelezi family by marrying their daughter without their consent and for they are asking for three cows-” bab’Maphikelela

Wait a minute... Three cows?

This has bab’Themba written all over it. How will Mngobi afford three cows?

Three cows? Like seriously.

I see him squirming in his seat.

”and you must apologize for your wrongdoings”

I don't know why is Mngobi the only blamed, I agreed to marry him didn't I?

Mngobi clears his throat before speaking

” I'd first like to greet you all-” by the look of things he was called at the same time I was.

”baba I'm sorry I married your daughter without your consent. I won't make any excuses because I know I was wrong. I wasn't thinking and for that I'm sorry-” that's a good start

”the decision was made out of love, I'm sorry to say this but I'm in love with your daughter baba and believe me I tried to fight my feelings but I couldn't. I don't exist without her. I'm nothing without her baba. I know I wronged you and I'm willing to pay whatever fine you pose on me but please, don't make us break up. I won't survive it and I know she won't survive it too.” wrong move Mngqobi.

He should've just stopped after the apology. Now, bab'Themba is staring at him like he's planning Mngqobi's death in his head.

”Hey wena mfana, how dare you sit there and tell us what to do. I can end this marriage right now”

” I'm sorry baba I meant no disrespect” okay shut up Mngqobi.

”however-”

”Please forgive my brother, he's still young and

therefore has a lot to learn. He meant no harm. Baba we have tried countless times to break these two apart for a while but the more we do that the more we push them to be together. We are as disappointed in their actions as you are however we are here to find a solution not to lay blame. I'll personally make sure that Mngqobi gives the three cows you ask for. Our ancestors don't know about this marriage just like the Buthelezi's and I was hoping we rectify that" thank God Makhosini interjected when he did, no doubt Mngqobi was going to infuriate bab'Themba further.

I must say Makhosini is very calm, come to think of it I don't think I've mentioned how much I admire him, he oozes power. He commands respect without saying much, most bow to him and I respect him for raising Mngqobi.

He turns his direction to me.

"Qhamukile I won't lie, I expected more from you but I'll forgive you. We turn to be stupid when we are in love. Mngqobi, you're my brother and that's the only reason stopping me from punching your eyes out

but what done it's done now, we need to find a way forward”

” I agree with Makhosini, we are all disappointed by their actions and we expected more from both of them nonetheless like Makhosini said what's done it's done.” Misuzulu says calmly, surprising me. The old Misuzulu would've been red with anger and who would have thought that he and Makhosini would agree on something.

”Mngobi I'm aware that you want to do things the right way however as you know Qhamukile is still in school and I'd like for her to finish her degree before you marry her traditionally or start making babies again for that matter. You're both still young however we acknowledge that you want to be together we ask that you respect our wishes just like we acknowledge yours. Qhamukile I want you to finish school and make something of yourself. Baba had big dreams for you and I've got no doubt you'll make him and us proud”

everyone agrees that Mngobi will pay Lobola in the next two years when I'm done with school and okay

with that.

This time I don't want to rush things as I did before and I trust my elders to know what's good for us.

Mnqobi and I are politely asked to be excused and they continue with their meeting until midday.

I don't know what else they were discussing but I'm happy they all agreed on how we going to move forward.

Things are not so gloomy by the end of the meeting so I dish up for everyone.

The first plate goes to bab'Themba then bab'Maphikelela, and in that order, until I reach Langa whose been awful quiet throughout.

"mmmm looks like my brother chose well here"
Langa finally speaks putting yet another full spoon in his mouth.

I outdid myself I tell you. They are all eating, Makhosini is even smiling to himself.

Maybe one day ill open my own restaurant.

I smile at how happy they all look and give a little

bow before I go back to my room.

There's a miss call and a few messages from Mngqobi when I check my phone.

"Hey that's wasn't so bad right" that's the first message

"look Qhamu I know I hurt you and I'm sorry, eish you said no more sorries, sorry. I just want to tell you that I'm fixing myself. I don't want to lose you and if it's space you want ill give you that but promise me you won't stop loving me please."

"hey I can't promise anything but I'm glad you gave me the space I need" I respond back

It's like he's been staring at his phone waiting for my reply because he replies immediately

"so you saying there's a possibility that you'll stop loving me" I roll my eyes

When did I say that?

" I didn't say that, look work on your demons first and thank you for understanding that I need some

time” I know how hard it was for him to agree to it.

”but for how long, a week maybe. I already miss you”

A week?

Like really SMH

”no, not a week. I'll tell you when I'm ready to get back together”

”what do you mean get back together. We are not breaking up, I'm just giving you space. You're not allowed to see other people Qhamukile”

”we on a break Mnqobi meaning I can do as I please and so should you” I'm going to castrate him should he see other people.

I'm just saying this to piss him off.

”Qhamukile don't piss me off. I'll put an end to this little break you want. I'm serious here, you not allowed to date anyone else. You're still married to me in case you forgot”

Can't Mnqobi take a hint I'm joking here

"I'm joking yoh"

"you better. I love you okay"

I don't respond to that and not because I don't love him but because I can't say it at the moment

"I said I love you" I log off WhatsApp.

My husband is persistent and persuasive and I don't trust myself not to fall for his charm.

My phone rings before I can even put it down

It's Mngobi, he's relentless so I know he won't stop calling or texting until I tell him what's he wants to hear

"I know you love me Mngobi" I answer

"then why ain't you saying it back" isn't he exasperating

"I love you"

"I know you do my love" I roll my eyes

I hate that I love him as I do.

"I'm going to miss your cooking. I can't wait for us

to live together. I'll get to eat your food every day”
the last part he says seductively

”pun intended,” he says before I hang up.

I don't have time for his naughtiness

”I'm sorry, that was too soon” he texts me.

I'm done talking to him for the day.

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Stargazer strip club...

The adult's entertainment club is closed today for a private party that's currently taking place. All the big bosses of the underworld have attended to celebrate the success of their illicit business and Zithulele is also one of the attendees. He looks very handsome in a black Neil Barrett three-piece suit and not forgetting that expensive black leather Hublot watch that's secured around his wrists.

Zithulele is a very handsome man and his muscularity doesn't do him any justice. He has broad shoulders which is evident that he works out. He takes good care of himself and it shows on his smooth dark chocolate skin and his perfectly proportioned milky white teeth.

He paired the suit up with a black pair of Christian Louboutin black greggo Oxford formal shoes and a white shirt. He finished his look with a bald head.

He's a dream and fantasy to every woman.

There's expensive alcohol and naked prostitutes, no pardon me. escorts. That's what they call themselves nowadays right?

Well, they are ready to entertain each and every men in this room.

Everyone can't help stare at Zithulele's physique as he takes his long strides to the vip round table in the corner. all sorts of wild and crazy thought running through the ladies mind "he would fuck me real good" one lady says aloud, most if not all of

them see themselves underneath him by the end of the night but he is oblivious to all the lust full looks he's getting.

He gives Chikoze a firm hand shake before greeting everyone else.

“Gentlemen” he first undo the button of his suit before taking a seat.

The naked waiter pours him his favorite bourbon and he downs it.

He acknowledges Nokhaya with a slightly nod. She is sitting on Chikoze's lap, dresses in nothing but a sexy red lingerie that highlights her light beautiful skin.

“She's yours for the night” the baboon as Nokhaya call him says to Zithulele whose rather taken some sort of interest in Nokhaya like he has previously.

“Rather not” Chikoze usually gives Nokhaya when he wants something in return, yes Zithulele wants Nokhaya but he can't show Chikoze that. Chikoze is an opportunist, if he sees any sign that Zithulele wants Nokhaya for more than just sex he might use

that as ammunition against Zithulele.

“Don’t worry Zee my man, I’m just showing appreciation for the business you have been bringing me”

Zithulele has managed to kidnap more young girls than ever imagined so business is booming for all men. Another reason why Chikoze is so giving with Nokhaya is because he wants his men to enjoy themselves before she’s shipped to Thailand to make more money of course.

“In that case” they click their classes and they both down the hard content.

Most of Chiloze’s business associates love Nokhaya because she is strong enough to handle their violent if not dehumanizing sexual acts. She taught herself not to cry during sex. To numb the pain she sniffs as much coke as she can to take her mind off her reality.

Akin got her an apartment and a car she wanted and now she's the queen that's she's always wanted to be.

She sways her hips looking at Zithulele, he's the only man that's she enjoys having sex with. He's gentle and treats her with respect like a man should and she knows Zithulele is her only way out of this life, she'll have the security she needs without having to perform dehumanizing acts.

Her last client forced her to drink up his urine after forcing her to do rimming.

The party is joyful with men occasionally dragging woman upstairs for a great fuck.

To Zithulele business comes first and tonight is no exception, except that tonight it's all about revenge.

He was disappointed that his men failed to carry out the plan to ensure that all the Ngcobo's and Buthelezi's die at that funeral so he decided to take matters into his own hands.

“Never send a sheep to do a wolf's job” his father once told him.

J aho by kizz Daniel is busting out loud from the speakers, Nigerian music is the only genre on the DJ 's playlist for tonight.

It's a party so as expected everyone is either tipsy or drunk but not Zithulele of course.

"Deeper" one guy shouts gagging the lady that's swallowing him balls deep and not far from him there's a man in between an escorts thighs satisfying his sexual needs.

After midnight Zithulele takes Nokhaya's hand after giving her his coat to cover herself up before they both leave.

"He cares about me" Nokhaya thinks to herself as she shakes her hips to his car.

Zithulele has to execute his plan today before she is taken away.

The valet opens the rolls Royce phantom door for both him and Nokhaya and they enter.

"How are you" he asks once he's driving

No man has ever asked how she is before so she gets too excited.

"I'm good and how are you"

"I'm good. Look there's something I need you to do

for me” he’s brushing her thighs giving her a tingly feeling.

It’s been a while since she felt this way when a man touches her.

To her this “relationship” is beyond sex but to Zithulele this is part of the plan. He’s done his research.

“I’d do anything for you”

“Is that so” he says and dips his finger in her before licking it.

No man has ever treated her like Zithulele does. Maybe this is her second chance on having a normal life again.

She nods lightly

“I want you to call that Ngcobo boy”

Alarmed Nokhaya asks a little confused too

“Ngcobo boy”

“Yes, the twin”

“What, why” she’s asks incredulously

“The less you know the better.”

“How do you know him” she is still confused as to why would Zithulele want Mngqobi.

“I don’t but you do. You two dated right” he is too calm.

“Yes but”

“I know he has a soft spot for you so call him and pretend to be in some trouble. He’ll come running” he throws her with a phone.

Nokhaya never stopped loving Mngqobi and she wouldn’t allow Zithulele or anyone else to hurt Mngqobi for that matter

“No I’m not going to do that”

Zithulele lets out a sinister laugh looking ahead on the road.

“You think” he takes out his cigar and lights it.

“How do you know about him and I. I will not allow you to hurt him” she shouts infuriating Zithulele.

“Nina abo magosha niyafana yaz. It puzzles me that

you still have some moral compass after everything you have done.”

“W...hat”

“Have you forgotten that you threw an innocent man in jail—“ Zithulele shakes his head and puff out his smoke

“But that’s not why you’re here. I’m going to have my way with you and when I’m done you’re going to call that boyfriend of yours” he clicks his tongue and steps on the accelerator.

Twenty minutes later Zithulele has her pinned down on his office desk thrusting Nokhaya painfully deep. Something she never thought he would do.

He fucks her until he is satisfied.

“Wipe those tears and call your boyfriend”

She’s been crying throughout this ordeal regretting ever believing that Zithulele is different.

“I hate you” she screams

Zithulele glares at her shaking his head and wipe her remains off his dick before dragging her up to

her feet.

“I don’t have all day”

“Mngqobi died, he was shot at the funeral” she knows people have difficulties in differentiating Mangoba from Mngqobi.

“Then call the other one”

“I don’t know Mangoba’s numbers. I’m not close to him”

he shakes his head pouring himself a glass of his favorite cognac

“Is that why you two were screaming behind his twins back—“ he laughs lightly

“Desperation uh.” He throws her with her bra and tell her to dress up.

He’s now wearing a pair of blue jeans but topless

“How do you know that” Nokhaya is scared for her life now

Zithulele is not a man she thought he was.

“I have my ways but if you must know, that bitch

friend of yours was so quick to tell me your life story after I gave her a couple to hundred bucks but like I said all you hoes are the same”

He grabs a phone and throws it to her

“Nontombi, Nontombi told you” more tears erupt for the back of her eyes when she thinks about her friendship with Nontombi.

She trusted her, she told her about her screams with Mangoba because she trusted her but now she regrets it.

It’s saddens her that money meant more to Nontombi than their friendship.

“I’d love to sit and chat but you don’t have time and I need you to do this before you’re shipped to Thailand”

“What do mean shipped. Is Chikoze trafficking me to Thailand”

she lets out a loud wail

“How can he do that to me” she says hysterically crying

“Not only are you stupid but you’re naive as well, what do you think this is? This is business sisi you’re here to make Chikoze money nothing more. Enough now call that boy”

At first Nokhaya refuses but after a few punches and kicks she relents

“Fine I’ll call him” she tells him

Zithulele has been banging her head against his hard oak table so she’s bleeding through her mouth, mucus mixed with tears dripping down her face.

She’s a mess.

“Good girl” he gives her the phone and she dials Mngobi number.

She calls three times before Mngobi husky voice bawls through the speaker

“What” Mngobi deleted Nokhaya’s number a long time ago

“Mngobi it’s Nokhaya” she says tears streaming down her face

“Nokhaya, what do you want” Mngobi

“I’m so sorry to wake you I need your help”

“Nokhaya I told you to stop calling me. I’m sorry I can’t help”

“Mnqobi please, I beg you don’t hang up please. I’m begging you. I need your help” she cries more irritating Mnqobi

“Call your blessers and leave me alone”

“Mnqobi I’m begging you. I’ve been raped and I don’t know where I am. Please I’m stranded”

“Call the police” she’s trying to make it as believable as she can. Zithulele has drawn out his gun and he’s playing with it terrifying her even further.

“Mnqobi you know me, which police is going to believe after what I did to my uncle. They will just say I deserve it please I need your help please.”

“Nokhaya”

“Please Mnqobi you’re my last hope” in as much as Mnqobi doesn’t want anything to do with Nokhaya he doesn’t hate her and he knows her enough to know that she needs help.

“Fine send me your location”

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My good people I know I'm disappointing you, I've lost motivations so please comments to help gain my momentum back.

And who else loves the bad boy that is Zithulele because I found myself loving him as I wrote about him.

[06/20, 18:33] Lynne: 63

MNQOBI

I really hate to be doing this even so more now that I'm not on good terms with my wife, Qhamu is going to kill me should she hear that I helped Nokhaya, not when she made it crystal clear that she doesn't

want me to make any contact with Nokhaya.

”fuck” I half shout frustrated.

Tell me, how did I agree to all of this?

I'm angry at myself for agreeing to this.

I get off the bed careful not to wake Mncedisi up.
He slept in my room because malume Mphikeleli is occupying his room and he's too much of a wimp to use Manqoba's room.

He thinks Manqoba's spirit is still in there.

I'd laugh if I wasn't this pissed off.

How can I let Nokhaya do this to me again?

I know for sure I don't care about her so it really puzzles me as to why am I dressing up right now.

I wear my grey sweat pants Qhamu detests with a black hoodie.

”where are you going to this time of the night”

I'm startled because I thought Mncedisi was sleeping

”eish Mncedisi are you trying to give me a heart attack”

I say wearing a pair of sneakers

”you're the one being creepy in the dark” he says switching on the light.

”eish I'm going to-”

”I know, I know, you are going to Qhamu but didn't she say she wants a break. Teenagers can be exhausting”

he is now sitting up straight, looking at me inquisitively

”not that it's any of your business but I'm not going to Qhamu. We still on a break. I'm going to help Nokhaya”

I know for sure he's going to be melodramatic about it, I should have lied to him.

”Nokhaya... Which Nokhaya. Oh wait don't tell me you talking about Indian hair Nokhaya”

I guess the name stuck after she made comments about how expensive her hair is.

”you do know Zulu girl is going to kill you right?”

he has been calling Qhamu that after hearing Katlego and I guess that name stuck too.

” I’ll be back” I go out before he can say anything else.

I know how dramatic my brother can be and right now I don't need anyone chiding at me.

I drive out carefully not to wake the rest of the family and let the navigator direct me to the destination.

I don't know why didn't she call an Uber. Nokhaya needs to seriously sort out her life because I can't always rescue her when she finds herself in this kind of sticky situation which she usually puts herself in.

I'm doing this for the last time. After this, I'm cutting all ties with her.

”in 500 meters turn left” the female’s voice from the navigator jolts me out of my thoughts.

This place is very remote and I've suddenly

developed this uneasy feeling.

The bushes surrounding me are not making me feel at easy at all.

I take out my phone and call her

"I'm here," I tell her once she answers

I wait for about two minutes before she appears from the bushes wearing nothing but a red bra and panties and barefoot.

Oh shit, her face is covered in blood and she can't even walk straight.

I quickly get off the car and run to her.

"Nokhaya—"

"I'm so sorry Mngqobi. He was going to kill me, I didn't have a choice" she says incoherently.

She's not making any sense because she says all this while crying hysterically.

"what are you talking about, who is going to kill you"

"zi—"

I feel a heavy steel hit me on the back of my head causing me to fall down.

“Don’t kill him Zithulele please, don’t kill him” I hear Nokhaya’s shaky voice before I see nothing but darkness.

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Morning lights is creeping in when Makhosini receives a call from Mngqobi. He is a little hazed from sleep but he hell as sure Mngqobi wouldn’t call him so early for nothing. So he is a little alarmed when he answers.

“Mngqobi” his voice is raspier in the morning

“Hello Makhosini” Zithulele smiles through the phone

Sitting up straight Makhosini asks

“Who the hell is this”

He removes the phone from his ear to check if he

saw Mngqobi's name and indeed Mngqobi it reads.

“Your worst nightmare”

He's already on his feet when he hears his enemies voice and he's wondering how the hell does Zithulele have Mngqobi's phone.

“I have your stupid brother so here is what you are going to do to save his life. You are going to kill all those Buthelezi boys and I might not just kill him” Zithulele says serious

“How the hell am I going to do that” Makhosini shouts angrily

“That's your problem Makhosini, you have until tomorrow to kill them all, including that little bitch they call a sister” Zithulele says and hangs up

Makhosini calls him back but the phone rings unanswered.

Furious he walk to Mngqobi's room, he's hoping he finds him sleeping like he should be.

“Mngqobi” he shouts opening the door.

He first check Mngqobi's side but his brother is not

around. Mncedisi is sleeping alone peacefully.

Mncedisi is a heavy sleeper by nature it's surprising he was able to hear Mngqobi last night

“Mncedisi” he shakes him vigorously awake.

“Where the hell is your Mngqobi” he asks angrily

Afraid, Mncedisi sits up straight and starts mumbling

“He... he... I don't ... he went to Qhamu”

“I swear I'm going to break your bones if you continue lying to me” Mncedisi has never seen Makhosini this furious.

“He went to help Nokhaya”

“Who the hell is Nokhaya”

“His ex-girlfriend” Mncedisi is terrified of his older brother.

He has witnessed his beastly side but not like this, right now Makhosini is breathing fire.

“There's no girlfriend here, Zithulele took him. I want you to tell me exactly what he said to you”

Mncedisi narrates the whole story from the time Mngobi received a call to him leaving around 2 am.

“Get dressed”

Makhoaini walks out to wake Langa and Zwelethu up. Langa is as furious when he hears that Zithulele is yet again messing with his family.

“Zithulele has to die” Langa says and bangs the bonnet of the car.

“He wants us to kill the Buthelezi’s. what are we going to do” Zwelethu.

“We are going to get Mngobi back” Makhosini says and gets into the car.

Mncedisi is dressed up so he joins the rest of his brothers in the car but MaNgidi stops them before they are able to drive away.

“Hey Nina what’s with the noise so early in the morning” she shouts from the door wearing her gown and sleepers

“Makhosini whats happening, where are you all going”

Makhosini huffs before getting out of the car but now his uncle is also awake and demanding to know what's happening.

“Malume there's just an issue at the pub so I'm going there”

his uncles knows his lying because Langa's is the one that deals with the pub.

“Then why are you all going. Makhosini you know I don't want you guys fighting”

“Yebo ma we not going to fight”

MaNgidi shoots him an eye before going back in the house, she knows something is up because Makhosini never call her ma unless he wants to soften her up.

MaTwala is still sleeping peacefully.

“What's going on” Maphikelela asks with a serious tone.

He too woke up when he heard the shuffling outside.

“Mnqobi was taken last night so I'm going to get him back”

“I figured you know who took him. Do what you must to bring him back alive. I’ll make sure MaNgidi doesn’t find out what’s really going on. She lost Manqoba, she won’t survive yet another heartache. I trust you will bring Mnqobi back”

With a nod Makhosini gets into his car and they all speed to Mvubukazi.

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“Are you sure it’s Zithulele” Gatsha asks

Langa nods

“yes and he wants us to kill all of you to get him back”

“Zithulele is not a man of his word, he wants you to get rid of us so it’s easier for him to get to you”

Misuzulu

“I know. We need to come up with a plan to get Mngqobi. I’m thinking he is keeping him at his warehouse” Langa

“Maybe but he knows that’s the first place we are going to look and I’m sure he’s not waiting for us to burst through his doors unarmed. It could be an ambush.” Makhosini

“I agree. Zithulele is anything but stupid. He’s keeping Mngqobi else where” Nqaba

“Manqhele might know where he’s keeping him. Langa and Gats ha you know what to do”

Both men wait not time.

They rush out to get Manqhele.

Qhamu is now wide awake listening to the noise

coming from the back room. she saw the Ngcobo's walking in angrily but what puzzles her is what brings them here so early.

Curious, she gets off the bed and tip toe outside to eavesdrop from the door.

“Mncedisi are you sure he said he's going to help Nokhaya” She hears Misuzulu's voice

“Yes, Qhamu is going to kill him and I warned him” Mncedisi says angrily.

“We won't tell her until we get him back, this will kill her. I don't understand how can he be this stupid” Makhosini

“Won't tell me what” she burst through the doors.

“Where is Mngobi, is he cheating on me with

Nokhaya”

she’s fuming and all the brothers are just looking at her blankly.

After sometime Makhosini tells her what’s happening, calmly so but Qhamu is already picnicking before Makhosini even finishes. She’s cries for the brothers to bring him back.

Once she calm she goes back to the house and trust the brothers to bring back Mngobi alive.

Langa and Gatsha have taken Manqhele to Joe’s garage, he’s bloody from the punches and kicks they gave him. Soon the rest of the brothers joins them.

Manqhele is tied to the chair and unconscious from the blow Langa gave him.

Gatsha splashes Manqhele with cold ice water to wake him up.

It takes Manqhele a minute to register what’s happening but he sure doesn’t take the risk of

undermining these two families, not after they took his daughter. He knows they won't hesitate to kill him for their own so he wastes no time in telling them where Zithulele might be keeping Mngqobi.

“So listen up. Zithulele is a very dangerous man but right now we are at an advantage. I know how he thinks and right now he is expecting us to raid his warehouse looking for Mngqobi and we are going to do just that but he is not expecting us at his private home and believe me that's where he is, he won't let Mngqobi out of his sight, I'm certain of that. And I'm also sure that he's upped his security at the warehouse and they are ready to ambush us which is why we need to be clever about this. Langa and Gatsha you are with me, We will take as many men as we can to the warehouse to cause havoc, we will fire shots and kill a few men Let's make it look real but please boys, no one should get hurt. I want that spineless bastard to think he got us and just when he thinks he won Makhosini will be there to remind him of who we are and we shall see who has the

last laugh. Mzee and sjava you will go with Makhosini, the lesser the better, Zithulele is not expecting us at his private home so security won't be too tight"

Misuzulu the master mind has come up with a solid plan what's left of for them to execute it.

"And guys we doing this now, I'm sure Zithulele is not expecting us to come gun blazing in broad day light so get ready" all men are ready themselves for yet another war between the two families and Zithulele. It's funny how they all don't care of they getting caught. The are doing this for Makhosini and Misuzulu and that's all that matters.

"Remind me to never even think or crossing you"
Joe says looking at Misuzulu chuckling

"Buthelezi I know you want to join us but Manqoba didn't give you his heart just for you to die. You still

need to recover. Sit tight, we are all going to stick to the plan and Mngqobi will be here with us by the end of the day”

Misuzulu first protest but Makhosini hears none of it, after a few back and forth Misuzulu finally relents.

“The last time this was you” Misuzulu chuckles when he remembers how devastated Makhosini was when they went to attack Zithulele and he couldn’t because he was in a wheelchair.

“Look how the wheel has turned Buthelezi”

“Bring Mngqobi back Makhosini, I can’t bare to see my sister in pain for the rest of her life”

“And I’d be damned to bury another brother because of Zithulele”

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Langa and Gatsha do what they have to when they reach the warehouse. Sticks is the one that's overseeing that the opposing side fall for the trap. Soon there's gun fires from corner to corner but Langa and Gatsha are too careful to get hurt. Sticks manages to call his boss to inform him that the brothers are indeed at the warehouse like they anticipated and they are currently in battle. Zithulele is thrilled to hear that and he tells sticks to make sure they are dead this time.

The moment sticks hangs up Langa shots him from a distance, instantly killing him and they retrieve.

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The drive to Zithulele private house is long because it's out of Pietermaritzburg but an hour later Makhosini arrives with the two men and Nqaba who

forced his way. The house is in hiding no one would see it unless of you are looking for it. They park further from the house and walk the rest of the way, after scanning their surrounding they notice security is not so tight like Misuzulu had said.

There's just two guards at the gate and two more at the door but Makhosini is a man of many talents so him and his men manage to kill them all without making any noise which can only mean they had to strangle them to death.

Mzee had to break one guard's neck to kill him.

No one can handle Makhosini, not when he is ready to kill for his blood.

His mission is to rescue his brother and that's the only thing pondering in his head right now.

Nqaba manages to open the doors without Zithulele hearing.

This is the same house Zithulele hid in when the brothers were looking for him after they raided his warehouse.

Zithulele is seating on a couch sipping his hard liquor celebrating his supposedly victory.

“Your brother thinks he is Superman, how dare he mess with me. I’m Zithulele Ntshangase, no one, I mean no one messes with me and gets to tell the tale” he lets out a sinister laughs and knocks his drinks on the back of his throat.

“Im sure they are all dead now but don’t worry you will follow soon and if you’re lucky they might just bury you in the same casket as your twin”

That manages to evoke so much hatred in Mngobi who is cuffed to a chair he is seating on, he starts fidgeting trying to free himself but it’s futile.

He’s seeing red, the same men that killed his brother is right in front of him and not only that but he’s bragging about it.

Mngobi is not the only one listening to the lunatic

that is Zithulele, Makhosini heard every word and he too like Mnqobi, he gets engulfed by hatred, this is the same bastard that killed Manqoba and not only that but he has made their lives a mess.

Angry, he shots the glass on the table startling Zithulele, this is just him showing his presence to Zithulele. He never misses. If he wanted Zithulele dead then he would be but of course he's not going to kill Zithulele, as yet.

Mnqobi is relieved to see his brother standing tall and ready to kill for him.

“You’ll be dead before you even touch that gun”

Makhosini says calmly so when Zithulele tries to reach for his gun.

Zithulele is shocked to say the least. Just as Misuzulu anticipated he did not expecting them to be here.

“How are you... you should be dead.. how...

impossible” Zithulele says stammering.

“You messed with the wrong family” Nqaba says before shooting Zithulele on both knees.

The two guys help uncuff Mngobi from the chair.

“There are three ladies downstairs” Mngobi tells Nqaba before the two guys help him out.

A little guarded Nqaba walks downstairs to help the three ladies Mngobi spoke of.

“Shit” Nqaba says, he didn’t prepare himself for such cruelty.

Nokhaya is chained to the bed along side another young girl who looks about 14 if not 15 years and the third one is in a corner chained with barbed wires on both her wrist and angles.

Nqaba first helps Nokhaya, then the young girl who introduce herself as Nosipho

“Shit” he says again when he sees the damage caused by the barbed wires on the other girl’s wrist.

“I’m Nqaba, what’s your name” at first the girl doesn’t allow him to touch her instead she fights him with tears streaming down her face but he understands when Nosipho explains what Zithulele did to her.

It explains why she doesn’t want any men to help her.

Zithulele is a cruel man.

“I’m here to help you, don’t cry. You’re safe now” he says trying to get the wires off of her.

“She doesn’t talk. Zithulele says she’s stubborn so he tied her up with wires to teach her a lesson” Nosipho.

Nqaba is deranged by how heartless Zithulele is.

He takes off his t-shirt, tears it apart and wraps it around the girl's wrist because she's bleeding. She lost a lot of blood and can't walk so Nqaba picks her up and whispers that everything is going to be alright.

Feeling some sort of security the girl holds on tightly to Nqaba as he walks to the car with Nokhaya and Nosipho following behind.

While Nqaba was busy helping the ladies Makhosini managed to drag Zithulele all the way to the car and threw him in the boot.

It's a short drive back to Joe's garage, Makhosini has thought of what he's going to do to Zithulele and death is too kind for what he has planned.

Langa and Gatsha are also back and for once no one got hurt, everyone is alive and well.

Misuzulu is thrilled when he sees all men walking in.

“We come baring gifts” Makhosini says excitedly.
Sjava and Mzee walks in happily dragging Zithulele.

“And what do we have here” Langa says chuckling
and fist pump with Langa, these two surprisingly
work well together.

Who would have thought.

“Why don’t you just kill me” Zithulele.

He knows his death is near and not only that but it’s
going to be painful.

“Where’s the fun in that but to ease your mind we
are going to kill you, eventually” Gatsha.

Zithulele knows he won’t be able to handle what’s in
store for him and right now he’s wishing for death
than life.

“I’d love to be part of the fun but I’m taking the ladies to the hospital. I’ll take lover boy with me just Incase he has internal injuries” Nqaba

He somehow feels drawn to the young lady who was tied up with wires and it frustrate him that he can’t explain these feelings that has suddenly developed towards a total stranger.

Everyone is a little amazed that he out of all people is willing to miss out on the fun but they let him go nonetheless.

[06/20, 18:34] Lynne: 64

QHAMU

I must me going deaf because I’m not exactly hearing what my husband is telling me right now
”what exactly are you saying to me Mngobi”

He looks nervous and to my surprise my anger

evaporated the minute I saw him. I know what you thinking but what I'm feeling is far worse than anger. Im not sure of it as yet but anger is not it.

I'm perplexed by Mngqobi's willingness and the length he went to help Nokhaya. He put himself in such an immense danger for her, her out of all people?

I thought he said he doesn't care about her but I guess I was a fool to believe it.

"im sorry my love she sounded desperate and I fell for it. I know it was stupid of me to agree to help her in the first place and I'm sorry I just didn't think it was a trap, she tricked me"

he says pleadingly

You know after Nqaba sent me a text telling me he took Mngqobi to the hospital I hurried here thinking he was hurt but now that I'm here, listening to him tell me that Zithulele used Nokhaya to get to him makes me regret it, even more especially because he was helping her.

"but look on the brighter side, Zithulele is finally

captured”

he whispers

Nqaba mentioned the police where here to questions him about the two girls. I’m still yet to hear what lies he told this time.

“Don’t patronize me”

“I’m sorry, I’m sorry —“ he says lifting his hands up as if surrendering

“—but admit it, her little tricks worked in our favor”

”so that makes it okay. Right?

I feel betrayed more than anything.

”I’m not saying it’s okay I’m just trying to see the positive outcome of everything that transpired”

he steps closer wanting to hold my hands but I yank them away before he can touch me

”mnqobi how many times have I asked you to stay away from Nokhaya”

”a lot, I know sthandwa sam but if it wasn’t for her then they wouldn’t have captured Zithulele”

is this man even listening to himself?

”you don't get it, do you”

” I know you're angry but baby I'm fine and we will finally get to live our lives without looking over our shoulders”

He smiles fondly

”Mnqobi do you understand how worried I was. I thought Zithulele was going to kill you. An imagine of you laying dead somewhere replayed in my head like a broken record and for those few hours I couldn't breath. I thought I lost you. I don't know what I could've done had it been real and you're happy. You don't get it Mnqobi, I won't be able to survive without you. You're my life but of course, that doesn't matter to you. You just wanted to rescue your damsel in distress. Did you stop for a minute and thought how this would make me feel”

He looks at me blanky

”I guess not, Nokhaya must mean so much to you than I do”

”don't be dramatic, Nokhaya means nothing to me”

”could've fooled me”

I'm tired of Mngqobi thinking it's okay to disregard my feelings. Is it too much to ask for him be a little more considerate before he acts like a hero. I know he would have been furious had I been the one that went out there and put my life at risk but because it's him I'm dramatic.

“Qhamu I'm not going to have this conversation again, Nokhaya means nothing to me and you know it”

“It's not about her Mngqobi, but you you risking your life!” I shout

Why doesn't he get it. Nokhaya is not a factor here but him.

Sighs

Let's me calm down.

”i know you're angry at me but I'm—“

“Going to fix it, I know. And I'm not angry, just disappointed”

That's it, I'm disappointed.

"Mngobi these days you seem to be messing up more that I'm starting to think maybe you don't want us anymore. I can't keep on fixing your mistakes while you continuously do the same thing.

I don't know you anymore. Imagine I was the one that went out there and risked my life like that—“

his face immediately change from soft to hard in a second.

“Not a great picture uh, now imagine how I feel. Mngobi I don't know for how long will I do this but what I know is, you're slowly getting blinded and you don't know what's important anymore.

The guy I married wouldn't have gone out there and risked his life for someone he doesn't care for and he certainly would have thought how his actions would affect me. I want that guy back not someone who continues to hurt me but of course, I'm dramatic”

He lets out a loud sigh and pull me closer to him.

“I’m sorry for saying you’re dramatic i didn’t mean it. Nokhaya used me and I allowed it, it’s my fault you’re hurt right now and baby I’m sorry. I put my life at risk and I didn’t think about how my actions would make you feel, in fact, I didn’t think at all and I’m so sorry for that. I promise, Nokhaya means nothing to me. I know i wouldn’t survive if something were to happen to you, please forgive me for not thinking how this would’ve made you feel. You’re my everything Qhamu and it would kill me if I were to lose you because of this. I love you sthandwa sam and thank you for loving me”

I nod and pull my hands away

“I get it, it’s not about Nokhaya but about you losing me but as you can see I’m fine, feel me. I’m back and in one piece”

he says and smiles sweetly.

Let’s hope he gets it.

“I miss you baby, I know you said you wanted a break but I can’t take it anymore”

I should've known he'd use my venerability to his advantage.

“Oh nooo my dear, I still want my space”

He chuckles softly and pulls me closer to me and tempt to kiss me

“Seduction wont work, we still on a break”

He throws back his head and laughs out loud before kissing my temple

“I tried—“ he sniffs my hair.

I still find that odd.

“As frustrating as it is, fine but I need a nap and I'd love for you to join me”

My eyebrow raise involuntarily

“Please. I just want to feel you close to me”

Hate to admit it but I want the same thing and I would love to nap as well. I'm tired from all the crying and worrying I've been doing all morning.

It's a little after three in the afternoon now meaning I should go home and prepare for tomorrow but two

hours of nap won't hurt

Some of you won't understand why I'm not angry, I can't be angry, not when I thought he was dead. right now I just need to hold him and forget about Nokhaya, Zithulele and everything else.

“Am I interrupting”

that little squeaky annoying voice I loath says opening the door.

“No” I say simultaneously with Mngqobi only he says “yes” affirmatively so at that.

Her presence repulse me

I feel anger erupting from the pit of my stomach

This girl is brave I'll giver her that

“Sorry, I was hoping to talk to you” she says looking at Mngqobi

“Like I said Nokhaya you're disturbing us”

“I know you're angry and probably the last person you want to see but I came to apologize. I didn't have a choice Mngqobi. You have no idea how

dangerous Zithulele is, he was going to kill me”

What a lousy apology

“Nokhaya get out and whilst at it, forget my contact numbers. I never want to see you again” Mngqobi is infuriated by her presence just as much but I doubt he wants to strangle her like do.

I’m imagining my hands on her throat and tightly squeezing life out of her.

I never knew it was possible to despise a person like I do her

“I know you hate me, I’d hate me too but for what it's worth I love you”

I don’t know when did I move from Mngqobi side to hers that quick but I’m outraged when I hear a loud whack

My palm stings from the hot smack I’ve just landed on her cheek.

To say she’s horrified would be an understatement, she’s petrified.

Her hand is covering her cheek with terror plastered

on her pretty face.

“Did you just slap me?” she asks in disbelief

I think ignoring her all these years has made her think it's okay to make people feel inferior, well I'm not scared of her.

Oh she poked the beast in me.

“Listen here and you better listen attentively because I'm not going to tell you this again—“

I'm looking her straight in the face
unblinking.

I'm not sure if I'm reading her facial expressions correctly but she looks frightened for a lack of a better word.

“You don't love Mngqobi because if you did then you would've died for him as I would have but of course, you are too much of a narcissist to put someone else before yourself. Nokhaya I want you to stop calling Mngqobi, in fact, you should never mention his name ever again. I never want to see you again, you better change paths when you see me because

next time I'll do more than just slap you”

I'm enraged.

This girl is disrespectful, she has the guts to tell my husband she loves her in my presence.

I'd be damned if I let her disrespect me ever again.

“Now get the hell out of here”

She sheepishly walks out without uttering any word.

Now that I'm fired up and I've dealt with her let me deal with this one.

The anger I've been suppressing is oozing out of my pores, I'm furious and can't contain it.

”Wow I didn't know you could throw a smack like that”

If he's not careful I might just smack his pretty face too.

He's laughing lightly, he thinks this is funny.

Let me burst his little bubble.

”Mngobiwesizwe you will not look, speak or even

breathe the same air as that girl because if you do I'm going to leave you. Believe me, I won't even look back. Just look at your doings, now your girlfriend thinks it's okay for her to disrespect me”

“Wooh she's not—“

“But you made her think she is. God, you make so angry you know. I don't know what were you thinking when you went to her. Did you seriously think I wasn't going to find out.”

He starts moving his lips but no words

“You're so stu—“ his face changes instantly.

I might be angry but he's going to kill me before I even finish my sentence

“—Mnqobi this is the last time we having this conversation” I say instead.

I throw my hands in the air huffing

“That girl thinks you still care about her so you better deal with her before I deal with you”

He's back at being awestruck, I'd be shocked as well.

We were talking calmly a minute ago but now I'm fuming. I literally went from zero to a hundred in a second.

I see the corner of his lips lift

He's not smiling is he.

"What are you smiling for"

"You turning me on"

He can't be serious

"I swear I'm going to kill you" that manages to wipe off his smile.

"Baby—"

"Don't baby me, let's go"

I say angrily and walk out of the ward.

I don't even know why was he in a ward in the first place because he's not injured.

"watch it" I nearly bump into Nqaba.

He's making his way into the ward.

"what got you so angry"

”Nothing. Can you please give us a lift home”

the two ladies who were rescued are still here and will be here for a few days for observation. They were both raped countless times, it's sad to think I could've suffered the same fate had it not been for Makhosini. Lungile will be fine from what Nqaba told me earlier, her family was notified and they are driving from Joburg but I can't say the same about the other girl. She suffered blood loss and has a few broken bones too.

”you and your boyfriend have to take a taxi home, I'll be here for a little while. Amanda is awake and I need to be here for her”

That causes me to raise an eyebrow.

”Amanda”

”yes, the girl we rescued” wait a minute.

What happened to my brother because I don't know who's this guy.

Nqaba is capable of caring for someone else besides his family.

I'm astonished.

Could he be in love?

the thought of him being in love gets me all fuzzy inside but let me not jump the gun, this is Nqaba I'm talking about and he's very unpredictable.

"oh, she's awake" I down play it.

I don't want him to think I'm happy that he cares for his girl.

We all know how Nqaba is.

"yes so you and lover boy will just have to use a taxi"

"mmmm" I take the 100 bucks he's handing me

"wait.. What's that, that mmmm"

I act confused

"I don't know what you talking about dear brother. I'll see you at home or not, something tells me you'll be here all night" he shakes his head and leaves me standing there.

The taxi ride home is long because it's Sunday and no one is in a rush. I'm still angry at Mngqobi but right now I just want a little bit of peace and serenity and what better way than to be with him.

Isn't it ironic how he's my peace and yet he's the one that's constantly disrupting my life?

SMH.

We walk from the stop sign to his home. MaNdigi is standing outside with MaTwala who runs to us the moment she sees us.

"oh my boy what happened to your face" she's touching Mngqobi's face observing his bruises but he pulls away his face annoyed.

They all still hate her.

"Hey ma, how are you," he says looking at MaNgidi

He acts as if MaTwala does not exist, which is rude if you ask me.

"MaTwala asked you a question" MaNgidi shouts but he totally pretends like he didn't hear that

Poor MaNgidi. I can see she's stuck in the middle

but what puzzles me is what MaTwala is still doing here when it's clear she's not needed.

"What did I say about fighting"

" but Ma I didn't get into any fights ask Qhamu"

"Zwelethu brought your car. I don't know what's happening with you and your brothers but I'm going to find out" MaNgigi

Sma is playing on the lawn minding his own business.

"Nothing is happening ma. I hope you cooked I'm hungry" he says blowing her a kiss

"I cooked" MaTwala

"I'm suddenly not hungry" he grabs my hand and pull me to his room.

"Why are you behaving like a spoiled brat, MaTwala is trying. Don't you think you guys need to meet her half way" I'm sickened by his behavior towards MaTwala.

Yes she abandoned them but he doesn't have to be rude, she's still an adults who deserves respect.

“You can shout at me for anything else except this, I don’t even know why she’s still here.”

He’s already undressing getting ready to get into bed.

“Mnqobi come on, cut her some slack”

“I love you so much sthandwa sam but you not going to win this one”

He gives me his t-shirt and get into bed.

I roll my eyes and undress, dress up in his t-shirt and join him.

I missed this, laying on his chest and listening to his heartbeat and not only that but I miss his lips too so I’m forced to make a move.

His minty fresh breath is the first thing I feel against my lips before our lips lock.

The kiss start slow and lush but it gets intense when we use our tongues.

“Mmmm” I moan

My body is starting to heat up, it’s been a while

since I felt Mngobi in me.

He's only wearing his boxer shorts so I trail my hand down his chest, to his stomach and finally I lift the waist band of his boxers and reach for what's mine but he holds my hand stopping from reaching his manhood.

"I'm tired" he says after breaking the kiss.

Did he just say he's tired?

Mngobi is never too tired to have sex.

This is a first.

"Please" don't look at me like that, it's been a while.

"Not now my love. Let's talk about that slap though, Who knew you had it in you Yoh I'm scared of you now"

Rolling my eyes.

He's trying to make me forget about sex and it worked.

"Just rest. You have to take me home when you wake up"

He laughs lightly, sniff my hair and whispers close to my ear “I love your crazy ass” then kiss my forehead and pull me close to him before closing his eyes.

This is what I want for the rest of my life.

-

At Joe’s garage.

MISUZULU

I’m relieved the plan worked but I’ll feel more at ease when I get to watch Zithulele take his last breath. This bastard has turned our lives upside down, he kidnapped Qhamu, shot Gatsha and Mncedisi but that’s not the worst of it. He killed Manqoba. I wanted his death to be quick and easy so that we can move on but Makhosini has other plans. He’s more sinister than I am but I’m not judging. Manqoba was his brother after all.

Zithulele is currently hanging from the ceiling
beaten up to the pulp.

Makhosini, Langa and Gats ha have been having the
time of their lives. They've managed to cut all his
toes and fingers and that's just the beginning.

“Just kill me already” Zithulele shouts

I'm tired of listening to his screams and cries.

Who knew he could cry like that.

“I've been telling you, not yet but don't worry you will
die soon” Langa

“We still thinking of more ways on how we can
make that very painful” Gats ha

Makhosini shakes his head laughing at these two
clowns.

It's been fun watching them taunt Zithulele like like
they've been doing I must say.

I didn't think I'd find it this thrilling and entertaining.

“Put him down boys it's time we take all this up a
notch” Makhosini is so into this.

Langa and Gathsa do as told and unfasten him.

He'll be unconscious soon with the amount of blood he is losing.

Joe's complains about his garage getting bloodied fell on deaf ears I think he's tired of complaining now. Like myself, he's enjoying the show.

"You won't get away with this, do you know whose daughter it is you took. You're all going to die"
Zithulele rumbles on.

"Unlike you. We don't rape young defenseless girls"
Mzee says and kicks him on his balls forcing him to groan

That must've been painful.

"Fuck I'm going to kill you all" he says after recovering from his groin injury

Mzee mimics his cries and they all laugh

"The sounds of your voice is starting to annoy me, what do you say boys. How about we shut him up"

the "boys" cheer Makhosini on and force Zithulele down while Gatscha forces to keep his mouth open

and Makhosini cuts out his tongue.

I remain aloof. I'm not even moved by the level of cruelty going on around here.

Zithulele is groaning and moaning with tears streaming down his face.

“Why is he crying now, doesn't he know Isikhuni sibuya nomkhwezi. (if you choose to play with a risky situation, be sure that you will have to suffer the consequences) who do you think you were messing with” Langa

“He seriously thought he was untouchable” Mzee

“What's with the chitchat. Bring Manqhele here. I want to deal with him”

I'll let Makhosini and Langa deal Zithulele. Their killing him will bring them some sort of solace than it would me, pity Zwelethu is not here to enjoy this.

Manqhele is beaten beyond recognition but his death needs to be as painful.

I remember Joe has pit bull and from what I know those dogs are carnivores who eat raw meat.

You going to love this.

Manqhele has been locked up in one of joe's boot so I drag him out and feed him to the dogs while Zithulele watch.

It's like these dogs are seeing meat for the first time. They are ripping and pulling and listening to Manqhele's cries is satisfying. He cries until he's dead. The dogs ripped his intestines out and all his organs are out and the dogs are fisting.

“And you say I'm cruel” that's Makhosini

He's smiling at me like a proud father.

“Now it's your turn to impress me” I say shaking my head.

“And what do you know, I live to impress”

He fasten Zithulele to the table and undress him

“So this man here kidnaps, rapes, sells and kills young girls for money so I've been thinking how about we first rip off that one thing that makes him a man” I'm loving this.

“Boss are you saying we—“

“Yes Sjava, bring me that knife” Makhosini is dressed in disposable overalls.

He first torments Zithulele, pocking and cutting his flesh with the knife while laughing and making jokes before he cuts off his balls and penis.

Remind me never to cross Makhosini.

If you think castration is the worst then you clearly don't know Makhosini.

He further cuts him up limp by limp before decapitating his head.

I thought I've seen it all.

“Boys, Clean up and burn the rest of the remains. I'm going home to catch up on a peacefully sleep”
Makhosini

It's been an eventful day.

[06/20, 18:35] Lynne: 65

MNQOBI

It would be hypothetical of me to blame Nokhaya for everything that happened because part of it was my fault but I'm not about to dwell on the past. I've lost focus on being the partner Qhamu needs and I'm planning to rectify that, starting with the man in the mirror then Nokhaya. I don't care much about what she did to me but her mistake was to mess with my wife and think she'll get away with it.

I admit I was petrified when Zithulele took me. I literally saw my life ending that moment but nothing is more threatening than listening to Qhamu utter that she will leave me. The thought of being apart from her kills me inside, okay enough now but you get the gist I just don't want you thinking I'm a total wimp.

It's after seven and we are all gathered around the dining table, courtesy by MaNgidi. I don't know why does she try so much to get us to accept MaTwala because it won't happen. That ship has long sailed and she just needs to let it go and let things be.

I personally don't hate MaTwala as a person but she makes a lousy mother and I very much doubt

that will change.

Anyway, like myself, my brothers are seating here out of respect for Malume Maphikelela because we haven't had dinner like this ever since MaTwala got here, usually we take our plates and eat in our rooms just to avoid her.

She actually cooked and admittedly her food taste good but the thought of her leaves a bitter taste in my mouth so I can't even enjoy this meal.

"thank you MaTwala for cooking tonight, it's good to eat someone else's food for a change"

I almost roll my eyes at how corny ma sounds.

Her plan won't work.

"oh she cooked," Zwelethu says with a flat tone.

They've all suddenly lost their appetites.

Told you MaNgidi's plan won't work.

"What a pleasant surprise" nothing pleasant about MaTwala feeding us her poison but Mncedisi sarcasm is pleasant though.

”Stop it you two” I don't know why does ma have to reprimand us all the time, nothing is going to change

” apologize” this I want to see

”now!”

”sorry” Zwelethu doesn't even sound sincere

”sorry, your food tastes good” I'd believe Mncedisi's modesty if he wasn't my brother

”okay that's it. Smagele go to your room. I want to speak to your brothers” the little guy knows when to protest and when not to and right now MaNgidi is ready to lash out.

He walks out mumbling under his breath.

Couldn't ma wait for him to finish his food first

Sighs

Here it comes.

”I'm tired of all of you disrespecting MaTwala, I understand she might have wronged you”

might have?

”but this is no way to treat her, I didn't raise you all like this. Baba please speak to them, I'm tired of asking them to give MaTwala even the slightest respect.”

Now I see why Malume is still here, he was supposed to have left today.

He hasn't said a word but has been observing us.

“Bashana please, can we all just let go of the past and move on”

We all remain silent but I'm recoiling inwardly.

”Makhosini you're the leader of this pack, I've realized they are more likely to listen than anyone else so I'm going to let you speak to them”

he says defeated.

Makhosini has been quietly eating his dinner smiling to himself.

I take it he dealt with Zithulele which explains the jolly mood.

He starts scratching his head.

“Malume hey are all adults I’m sure they are listening to you”

Malume gives my mother that ‘I tried look’ before looking back at his plate

I’m not sure what’s his reason is for not talking to us I guess he knows us more than we think.

“Makhosini I’m defeated I’ve been speaking to them from day one but they don’t listen”

MaTwala is just seating with her head bowed while ma fights her battles.

“No ma, lets first talk about why she left. Let her talk, I don’t know her and yet she’s my mother.—“

this is frustrating

“Ma, she left when I was an infant and now that she’s back we are expected to welcome her and move on so easily”

“Mnqobi I’m not going to let you speak like that she had her reasons, maybe you should try giving her a chance to tell you her reasons”

“More like excuse” Langa

“Langalibalele—“

“Let’s all calm down. MaNgidi i’m sure MaTwala had her reasons and seeing that we all here let’s hear her out” Makhosini

She starts with the tear works. Her tears don’t move me, in fact, I’m impatiently waiting for her to tell us her excuses so I can leave.

”my children, leaving you was the hardest thing I had to do but it had to be done. Makhosini you were old enough, I’m sure you witnessed how bad things were between your father and I. Our marriage was too toxic and violent so I was torn between what I regarded as domestic drudgery and the well-being of my children. I know you’re all angry but imagine how angry would you all be had I stayed and you all got to grow up in an unhappy and violent home, all that I did was for you.”

Zwelethu is the first one to scoff

“So it’s our fault you left”

“That’s not what I’m saying Zwelethu, I know you were my responsibility but what kind of a mother would I have been had I stayed. I was bitter and angry and I knew you guys didn’t deserve that kind of a mother so I left, and not because it was an easy way out but because I loved you more than I loved myself. I wanted what was best for you”

“But Ma you could’ve left with us”

“I know but your father was a better parent than I was. Langa I know you won’t understand, I was lost and you didn’t need someone like that in your lives. I know you all think I’m a terrible mother—“

Great, Something we can all agree on

“But I’m here to rectify that.”

Her Lips are quivering and more tears are streaming down her face but if she thinks her atrocious explanation will make things right then she clearly doesn’t know her children

She’s been looking at all of us but she shifts her eyes to MaNgidi

“I want to thank you for raising them into these men they are today, you did an impeccable job, something I failed to do and for that I thank you”

We all remain silence until MaNgidi breaks the silence

“I know this is difficult boys but I’m asking you to find it your hearts to forgive her.”

“Let’s give them some time first, MaTwala I’ll try and talk to them but I won’t force them to have a relationship with you.” Makhosini is saying this because he knows this won’t end now, I can see from Langa’s face that he doesn’t get MaTwala’s explanations.

We all agree that we will be civil with each other before the unofficial meeting ends.

I can’t sleep before I see Nokhaya and Langa is kind enough to go with me to the hospital.

He's driving.

”bafo, I won't ask why you going to see her after everything she did to you but I can only hope you

know what you doing”

I nod

”I didn't think I'd say this but Qhamu is good for you so please, don't hurt her. stay away from Nokhaya, she's bad news”

I know he means well but I need to see Nokhaya.

”don't worry, I won't hurt Qhamu”

I say and look ahead on the road.

I told Qhamu I'm going to see Nokhaya but she just blue ticked me.

I know she's angry but I have to do this.

Nokhaya sounds happy when I ask which ward she's in.

I walk in with Langa following my tracks. Nokhaya is laying on the bed looking better than she did earlier.

“Hey I knew you'd come—“ she says sitting up straight smiling ear to ear

“I'm getting discharged tomorrow and I was hoping

I could crash at your place I'm not going back to my place after that fool almost sold me and I can't go back to my aunt"

Qhamu was right, this lunatic thinks I still care.

Langa lets out a sinister chuckles

She ignores him and continues

"I'm glad you forgave me for what I did and we can finally be together again" now it's my turn to laugh

Clearly Qhamu's smack was not enough

"Now I want Qhamu to kill you for allowing this lunatic back into your life"

Langa says with a straight face

Nokhaya glares at him once and back at me

She's about to meet the evil side of Langa.

"I know you don't love her as much as you love me"
Nokhaya is seriously crazy.

Let me put a stop to this whole madness.

"Unfortunately I'm not here to chat."

Once upon a time I cared for this girl, I can even say I loved her but I don't know what went wrong. Her life just took a drastic turn to the worst and I don't recognize her anymore. I'd feel sorry had she not messed with what's mine

“Nokhaya, my wife mentioned you think I still care you for, at first I didn't want to believe it but now I'm that here I see just how demented you are. Listen here—“

I step close to the bed keeping a straight face

“If you ever disrespect Qhamu again, I'm going to kill you”

I say as deadly as I can

Her eyes shimmer with tears

“Mngobi” she whispers

“Nokhaya I hope you listening because I won't say this again. You'll Stay away from me and Qhamu if you value your life.”

“Mngobi this is not you”

Langa chuckles stepping closer to the bed and look

her straight in her eyes.

“Mnqobi might have forgiven you but I haven’t. You going to pay for almost getting him killed”

“Pay..” she says stuttering

Langa nods at her words, not blinking.

“Your days are numbered”

Once Langa sees fear in her eyes he walks out.

“Trust me, he is going to kill you and I won’t stop him”

I say and walk out too.

I want to laugh at how intimidated she is but I hold my laughter in until I’m completely out of her ward.

She got the message, she will never bother me again.

“You missed all the action, your brother is savage I tell you. Let’s just say Joe’s dogs were fully feed today”

Langa is talking to Nqaba

I wonder what's he still doing here this time of the night.

“I'm sure he's not as savage as Makhosini though”

“You have no idea, anyway, what are you still doing here”

“Lover boy” Nqaba says to me ignoring Langa's question.

“What are you doing here”

he can't ignore the same question twice.

“I'm just making sure Amanda is fine, she doesn't have any family so I'm helping her out”

“Mmmm” I'm guessing Amanda is one of the girls he rescued from Zithulele and I'm just saying that to tick him off

“First Qhamu now you, speaking of Qhamu does she know you're here”

“Yes she does and no she's not happy about it but enough of that. Let's see how Amanda is doing”

He lets us go into her ward to see her.

“Don’t overwhelm her” he says before we step in to her ward.

“Hey Amanda”

She’s looking out the window absent minded.

“Amanda” Nqaba call out for her again

She turns around.

Her eyes are heavy with sorrow, I see pain in them but behind her tears, traumatized eyes and hard exterior I see a beautiful young girl with a soft heart.

“This is lover boy, my sister’s boyfriend remember I told you about him” she nods

Nqaba was already gossiping about me

SMH.

“and this is his brother”

She smiles feebly at us and move to stand next to Nqaba

“Guys this is Amanda”

I’m surprised by Nqaba’s benign side I didn’t know it

existed.

Amanda looks uncomfortable with us being her and it shows by how she's standing so close to Nqaba.

“We just came to see how you doing” Langa

“Yes and we have to get going. It's was nice meeting you, officially” I say smiling

I was with her in that room before Zithulele took me out so we've meet though we didn't get to talk much

“Thank you” she says looking at me before I walk out

she remembers our little talk.

I nod at her and walk out with Nqaba following us

“Shut up, don't say anything” I laugh at Nqaba and for the record I wasn't going to say anything.

I'll have my chance to tease him for now I'll let him nurse Amanda in peace.

I shake my head and fist bump with him and leave shaking my head.

Coming here was not so bad Now was it, Amanda

gave me some leverage against Nqaba.

He won't hear the end of it shem.

[06/20, 18:35] Lynne: 66

QHAMU

months later...

First-year done and dusted, two more to go then ill be done with my degree. Everything has been smooth sailing for the past few months except that Mngobi hasn't touched me.

Lol, some of you will understand that sexual deprivation is not good for body, mind and soul so can Mngobi do what a husband should before I go crazy.

self-service might work for him but I can't deal.

Okay, enough now.

But come think of it, I wouldn't be complaining about Mngqobi's forced celibacy if I wasn't so bored.

I hate Gatsha for forcing me to come here and even more so that Nqaba forced Amanda on me as well. I'm not sure what's going to be between them, I'm yet to find out but Amanda's name can't seem to be off Nqaba's lips lately.

Things are a bit awkward between us I must say, mainly because we just meet. I don't know why Nqaba is doing this to the poor girl.

She's reserved and shy which I like because I wouldn't be able to handle someone whose out there. We both feel out of place and it shows, I don't know what Nqaba said to her to agree but I'm here out of obligation. Gatsha can be very persuasive if not manipulative.

Amanda and I are seating under a tent waiting for Yobanathi to make her grand entrance.

It's her baby shower.

Eye roll.

Don't get me wrong, I've got nothing against Yobanathi but she not my friend and to be honest we not that close but I guess this is one of my duties as a sister in law.

Gatsha paid Lobola in December so I'm guessing we will be celebrating their wedding after she gives birth.

She's eight months pregnant and the last time I saw her she looked huge but radiant.

I hope and pray to God I don't change much with my next pregnancy I can't be looking like a whale.

"You know, Gatsha forced me to come here" Small talks can be awkward but what else can I do.

She smiles before responding

"You were forced and I was blackmailed"

That's Nqaba for you

I wonder what did he say to her.

"Why am I not surprised, Nqaba can be—" she's looking at me inquisitively

“Well, Nqaba. I’m sure you know him by now” I say
flashing her with a genuine smile

I can’t expose my brother’s dirty laundry like that.

“He says this will give us time to bond” we both
chuckle

I’m not sure what to say to that because the Nqaba I
know wouldn’t say anything like that but again, the
Nqaba I know has never introduced me to any of his
girlfriends before.

Who knows maybe Amanda is the one.

Let me ask..

“Are you two dating”

She smiles or is she blushing, I’m not sure.

Mmmm something is definitely happening between
them.

“We are just friends”

I’m not convinced.

“Friends uh, are you sure you’re just friends”

“we are not dating Qhamu” yet.

Let me not pry further.

“Mmmm”

I admit I like her for Nqaba. I don't want to say much but she looks like a sweet girl.

“Gather around, Gatsha is dropping her off”

Yobanathi's friends booked at botanical garden. I was part of the planning simply because I'm Gatsha sister and he paid for everything.

Yobanathi's friends are too forward and controlling so i didnt suggest much but Gatsha wanted me here to make sure they don't waste his money.

He's excited for his second baby, I know he's secretly hoping for a girl but I know he'll also be happy with any gender.

“She's too controlling” Amanda says referring to the MC whose busy ordering people around.

According to her, she's Yobanathi's best friend.

We gather around the stretch tent I'm not sure how

are we going to scream “surprise” if Yobanathi will see us from the entrance.

“Don’t forget to shout when she appears”

She’s dressed in a yellow short summer dress which makes me wonder if she’s not getting cold. I’m dressed in a yellow dress and boots seeing that the theme is yellow and Amanda is wearing a yellow dress as well but it’s not so summery.

Yobanathi appears walking with Gats ha and we all shout “surprise” as instructed.

She’s look taken aback and tears are streaming down her face.

Her soon to be husband hushes her before the MC drags her to her chair.

“This looks nice” That’s Gats ha next to me.

I wish I could say I had a hand in decorating but Yobanathi’s friends did everything. The place is nicely decorated with yellow and white balloons floating from the tent. There are sunflowers and pansies on the tables, yellow and white plates are

placed nicely too. There's a big cake decorated with yellow and white icing and there are also cupcakes. It looks beautiful.

"You must thank her" I say eyeing the MC whose already welcoming everyone.

"I'll see you later, the guys are waiting for me" and he's out.

The rest of the day goes well with everyone participating in baby shower games.

I didn't have money for a present so I personalized a life time babysitting coupons. I know I dug a grave for myself there but that baby means the world to me and I don't mind but let's just hope Gatsha and his wife won't abuse those coupons.

Amanda got belecoo stroller, I'm afraid to ask where she got the money from because I know those strollers are expensive but Yobanathi looks very Pleased with that particular gift.

Amanda texted Nqaba to come to pick us up a while ago so I'm not surprised when he waltzes in looking tall and confident.

“Hey” he says to Amanda giving her a warm hug

Her cheeks are reddened from blushing

“I hope you had fun” hello I’m here too

“Yes I had fun” she says looking at him adoringly

And she says they are just friends.

Shaking my head.

I wasn’t born yesterday Amanda.

“Hey bhuti I’m here too you know” he didn’t even greet me

“Are you jealous” I roll my eyes

Maybe I am a little bit, I’m used to being the center of attention so please pardon me for feeling a little entitled to all my brothers.

I’ve always been the only woman in their lives but now things are changing.

Gatsha is getting married and by the look of things Nqaba seems to be taken too, whose next?

Misuzulu?

Yoh let me not even go there.

I get heart palpitations just thinking about it.

“You wish” I stick out my tongue at him

He shakes his head and takes Amanda’s hand in his and walk to Yobanathi.

Once Nqaba and Amanda are done they walk out.

Haibo why is Nqaba leaving me behind?

I run after them shouting his name

“Why are you leaving me,” I ask once they stop and turn to look at me

“You have a boyfriend Qhamu, call him” tjo

Is this Nqaba

Clap once.

”Does this mean you two are dating” I had to ask

I’m being noisy I know.

He smiles and looks at Amanda who is blushing and shaking her head

Nqaba smiles at me before planting an unexpected

kiss on her lips

”does that answer your question” he says after breaking the kiss.

I'm happy and sad at the same time.

Don't look at me like that, my Nqaba has a girlfriend whom he loves for a change but I'm saddened that he won't spend much time with me.

”bye Qhamukile” I'm left giggling like a schoolgirl
I'm amazed really.

I watch him as he opens the door for her and she drive away, things are changing and I better accept it.

I've got no choice but to text Mngobi.

Thirty minutes later he is waiting at the parking lot

”hey” I plant a soft kiss on his lips

”how was the baby shower” him

”good, I had fun” irrespective of Yobanithi's annoying friends I had fun

“I told you you’d like it” eye roll

I complained to him

“Are my brothers still at the pub”

He nods

They seem to be getting along like house on fire since the whole feud ended, they are always together which sucks because I can’t visit Mnqobi with peace.

“Where is MaNgidi”

“Work” nice

He's driving towards Mvubukazi.

” let's go to your room” we won't get another chance to be by ourselves soon because Makhosini makes sure of it. Whenever I am in Mnqobi’s room he comes

I’m sure they planned this ”sabotage qhamu and Mnqobi’s privacy” together with my brothers but it’s not like Mnqobi and I have sex nowadays anyway.

he's always exhausted for some odd reason.

“I thought you were going home”

Clearly I want to go to his room

I shake my head smiling seductively

I miss feeling him in me.

He shakes his head and change direction.

MaTwala is home with Sma, they seem to get along unlike the rest of the brothers.

Mngobi told me he's civil with her for peace. I can somewhat understand her reasoning behind her departure and I know it wasn't easy for her to leave her children but hey I guess we all don't see things the same because they are still angry to forgive.

I've got hope that all will be well though.

I kiss him once we are behind closed doors I deepen the kiss which makes my blood warm. I'm holding on to him not wanting to let go.

I unzip his jacket and trail my hand underneath his t-shirt.

His bare chest is warm and if love nothing but to

put my lay my head in.

After sex of course.

Even though he's reciprocating to my kisses I can't help feel he's emotionally detached.

I move my hands to unbuckle his belt.

He knows what I want.

"Mmmm" he moans in my mouth before pulling away

"Mnqobi" I complain as I have for the past few months.

His graduations were in March. The day was a success, I even went with him and his brothers to Joburg but we still didn't have celebratory sex.

Sighs

I let him go and sit on the bed.

"Mnqobi what's wrong"

"nothing" that was too quick, now I'm certain that something is definitely wrong.

”then why won't you touch me”

He sighs and fixes his belt

”its nothing qhamu I'm just tired that's all”

Like I said I wasn't to be born yesterday

”Mnqobi don't, please, I know something is wrong I just don't know what is—“ I'm calm but he is pressing his palm together meaning he is nervous

“You no longer want to have sex with me. It's either you are too tired or we are disturbed by Makhosini so don't tell me nothing is wrong. Is it me” my body hasn't change except for the scar on my abdomen.

I still don't have any stretch marks, I don't have any cellulite I still have my flat stomach so why doesn't he want to touch me.

“Has my body change—“

“Qhamukile it's not you, I'm—“ he stops to take a deep breath

“I know you not cheating Mnqobi so please sthandwa sam” they say never say never but I know Mnqobi will never go back to Nokhaya ever again.

Langa told me how scared she was when he threatened her and I think she got the message loud and clear this time.

No one has seen her after the whole saga.

I'm glad she's out of our lives for good.

"I'm scared okay, I'm scared" he half shouts frustrated.

Scared?

Of what?

I let him continue

"I... I ra...I forced myself on you so I'm afraid of touching you now" I should've known this was the reason

I remain silent

"Qhamukile whenever I try to touch you the events of that day play in my head again and again and I can't bring myself to touch you again. I hurt you and I don't ever want to hurt you like that again"

So he is afraid of having sex with because he's

afraid of forcing himself on me?

I'm just trying to understand here.

I sigh and take his hands into mine

“Mnqobi I forgave you. You need to forgive yourself. you were not yourself that day, it was a mistake I know you wouldn't hurt me intentionally so please my love try not to think about that day again”

“I'm sorry. I didn't mean to do that”

“I know you didn't. I miss making love to my husband and I know you miss me too so how about we forget about everything and just focus getting multiple orgasms”

He smiles shaking his head

“You my wife love sex” he says kissing the corner of my lips

“Of course I love having sex with my husband”

I kiss him and undress each other. Soon he's on top of me panting and digging me deep and I'm screaming his name.

“Are you okay” he’s been asking me that since we started.

I flip him over and ride.

If that doesn’t show him that I’m okay then I don’t know what will.

I ride him until I feel my insides combusts and I feel his warm spills in me.

I’m on a pill now so I’m safe.

•

MNQOBI

Making love to Qhamu again was glorious I missed hearing her screams and feeling her scratches on my back.

She looks happily flushed and thoroughly fucked but I’m not to blame, she did all the work.

She must have really missed Mapholoba.

I know I should've spoken to her about how I felt but I didn't know how to so making excuses and getting Makhosini to disturb us all the time seemed the only choice I had.

She's laying on my chest, trailing her finger on my scar and I'm trailing my finger on her scar.

These scars are part of us. They've molded us into the people we are today and for that I love them.

I can't believe she ever thought her body changing was the reasons I didn't want to touch her. I love her body just the way it is. I know it's going to change in future but I doubt I'll love her any less.

"You still on the pill right" as much as I'd love for her to bare me children I can't afford to pay more fines right now.

I had to pay for my son and I also had to pay again for getting married so now I'll just wait until we traditionally married before filling her up with my kids.

She nods and snuggle closer to me, her body is warm and I want nothing but get on top of her and fill her up with Mapholoba but she's too spent.

"I've been thinking" now that I'm done with my degree it's time to grow up and start planning the future.

She lifts her head from my chest and looks me lovingly

"I'm thinking of growing the poultry business back in Mpophemeni which means I'd have to spend more time that side" we haven't spoken about such serious matter before.

"That's good. So you didn't accept that internship" I shake my head.

I've decided to focus on my families business. This is the legacy my father left us.

"I didn't take it. I need to focus on the family business"

"So does this mean you'll stay that side"

I have thought about that. I thought I'd drive back

and forth. Mpophemeni is two hours away.

“I don’t know”

“I’ve been thinking as well” now it’s my turn to raise an eyebrow

“How about we build a house In Mpophemeni. I want our children to grow up that side away from the busy locations” okay.

I love the busy location but a farm wouldn’t be so bad.

“Are you sure”

“Yes I’m sure, It’s so peaceful there” i guess we will be building a house in Mpophemeni then.

“I’ll speak to Makhosini about that but I want us to enjoy our marriage before we start having kids again.”

“I want that too. I need to be included in the building of the house” it will be her house too so I wouldn’t have it any other way.

Qhamu is twenty and I’m twenty one but I’ve got no doubt that we will make this work.

Enough talking now, Mapholoba is slowly getting hard.

I get on top of her and kiss her.

•

[06/20, 18:36] Lynne: 67

QHAMU

”Why are they not welcoming them” an SMS from Mngobi reads.

I'd like to know the same thing myself, it's been two hours already.

I'm nervously pacing back and forth in my room, worry-stricken about what could or could not happen today.

Anything is possible when it comes to my brothers and you know this too.

They are just too unpredictable.

”Aunty they've been out there for too long, are you sure Misuzulu hasn't changed his mind” I'm with my aunt and Nomcebo in my bedroom.

”you know how your brother is I'm sure he's testing their patience”

she says with no hint of panic in her voice.

I wish I could compose myself as she has, she's so calm which I can't say about me and to make matters worse I haven't gotten a wink of sleep in three days.

”stop stressing Qhamu, bhuti knows how important this is to you” that's Nomcebo.

She too would be this anxious if she were in my situation.

I'm surprised she's no longer miss high class as she was back then.

I roll my eyes at her and text Mngobi back.

I'm sure you're wondering what's happening and I'm going to tell you but ain't you curious about what's

been happening for the past three years?

Lol... it's been a blissful three years full of nothing but happiness and joy.

First thing first, I got my results four days back and I passed all my modules meaning I've bagged my degree.

Gatsha got married to Yobanathi and they welcomed a baby boy named Asandamadoda, he's a replica of his father like his older brother Bheki who talks too much now.

They don't stay too far from Mvubukazi so I get to see my nephews as frequently as I want.

Nqaba is still dating Amanda, to tell you the truth I didn't think they would still be dating after all this time. Nqaba has never been in a relationship for this long but I'm glad they are still kicking it.

I've gotten close to Amanda but for obvious reasons, I can't be seen with her by Luu. My poor friend, he's hurt by Nqaba's relationship with her.

Misuzulu has been too focused on growing the

business, he partnered with Makhosini on some businesses so you can imagine what a success that has been.

Mondli, my favorite brother is dating some girl, Nontuthuko is her name I think. She's too clingy to Mondli but I know it won't last.

Gcina has been secretly seeing Zanele I'm afraid it's just sex to him whilst it means so much more to Zanele. I say this because Gcina is seeing other people when Zanele is not around.

I haven't spoken to Zanele about it because I'm trying not to get involved.

I know it won't end well though.

And lastly, Nokhaya finally got the messages loud and clear this time.

She hasn't bothered me or Mngqobi since that day at the hospital. I'm not sure where she is but rumor has it that she's staying with some guy in Durban.

Okay, enough with that.

I'm dressed in a long dress and a doek, the same

outfit I wore years back when the Ngcobo's were here for a meeting.

You might not remember that day but I do because you laughed so hard at my choice of a wardrobe but I also remember telling you I was practicing for when the Ngcobo men come to ask for my hand in marriage and guess what?

That day has finally arrived.

I was just seventeen back then but even then I knew Mngqobi was the man I wanted to spend the rest of my life with, perhaps I wasn't ready for such commitment then but I'm now 23 years and more importantly, mature.

Mngqobi and I have been through hell back and forth but through it all, we've been each other's pillar of strength.

helping each other to fight for our love.

I feel in love at sixteen to a guy I thought was an enemy and it was not an easy road.

We went through tribulations, we broke up more

times than I can remember but today we reading ourselves to take a step forward to spend the rest of our lives together.

It's true when they say true love conquers. I don't know many people who would've survived half of what we've been through but we still here and more in love.

He and I didn't discuss the lobola issue in detail because my brothers said I must first finish my studies so you can imagine my surprise when Misuzulu summoned me after he got the letter from the Ngcobo's.

Mnqobi is very impatient.

The letter was sent after I got my results... LOL... I'm not bothered though.

I've been ready to be with Mnqobi without our brother's watchful eyes so I didn't see any reason to wait any longer but Misuzulu still feels like it's too soon but he agreed nonetheless and here we are.

“Singo Ngcobo

Mapholoba,

Nyuswa,

Fuze, Mavela,

Mafuz’afulele njengefu lemvula.

Mashiya amahle ngath’azoshumayela.

Dambuza, Mthabathi,

Mabhala ngozipho abanye bhala ngepensela

Malal’efake omunye endunu,

Avuke ekuseni awucinde akhombe ilanga,

Mavulankungu Kuvel’ilanga,

Sisidane,

Ngongoma,

Maqadi amakhulu,

Mbili!”

I’ve heard Malume Maphikelela’s voice too many

times to be able to distinguish it from the rest of the Ngcobo men. I've got no doubt that's him reciting his clan names for the hundredth time since they arrived an hour ago.

I'm not sure what Misuzulu or Bab'Themba is thinking by not welcoming them but I'm hating every minute they spend not opening that gate for the Ngcobo's.

“Aunty can you please go speak to Bhuti”

I'm losing it now, I've reached my anxiety control threshold.

The longer I hear the Ngcobo's screaming outside the gate announcing their arrival the more anxious I get.

“Relax Qhamu, he's just making them sweat a bit” a bit?

It's been an hour.

Exasperated, I sit my ass back on the bed and continue chatting to Mngqobi.

Thirty minutes later Nomcebo excitedly announces

that Gatsha is walking towards the gate.

I quickly peep through the curtain next to her and indeed Gatsha is going to the gate.

Finally.

I'm feeling jubilant and nervous at the same time as I watch Gatsha opens the gate.

He looks so serious.

"Hey Nina get off from that window" why is my aunt raining on my parade.

"Kodwa anty"

"She's right Qhamu, you not allowed to do that" I forget how uptight Zanele can be.

Can't she tell I'm excited?

Nomcebo and I leave the window sulking.

I text Mngqobi letting him know that his family is finally in.

I know lobola negotiations can be long and complex but I didn't expect it to take over six hours.

Misuzulu must be giving them a hard time which was expected.

I'm bored from seating in my room waiting and worrying.

Mnqobi has been trying to calm me down but it's not working.

Gatsha is the one who summons me.

I unwrinkled my dress and follow behind him. Bab'Themba is seating next to Misuzulu and bab'Mkhize is seating on a one-seater couch and Gatsha on a chair next to him.

Bab'Mkhize has always been a father to me and I'm glad he's here to delegate my lobola alongside all the men that mean the world to me. one thing I don't miss about him is his lectures about being late.

“Qhamukile you will even be late for your own funeral” thank god I don't have to hear that line anymore.

My heart is ready to jump out of my chest as I sit on the floor with my head bowed.

“Sawubona Nkosazana” That’s Malume Maphikelela reciprocating my respectful greeting.

He is with Makhosini, Langa, Zwelethu and two other men I have never seen before.

“Ndodakazi do you know these men” Bab’Themba and his scary voice though, apart from (physical education) PE and Mrs. Ndaba he’s another reason why I don’t miss high school.

“Yebo baba, I know them”

“Alright then, you may be excused”

Seeing all that alcohol on the table makes me wonder how much my family charged them, remind me to ask Mngqobi later on.

I excuse myself and go back to my room. Nomcebo is already on her feet asking what happened.

”ma were they not supposed to call us together and choose which one they want” I laugh

I thought that's how it's done but I guess lobola negotiations varied culturally.

My aunt lets out a giggle

”is that why you were so excited, they know their bride” I doubt this anything to do with lobola, Nomcebo just wanted to see Langa.

I have never laughed as hard as I did when Mngqobi mentioned Nomcebo has a crush on Langa.

Don't get me wrong Langa is good looking, like duh he's Mngqobi brother so that's a given but he is also scary and definitely not a snob. not her type if you ask me.

”I know but it would've been more exciting”

She's sulking.

But this is Langa we are talking about so she won't have guts to act on her little crush and boy am I happy.

An hour later I hear loud happy noise. I'm guessing all went well.

My aunt is the first one to go out. She's dressed in a long African print dress with a matching doek
Jealous down she looks beautiful.

She calls out us out to help dish up for my in-laws

and Judging by how happy everyone is today was a success.

“Ndodakazi go get Mkwenyana” that’s bab’Mkhize.

I shyly walk out and walk a distance to where Mngobi is parked.

He is startled when I knock on the window but smiles widely rolling down the window when he notices that it’s me.

“Wamuhle Umakoti wakwaNgcobo bafethu” I’m blushing like a young teenage girl.

He gets off the car, pulls me closer and pecks my lips.

his mint breath mixed with a hint of nicotine still does something to me.

I let out lips linger for a while before pulling away.

“Bab’Mkhize says I should call you in” he looks nervous but we both walk into the house.

My aunt starts ululating the minute she sees Mngobi and the rest of the men rumbles on about how well he has chosen.

I'm pleased to know that of course.

I didn't get much teaching growing up but I know enough to get a bowl of warm water for the men to wash their hands and a table cloth too.

My aunt placed everything neatly on a tray for me to give to Mngobi, the plate is full and there's a glass of juice next to it.

He smiles when I place the plate in front of him.

"Mmm Makoti I've got no doubt my son will be well looked after," one of the men mumbles with a mouth full.

I take pride in cooking.

Mngobi winks at me and starts eating.

I had to wake up in the wee hours of the morning to cook but looking at how everyone is enjoying the food I don't regret it. I outdid myself.

Misuzulu didn't pay all that school fees for mahala.

It's been a great day indeed.

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MNQOBI

Where do I start?

A lot has happened in the last three years but let's start with today's events.

I finally paid dowry for my wife.

Happiness can't even begin to describe how I am feeling.

I panicked when my brothers spent an hour and a half at the gate waiting but in the end all went well.

Langa went to the pub and I've got no doubt that the Buthelezi brothers will join him later but the rest of us have been home for a while now. Makhosini was just telling MaNgidi and MaTwala what happened today.

” I told you everything was going to go well”

MaTwala says wiping off food remains away from

Sma's face.

My uncle and two of my fathers childhood friends are chilling outside drinking beers.

“But yeses they charged us a lot” that's Zwelethu

He complains about almost everything but I won't tell you how much was I charged for lobola, just like I won't tell my curious soon to be wife but just know the Buthelezi's charged me a leg and an arm but Qhamu is worth every penny.

“But you said she's worth it” I repeat what he said when we were driving back here

“Hai no yena she is, Mnqobi I'm telling you this while it's still early. I'll visit every weekend and please tell her to cook. Hai bafo uyodla kamnadi lapha, uyal's hayi bhodo uQhamu”

I shake my head chuckling softly, that's Zwelethu for you.

“I'm so proud of you my boy” MaNgidi

Im tired of telling her I'm not a young boy anymore so I'll just let her be.

Manqoba died fighting the same battle too so I'm finally giving up.

“Thank you ma”

“I've always known you loved that girl, remember I beat you two up” does she have to remind me.

I'll never forget that day.

”haibo how come I don't know about this” Mncedis i says laughing

He's lying he just wants Ma to retell the story.

And indeed she recites the story to MaTwala who is laughing her lungs out before MaNgidi even finishes.

“Uthi Wa bashaya”

“kakhulu futhi. Yoh I have never seen Mnqobi cry like he did that day”

isn't MaNgidi exaggerating a bit

I don't remember crying as much as she claims.

“But look at him today” they all look at me proudly.

Okay that's it I'm out of here.

"I'd love to sit and chat but I've got places to be and people to see"

"boy boy where are you going" I'm close to killing this clown named Mncedisi

"we know you paid lobola but don't get her pregnant so soon"

"Mncedisi shut it besides I'm not going to Qhamu"

They all laugh as I walk out.

I text Qhamu and let her know I'm coming.

It's a little after 6 when I arrive.

she's still wearing her long dress and a doek, I love this girl.

We were just teenagers when we meet, I didn't think I'd be in love with her this intense.

"sthandwa sam" I love how that sounds from her lips.

"have I told you how beautiful you are" she blushed

"i love you" I tell her

"i know" I love it when she says that.

"how much did they charge you, I hope your pockets are not too dent" I laugh at how incontrobly noisy she is.

"don't worry my love, you are worth every cent," I say and kiss her.

The House I built in Mpophomeni is complete but we just need to furnish it and move in.

Membeso will be done in the next coming month then the traditional wedding.

I don't care much about the white wedding but whatever Qhamu wants she'll get.

The poultry business is booming. I can finally say I'm a business man.

These past three years have been very tough, growing a business is not an easy task I tell you especially when you are new to the industry but I'm a conquer so I'm slowly but surely getting there.

The rest of the other family business has been

booming.

”where is shake Zulu”

”gone, along with his troops. I'm left with my aunt and Nomcebo”

I'm guessing Zanele left as well

”thank you Mapholoba,” she says sweetly

”no, thank you for bunking PE that day. You make me a better person and for that ill forever love you”

I don't want to talk but I want to be close to her and she understands that.

We are under the bamboo tree watching as the sun sets on the horizon.

I wish I could stay like this forever but I know my brothers will be calling none stop.

Their plan is to get me drunk today.

Zwelethu said I have to enjoy my last few days as a single man because it won't be the same once I'm married and living with Qhamu.

Lol

I doubt ill hate it, in fact, I know for sure I'm going to love every minute of it.

I kiss her long and deep before departing.

[06/20, 18:36] Lynne: 68

(unedited)

QHAMU

It's been a month since lobola was paid and a week after Izibizo followed. I told you Mngqobi couldn't wait.

The Ngcobo's are total show off's I tell you. They bought so many gifts that I don't know what will my family do with half of the things they presented us with.

The pecks of having too much money.

SMH

Umbondo went well too. The grocery we bought the Ngcobo's is enough to feed the whole Ngcobo tribe. Not my words, Nqaba said that. I'm just glad everything is out of the way and now I can finally have a traditional wedding.

Planning a wedding is not easy I'll tell you that but having my aunt and Nomcebo by my side has made things a lot better, I appreciate their help not forgetting Mam'Ngidi and Ma'Twala.

Just like the lobola day, I haven't gotten a wink of sleep but this time I'm excited more than anything.

It's my wedding day when this day ends I'll officially be a Ngcobo bride.

Who would have thought I'd be able to wake up this time, remember I used to sleep like the dead.

It's four am when I get off the bed and take a bath.

It's still dark outside but my aunt instructed me to be awake around this time.

By the time I'm done everyone is already awake and singing wedding songs.

The mood is just joyous.

Ma'Bengu, Thobile's mother slept over so she, my aunt, mam'Ntombela from next door and mam'Mbatha, bab'Themba's wife are in my room helping me dress up.

"oh Mbalenhle would be so proud seeing you this beautiful" I'm not done but Mam'Ntombela is already singing praising at me

"Ntonto—" I hear she was close with my mother no wonder she calls me Ntonto too.

Mbalenhle was my mother's name.

"You have grown so much, yaz not so long ago you were running around here not wanting to bath but look at yourself today, you are getting married" I chuckle at the thought of the younger me not wanting to bath but tears sting my eyes when a memory of my father running after me flashes.

I know he would have castrated Mngobi by now, he would have castrated any guy who looked at my direction for that matter.

It saddens me that he's not here to celebrate this day with me but I can hope he approves and he is happy with my decision wherever he is.

I quickly blink the tears back and let my aunt tie the doek on my head, her way is more stylish.

"yes Qhamukile this is the day you finally become a woman, be a good wife to your husband mtanam. Your duty as a wife is to cook and clean for him. As a wife, you don't question your husband and you most definitely don't argue with him. I know how you youngsters can be, respect him at all times mtanam and you will see he will love you harder."
that's Mam'Bengu

"Your husband needs to come to a good, warm, and loving home each time he comes back from work and you need to give him that, be his peace mtanam. Like I said you don't argue with him, you reason with him respectfully and Qhamukile mtanam when it gets tough you don't pack your bags and come here, after today this will no longer be your home so you need to sit down and talk to you husband with respect. This union is between the two of you don't

let anyone else besides God in, people will ruin your marriage so don't let them in. When you seek guidance kneel down and pray don't discuss your marital problems with your friends, uguqe ngedolo sisi and god will show you a way" she continues

I sometimes forget she's the pastor's wife.

"I couldn't have said it better, omama have said everything Qhamukile, continue to be the obedient child I've known you to be and lastly don't starve your husband, sleep naked so he can have easy access to his food, give it to him whenever he wishes or else his eyes will wonder" yoh

I could die of embarrassment.

Did my aunt have to say that?

"Hey don't act like you don't know what I'm talking about"

They continue giving me bits of advice and instructing me on how to treat my husband until it's time to leave.

I'm covered in a blanket and I'm also carrying an

assegai. Nomcebo is the one leading all the wedding songs as we walk out of the house.

The yard is full of half of the people I don't even know.

Misuzulu is the one leading us

“Buthelezi, Shenge, Sokwalisa, Mnyamana
kaNgqengelele, Phungashe, Sondiya,
Mnandingamondi, Wena owadliwa zindlovukazi
zamlobolela, Nina zinyawo ezimahhele, Enaganisa
izintombi nanganye nangambili! Umlando...”

He is informing our ancestors that I'm officially leaving to join another family.

Ululating starts again when he is done and I get into a car with my aunt and the rest of the women who were in my room.

I resist the urge to look back at a place I called home all my life.

I'm going to miss the Sunday breakfast with all my

brothers, I'm going to miss arguing with them, begging them to wash dishes, I'm going to miss seeing that old burned Toyota Camry that once belonged to my father.

I wipe my tears with the back of my hand when I pass the spot where my father took his last breath.

This is my wedding day let me not ruin it with sad memories.

“Remember don't look back”

mam'Mbatha advises again for the hundredth time.

She said this is so not to invite back luck.

I feel tears flowing freely out of my eyes as Mondli drives out of the yard.

I'm going to miss this home.

The drive to Mpophemeni is long because the old people in this car shouts when Mondli speeds. An hour and a half later we enter the dusty roads of Mpophemeni.

The greenery terrain is always refreshing.

I see my house from a distance it's finally complete but after a few disagreements with Mnqobi.

He wanted us to use his grandfather's land but I refused because that's his family home, his brothers are entitled to it just as much so we had to get our own land.

I smile when the view gets clearer.

My house is beautiful and one of a kind.

it's a traditional two stories house mixed with that rustic and vintage design. I'm in love with the little ornamentation, the simple rooflines, and symmetrically spaced window.

All this still feels so surreal.

Even though the house is complete and ready to be moved into I don't have much furniture. I just have the basics, I'm talking about a bed, two dishes, two cups, two spoons, and couches if you can call that furniture but that's about it.

Don't ridicule my house please, we all have to start somewhere.

I smile even wider when the Ngcobo homestead comes to view, we had to get land that's closer to the homestead to make Mnqobi happy but I'm secretly happy too.

The yard is buzzing already and everyone is singing wedding songs.

It's saddening to think this is the same place where we lost Manqoba, may his soul continue to rest in peace.

No sad memories Que I reprimand myself one last time.

Bab'Themba has announced our arrival.

It's hot under this blanket and more so Because I'm covering my face too.

Malume Maphikelela is the one who welcomes us at the gate with a goat after the welcoming speeches they slaughter the goat and I'm smeared with gall all over to introduce me to the Ngcobo ancestors.

It's around midday when we conclude everything

and now the wedding celebration can start.

I'm wearing isicholo to symbolize my status, phela I'm a married woman now.

Lol, don't bite my head off please allow me to gloat this once. I'm also wearing ibhayi (cloak) around my shoulders, ureyisi (traditional necklace) around my neck, and a cowhide skirt (isidwaba).

Never have I imagine that I'd be seating on a grass mat like this celebrating my wedding.

Mnqobi is seating on a chair not far from me alongside his uncle and brothers. He looks handsome in his "imbhata" which is a circular cowhide skin worn around the neck.

I want to run my fingers under his imbhata and feel his hard stomach, can you believe he worked out to get a six-pack for this day because he knew he'd be shirtless the whole day.

SMH

That's Mnqobi for you.

He gives me a roguish smile only reserved for me

when he catches me staring.

I smile and look down.

Isicoco looks good on him.

My aunt lays a mat on the ground in preparation to hand out the gifts to his family so during Izibiso Mnqobi's family bought my family gift but today is umabo so it is our turn to return the gesture and present the Ngcobo's with gifts.

Mam'Twala is the first one to be called because she's older, she is followed by Ma'Ngidi. Nomcebo and cousins I've only meant today hand them blankets, grass mat and brooms soon every other woman follows until we reach the men, Malume Maphikelela is the first one to be called and he is presented with beer pots and piece of furniture. Makhosini is next and in that ascending order until Mnqobi is the only one left.

My aunt calls out for him and ululating starts all over again.

He stands up commanding respect without saying anything.

I'm blushing profusely at the sight before me, he looks eatable, umutsha is covering his front part while Ibheshu is covering the back. The tufts of cow's tail he is wearing around his upper arms and below the knees gives him a bulkier appearance. And just like that I'm sixteen and seeing him for the first time again.

I fall in love all over again.

I forced my weakling knees to get up, make up the mock bed in the center, and pretend to look for my husband.

Mam'Mbatha made sure I do this part right, we went through it too many times for me to forget what is it that I have to do.

Once I located Mnqobi I place the grass mat on the ground for him to walk on leading to the bed where he sits.

I get a basin with a towel and soap and I wash his feet.

I know he is going to make fun of me for doing this once we alone.

I also have to wash his teeth and apply him with lotion.

I feel an electrifying emotion engulfing me when I run my hand on his rigid stomach, I'm hot and longing for his touch.

He smirks when he notices.

The effect he has on me is too rife to control.

I try to compose myself and continue with what I am doing, once I'm done I pull back the bed cover for him to lie down, hesitantly, he lays back and watches me cover him with a blanket.

As part of the drama and entertainment, some say tradition my cousins, including Zanele and other young ladies we came with from Mvubukazi hit him with small sticks before he manages to escape.

I'm laughing my lungs out along with everyone else.

Umabo is a very important ritual in Zulu culture. Some people believe that a person is not properly married until they've carried out the ritual of umabo and my family is no indifferent. I'm legally married

to Mngqobi but none of our family members recognize that I'm just glad we do things the right way this time around.

I'm dog tired by the end of the day, I haven't had time to be with Mngqobi because we've been too busy and I'm now seating with Lucas, Amanda, Zanele, Nomthandanzo and two of Mngqobi's cousins. Lwandle and Siyanda. My cousins are also here but not engaging much in the conversation.

They are drinking of course and I'm not out of respect for my in-laws.

"it's your wedding I'm sure you're allowed to drink a bit" why is Lucas such a bad influence.

Everyone else agrees with him.

he looks way too excited as he pours wine in a cup for me.

"your in-laws will just think you drinking coffee in there" I laugh at how ridiculous that sounds.

Who drinks coffee at ten thirty pm?

"isn't that heavy" he is talking about isidwaba

”no it's not hey” it actually is but Lucas will just be dramatic about it.

”I'm so happy for you, I wish I could find someone who loves me as mzala loves you. You're very fortunate Qhamu” Siyanda is sweet

She is genuine.

”yes she is, she's only twenty-three but she's found her soulmate. Tell us phela, how did you do it. Do you do cartwheels in bed na”

I laugh and sip on my drink.

The conversation has moved from sex to my white wedding.

Lucas is looking forward to it, according to him, he is my maid of honor

Mnqobi and I decided not to have the white wedding now, we have a house to furnish first and I guess we made that a priority. Mnqobi is not making too much money to afford everything at once and I haven't started working.

The furniture we both got as gifts is not enough for

the whole house but the wedding will happen.

"hai you are brave shem, I'm twenty-six but I don't see myself getting married anytime soon" Lwandle

I'm getting a vibe from her but I dismiss it and smile at her instead.

"ladies" that's Nqaba

"and gentleman" I want to laugh at how Lucas is rolling his eyes right now

He kisses Amanda on the cheek and whispers in her ear.

I'm just admiring how in love my dear brother is.

Amanda stands up and takes his hand before they excuse themselves.

"I'm still angry at your brother Qhamu"

I know he is.

"But I'm willing to let go because of Amanda, she's a nice girl"

did I hear right?

He rolls his eyes and sips on his drink dramatically.

I'm just happy he is finally accepting that Nqaba is with Amanda it's been long overdue.

Mnqobi is seating with the guys including Katlego and Simphiwe not far from me, he keeps blowing me kissed when no one is looking.

I love him so much.

He is now dressed in a fawn umblaselo that has blue and red detailing.

Amanda comes back blushing, it's doesn't help that she's light in complexion too.

Even a blind man can tell how in love she is.

I'm feeling a little tipsy and sleepy now.

I bid my farewell and go sleep in the back hut.

My feet are killing me.

I feel lighter after removing my makoti attire and I sleep immediately when my head hits the pillow.

•

MNQOBI

I watch as she takes her slow strides until she disappears into the hut behind the main house.

That girl is my wife, I'm officially a married man.

My body longs for hers and fortunately for me I'm not too drunk to bury myself inside her.

Mapholoba gets semi-hard at the thought.

It's time I go to bed as well, I'm smoking with Nqaba who has been a pain my behind.

"so wena when are you getting married"

He smiles, more like blush looking at Amanda's direction

He is smitten it's not even funny.

"Soon, very soon" I chuckle but stop when I see how serious he is

”How soon are we talking here”

”hai lover boy, why are so noisy” I laugh lightly before Silence engulfs us as we continue smoking.

”How did you know Qhamukile was the one” he breaks the silence.

It takes me a minute letting the question sink in before answering

”I knew she was the one when I woke up in the middle of the night thinking about her” he lets out a full blown belly laugh

I don’t know why do I bother at times

“You’re serious” he’s still laughing

I nod because it’s the truth

“I knew I was doomed that moment. It got worse when she was all I could think of. Your sister occupies my whole being and I just can't picture my life without her”

“I’m never saying this again but I’m happy to have you as her husband and brother-in-law”

Inside I'm beaming with happiness.

I never thought Nqaba out of all the brothers would say something like this.

We shake on it and puff our cigarettes

"So uthi wavuka nje cause you were thinking about her" he's teasing

"She's my world"

"you are more whipped than I thought" he's the first to laugh and I follow.

I know he's more in love than he lets on.

"if you planning on proposing, be romantic, please" I tease

We all know Nqaba is not the romantic type.

"Enough of mushy talk, let join the guys"

I throw the cigarette butt and follow behind him to join the rest of the guys.

We continue drinking and listening to Katlego's crazy jokes when Amanda comes to us rushing looking distraught

”Nqaba I have to go,” she says trying to blink away her tears

Nqaba stands up abruptly and goes to her side to hold her.

”what's wrong,” Langa asks worriedly

The rest of the Buthelezi bothers are on their feet ready to attack who ever wronged her.

Nqaba comforts her until she's able to talk again .

” it's my mother, she killed herself”

•

It's after twelve when I manage to sneak away from the guys to join Qhamu. After Nqaba left with Amanda the mood got a little somber so we continued drinking but I'm tired now and ready to be with my wife.

She is sleeping peacefully, even snoring a bit.

Please don't tell her I told you.

She must be tired from the events of today.

I undress and lie directly behind her in my birthday suit.

She is laying on her side making it easier for me to pull her closer and spoon her. Feeling my body against hers she snuggle even closer.

“Mnqobi” she moans my name.

I’m not sure if she’s dreaming about me or if she's just feeling my presence.

I feel Mapholoba getting harder and harder.

I won’t be able to sleep unless I offload in her.

I caress her wanting her to wake up.

”mnqobi the elders might here us”

Everyone knows we married here.

I ignore her and continue with what I'm doing.

She moans when I reach her breast.

Now that she's fully awake I can indulge but I don’t have time for foreplay so get on with it.

She's wearing her panties.

"I assumed the elders told you to sleep naked" I whisper against her ear.

I know what that does to her.

she chuckles softly and lets me push her panty down.

Mapholoba is up and ready and she knows this very well. She bends her knees slightly and pushes her butt back for easier access.

With a single stroke, I'm in. I love how wet she is for me.

Her breath hitches and she moans my name just as I push in the rest of my penis in her.

"mmmmmmmm"

I love that sound.

I start trusting slowly.... in... out....

in....out....in.....out...

I'm breathing heavily close to her neck. My one hand is playing with her boob while the other is in

between her thighs playing with her clitoris to give her the same sensation she gives me. I continue with my slow strokes until her body starts twitching. She's close.

I continue, letting her reach her destination.

Her body shudders when an orgasm hit her hard and she explodes right on my dick.

But I'm not done with her yet.

I flip her so she is on her stomach.

Prone bone style.

I love this position because I get great leverage on deep pounds and I also get to take nice long smooth strokes that drive me crazy.

She arches her back slightly and I enter.

She says she loves the feel of my weight on her when I press my full body against hers. I lay down the pipe good when we like this, I know this is a perfect angle for her to reach her most orgasmic places.

She cums again just before I follow pursuit.

Now I can sleep.

[06/20, 18:37] Lynne: 69

I'm dressed in a black knee-length dress and a doek. I don't know what do rich people wear at funerals but I look decent. Mngobi appears from the bathroom holding a tie in his hands. He is wearing a navy slim fit suit with dark brown grensons' shoes.

"With or without a tie" he asks pressing the tie against his chest and removing it again for me to see both looks.

I love how the white shirt looks on him.

I stop what I am doing to look at him.

he is now standing in front of a full-length mirror in our bedroom.

"With a tie, you look more professional" he nods and fastens it.

He looks very handsome I must say.

“So after the funeral, you will be going to Mvubukazi”

Misuzulu asks me to come

He says there is something of importance he wants to discuss with me.

“Yes”

“Big brother already missing you” I laugh lightly shaking my head

We moved into our house right after the wedding so it's only been a week since I moved out of home and I doubt my brothers miss me.

“He says there's something he wants to discuss with me. You can join us when you are done”

“It's alright my love. Call me when you are done, I don't want to disturb your bonding time”

He's now brushing his fade hair cut. I'm sorry to brag but my husband looks too good.

“I'm all yours you know” he says getting closer to me, pulls me by my waist, and plants a lingering kiss on my lips.

“I love it when you look at me like that”

I didn't realize I was staring at him

He kisses my nose before winking and goes back to stand in front of the mirror

A text from Nqaba comes through as I apply lip gloss.

He is twenty minutes away.

He forced me to accompany him to the funeral. My heart goes out to Amanda, I can't imagine what she's going through.

“What do you think”

“You look handsome my love and don't look so nervous, you got this”

He's meeting potential investors. The business is doing very well but it's time to expand.

Watching him put so much focus on the business has made me think a lot about what I want to do with the rest of my life

“I've been thinking”

He lifts his eyes to look at me inquisitively through the mirror and asks “about”

“My future”

“Oh, what about”

“I need to get a job”

“A job, as in like work” he looks confused

“Yes a job, I can’t stay at home and do nothing all day”

“What’s wrong with that” I inwardly roll my eyes at how genuinely confused he looks

“Mngobi I need to put my degree in use. I’m only twenty-three and very much capable of working. I didn’t plan on being a housewife, I need to make money as well”

He turns his whole body to look at me

“Haibo what’s wrong with being a housewife and I make enough money to support us both”

Yoh I advise you to discuss such matters with your partners before getting married.

“I know you do but I need something for me”

He shrugs nonchalantly

“I thought you enjoy being home and taking care of our home” I do but it’s only been a week in no time I’ll be bored with doing house chores and waiting for him to put bread on the table. I didn’t study hard to be a housewife.

“Stop with your caveman tendencies please, I’m getting a job”

“What will happen when we start having kids” didn’t he say he doesn’t want to have kids now

“We will jump the bridge when we get there besides it’s not like we will be having kids tomorrow. You the one that said we need to enjoy our marriage before starting a family”

“Mmmm” I’m getting a job, he just needs to deal with it.

A text from Nqaba comes through, finally, he is here.

“Nqaba is here. I’ll see you later.” I walk to him and peck his lips

“Love you and good luck”

“Thank you, my love, and please pass my condolences”

•

An hour later we arrive in Umhlanga. I don't know how rich is Amanda's family is but judging at this house they must be extremely rich.

“Are you sure this is the house” Gcina can't believe it himself.

“GPS says we have reached our destination” Nqaba Mondli is the one driving.

It's around eight am so we on time to make it for the church service which starts at nine.

The security hesitantly opens the gate for us even after confirming with Amanda that we are here for her.

Nqaba is the first one to step out of the car.

He looks handsome in his black charcoal suit, I wonder where he borrowed it from because my brother doesn't own any suits.

Mondli looks very stylish dressed in black formal pants and a shirt, while Gcina is wearing a black jean and black golf t-shirt, at least he's not wearing sneakers.

We are welcomed by an elderly woman

"You must be Mokgadi's friends, she told me you'd be here" we all look at her confused

Mokgadi?

"I mean Amanda" she corrects herself before we could ask.

"You guys are here" Amanda says emerging from another room

"Mam'Martha thank you I'll take it from here"

She's dressed in a simple black dress too.

Her eyes are bloodshot red but she's strong for someone who just lost a mother.

She first hugs Nqaba

“I’m sorry for your loss” I say breaking the hug

“It’s alright, she’s in a better place now.”

It’s remarkable how well she’s taking this I know I’d be in total dismay.

“Baby, are you ready” a bold voice speaks behind us forcing us all to turn our heads

A mountain of a man is standing and looking at us with some sort of disgust

“Richa... I mean dad these are my friends. This is Nqaba, his brothers Mondli and Gcina and his sister, Qhamukile”

“Mmm. We need to get going. Everyone is already waiting at the church” he says without even taking a single glance at us

“Go on, I’ll be traveling with them”

He holds his gaze on her somewhat scolding her without saying a word

this is awkward

“don’t be late” He relents once he notices that Amanda is not changing her mind.

The drive to the church is quiet and long. There are too many thoughts running through my thoughts.

So Amanda’s father is Nigerian.

Mmmm

We park in an empty space next to a Maserati. I feel out of place everyone here seems to be rich.

We all sit in the back while Amanda goes to the front.

Things are done differently here like how we do.

This is a Catholic Church.

The pastor gives a touching sermon and thereafter Amanda steps into the podium to say a few words about her mother.

Once she’s done a few more other people do the same and we all go to the cemetery.

It’s around eleven when we drive back to Amanda’s house.

The caterers outdid themselves with finger foods.

Amanda has been holding Nqaba's hand not wanting to let go all morning and most people here are amazed if not disgusted by that.

"Yooh Mokgadi is such an embarrassment, did she really have to choose that poor thing as her boyfriend" I hear one of her aunt's whisper

I feel anger erupting in me. I don't care about their money but I hate how they've been looking at us throughout. We may not have as much money as they do but we do deserve respect.

I click my tongue and walk out.

The water flowing from the pond calms me down.

"what's a beautiful lady like you doing here all by herself" some guy says

I'd be flattered if I wasn't so pissed off

I smile feebly and look back at the pond

"excuse my manners, my name is Akin" he says extending his hand

”okay” I look at his hand until he drops it.

”you must feel out of place” doesn't he get that I don't want to talk to him

” I'm sorry you had to hear what Mamsi said about your brother. rich people can be full of themselves at times, just ignore them”

”you're one of them”

”But I don't let money change my humanity”

Akin is not as bad as the rest of them.

”I can help you make money more money than all of these people here”

”How so”

” it's easy, your beauty can make you so much money that you wouldn't even know what to do with it”

”my beauty...”

”Hey wena nja stay the hell away from my sister. Qhamukile we leaving”

I don't know when did Nqaba come outside but he's

ready to kill.

He is as angry as he can be.

I sheepishly follow behind all of them and get into the car.

”who does he think he is telling me I'm not rich enough to marry his daughter. Nca to hell with him”
Nqaba

I don't know what happened in that house but whatever it is got him furious.

We are all quiet listening to him rant

” I love Amanda, isn't that enough” he shouts

Amanda comes running towards the gate as we drive out shouting for us to stop.

Mondli stops the car and she gets in

”I'm coming with you,” she says with tears streaming down her face

”Amanda I'm not rich enough for you angithi so what do you want”

”Nqaba I don't care about money I love you dammit”

he scoffs

”that's not what you said in there”

” I know, I know okay but I'm here now. My mother chose money over her happiness and look where that got her. I don't want the same thing I love you and I'm choosing you over this stupid money”

”Amanda get out. We need to get home. I need to get back to my small backroom so please, get out”

”then you'll have to throw me out because I'm not going anywhere”

Let me stop this

”Amanda, Nqaba is angry can you give him some time to cool off first. You will see him once you've both cooled off. you just buried your mother and all this fighting isn't good for you. Go be with your family ill speak to Nqaba” she folds her arms across her chest and snuggles closer to Nqaba

”I'm not going anywhere, Mondli please drive. I'm going to that small backroom with Nqaba” I tried.

She's stubborn as a mule.

Poor Mondli doesn't know what to do.

-

”she cried herself to sleep”

It's after four pm and we are all gathered in the lounge area for the meeting Misuzulu called.

”let her sleep hopefully she will be calm when she wakes up” Gatsha

Amanda came back with us, we all tried to get her to stay back home with her family but she refused.

Nqaba had no choice but to comfort her.

”yes, I'm taking her back once she's awake though”
Nqaba is still angry.

I'm holding Asa in my arms, he's so cute and chubby just like baby bee was.

”bhuti why did you call us all here,”

He laughs lightly and makes a comment about how

impatient I've always been

"its nothing bad Ntonto. I just wanted to tell you that I'm getting married"

Wait.. what...

"getting married" I ask incredulously

We are all shocked except for Gatsha of course

I have never seen Misuzulu with any girl before I mean ever. I'm shocked, to say the least.

"I did my part, you are all grown up now, look at yourselves. Qhamukile is even married now."

"Bhuti Wait, I didn't know you were even dating"

He laughs shaking his head

"I'm a man Qhamu, of course, I'm dating"

I clap once speechless

"I made a promise to baba that I was going to care for you and play the fatherly role he was robbed off to you all. I won't lie it was not easy, I wanted to kill you all especially wena Qhamukile but I don't regret anything. Gcina I'm glad you're getting your act

together now and becoming the man I've always wanted you to be. I hope you will accept Nandi as my wife and be happy for me. I've been with her for years now, she's been very understanding and patient with me for putting you all before her needs. I wanted you all to grow up first before I could get married and now that you're all finally old enough to care for yourselves it's time I start living my life. Nandi is here and I'd like you all to meet her"

I'm loss for words

He stands up, goes outside, and comes back with a beautiful dark woman.

"This is Nandi, the woman I'm getting married to" he introduces her.

"She's been helping me raise you all from behind the scenes, Darli these are my siblings. You already know Gats ha, meet Nqaba, Mondli, Gcina, and Qhamukile"

She's smiling nervously

"It's nice to finally meet you all"

Her voice is sweet.

It's not as awkward as I thought it would be. We are talking reminiscing about the past. It's amazing how much she knows about all of us.

Her and Misuzulu have been dating since he was twenty-two. I love her for being so patient with him I now no other woman would stick around a man with so much baggage but she did and for that I admire her.

Misuzulu seemingly looks happy with her. I have never seen him smile as widely as he is. Love is evident in his eyes and I'm happy he has someone who he will spend the rest of his life with.

•

I'm in the car with Mngobi driving back home. He's as shocked as I was about Misuzulu getting married.

his meeting with the investors went well so we can

only hope for the best.

“Zwelethu is coming weekend, he asks you cook” I roll my eyes.

I’ve been waiting to hear this.

“Let me guess, he’s not coming alone is he” he gives me a sorry look

“I couldn’t say no to them”

We drive in comfortable silence until we get home.

“Wait here,” he says getting off the car first.

He rushes into the house for about five minutes before calling out for me to enter.

I’m welcomed by red roses sprawled on the floor and lavender scented candle lighting all the way from the door leading upstairs to our bedroom.

“Stand sam” I’m speechless

“When did you do all this”

“I have my ways—“ he pecks my lips softly

“I knew you’d be in a somber mood coming from a

funeral so I did all this to cheer you up” I was indeed in a somber mood particularly because the funeral is depressing but the family meeting managed to cheer me up a bit, but seeing how thoughtful my husband is making me jump for joy.

Am I lucky or what?

“I love you”

“And I you” he kisses me again just as deep.

“I cooked. Do you want to shower or eat first”

“You cooked” Mngqobi can’t even boil water so what cooking is he talking about

“Okay, I got takeouts but it’s the thought that counts right”

“Right” I kiss him deeply.

“I’ll shower first”

He is staring as I undress.

“I’m all yours you know” I repeat the same words he said earlier and wink at him

He smirks standing up and walks up to me and

stands behind me.

I can feel his hard penis pressed against his jeans.

I guess he changed when he came back from the meeting.

“I know and you’re all mine to do as I please”

please!

“Dream on” I enjoy teasing him

he’s breathing down my neck giving me goosebumps.

“I could wash you back” he whispers softly against my ear

Instantly I’m feeling hot, my body wants to feel his touch but I resist the urge.

“I know but I’d rather you don’t” I bend slightly pressing myself more on his erection and remove my panties.

He chuckles softly helping to unclip my bra

“Thanks,” I say seductively and walk into the bathroom.

The hot water feels good on my skin. I didn't realize how tiring the events of today were.

I let the warm shower cascade down my body but in a second I feel the cold wind on my skin before Mngobi's hard body pressed against mine.

"Too can play this game" his finger is already trailing down my thorax, down my navel and finally my groin.

My bum arches back involuntarily meeting up with his belt.

Can you imagine he got into the shower fully clothed

I feel my nipples harden, it's must be the cold tiles I'm pressed against.

He bites my earlobe while his middle finger enters me.

My breath hitches and my head falls back on the crock of his neck.

"Mmmm you're so ready for me"

One of his hands is playing with me while the other

is unbuckling his belt.

He lets his jeans fall up to his knees and parts my legs with his knee.

“Think you can win”

he roughly turns me around and picks me up so I wrap my legs around his waist and he enters me just when I thought he'd enter from behind.

I'm breathing heavily with my arms wrapped tightly around his shoulders.

“Damn Mrs. Ngcobo”

He's standing still not moving his waist. the urge to pound hard in me is fighting with his ego to win this little tease game we play.

Teasing each other has always been our thing but right now I need to feel his slow strokes

I remove my head from his neck and watch him smirk

“I got you.” Looks like the tease in him won

He gives me a single deep thrust before coming to a

complete halt

“You’re all mine to do as I please”

“Touché Mr. Ngcobo”

I should’ve known he’d want to prove that I’m his to do as he pleases.

“Think about that next time before you try and tease me”

with that said he gently removes my legs around him and steps out of the shower.

“Mnqobi get back here” how can he?

I know he won’t be coming back so I finish showering faster than anticipated and wrap a towel around my body.

He is butt naked laying on the floor where he constructed a small romantic picnic on the balcony.

“Lose the towel and join me” I’ve got no choice.

It’s surprising how Mnqobi can be a grave-man when it comes to certain things and be such a hopeless romantic on the other hand.

“I’m sorry about this morning, you can get a job if you want to.” I smile and nod

Of course, I was going to get a job whether he liked it or not.

“I just don’t want you to stress. I’m here to provide for you” isn’t he sweet

“I know my love and don’t worry I’ll be fine.”

We drinking wine under the moonlight and enjoying the lovemaking in between.

Everything is just perfect.

[06/20, 18:37] Lynne: 70

Unedited

Three years later...

I’m so tired plus my feet hurt but these little two days leave I took won’t help in any way instead it

will just tire me more. Planning a wedding is very stressful and more especially when your entourage disagrees with your wedding planner over everything.

Lucas is making my life a misery, you'd swear this is his wedding.

I kick off the blanket groaning, we all know how much I love my sleep.

Mnqobi is long gone by the time I wake up.

I take a quick shower, dress up, and drive to town.

Mnqobi bought me an Audi Q8 for my birthday and I'm just in love with it. The leather interior is to die for.

I find Lucas, Zanele, Nomthandazo, and Thandiwe, the wedding planner already waiting at the dress shop.

"You're late" I roll my eyes at Lucas

I'm feeling a little light-headed.

I should've eaten before coming here.

How am I late if everyone else is not here?

“I’m sorry we late, I was waiting for her” that’s Yobanathi walking in with a protruding Amanda.

Thank you very much Nqaba for hindering my plans by knocking up your wife.

Now I have another task of finding her replacement bridesmaid and mind you I don't have lots of friends.

She is seven months pregnant, glowing, and beautiful.

I'm secretly hoping for a girl, I'm tired of boys hai.

It's still hard to believe that she and Nqaba are married and expecting.

Their wedding was intimate with only friends and family, it was beautiful and elegant.

These last three years have been about weddings and babies

Misuzulu and Nandi also got married, the Buthelezi family has been abundantly blessed I tell you.

Their traditional wedding was almost a week's

celebration. it's funny how I thought my brother was single for all these years.

Gatsha is such a crook just like Misuzulu, he allowed Nandi to secretly come to visit Misuzulu when he was in hospital without any of us knowing.

Shaking my head...

I'm just saddened that Nandi is unable to come today because of Nkos enye.

The new member of the family is just a month old. Now you see why I'm hoping Amanda is having a girl, there's just too many princes.

This is my first wedding dress shopping experience and I'm already hating it.

I want a simple dress but I doubt Lucas knows what that means.

The ladies here are very welcoming and sweet, we all having champagne except for Amanda of course, she is drinking water because juice somehow gives her heartburn.

Isn't she just dramatic?

”try this one” I knew this day would be stressful.

I told Lucas I want a simple dress but that went in with one ear and out with the other.

”she said simple Luu, simple” he rolls his eyes at Nomthandazo and moves on to the other dress.

”This is one part I don't miss about planning a wedding,” Amanda says.

She was a bridezilla and now she's way too hormonal.

I feel so sorry for my poor brother.

”and this one” now Zanele gets me.

It's a satin long white dress with a V-neckline with an open back, the train is not too long it's just perfect for me.

” I think it might be the one”

”hai fit it first” Lucas, he's just jealous because Zanele found it.

I step into the dressing room and change.

I love how it accentuates my curves and bum.

I'm happy.

I feel tears stinging my eyes as I look myself in the mirror.

Yobanathi shouts for me to come out and I get ooh's and ahhh's when I come out.

"you look so beautiful" that's Amanda already crying

I told you she's way too hormonal.

"I hate to admit it but you look breathtaking. My f you've got curves. Who knew.—Wow, this is beautiful" guess who?

You guessed right. Lucas.

"This is so you, simple yet elegant." Yobanathi we are all teary now.

"This is the dress" all this is getting so real now. Being in a wedding dress makes me realize how I've always wanted to get married. I might have not dreamed about it when was I younger but this is what I've always wanted ever since I started dating Mngobi.

I wipe my tears and do a turnaround for everyone to see again.

”wow” Nomthandazo is speechless.

This is my dress. It's was made for me.

•

It's after three pm and we are now seated in a restaurant where I work as the head chef going through the last few details of the wedding.

Most things are planned out but I still need a venue, I haven't been successful because most places are booked off.

I managed to convince Yobanathi to replace Amanda but I'm still short of one bridesmaid because Mngobi decided that all his brothers including Katlego are his groomsmen.

Nomcebo joins us as we still discussing, she was at work.

”What did I miss” we fill her in.

She's sad that she wasn't at the dress fitting but she also agrees that the dress I chose is perfect for me.

She's the one planning the bachelorette party.

Don't Ask

I told her countless times that I'm already married so a bachelorette party defeats the whole purpose but as always she didn't listen.

She and Lucas agree on almost everything so they are working together in making this party happen.

I was amazed when Amanda told me she saw her disappear with Langa during Misuzulu's wedding.

I do hope and pray nothing serious is happening between them.

An hour later we are done.

Thandiwe is a God sent, everything is coming together well except the venue issue.

I need to get home plus Mngqobi is home himself

waiting for me.

I'm too tired to cook anything so I get takeaways.

I haven't eaten because I can't seem to stomach anything.

I'm saying my goodbyes to the ladies when I get dizzy and within a second I'm on the ground.

•

MNQOBI

I just got home when I get a call from a number I don't recognize.

I'm too tired but I answer anyway

"Mnqobi, Qhamu has been rushed to a hospital" I don't ask anymore when Nomcebo mentions that Qhamu was taken to a hospital in town.

Thirty minutes later I arrive at the hospital, frantic.

I wonder what's wrong with her.

The nurse shows me her ward and I find Nomcebo seating on the bed next to Qhamu while Lucas and Zanele are seating on the chairs next to the bed.

I greet them and kiss Qhamu on her temple.

I thought I'd find her sleeping but she's awake and talking to the ladies.

They soon depart leaving me and Qhamu alone.

The doctor took a blood test earlier and we just waiting for the results, maybe that might explain why she fainted.

"I'm sure its because I was hungry. I've been so busy with the wedding plans that I forgot to eat" I nod and continue to feed her

She quit complaining the minute she realized I'm not backing down. Hospital food might be tasteless but she needs to eat.

"seriously my love, I'm fine. I feel fine" ill be sure of that when we get the results and she's sulking because she is spending the night, the doctor

explained it's just for observation.

"I hear you baby. Nomcebo mentioned your car is at the restaurant—"

"Oh my God, totally forgot about it"

"I figured. Don't worry though, Mncedisi is already on his way to take it back home" I had to beg him.

He has become impossible since he has a steady girlfriend.

"What would I be without you" she says smiling.

"Remember that—" she's feed and okay. now it's my time to leave.

"Let me leave you. I'll be back first thing tomorrow morning" she's sulking but what choice do I have.

The drive home is lonely but no as lonely as having to spend the night alone. The bed even feels cold without her.

I wake up early, first have a smoke and take a quick shower.

It's around nine when I arrive at the hospital.

Qhamu looks better than she did yesterday.

The doctor joins us around midday with the results in hand.

"Mr and Mrs Ngcobo I have the results" my heart is pounding hard against my chest.

I'm trying so hard not to think of the worst but I'm not winning.

"relax, its nothing bad—" I let out a sigh of relief

"—Mrs Ngcobo is pregnant—"

what...

wait...

she's pregnant?

"Pregnant" i repeat out loud.

I'm shocked more than anything

"Yes, the amount of hCG in her blood estimate that

she may be about five to six weeks long”

I feel my lips curve up into a smile but my little happiness is short lived when I think about Qedusizi.

What if the same thing happens to this baby?

“That’s impossible Doctor, I’m on a pill” I see tears shining in her eyes.

“Birth control pills are very affective however, some factors, such as missing pill days, vomiting, and taking certain medications, can reduce the effectiveness” she nods and look away.

“Are you sure she’s pregnant” I ask

The doctors smiles nodding

“Without a doubt”

“She fainted, is the baby fine” my worst fear is losing another child.

“Dizziness and fainting are very common during the first trimester. It is caused by a drop in blood pressure which is why she needs to stay healthy. And seeing that these are still early days of the pregnancy, the embryo may be undetectable on the

ultrasound however if she's comfortable we can do the transvaginal ultrasound to make sure everything is alright"

I'm not sure how Qhamu feels but happiness is not it.

I think it's shock.

She agrees to the vaginal ultrasound.

I'm scared I won't lie.

I'm holding Qhamu's hand as the doctor inserts the transducer in her.

"Are you feeling any pain" she shakes her head, flinching.

Maybe she's just uncomfortable.

The joy I feel when I hear the fetal heartbeat is beyond imaginable but like before my happiness is short lived.

Qedusizi had a strong heartbeat throughout.

Qhamu didn't experience any difficulties with him but he still died.

“She is precisely six long, the embryo is still developing but everything looks healthy” I know I’m excited and happy but I can’t say the same about Qhamu.

She has been quiet throughout that I’m starting to worry.

“I’m going to let you go home but you need to see a gyne for another ultrasound in four weeks—“

she writes a number on a piece of paper and hands it to us

“Call him, he is good. Mrs Ngcobo I urge you not to stress and please eat, we don’t want you fainting again” she chuckles softly and leaves us.

I watch as she changed back into her clothes and we leave the hospital.

The drive back home is dreadful and quiet.

She keeps wiping away her tears with the back of her hand gazing out the window.

I don’t know what’s running through her head right now but she definitely doesn’t share my sentiment.

I'm happy and I thought she would be over the moon too but clearly I was wrong.

I want to show her how happy I am but I'm afraid that might hurt her somehow.

She gets off the car immediately when I park in our garage.

I sigh loudly before following her.

This should be the happiest day of our lives but instead my wife is unhappy and crying.

After taking a quick shower I join her in bed.

She hasn't said anything throughout

"Sthandwa sam" we promised each other never to go to bed angry or sad.

"Talk to me, what's wrong"

she shifts her body to face me

"I'm sorry. I don't know what happened, I must've missed a pill or something. I'm so sorry I didn't do this on purpose—" What is she talking about

"I don't understand"

“I saw how unhappy you were when the doctor told us about this. I know you said you want us to enjoy our marriage before having kids and I messed all that up—“

I’m not sure what’s happening with my wife right now.

“Qhamu wait my love. I was shocked yes but never unhappy and yes I said I want us to enjoy our marriage before starting a family but that doesn’t mean I’m not happy”

How can she even think that.

“I’m so happy my love. Timing might be off but hey a Ngcobo is growing inside you and I couldn’t be happier” her eyes are gleaming with tears

I pull her in my arms and comfort her.

“I want to shout for the whole world to know I’m doing to be a father and that’s because of you”

“So you’re not angry”

“Hell no.” She giggles sweetly burying herself in my chest

“Is this why you looked so miserable at the hospital”

“I thought you were disappointed in me” I kiss her forehead

“How can I when you’re giving me such a precious gift”

She smiles and plants a soft kiss on my lips

“I want to be happy but I’m scared, what if something happens, what if he di..”

“Stop worrying. Nothing will happen to this baby. She is going to be just fine”

She rolls her eyes and throws her head back

“It might be a boy” I know.

I don’t care much about the gender.

“Or him. I know you’re scared because of what happened to Qedusizi but I’m here. this baby is going to grow old and probably give you grey hair before your time”

Her laughter sounds like melody to me.

I rub my hand over her flat tummy.

Im so happy I can't even contain it.

“Yoooh Mngobi In three months time I'll be four months and two weeks pregnant God my dress won't fit”

I'm not about to deal with another mass of hysteria, am I?

“Relax, you'll alter it”

“Alter it—“ she says incredulously

“So you think I'll be fat by then. It's bad enough I haven't found a venue and now my dress might not even fit me” Yoh I'm so not ready to deal with this.

“Don't worry I'll help look for a venue and you can always get another dress if it doesn't fit”

Wait... why am I committing myself in finding a venue.

“Nooo Mngobi you don't get it, that dress needs to fit”

“I hope you not planning on starving my child. I'll personally get find you a new dress if needs be. don't worry, please”

Why not commit yourself even further Mngqobi.

“And how are you going to get a venue, Mngqobi you refused to be part of this. You failed to even come for cake tasting so how are you going to find a venue” this is the reason I didn’t want to be involved in all this.

“I’m sorry I didn’t come for the cake tasting that because I trust you know what I like and as for the venue—“

EURIKA!!

“How about we get married under the bamboo tree” that tree is part of us

“A tree, a tree Mngqobi. You can’t be serious” she scoff

“Think about it. That’s where it all started, that tree is part of us”

She contemplates for a while but nothing my charm can’t fix.

I don’t even have to work hard to convince her.

“If you can convince Thandiwe then we will have

our ceremony there” whose Thandiwe again

“Thandiwe”

She rolls her eyes

“Our wedding planner” oh, we have a wedding planner.

“I’m paying, she just needs to do what she’s told”

“Oh dear husband, I sometimes forget what an egomaniac you are” we have a venue, that’s all that matters.

I’m happy when she’s happy

“How about we make our baby’s fontanel (ikhakhayi) stronger” I say getting on top of her.

[06/20, 18:37] Lynne: 71

QHAMU

”Qhamu, delivery again” that's one of the waiters

I smile and wipe away my teary eyes.

Damn this onion.

I quickly wipe my hands and walk out of the kitchen.

"Hello Paul" he is wearing his net-florist branded t-shirt with his name printed on it.

"Mrs. Ngcobo" I don't know if smiling like he is right now is part of the job or if he's just sweet by nature.

I reciprocate his smile shaking my head and sign on the clipboard.

I've told him to use my first name but he argued that Mrs. Ngcobo has a nice to ring to it.

"How are you today"

"I'm good thanks"

He nods smiling.

"what does it say today" he is one noisy delivery guy

I chuckle softly and open the little envelope

"10. Do you remember our first kiss?" I roll my eyes inwardly.

how can I forget my first stolen kiss?

”you're one lucky lady. I don't know any guy who would send his wife a single rose every day without fail”

”Thank you very much, Paul, I'll see you again tomorrow” he smiles and walks away.

I've known Paul for ten-days now and I've realized that If I entertain him he doesn't stop talking so it is best to politely ignore his small talks.

Cheryl, the owner of the restaurant calls me just as I walk back to the kitchen with a single rose in hand.

”chamu, how many times have I told you to leave. You're getting married for goodness sake. Go home, go do your nails or something”

My wedding is in two days' time so I've got plenty of time to do my nails.

”I still have time for that”

”you took leave I know but I'm not going to allow you to be in that kitchen any longer. Go home and relax then, let your husband massage your feet”

there's no point in arguing here.

”fine”

”good, I'll see you on your wedding day”

I've invited her and a few of my colleagues as well.

After packing and saying my goodbyes to everyone I walk to the parking lot.

I still love the leather scent in this car.

Yesterday's note is still in the glove compartment. I must have forgotten to put it with the rest of the notes Mnqobi sent.

” 9. I love you. Do you remember the first day you said those words to me”

the note reads

How can I forget?

I knew I love him the first day I saw him but I didn't say it until that day we were in his room when he

was tutoring me.

Thank God those maths days are over.

” I love you” I still remember how shocked he was when I told him those three words.

I throw the note back in the glove compartment along with today's note.

Just like today, that note was accompanied by a single red rose.

It's after twelve so there's no traffic.

Thirty minutes later I'm home.

I smell today's rose like I did with the rest before putting it in the vase. As you have figured out, my husband sends me a rose each day, now he is on rose number ten and each rose comes with a little message.

It's a pity the first roses I received are slowly dying.

I chuck lightly when I come across the little note when I open the cabinet.

1. "Rose are red, violets are blue and I'm in love with you... Cheesy right?"

I've never laughed so hard when I got that first note.

I can't help read the second one.

2. "I love how you screamed my name last night."

I won't tell what happened that night but just know that I was very tired the next day.

3. "I'm craving for your ... I'll tell you later"

You can imagine my disappointment when I got home and he asked me to cook beef stew.

"oh you home," Mngqobi says surprised, startling me.

I watch him walk down the stairs until he takes the last step.

4. "I love it when you stare at me" I
remember the fourth note he sent.

He is dressed in black jeans and his signature shirt.

Yes, he still wears them.

I close the cabinet and walk closer to him and peck
his lips

"hey love"

He took a few days off as well to help with finalizing
everything.

"Cheryl literally chased me away"

"Remind me to thank her when I see her" I forgot he
doesn't want me working and even more so now
that I'm carrying his precious cargo.

He bends and kisses my tummy.

"hope you didn't give mommy any problems today"
he whispers rubbing my belly.

This pregnancy is nothing like my first, with
Qedusizi I didn't get as much morning sickness as I

do now.

”is the dress done”

I had to get it altered to accommodate the protruding belly. I swear I'll be as huge as a hippocampus before I know it.

”yes, I'm getting it tomorrow” hopefully it fits this time.

Secret?

It's the second time I'm getting altered.

This child came at the wrong time.

”Good. I'm actually on my way out. I'm getting the suits”

I'm so relieved by that.

This gives me time to be alone and maybe catch up on sleep.

I'm getting facials and massages tomorrow along with Lucas and the rest of my bridesmaid.

I've made peace with the fact that I'm a bridesmaid short. Mngobi needs to cut one guy out or else we

will just have to improvise.

Lucas was not pleased that Nomcebo is my maid of honor but he got over it since he's "planning" the wedding.

Speaking of Nomcebo, she will be arriving later so I'll get to ask her about her "relationship" with Langa.

My phone rings just as I place my head on the pillow

"woman where are you, I'm at the restaurant but you're not here" Lucas.

"home, trying to catch some sleep"

"forget sleep darling, I'm on my way with the ladies"

I huff frustrated.

An hour later he walks in with Zanele and Nomthandazo carrying bottles of champagne.

"pre-bridal party" he calls it.

I'm having grape juice while they are sipping on sparkling alcoholic beverages.

I'm telling them about the roses Mngobi keeps

sending me daily.

5. “The best feeling in the world is seeing you smiling and knowing that the reason for your happiness is our love.”

Lucas reads out loud.

That one had me blushing all day.

”Okay it's official. I'm jealous” he says dramatically throwing the piece of paper away.

”me too, how did you get so lucky” Nomthandazo.

She is dating a guy we went to school with.

”seeing that Nqaba is taken can you organize me a date with one of the Ngcobo brothers”

I laugh at Lucas.

”Zanele what happened with Gcina”

I've never confronted her about it till now but it went

on for a couple of years that I started to think it might just work but all that changed when she started dating a couple of people after, even though those relationships never worked out.

She gulps her champagne

”slow down, she's known for years now” Lucas

Done she really think I didn't know?

Rolling my eyes.

”Your brother doesn't know what he wants. He gets mad when I date other people but he doesn't want to commit too. I'm tired of being played by him Qhamu”

I knew this wouldn't end well.

”so you two are over or” she shrugs

” I love him” my eyes are about to fall out of their sockets

”what” even Lucas is as shocked as I am.

“Yes, I've loved him since I was a teenager but I guess he doesn't feel the same way”

I want to say I told you so but I hug her instead.

I don't know what it's like to love someone who doesn't reciprocate those feelings but I'm sure it sucks.

The mini unofficial party goes on until Nomcebo joins.

She's already half-drunk when she arrived. I always wonder how she manages not to stagger in those high heels of hers.

She and Lucas get well like house on fire and believe me the common denominator is Amanda.

I'm sure her ears always itch when these two are together.

“Yoooooh I'm glad she's not here, I can't deal with her hormones shem” What did I say

Let me shut her up

“Mzala(cousin) what's this I hear about you and Langa”

Judging by how Lucas is looking at her he knew as well.

“What do you mean”

like really?

“I saw you sneaking around during Misuzulu’s wedding” I might have not seen them but I heard so that the same thing

Lol...

She rolls her eyes

“I slept with him” clap once

“Slept”

“Yes Like has sex” she even lock her fingers together motioning sex

“I know what that means but—“

“How was it, phela Langa is always serious”

Nomthandazo

Nomcebo blushes

“Yoooh I’ve never been handled like that, hai shem he is good. Yoh the things he does with his tongue. Jehova”

she presses her thighs together... wait is she horny?

She is definitely drunk.

She always reminds me of how she doesn't kiss
and tell

“Is it big” Zanele

“Mmmhmm... that's all I'm going to say” she
motions locking her lips and throwing away the key

“Qhamu is Mnqobi gifted” I stop laughing and look
at Lucas amazed.

I'm not drunk like them.

“Haibo” I'm not discussing my husband's penis.

“What... talk sis” on second thoughts

“Let's just say WOW” I'm beyond satisfied.

•

MNQOBI

I'm at the pub when Qhamu texts me saying her friends are sleeping over.

This gives me time to catch up with my brothers.

Makhosini joins us as we sip on our beers

"Alright babe, I'll just sleepover here but I'll be there first thing in the morning" I text her back.

I'm drinking so it's for the best.

"bafo you gaining weight"

I'm just teasing

That's what we all say ever since he moved in with his girlfriend

"mxm" he laughs lightly and opens a beer bottle for himself

"Mnqobi I don't know how do you do it shem, abafazi baya hlupha (woman are troublesome)"

"What has Lindiwe done now" Mncedisi is also here.

Its funny how he doesn't grow old. He is 31 but still looks 20.

Makhosini has been dating Lindiwe for about two years before they moved in together

“Hai yaz we agreed we not going to get married but now she’s been pestering about marriage.

Umshado this umshado that.. Hai man I can’t even sit and watch tv in peace because marriage is all she talks about. I’m not getting married, full stop”

I also want to know why the idea of marriage prettifies Makhosini like this.

“Bhuti you’re old though. What about kids”

I try and reason

“I’m 40 not old and uMapholoba works just fine”

We all laugh and continue drinking.

I can't believe how we've all grown

No so long ago, Langa was very stubborn and very unsteady but now he is a thirty six years old man who reason like never before.

It's surprising how well he handles situations now.

I doubt Zwelethu will ever mature though, for a 33 year old man he is still playful and a womanizer.

We all moved out of home except for Sma. He's turned out to be a very handsome young man.

I think he has a girlfriend now, well, he is a Ngcobo after all. In matric I had a number of ex-girlfriends so it's no doubt he has at least one girlfriend at least.

Next year he will be out of the house and in varsity too.

MaTwala and maNgidi are best of friends don't ask me how.

Women are complicated.

A little chaos erupts from the gate, I'm sure its the security fighting with one of the drunkards.

Langa gets up to check what's happening.

The pub business is still his baby.

We are all talking when he comes back followed by a young girl with a baby strapped on her back and a school bag.

“What was that all about” I don't think Zwelethu is seeing the lady behind Langa.

Don't tell me Langa has a baby we don't know about.

The girl unstraps the child and hand her to Zwelethu.

The baby is wrapped in a pink blanket.

Amazed Zwelethu asks

“Hey sisi Who are you and why are you giving me your child”

we are now all on our feet wandering what the hell is going on

“Zwelethu I can't do this” shes already crying

What the hell is going on here

“Ntombazane who are you” that’s Makhosini.

He’s not as stern as I expected him to be I think he’s still trying to figure out what’s going on here.

“I’m still in school and I’m failing to care for her. My parents cut me off so I can’t anymore”

What is this girl saying

“Haibo and now where do I enter there” Zwelethu shouts, trying to give the baby back.

The poor baby is now awake and wailing painfully lifting her arms towards her mother.

“She’s yours too” She manages to say through her tears

she drops the school bag on Zwelethu’s feet and wipe her tears with the back of her hand.

“In there are a few clothes and her birth certificate”

Zwelethu is shocked and speechless

“What do you mean this is his child” Mncedisi

This girl is totally ignoring us but looking at
Zwelethu.

“Durban... sinderella”

Coming into realization Zwelethu softens his face

“Nwabis a” he says unsure

“Mandisa actually. I fell pregnant that night”

“Ini (What)” we all shout in shock

About a year and couple of months back Zwelethu
went to Durban for a business meeting on my
behalf because I had other things I had to attend.

I don't remember him telling me he slept with
anyone.

“Zwelethu meet your daughter, Nomfundo” she says
and walks away.

Nothing less than 200 comments

[06/20, 18:37] Lynne: 72

Unedited

MNQOBI

”Mnqobi take her” he says giving me the baby

”haibo” she's already in my arms before I blink.

Zwelethu runs out screaming Mandisa’s name maneuvering through the crowd before I can hand the child back to him.

This Mandisa girl is crazy.

She can't just leave her child like this, she has some explaining to do and who in their right mind leaves their child with total strangers?

Tell me how do I even begin to get this child to stop crying.

”Mncedisi take her” I don't know how to handle crying kids.

”haibo hold her nawe, take this as a practice”

I'd give him a slap if I wasn't holding this baby.

Nomfundo is wearing a pink dress with white leggings.

I try and soothe her with no success, she's still wailing painfully.

I'm singing and rocking her back and forth but it's not working, nothing I do works.

The loud house music is not helping either

Zwelethu rushes back with his hands on his head shouting that she's gone.

”she's not there” he keeps shouting and cursing at Mandisa.

He can swear at her until kingdom come but that won't bring her back right now.

I suggest we get out of here and go home.

MaNgidi will know what do to.

I'm seating in the backseat with Zwelethu and Mncedisi holding the baby.

I've been holding her since no one wants to hold her, even her supposedly father.

At least she sleeping now.

Langa is driving while Makhosini is in the front seat and we are driving towards home.

The silence is deafening.

I have so many questions I need to ask but I don't know which one to ask first.

"We can't go home, not until I'm sure she's mine"
Zwelethu breaks the silence

We all look at him

"You all know MaNgidi, she will just stress me more"

Langa stops the car on the side of the road just before turning into our street

“So what do you suggest we do then” I ask

This is his mess and he needs to sort it out.

He looks at me with pleading eyes

“Haibo what am I going to do with a child mina” he is crazy

“You could ask Qhamu to look after her only for today while I make a plan” he has totally lost it.

“Zwelethu my wife is pregnant and not only that but we are getting married in two days. I don’t want her stressing”

“I know but she’s the only one I can think of right now”

“What about Nompilo” that’s his girlfriend

“Yoh she is going to kill me” oh how can I forget.

He cheated on her and a child was conceived.

“Makhosini can you not ask Lindiwe”

“And give her ideas about having kids” Makhosini and his commitment issues though.

Langa doesn't have any serious girlfriend I know of
So it leaves me with Mncedisi

"My girlfriend stays with her parents Mnqobi" Yoh

"Zwelethu, Qhamu is seriously going to have a fit" I
can't believe I'm even considering this ludicrous
idea.

"Just for a day, I swear I'm going to make a plan" he
better.

It's after twelve midnight so no shops are open for
us to get formula but at least Mandisa was sane to
pack enough diapers.

We first drive to Mvubukazi, Misuzulu's wife must
have a formula.

I remain in the car with the baby and Mncedisi while
Zwelethu and Makhosini go into Misuzulu's yard.

Langa is outside smoking.

I could use a smoke myself.

Twenty minutes later they come back holding a can
of formula milk.

I wonder what lies did they have to tell.

The drive to Mpophemeni is quiet. I know Qhamu is going to go crazy when she hears what happened tonight.

An hour later we arrive.

Now Zwelethu is forced to hold the baby when I walk upstairs.

Qhamu and her friends are all sleeping in the guest bedroom.

Qhamu is squashed next to Nomthandazo. I wonder how did they all manage to fit in one bed.

I jump a few empty bottles of champagne and glasses on the floor before reaching her side.

I hope and pray she didn't consume any alcohol.

I shake her, carefully not to wake the rest of her friends.

"Baby" she half opens her eyes when she hears my voice

"You back"

she says my voice sounds raspier when I wake up
which she loves but hers is just melodic.

“Yes, please come downstairs with me”

She’s walking barefoot behind me, complaining as I
climb down the stairs.

I’m nervous for some reason as we enter the lounge
area where all my brothers are standing tall looking
like the world is coming to an end.

“Bhuti—“ she’s looking at Makhosini, worry
plastered on her face

“What’s wrong” she asks

Zwelethu is as nervous as I am.

“MaShenge, this baby is the reason we are here so
late”

I watch as she nods tightening her silk black robe to
conceal her bump and folds her arms to her chest,
giving me a deadly stare.

“Mngobi what’s happening” I don’t know where to
start

“My love, I can explain”

“What.... explain what. Is this your child” what no...

“Qhamu she is not his child ... she’s mine. I’m sorry for coming here but I had nowhere else to go”

Zwelethu says softly.

“Her mother just dumped her on me a few hours ago. I didn’t even know she existed” he continues

“You’re the first person I thought of after her mother left”

“why not go to MaNgidi”

“You know her”

“So what now Zwelethu, what were hoping for by coming here” Qhamu is angry

“I don’t know, that maybe you can look after her until I make a plan” she huffs and throws her arms in the air and leaves the room.

I’m forced to follow her.

“Mnqobi, for how long is Zwelethu hoping to hide that child. We getting married, how the hell am I

going to get my nails, and everything else done while taking care of his secret baby. A baby Mngobi.” she’s pacing back and forth in our bedroom.

I expected her to be angry but not like this.

“Why is Zwelethu so irresponsible I mean how can he not know he has a child out there”

I get closer to her and hold her waist

“Calm down my love, you’re pregnant. This is Zwelethu’s mess and he will deal with it I promise but think about that baby.

We don’t know who her mother is or where she’s from and you know how ma is. I’m asking for you to give Zwelethu just a day to tell her about this”

I am angry at Zwelethu too bit that baby girl might be my niece and I’m not going to let anything happen to her.

“Mngobi I have so many things I need to do.” I can’t believe I’m begging my wife to do this

“I know my love but I would ask you this if I had a

choice. If Zwelethu doesn't tell Uma by the end of the day I'll tell her myself"

she finally agrees after some time.

Nomfundo is awake and crying when we walk back to lounge.

Qhamu manages to hush her back to sleep.

I'm now with her in the kitchen watching her make formula for Nomfundo. I can't help think about Qedusizi. I missed an opportunity to watch her do this for him.

She didn't even bother showing my brothers where they'll be sleeping instead she took Nomfundo and tucked her in my side of the bed.

Looks like I'm sleeping on the couch today.

"Why are you angry at me" she's done and walking to our bedroom.

"I'm not angry at you" could've fooled me.

She place the bottle on the side pedestal and gets into bed.

“Goodnight Mngqobi” with that said she snuggles closer to Nomfundo and close her eyes.

ZWELETHU

My life as I know it has been turned upside down in a blink of an eye. Just yesterday I was a carefree bachelor with no care in the world but today I'm stressed about a baby that might be mine.

I'm trying to dig deep in my thoughts, thinking about what transpired that night but I'm getting bits and pieces of me meeting her and taking her back to my hotel room and that's it. The rest of the night is a blur but how did I not use protection?

I'm not so careless, especially with someone I barely know.

My ringing phone jolts me out of my train of thoughts

“Found anything”

“Ah hade Boss, her friends says they last saw last night when she left for Joburg. I’m still trying to find out where in Joburg is she from”

I had to get one of my guys to look for Mandisa

“Find her” I say and hang up.

I call Qhamu who answers after a few rings

“Zwelethu” she is still angry

“How is she” it’s after ten a.m

I left her place early in the wee hours of the morning to start looking for this insane girl.

“Fine. Listen I have to go...”

“Tell him to send you money, we need to get clothes and baby stuff for this cutie” I hear that gay friend of her’s in the background.

“Zwelethu Nomfundo needs a few things. I’ll send my banking details”

“Im not buying her anything until I’m sure she’s mine”

“She needs formula and diapers Zwelethu but of course, you’d rather you wait” arguing with her won’t be fruitful at all.

Mngobi mentioned that she has gotten more feisty ever since she got pregnant.

“Oh Zwelethu you have until five pm or else I’m telling MaNgidi” she says and hangs up.

Sigh

I know she means it.

I spend the whole day following leads about Mandisa’s whereabouts but of course, all my hard work is in vain.

It’s like she vanished in the face of the earth.

I’m still thinking about my next move when I get a call from ma

“Zwelethu Ngcobo you better come here if you know what’s good for you” she hangs up right after saying that

It’s seventeen fifteen so my guess is Qhamu told her.

I find Mnqobi and Langa outside smoking

“Hai bafo your wife though” I say

“Hai Zwelethu, Qhamu did nothing wrong here. This is all on you”

yoh can he relax.

I find Qhamu in the kitchen, I greet her and walk to the lounge area where I find MaNgidi with MaTwala and Makhosini.

“Zwelethu what’s this I hear about you having a child” how about hello Zwelethu, how are you?

“Ma I promise you I didn’t know anything. A crazy girl dumped her on me and said I’m the father before disappearing” that’s the truth

“Haibo What kind of a mother leaves her child like that” one thing you should know about MaNgidi is that she calls a spade a spade.

I don’t think she cares much about what MaTwala thinks seeing that she left us too.

“The girls you date nawe Zwelethu, look at yourself now”

I'm happy her wrath is not directed at me.

she's angry at Mandisa for being such a bad mother.
At least I'm off the hook.

“So what's next”

I tell her how I spent the whole day trying to find her
with no luck. I lie and tell her that Mandisa and I
dated for a while before she dumped me.

I can't tell her about a one night stand I hardly recall.

“Where did you even meet this crazy girl”

At a strip club

“Ini (What!)” don't tell me I said that out loud.

“A strip club Zwelethu! A strip club”

It's like I've ignited the fire in her.

QHAMU

I can't believe Zwelethu. So had I not have told MaNgidi about Nomfundo's existence he wouldn't have.

I know he asked for a day but his brother is getting married so how was he going to hide a whole human being?

I'm late for my own bachelorette party because of him.

I know he's angry I told MaNgidi but what else was I suppose to do?

My wedding is in a days time so I can't sit at home and care for a six months old baby.

"A club strip Zwelethu. A strip club!" I hear MaNgidi's scream furiously.

I'm guessing he told her about how he meet Mandisa.

When he told me last night I was dumbfounded as well but relieved that she was not a stripper.

It's still a mystery as to what she was doing at a strip club.

“Tell me Zwelethu when are you growing up huh. So wena you go around poking every hole in KZN, worse you don’t even protect yourself” I can’t believe him as well.

He knows nothing about Mandisa but he had the guts to have unprotected sex with her, no. The condom burst he says.

“Ma that baby might not even be mine. I’m going to do a DNA test first”

“And then what, where are you going to find her mother” MaNgidi

“DNA test will just be a waste of money, that child is yours” MaTwala.

She’s not angry as MaNgidi but I think that’s because she still walks in eggs shells when it comes to all her son’s.

She still longs for their forgiveness after all these years and I’m afraid her children just don’t care.

“Yes, she’s yours bafo” I hear Makhosini deep voice agreeing with MaTwala.

I hate to admit it too but Nomfundo has their eyes, nose and lips.

She's a Ngcobo and a beauty.

I kind of miss her she has been sleeping for a while now which is no surprise after all the shopping we did today.

Lucas is a self appointed favorite "aunt" and it didn't help that Nomfundo was clinging to him all day.

I managed to do all I had to do, nails, hair and facials. I even got a full body massage and I did all that while taking care of her.

Don't be surprised, she's a sweetheart.

Give her a clean nappy and food then she'll sleep that you'll forget she's there.

Lucas got her a white dress and a little sunflower hair band for the wedding.

I was so saddened when Amanda gave birth to a boy child whom they named Bandile. I'm tired of boys but Nomfundo is here now, hopefully Zwelethu will just embrace the situation as it is and care for

her.

I can't imagine what being a single father is like.

Mnqobi enters the kitchen while I'm packing away the dishes I've been washing.

He smells of nicotine and mint.

"Mnqobi when are we leaving—" Lucas has been calling me none stop asking where I am.

It's after a little after seven. My bachelorette should've started an hour ago and worse my house is full of people Lucas invited.

"If you're ready then we can go"

I'm sad that I have to leave Nomfundo here but MaNgidi promises to be at my house first thing in the morning.

I don't know what Mnqobi has planned but Katlego and Simphiwe are here so I'm sure he'll have his bachelor party as well.

Unfortunately I'm unable to continue due to load-shedding.

remember nothing less than 250 comments

[06/20, 18:38] Lynne: 73

QHAMU

“I hope there are no strippers here”

“No, of course not ma” Lucas says hastily

She's not convinced but she doesn't say anything else.

“And wena What are you wearing. Get something warm, I don't want my grandchild to catch pneumonia before he's even born”

I refrain from rolling my eyes

What pneumonia is she talking about?

It's summer and this house is not cold, besides this

is my lingerie bachelorette party.

MaNgidi is too much for my soul.

“Don’t worry ma, we are going to take good care of her. I’ll make sure she dresses in something warm”
Nomcebo.

I’m wearing a beautiful white silk satin short babydoll lingerie dress with its matching peignoir with the words Mrs Ngcobo embroidered in the back. Courtesy of Lucas, of course.

“You better—“ MaNgidi says pointing at her before turning her eyes to a very peeved MaTawala.

“lets go sleep”

Poor MaTwala follows behind her complaining that they should be home taking care of their granddaughter instead of coming to a youngster’s “naked” party.

We watch them climb up the stair balancing on the banister until they disappear around the corner

“What...the...hell...is.. she... doing... here” Lucas asks horrified, dramatically punctuating each word.

“To teach Zwelethu a lesson” and I quote.

Zwelethu is very imprudent so she left him with Nomfundo to teach him that each action has consequences.

I was just as appalled as Lucas is when she got into the car with me. I don't care about Zwelethu he's old enough to care for himself but what about Nomfundo, Zwelethu is not capable of caring of a six months baby.

“And how does she know about the stripper”

“She's just—“

Wait... what is Nomcebo talking about?

“Strippers, what strippers”

“Relax I'm only joking”

“Mmmm—“ I really hope there's no strippers.

“MaNgidi is a little neurotic after hearing where Zwelethu meet the mother of his child”

Lucas' mouth is left agape with incredulity when I finish telling them about Zwelethu's escapades.

“Kodwa a strip club bo and worse he slept with her without a condom. Yoh hai” he claps once.

“Enough with gossips, let’s go enjoy your party Mzala”

Lucas and Nomcebo decorated the cottage with blush pink and white. There are balloons hanging from the ceiling. I’m loving the rustic elegant feel, the table looks stunning with blush tableware decorations.

Lucas was kind enough for to invite my cousins from the traditional wedding, Nthando and Thobeka. Nomthandazo is also here and of course Zanele. Yobanathi and sis Nandi are in the house. I didn’t think my colleagues would be here but Tracey and Cheryl, my boss are here.

The only person missing is Thobile.

Everyone is wearing a themed blush colored matching peignoir, I must admit this was properly planned. Lucas is in a long blush sleep shirt and pants set.

He complained about the color, said he’s gay but

still a guy, he looks comfortable though.

I'm sad that I'm the only one not in consumption of adult beverages, damn this pregnancy, I'm drinking a non-alcoholic Champagne instead.

"I'd like to propose a toast" that's Zanele

"Qhamukile I'd like to say how happy I am that this day is finally here. I was there when you and Mngqobi hid from your brothers. I witnessed it all the love, the cries and the fighting but just like then your love for each other is still raw and true.. I know you're married but I'd like to formally toast to being Mrs Ngcobo—" we all lift our glass

"No one deserves this than you. Congratulations my love" she says as we all click our glasses together.

I'm teary from just hearing her say those words.

It must be the hormones.

Lucas is next.

"I'm not going to say a lot—"

that's a first

“I just want to reiterate how glad I am that I was wise enough to end my friendship with Nokhaya because I wouldn’t have meet your beautiful soul. I gained more than a friend in you. You’re a sister to me Qhamu and I just want to tell you how much I love you”

now tears are blurring my sight.

I stand and give him a warm hug

“Ah luu, I love you too”

Nomcebo is not a fan of tears so she’s the first one to hand me a present

“I’m saving my speech for the wedding day” she says.

“Red for danger” Ntando.

Yoh.

Nomcebo is crazy to think I’d wear this. It’s a stunning red lace bra with a matching carter set.

“Haibo Nomcebo”

“What. It’s perfect, Mngqobi will be so happy seeing

you in that” Thobeka.

“And the heels” I ask when I notice a pair of red high heels

“For the outfit, I wouldn’t be surprised if you were planning on wearing all this with pumps” I roll my eyes at Nomcebo.

Pumps are comfortable.

Lucas bought a more skankier nougat bra with matching suspender belt, a thong and black stockings.

They all agree that I need to look sexy for Mnqobi, Lucas goes as far as showing me a few moves.

Cheryl got “something blue” in a form of a gift box with pens and notebooks so I can write my vows—while eating champagne-flavored gummies, that came with the box. It also comes with an emergency kit for any wardrobe issues that might happen on the big day.

How thoughtful of her.

”Here,” Sis Nandi says handing me a rustic, vintage

jewelry box

I wasn't expecting anything from her or anyone else for that matter but I gladly accept

”for something borrowed” I feel emotions envelop me as I open the little box, inside it's an old silver hairpin with pearls.

”It belonged to your mother. It was handed to her by MaDlamini—“ that my paternal grandmother.

“on her wedding day and Misuzulu gave it to me on my wedding day and I'd like you to have it”

tears are streaming down my face as she says all this.

How could I have not known about it?

I fall in love with it instantly. It's a family heirloom after all.

“Thank you” I give her a full warm hug.

It's a pity Amanda could not be here to celebrate with us.

Ntando got me an essential oil reed diffuser with a

light fruity aroma that's "chef's kiss" and bath oils and salts.

I'm not sure who got me a spa voucher but it's very much appreciated. I can't open all present because well, food is waiting and I'm famished.

Everyone is having a jolly time and half drunk from the champagnes.

We are talking about sex when a knock comes through.

It can only be MaNgidi, I wonder what does she want now.

"Ma—" I stop when I see a tall police officer standing on my front door.

How did he manage come this side and not the main house.

Confused I ask

"Evening Sir, is it the noise"

but we not making that much noise and besides houses in Mpophemeni are far apart for any of my neighbors to hear us.

“I heard someone is getting married” befuddled I answer

“Yes, I’m the one that’s getting married but what does—“ he sweeps me off my feet before I can finish my sentence.

Nomcebo is the first one to scream when she sees me in the arms of this police officer and they soon follow with defending screams.

I’m still a little confused wondering what’s going on when the officer puts me on my seat and unbutton his shirt.

“Dim the lights, queue music”

Nobody by Keith Sweat starts slow...

Mortification cannot even describe how I feel as I watch him start grinding slowly as he pulls the shirt off his shoulders and his hard six-packed stomach gets more visible.

Everyone screams as Thobeka increases the volume.

“Work it” who knew Yobanathi would be this wild.

Her and Lucas are throwing money at this man shaking his ass in front of me.

With a single pull, he rips off his 'tear away' pants leaving me face to face with his muscled ass.

Oh God, He is wearing a leather underwear.

Like I said I'm modified, even more so now that he is grinding close to my face.

I push him away and stand up.

"Jesu wase Nazareth's, what's happening here"

She shouts, looking flabbergasted.

"Heee the world must coming to an end. Qhamukile are you trying to send me to my early grave. Why is this man grinding on you"

We are all shocked looking at MaNgidi as she shouts.

"Wena get dressed and leave this place." We watch the police guy take his clothes and sheepishly walk out.

"Amanyala wam lawa Qhamukile. You busy

screaming making noise for a man while he's is rubbing his junk on you" Yoh she's now exaggerating.

"I'm sorry ma"

"Hai sorry yan. Switch off these lights and go to sleep" she shouts lastly before walking out.

"Yoh hai your mother-in-law is such a bore shem"

And just like the our fun night come comes to an end.

MNQOBI

"How do you even do this" Zwelethu says irritated holding a diaper.

Nomfundo has been crying since she woke up three hours ago and we all clueless about what to do.

She moved from Makhosini who was very patient to Mncedisi and now Zwelethu is trying to change her diaper with no success.

“How do I lock these two parts together” we all tried.

This diaper changing thing seem to be hard work and more so with a wailing baby.

I’m not seeing this angel that Qhamu says she is.

Her wails are just too much and not forgetting that she’s giving me a headache.

“Read the instructions” Mncedisi.

“I can’t do this”

Zwelethu says and throws the diaper on the floor, grabs a packet of cigarettes and walk out.

I could use a smoke myself.

“Call ma and ask” Langa suggest but we all scoff at that idea.

She left here angry and said Zwelethu must care for his daughter so I doubt she’ll be much help, that’s if she even answers her phone.

I take out my phone and go on YouTube. I don't know why didn't I think of this earlier.

After watching a few videos of diaper change tutorials I attempt to change Nomfundo.

It doesn't look as perfect as on the video but the straps are holding so that should do.

After that diaper struggle I won't even bother trying to dress her.

She will just stay with her diaper like this.

I pick her up and hush her trying to get her to calm down but she's having none of that.

How I wish she knew how to talk.

"Maybe she's hungry" Makhosini

Why didn't we think of that earlier.

I saw Qhamu make the bottle yesterday so I instruct Mncedisi to boil water and mix it with formula.

"I'm done, feed her" he didn't even shake it well but who am I to complain.

Next thing I know she's crying like I'm killing her.

Zwelethu comes in spreading like lightning and takes her from me.

“Dammit Mngqobi are you trying to kill my child, you burnt her marn”

oh fuck.

The bottle is still hot but luckily it's just droplets that fell on her and not that she got burnt while sucking.

“I'm sorry nana” her cries break my heart.

“Sorry Nkosazana ka baba, shh I'm here now”

He's trying to soothe her by rocking her back and forth but she's not budging.

The more he tries the harder she cries.

I feel so bad for giving her hot milk.

“Put that bottle in a freezer” Zwelethu shouts.

I do as told and watch as he he tries to calm her.

Once the bottle is cold Zwelethu feeds her and she sucks the bottle like life depends on it.

She must've been hungry.

After three hours of horror she finally sleeps.

I can even hear my thoughts.

We are all tired and just seating, watching her sleep on Zwelethu chest.

You'd swear she's not the same devil that was crying not so long ago.

She is cute when she's asleep.

Im seating on a two seater couch next to the sleeping Mncedisi.

He's tired, I am too.

“So this is my bachelor party in a nuts hell” it's after two am so I guess this has been my celebration.

“A very interesting one at that” Langa says sipping on his green bottle of castle light.

I prefer Heineken.

After all the chaos we needed a few cold ones.

Langa is seating on a three seater couch with Makhosini.

“I’m never having kids” Makhosini.

After today I want to say the same but unfortunately it’s too little too late for me.

The house is turned upside down with Nomfundo stuff all over the house.

We ruined about seven diapers and the kitchen is a mess with milk stains and power everywhere.

There’s open bottle of medicines everywhere. Don’t ask, I tried giving her medication after I burnt her.

And not forgetting that her clothes are all over the house.

“We have to clean this up before she devil comes back” I burst out in laughter.

Ma will definitely kill Zwelethu this time.

We all laugh until silence embrace us.

We are all tired.

“So I’m a father” Zwelethu says after a while looking at his daughter sleeping peacefully on his chest.

“We are fathers” Makhosini says.

As much as he says he doesn't want to have kids, unfortunately for him, all our kids are his too and he knows this.

"I've decided to stop looking for Mandisa—" Zwelethu drops his eyes to look at the sleeping beauty that is Nomfundo

"She needs me and I'm planning to do my best when it comes to her" he continues and kiss her forehead before lifting his eyes to look at us.

"We might occasionally burn her with milk but I know soon we will get the hang of parenthood"

We better get the hang of it fast because in less than five months we will be welcoming another baby.

This has been a rude awakening for Zwelethu, he didn't have time to prepare for Nomfundo like I have but I've got no doubt he's going to be the best father he possibly can be.

"To being a single father"

We all drink to that.

You have it folks, that's bachelor party.

[06/20, 18:38] Lynne: 74

"They made it"

"Why do you sound so surprised, of course, they made it"

"Hai, why must you always ruin my moments. Our children are happy can we not fight for once" I laugh.

Where have they been for all these years?

I shake my head and walk closer to them, as always they are seating on a big rock inter the willow tree but for a change, Mkhulu Ngcobo is not smoking.

"And who said I'm fighting"

They can't see me because they're backs are turned against me

"My two favorite old people, why do you fight so—" I stop mid-sentence when they simultaneously turn and looking at me.

“Baba” I say with incredulity

I thought it was a great grandfather.

“Ntonto wam” I feel tears gliding down my cheeks.

“Is it really you?” I ask astonished

My eyes must be deceiving me.

“Yes Nkosazana yam, come give your old man a kiss” his baritone voice still sounds the same.

I run and throw myself in his arms without thinking twice.

“Don’t cry, I don’t want you to be ugly on your wedding day”

I laugh squeezing him tighter

Once I’ve calmed down I let go and look at the man he is with, a total replica of Mnqobi.

instantaneously, my heart rate increases rapidly and so does my breathing, I’m hyperventilating. I’m trembling inside and I feel my muscles twitching and my hands sweating.

I swore never to forget this face.

I blink a few times trying not to think about what this man did to me, to my brothers and worse, my father.

The more I look at him, the more I find myself weak and lethargy.

“Qhamukile I taught you to greet your elders” My father scolds

I wipe quickly my tears and greet him.

“Nkosazana” he reciprocates.

The hoarseness of his authoritative voice still sounds the same

I feel my chest closing in, I’m suffocating.

It feels like I’m eight years again and I’m glaring at his hateful eyes as he lights that match, the match that took my father away.

He clears his throat, straightening his broad shoulders and asks

“How are you, my child”

He still wears the same cloak of confidence he did

those years back.

Sgidi

Even after his death he still haunts me.

I'm not sure if it's anger or just pure hatred erupting in me. I never thought I'd see his face ever again.

"Ntonto, my child. Bab'Ngcobo has something he needs to ask of you but before he speaks I'm asking you to listen and open your heart" my father pleads.

I don't want to hear anything he has to say but out of "respect" I'm obligated to listen.

Tears continue to roll down as Sgidi comes too close to me.

"I know you hate me. I don't blame you, my child, I'd hate me too. I'm not expecting you to forgive me after everything I did but I'm going to ask anyway. Qhamukile my child, please forgive me, I know no amount of apologies can make what I did right but I'm sorry my child" more tears fall down my face.

I hate that little hint of sincerity I hear in his voice.

I give him an icily gaze before looking away.

I hate myself for feeling so vulnerable and powerless towards a man who has taken so much from me but also how can I hate the one man that fathers the man I love.

“The past doesn’t matter anymore my child. Everything that has happened led to this day, to you and Mngobi finding each other. I know it too much of an ask and I’m not expecting you to forgive him but like myself, he too didn’t know what he was doing” my father.

How can he forgive Sgidi so easily after everything he’s done?

“Baba...” my voice breaking

“yebo Ntombi yam,” my father says after I remain silent for a while.

All my life I’ve dreamt about killing Sgidi painfully but here he is, in front of me and all I’m thinking about is forgive him. Not for him but for me.

I raise my eyes to look at Sgidi whose smiling nervously.

His thick brows meeting in the middle like Mngobi's,
I hate his contagious smile, it reminds me of
Mngobi's.

I can see this smile is only meant for me.

“Baba—“ I start

“I won't lie I'm hurt, you took the one person that
meant the world to me—“ I wipe my tears

I like that none of them is interrupting me

“But everything that has happened between our
families led me to Mngobi and for that, I can't hate
you. I... I...” it's takes everything in me to utter these
three words

“I forgive you” I finally say

I hear my father lets out a sigh of relief and Sgidi
flashes me a wide smile.

“Ndodakazi ng'yabonga” it's like he doesn't believe I
forgave him but again I can't believe myself either.

“A forgiving heart outshines any gold and silver in
beauty” he gives a warm hug before turning his
eyes to look at my father

“Shenge, your daughter is a remarkable young lady. I’m honored to have her as a daughter.” my father is smiling proudly as Sgidi continues

“My son is in good hands”

Out of nowhere, the two old grans appear

“Mkhulu” I never thought I’d be this happy to see them.

“Where have you been” I ask.

“We always with you” Mkhulu Ngcobo reply’s

“Yes, at all times” Mkhulu Buthelezi agrees

then where were they when Manqoba got killed, when my son, their grandchild died.

“Qhamukile everything happens for a reason and remember certain things like death are inevitable and can't be stopped, even by us”

is my grandfather a mind reader now

”mmhmm like your mother once told you, we all have a purpose in life, we all fulfilled ours, Manqoba and Qedausizi fulfilled theirs now fulfill yours. You

need to accept the last for what it is and learn to move on” mkhulu Ngcobo

Of course, he agrees with my gran.

Thobile appears alongside Manqoba and from a distance, there are two boys running around chasing *Taraxacum erythrospermum* (red-seeded dandelion) flowers.

I forgot how beautiful this garden is.

”Que” she manages to jolt me off from the boy who looks so much like Mnqobi.

”hey Que” her voice still sounds the same, high pitched and loud.

”Tee” she's flashing me with her pretty smile

”you look beautiful” she complimented.

”and you do too” she rolls her eyes as she has always do when I complimented her.

How I missed seeing her pretty face.

”I miss you”

” I know you do but just know I'm always with you”

that line.....

Now it's my turn to roll my eyes.

"is that Mxolisi" I ask pointing at the two boys.

She nods

"remember I once mentioned he'll have a playmate, we were best of friends and now our children are best of friends too" what is she saying.

"is that Sizi"

Again, she nods.

I let my tears fall as I run to them and crouch in front of my son.

"oh my baby" I hold on to him tightly that he starts fidgeting

"Is this really you" I'm touching him everywhere.

He looks so much like Mngqobi.

"Mama" he complains

He even sounds just like him.

I don't know what to say so I resort to just starting

him. He looks agitated if not creep out by me but he too stares at me impatiently. He occasionally shifts his gaze to Mxolisi who is running around, enjoying himself.

"tell my brother I love him," he says after a while and runs off to continue playing with Mxolisi.

I want to run after him, hold him tight and never let go but I let him be.

"Qhamukile" Manqoba manages to startle me out of my trance.

I could watch my son all day.

"I don't want to be the bearer of bad news but we all have to go now"

"why so soon and please don't disappear for so long again"

"Ntonto" my father

"what he means is we leaving now, all of us" my back is turned against them because I'm looking at my son but I fully turn to look at him.

I didn't prepare to see so many people.

”who...”

”these are all the people who lost their lives because of this feud. These are your grandfathers and uncles”

So many people...

”and they've all come to say their final goodbyes”

what does he mean final?

”This is the last time you see us like this. Peace reigns between us now so it's time for us to leave and rest” he answers my thoughts.

”baba no..”

”Qhamukile you have a heart of a lion, you proved to us all how resilient you are. You faced each obstacle with fortitude and through it all, you persevered, and that is why we all don't doubt that you will be fine” I feel tears tickling in the back of my eyes.

I know I found them creepy at first by now I need them.

”don't be so despondent, we will always be here

with you though you might not see us” Mkhulu Ngcobo adds

It's funny how he always agrees with Mkhulu Buthelezi in everything but argue when they are together.

”don't worry princess, you'll be fine.” Manqoba

I watch as they all walk towards the river and disappear into it one by one, Manqoba carrying Sizi over his shoulder and Thobile constantly looking back and waiving until it's just the two old men.

”Mkhulu” I shout before they reach the river banks they both turn to look at me

”you never told me how it all started”

They both laugh shaking their head

”treason...”

huh

Mkhulu Ngcobo walks back to me still shaking his head

”during the apartheid era, a traitorous somebody

told your grandfather I had committed treason, betraying all the people that fought so hard for liberation and back then treason was a very serious offense and back then there was only one sentence, death...”

”but of course, that was not true. He did not betray is Unfortunately it was already late when the truth came out. I had already killed him”

I didn't see my gran walking closer to us.

”so... Mkhulu Ngcobo didn't betray you”

”No he didn't, I was a fool to have believed he did.”

My gran

”We were the forces of nature, the government deemed us as terrorists because they knew how powerful we were. We were going to conquer and end apartheid. Your grandfather and I were stronger together and not everyone like that so we were played”

Ngcobi's face lightens up when he speaks of how great they were together

”Qhamukile all that is in the past. It's time you focus on the future and have your happily ever after” with that said they cross over.

”She can't still be sleeping, it's her wedding day for goodness sake” I hear Lucas’ voice in my sleep

I flap my eyes open, smiling.

It's my wedding day.

I'm too excited so I'll let Mnqobi narrate this day for you.

MNQOBI

“They are done” that’s Langa says putting his phone back in his pockets.

“Nomcebo updated you already” Mncedisi says and we all laugh.

He's been teasing him ever since he found out they had sex.

"And by the look of things he's getting some tonight" we all stop laughing and look at Sma

"What..." he says

I'm just surprised that's all

"Why do you all look so surprised, I'm a Ngcobo too" we all burst out laughing.

I think Sma has started having sex which was expected at his age like he said he's a Ngcobo and as you know we are a catch.

I shake my head and fasten my bow tie.

I'm happy the suit fits so perfectly well. All my brothers are wearing black matching suits with bow ties too and I'm wearing a two-piece suit, black pants, and white blazer. I paired it up with a white shirt that has black matching buttons, I look hot, what am I saying I always look hot.

Lol...

I finished the look with black dress greson shoes

and my signature trimmed fade hair cut.

Makhosini walks into my room as I clip on the little boutonniere on my blazer. He dressed up as well carrying a small box

“From Mrs Ngcobo” he says giving the box

This is a first.

Qhamu has never bought me any gifts before.

I chuckle at the thought and open the box.

Mmhm...

It's silver and black M initialed cufflinks, how thoughtful of her.

I smile and put them on.

MaNgidi walks in balancing the devil that is Nomfundo on her hip, Ma looking younger than she is in her long baby blue summer dress which she paired with a summer hat and a wedge.

I don't even want to look at Nomfundo after what we went through tow days ago with her and for almost getting killed for burning her.

She gives us her toothless smile jumping when she sees us.

She is in a blush lace tulle dress with a bow on the back and white ballerina shoes. I'm in love with the little blush hairband.

Lol, she looks too cute for words.

Have I mentioned how much I love this little girl when she's tearless?

MaTwala follows behind them, she is in a peach two-piece skirt looking elegant and chic.

“We are already late, Qhamu is done we need to leave, let's bow our heads” of course, I forgot about this part.

We gather around in a semi-circle and let her pray, she rushes out once we say Amen in unison.

It takes us under twenty minutes to get to Mvubukazi. Qhamu spent the night here so it should take her less.

Wow!

This place looks nothing like the tree I'm used to.

I'm not good at giving descriptions but I'll try since well my wife task me with this duty.

Thandiwe transformed our little sanctuary into a shabby chic kinda look.

“Shabby chic is a combination of two styles —it's less country than rustic, but not as “proper” as romantic. It's also a little bit vintage, with an emphasis on creating an eclectic feel through the use of mix-and-match pieces, antique items along with lots of fresh flowers” Thandiwe explained

You can't seriously think I know what shabby chic is, do you?

Lol. I'm surprised Qhamu trusts me to narrate this day.

Anyway, the aisles walkway is decorated with pink and white orchid flower leading to the gazebo under the tree—now flowers are my forte. And on each side of the walkway there are white Wimbledon chairs with little pink and white Lily's placed nicely all the way to the front.

It looks magnificent and simple

Just as Qhamu wanted.

Most attendees including the pastor are here already seated, Nomcebo's mother first walks down the aisle indicating that the ceremony is about to begin.

The initial plan was to walk down with MaNgidi but coming here I decided otherwise.

I grab both MaTwala's and MaNgidi's hands preparing to walk to the altar.

I see tears in MaTwala's eyes, I know how much of a big deal this is for her and frankly, I want to let go of the past and just be.

I hear her sniff as we continue to walk until we reach the gazebo.

Everyone laugh as Makhosini, Who is my best man walks down carrying the now sleeping Nomfundo in his arms.

I'm not sure as to when was all this planned but Langa is next walking alongside a very flushed and blushing Nomcebo. Langa is definitely dipping his

hands in her honey bee jar tonight as Sma said. Baby B as Qhamu calls him follows when all the bridesmaid and grooms men are standing in their post. He is our ring bearer.

Big up to whoever came up with the idea to use sunflower as a ring bearer, I love it. Next is Asa carrying a little banner with the words “for once she’s on time, here comes the bride” written on it.

I thought it would be funny since Qhamu is never early for anything.

Asa looks good in that little suit of his.

Everyone rise when Emlanjeni by Mafikizolo fills the silence. Thandiwe thought this would be a perfect song as our wedding song.

I fear tears stinging in the back of my eyes as I watch my wife slowly walk down the aisle with her hand hooked over the crook of Misuzulu’s arm.

She looks stunning in her well fitted white gown.

She’s not covering herself with a veil which I love.

Tears are streaming down her face before she

reaches me.

She blames her hormones.

“Ngcobo hurt her and I’ll snap your neck” Misuzulu warns

I’ve heard too many of his threats to actually feel threatened

I nod and smile, shaking his firm hand.

Qhamu gives Nomcebo her white and pink rose bouquet before we join our hands.

“Family, friends, and loved ones because this is a special day for us all, we want to start it in a special way. I’m going to ask you to bow our heads and invite the Holy Spirit—“

we all bow down and close our eyes as instructed by the pastor

“Gracious Father God, we give you thanks for your gift of enduring love and your presence here with us now as we witness the vows of marriage between Mngobi and Qhamu. We ask you to bless this

couple in their union and throughout their life together as husband and wife. Keep and guide them for this day forward. In the name of Jesus Christ. Amen”

“Amen”

we all chant.

Now that Qhamu is closer to me I see just how beautiful she is.

I’m holding on to both her hands as the pastor begins.

“Dear friends and family of Mngqobi and Qhamu, we welcome, and thank you for being part of this important occasion. We are gathered together on this day to witness and celebrate the marriage of Qhamu and Mngqobi. Every one of us here has a deep desire to love and to be loved and we all have our own love stories to tell. Some are short, others long.

Some are yet unwritten, while others are just getting to the good part. Every story has chapter and just like ours, Mngobi and Qhamu's love story has chapters too. Some are sad, while others are exciting and full of adventure, I'm sure some are forgettable, while others are not. All love stories have a beginning and their love story begun here, under this very same tree. Not so long ago they were rebellious teenagers who would do anything to be together. They sneaked out to meet here, this is where they had their meaning full teenage conversations, where they leaned about each other and where they feel in love. If only this tree could talk then maybe it would tell us more—“

I chuckle at a memory of almost making love to her here.

Those are good memories.

“This tree was their shelter, their home away from home. This is where their first chapter was written. And we get to share and witness where it all begun”

I'm smiling at my wife and she too is smiling back. I love the natural look the makeup artist gave her and who would have thought that a weave would look so good on her.

I'm sure Lucas is the one that convinced her I know how much my wife loves her natural hair.

“Qhamu and Mnqobi, your marriage today is the public and legal joining of your souls that have already been united as one in your hearts. Marriage will stretch you as individuals, deepen your love for one another and bring out the best in each other. So, enjoy your marriage and let it be a time of waking each morning and falling in love with each other all over again. Marriage is like an umbrella that covers and protects love. As 1 Corinthians 13 says, we learn that love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous or boastful; it is not irritable or resentful, nor arrogant or rude.

Love does not seek self, nor does it rejoice in the wrong, but rejoices in the right. Love bears and

believes in all things. Love hopes in all things
endure all things and love has no end.—“

The pastor pauses and looks at the crowd

“The couple has prepared their own vows, Mngqobi
it’s your turn”

I clear my throat and take out a piece of paper
where I tried as best as I could to write my vows

“Qhamu, you look so beautiful my love.” She
blushes

I guess that’s a good start right

“I never would have imagined that out of all the
people in this world, I would find someone as
special as you—“ that’s all I managed to scribble
down.

I chuckle lightly and squash the little paper

“I can’t tell you how I will love and cherish you
because I already do but I promise to be there to
catch you if you should stumble because I know
you can’t walk in heels.—“

I hear loud waves of laughter erupting from the

crowd.

I let them quieten down before continuing

” I will carry you over every threshold and fall in love with you every day. I promise faithfulness and patience, respect and lightheartedness, attentiveness, and self-improvement. I will celebrate your triumphs, and love you more for your failures—as your total fails in an attempt to dance, don’t take my word you will see for yourself when we dance”

She can't dance to save her life

” I promise to not only listen but to hear, not only, to be honest, but to trust—speaking of honesty, we seriously need to work on your snoring” laughter again

“I don’t snore” she complains

If only she didn’t.

“Alright my love, let me rectify something I promise not only to listen but to hear even though I might not agree with you” she rolls her eyes throwing her

head back.

“Sthandwa sam you have made me the happiest man in the world today by agreeing to share the rest of your life with me. I vow to take care of your kind heart and to always love you with all of mine. I want to grow old with you and best believe it cause you’re stuck with me for life.—“ chuckles

“give you this ring as a symbol of my love, my faith in our strength together, and my covenant to learn and grow with you.”

I slit the white sapphire band on her finger and watch her shedding tears of joy.

Through it all she managed to laugh too and that’s all I ever wanted.

Seeing her smile brings so much joy in me.

“I love you” I even wink at her.

now it’s her turn

She first attempts to wipe off her tears and clears her throat

“Mnqobi, my love. I vow to laugh, for real, at your

every joke even about my none existing snores”

I'll just record her next time

”In your arms, I have found a home, in your eyes, I have found compassion, in your heart, I have found love and in your soul, I have found a kindred spirit. You are my everything. I promise to support a family with you in a home filled with patience, love, and understanding. I will continue to love you faithfully and unconditionally through difficult and easy times—preferably easy because we've been through difficult before.” I know exactly what she means

”And like you said I'm stick with you for live, we'll you're stuck with me till the end of time. Even after death your soul will be still be stuck with mine—“ I hear ooh's and ahhh's amongst the crowd some even laughters

“I vow to put you first even in everything I do, I'll even watching soccer with you and you know how much I hate it. This ring is a promise that you will never have to face the world alone. I am so happy to

be able to tell you – I do, I will, and I always will.”

With that said she slit the Pegasus brushed titanium band on my finger.

I help her wipe her tears careful not to wipe off her make up.

Hormones huh

“We all heard the promised they’ve made to each other and now with the power vested in me I now call you husband and wife, Mngqobi you may kiss your wife” the pastor

I pull her closer to me with her waist and plant a longing kiss on her soft lips.

“I love you” she says breaking the kiss.

“I kn—“

I feel a little movement in her bump.

Don’t tell that’s the babies first movements.

“Ooooh is that—“

She nods emotions engulfing her all over again.

This is the first time our baby moves.

I place on my hands over hers on her tummy to feel a few more movements before my lazy child stops.

I'm beaming with happiness.

My wife has a ring on her finger, my child just moved. My work here is done!

Reception to follow

[06/20, 18:38] Lynne: 75

“Smile” I say to a sulking Mngqobi

“This is the last one I promise” He scoffs but smiles for the camera anyway

I don't know how many times have I unapologetically said that to him.

“I need a smoke” He complains

I roll my eyes and pose for the camera.

What has the camera ever do to men?

My brothers including his complained too but unlike them I'm able to bully Mngqobi in taking as many pics as I want.

"See I told you we done" I say after the camera click
He smiles shaking his head and walks away.

Choosing this place for the ceremony was just perfect, the surrounding trees and the green grass gives this place life and let's not forget what Thandiwe's remarkable work.

I take more pictures with the girls and Asa, he's the only kid who loves the camera.

After Mngqibo's smoke, we all drive back to Mpophemeni.

I didn't think Thandiwe would be able to transform our back yard into a nice reception but she did.

There's light draping from tree to tree giving our back yard a romantic scenery. brown Wimbledon chair and brown matching tables are mostly decorated with glass wear and placed nicely in the

center of the yard. I'm not sure how she managed to put everything together so well but I love it.

I love how jolly the mood is, everyone is happy.

Nomcebo is the one leading wedding songs never mind that there's a DJ .

Mnqobi and I do our little practiced step all the way to our table and sit.

My feet are killing me and I'm close to passing out due to exhaustion.

After a short prayer, bab'Themba takes the mic.

His speech short and lovely which I like. One thing you should know about bab'Themba is that given the opportunity he will ramble on about how much of a good man my father was.

He ponders a bit on how well I've behaved over the years and how proud he is of me.

I'm a little emotional but relived if not ecstatic when he gives the mic back to the MC without mentioning any embarrassing stories.

I feel nervous when MaNgidi stands up though.

We all know how she can be.

“Good evening everyone—“ she starts

Can you believe she doesn't trust Zwelethu with Nomfundo after she left her with him an entire night.

“Who would have thought we would be all here celebrating Qhamu and Mngqobi's wedding after everything. It's no secret that our family history is bittersweet but here we are. I remember one afternoon when Mngqobi came home heartbroken because he couldn't be with the only girl he loved, then I didn't know it was Qhamu but I knew he loved her. He was torn and ready to give up but I told him to fight for his love and look at us now. Boy boy—“ I see Mngqobi squirm with embarrassment.

He needs to make peace with that fact that Ma will never stop calling boy boy.

“I might have not given birth to you but you're my son, I'm so proud to call you my son.—“ I see tears in her eyes

“And not only am I proud to have you as a son but because of you I now have a daughter. I first saw

Qhamu at the clinic where I used work, she was such a caring and loving young girl, I felt connected to her before I even knew who she was. Qhamu my baby, continue to be as caring and loving as you were. I've got no doubt my son is in good hands and in you and I got a daughter I've always wanted. I wish you two a happy and prosperous marriage. Seeing how happy and in love makes everything we went through worth it, the fights, the lives we lost and not forgetting the hiding I gave you—“

I totally forgot about that

“But everything it's how it should be, congratulations my children”

I'm in tears by the time she finishes.

Zanele shares the lime light with Lucas, their speech is warm and full of love.

Katlego's speech is as sweet if not more. He narrates how Mngqobi and I first got married and he still reiterate how stupidly in love we were.

I love that Nqaba is not being his crazy self, he mentions how glad he is that he's gained himself a

brother and a smoking buddy in Mnqobi.

I roll my eyes when he reminds him that I'm still his younger sister so it's his duty to make Mnqobi's life difficult.

I'm tired not to mention hungry when we get to bab'Mkhize

“Mnqobi I don't know how did you do it because I've known Qhamu for far too long to know how stubborn she can be. I'm not going to forget that you took a bus two weeks straight when you were still courting her and let's not forget you had to walk all the way back—“

I laughed so hard when Mnqobi told me that.

“Mfana wam, you proved that love is patient. Qhamu didn't speak to you for that two weeks but you didn't miss a single trip. You proved love has no age, you were so young and yet you showed the rawest love I'd ever seen. My children I want to congratulate you. Continue to love and support each other, I wish you all the best”

Tears again.

I'm happy he's the last one so I can finally eat.

Now that everything is concluded it's time to get down.

Well my husband mentioned I can't dance so I won't even attempt to.

I'm chilling with the ladies, Amanda, Zanele and Lwandle when Nomcebo under the tent when Nomcebo rushes in like she's being chased.

"and then, why..."

"Qhamu follow me, now" oh my forever dramatic cousin

She grabs my hand before I can even stand up and drags me away from the crowd.

I'm shocked I won't lie even more so now that we hiding behind a taxi that transported some people who came here.

"I hope this is not about Langa"

I've noticed how he's been ignoring her

"I'm so sorry Mzala, I didn't know he'd be here. I

shouldn't have told him about today.....”

I wonder what is she rambling about

”Qhamukile” a voice behind me boldly says.

I’ll never forget this voice.

I can’t help turn.

What the hell...

“What the hell are you doing here”

“I’m sorry I’m late” he says

His voice is always calm and cool and I hate it.

“Lungelo I said what are you doing here” I'm trying not to raise my voice.

I look at Nomcebo angrily. She's the one I should be furious at.

” I swear I didn't know he was here until a few minutes ago. Mzala I would never do that to you”

I ignore her and look at Lungelo again

”leave, now” I half shout.

“Baby, what’s happening” another voice says

behind us.

If I want angry now I am.

“Nokhaya what are you doing here” Amanda asks
I should have known she'd follow us.

I sometimes forget they know each other.

This Nokhaya girl is like a bad rash, you can't keep her away no matter how much you try.

”baby this is Qhamu, the girl I told you about” clap once.

Is he seriously introducing me to this girl?

I let out a sinister laugh.

Am I getting tested so early in my marriage?

”Nokhaya I need to take this boyfriend of yours and disappear before I do something ill never regret”

”oh you know each other” he sounds surprised

”yes, baby we need to leave. We can't be here. I swear Qhamu when he said we going to a wedding I didn't think he meant your wedding”

Lungelo ignores her and looks me straight in the eyes

“Qhamu can talk—“ he runs his eyes at Amanda first, then Nomcebo.

“privately” I huff frustrated.

”just leave” I shout this time.

”I’m not going anywhere until you listen to what I have to say”

Seeing how adamant he is I relent and we move to stand away from everyone.

I hate to be doing this but I don't want Mngobi to find out so the quicker I talk to Lungelo the better.

The last time I saw Mngobi he was drinking happily with his brothers and his in-laws.

“Talk” I shout again.

“Look I’m sorry to have come like this but you know you’ve been a huge part of my life. Congratulations by the way, it's was a beautiful ceremony” I'm guessing he saw everything.

Stalking tendencies but I won't ask

I just need him to leave

”Qhamu you hurt me..” oh no

”Lungelo just stop okay. I didn't hurt you. What we had was a fling and that's it”

”to you but it's was love, it's live to me. Seven after your brother killed Khaya I still loved you—“ he’s not serious

“Lungelo I don't have time for this, there was no enough evidence to proof Mondli actually killed Khaya so please leave before my husband sees you”

“Relax im not here to start trouble but I miss you. I don't want our friendship to end”

“Listen here, what we had is over. I thought I made myself clear. I never want to see you again. Please leave”

“Okay okay, I'm leaving. But I need to know, did you have feelings for me”

Why does it matter

“It’s been so long Lungelo”

“I know but I can’t get over it. I want to get over you Qhamu but I can’t. I know we can’t date but can we at least be friends”

He is begging.

“No, I’m sorry but you need to leave”

“Admit it, you have feelings for me” this guy is more sick than I thought

“No I don’t Lungelo, I don’t have feelings for you, never have and never will. leave dammit”

“What’s going on here”

Oh Damn

World please swallow me now and spit me out later.

I know I’m innocent but my heart won’t stop beating erratically after hearing my husband’s voice.

Time stills and silence reigns.

I’m afraid to even turn to look at him.

”Qhamukile, what's going on here” the calmness in his voice tells me he is deranged.

Five months later.....

MNQOBI

I hate to be doing this, especially now but I've got no choice.

My toiletry bag is already pack so I finish packing the rest of my clothes and drag my suitcase down stairs.

She's sitting on a couch wiping her tears which I don't understand because she forced this on me.

If it it wasn't for her I wouldn't be leaving.

“Qhamu” she quickly wipe away her tears and turn

to my direction

“Are you crying”

“No, I just something in my eye” I nod and get close to her

“I can stay if you want me to”

She shakes her head

“No it’s okay, this is a big deal for you, remember this is for us. I’m just being silly”

“Are you sure” I have to ask again

the doctor said she’s not due in another week but i can’t help worry, she might give birth while I’m not around and I wouldn’t forgive myself if something were to happen to her and my daughter.

You heard right, a daughter.

She rolls her eyes and takes a bite at her peanut buttered apple.

I want to vomit just seeing her eating that.

“Yes I’m going to be fine besides the baby will not be here for another week and you’ll be back on

Saturday so don't worry” I nod still looking at her apple.

Do all pregnant woman eat weird foods because Qhamu eats all sorts of weird combinations.

“I’ll be back first thing on Saturday. The doctor’s number is on speed dial. Call me if anything happens”

“Nothing will happen—“ I huff

“Okay my love, you’ll be the first person I call should something happen. I’ll sleep in the bedroom downstairs. My phone will be closer to me at all times”

She thinks I’m being neurotic

why doesn’t she see that I’m worried here.

“Promise me you’ll be fine”

” I promise”

I crouch and kiss her protruded belly.

“Hey Ntombi ka Baba, I’m leaving for a few days but I’ll be back. Be a good girl for mommy. Don’t stress

her out please. Love you to the moon and back”

I kiss her belly again before standing up straight

Unlike her brother, this baby is much active. She kicks a lot and Qhamu looks very much pregnant unlike the first time.

Her stomach is big and ready to poop, her feet are swollen, and let's not forget that she gained weight like any other pregnant woman out there.

Her boobs are much fuller and of course, I enjoy them every chance I get which is minimal because she complains about their sensitivity.

I love the “glow” of pregnancy on her.

”I'm sure your princess will be perfectly fine when you come back”

You should've seen how happy I was when the doctor told us the gender.

I still can't believe I'm having a girl, I'm going to kill any guy who dares to look at her.

”The temperature is set in the bedroom and sis iTholakele will be here first thing tomorrow and

Ma is also anohkne calm away”

Am I overbearing like Qhamu says I am?

“Mngobi please, I told you I don't need a helper and baby I'm pregnant or cribled to relax besides Zanele will be here any minute now but you need to leave”

I guess I now have to leave her.

Langa is driving me to the airport.

“How is she” he asks as he drives out

“She pretends she's good but she was crying” he laughs shaking his head

“It's hormones I guess, well that's what Zibuyile says

Zibuyile is his now girlfriend, this relationship looks promising.

I'm just happy the little fling he had with Qhamu's cousin is over.

“When are you having kids”

“Hai hai, I have Nomfundo and Siyeza will be here soon so I don't need more” this clown calls my child

Siyeza.

I shake my head and let him drive.

A few hours later I land in Johannesburg. I haven't been here for a while but Johannesburg is still the same.

Katlego is waiting for me when I get off the plane.

We exchange greeting and he drives me to my hotel room.

“So Zulu boy for how long are you here for”

“My meeting is tomorrow then another on Friday but first thing Saturday I'm leaving”

He nods looking ahead on the road.

“Then let's hit the club on Friday, Thozama is back in town and wants us to meet for old time sake” I haven't seen her in forever so it will be good to catch up with her.

I spend the rest of the day with Katlego. He has serious issues with the mother of his daughter and I hope they solve it before it's too late.

His father is sick I just hope he recovers.

On Thursday, I go to my meeting and knock them off their feet. Repeat the same thing on Friday until I have to meet the guys.

”Tho Tho” she looks very sophisticated and still as beautiful as I knew her.

She now works for an auditing company and by the look of things all is well with her.

It's a shame Simphiwe could not make it.

We spend the rest of our Friday chilling and catching up, well, that's before Katlego suggest we move to a hipper scenery.

Qhamu..

Zanele has been good company, I haven't seen her since she's become scares. If I didn't know her I'd say she's avoiding me.

I've just gotten off the phone with Mngqobi, rolling my eyes.

He calls me every second of the day.

I'm drinking hot chocolate while Zanele has an unopened wine bottle in front of her.

"I'm taking that wine back if you're not going to drink it"

"Arg, I don't feel like drinking" I look at her questionably.

She never says no to a good wine.

"Mmm are you sure you're okay"

I know Zanele, something is wrong.

"Yes I'm good. Let me make myself a cup of that hot chocolate"

She's hasn't looked at me since she got here on Wednesday

I don't want to jump the gun but something is wrong with her.

She comes back with a full cup and a slice of pizza.

Zanele always complains about eating junk food, especially after ten at night.

“Hungry” I ask

We ate a few hours ago so she can’t possibly be hungry.

“Not really I just wanted something to snack on” we watching tv talking about Lucas and his new boyfriend when she gets a call.

She abruptly rushes out.

I wonder.

I flip through the channels until she comes back looking like the world has come down falling.

“And then, what’s wrong”

“Nothing, that was Thabani” that’s her new boyfriend.

They have been dating for a couple months now and I couldn’t be happier for her.

I’m so glad she’s finally over Gcina.

“So why do you look so sad”

I know id be happy after speaking to my husband.

“Qhamu you don’t understand, he wants to marry me”

“Then what’s the issue” I want to get excited but her somber mood make it difficult

“It’s complicated. I feel like its too soon and Gcina...”

“Hai Zanele you’re not going to think about Gcina. When are you going to learn that he’s just selfish and a womanizer? He has shown you so many times that he doesn't love nor respect you. Forget about him and focus on Thobani”

“your brother doesn’t love me I’ve made peace with that it's just that's I wish things were different and I wasn’t carrying—“ she stops when she realizes she has already said too much

“Carrying what—Zane what’s wrong”

All signs are there, the unexplainable glow, the

eating.

But I'm not prepared to hear the answer to this heavy question I'm about to ask

“Zanele are you...”

“Pregnant, Yes” Zanele says shedding a few tears
“whose the father” she looks at me once and lets out a soft cry

”Does he know”

How can Gcina do this to Zanele though, being pregnant on it's own is difficult but having a Gcina as the father makes it more difficult.

She shakes her head still crying

“How can I tell him, he’ll think I’m trying to ruin his relationship”

“Nonsense, he knew he was in a relationship when he slept with you so now he needs to man up” she continues to shake her head

”no, he doesn't need to know because I'm not keeping it” I won't lie in hurt hearing her say that,

this is my blood we talking about but I respect her decision.

”How far along are you” I do hope she changes her mind

”three weeks”

” I see. Zanele I'm not going to tell you what you should and shouldn't do but I think you should think things through. I don't want you to make a decision you'll one day regret”

I let her cry her pain until we both go to bed.

I'm sound asleep next to Zanale when I'm woken up by a sharp pain on my lower back and lower abdomen.

I sit up straight and take in the pain until it eases. Thirty minutes later that excruciating pain comes back tenfold and this time and the pain has radiated down my legs, particularly my upper thighs and I think I peed on the bed too.

I forced to stand on my feet and pace around until the pain dies. I quickly change in another set of

nightwear and shake Zanele.

I need to change the bed covers.

”mmmm” she loves her sleep

”Zane I need to change the bedding”

”why” God

How am I going to tell her I wet the bed?

”nothing just wake up” she opens her eyes annoyed and move to sit on the ottoman

”hai I'm never sleeping with you again. I don't understand why do I have to wake up just for you to change the bed in the middle of the night” she complains

Another sharp pain on my lower back just as I change the bedding

I'm in tears now.

”Qhamu what's wrong” now Zanele is fully awake and not only that bit scared too.

” I don't know Zane, the pain is killing me. Help me”

I'm leaning over the bed trying to breathe but the pain is just unbearable.

”oh no Qhamu, I think you're in labor”

[06/20, 18:39] Lynne: 76

MNQOBI

maneuvering through the drunk crowd is the only thing I detest about going out but I admit, I'm enjoying this.

The loud music and the dancing, the vibe. I missed it all.

Don't get me wrong, I love my life with Qhamu but I also miss the carefree young man I once was.

I bumped into a few full people, apologizing along the way until I reach our table.

Katlego is half-drunk and Thozama is still at it with taking pictures.

With a quick glance at my wristwatch, the clock

reads 23:19. And in as much as I missed this, I need to get some sleep. I need to be on a plane back home in less than six hours and I doubt I'll manage to wake up should I get drunk than I already am.

I down my drink and tell them we need to leave.

It takes me some convincing before they agree.

Katlego says he's drinking his sorrows away and Thozama is just drinking cause she wants to.

After 30 minutes we finally leave.

Driving here was a bad idea I think to myself as we walk back to where we parked.

Katlego is too drunk, it's a miracle he's hasn't fallen with the way he's staggering. I'm forced to drive. I first drop Katlego at his flat in Rosebank and proceed to Melrose Arch with Thozama.

"We should do this more often" she says as I turn into Biermann Avenue.

"I don't know about often but it was nice"

She turns her body to face me as I drive.

Katlego will get his car when he wakes up

“I miss you Mnqobi, you know even after all these years I still love you”

I think it's the alcohol talking

“And I'm married Thozama” I say irritated.

Not so long ago she couldn't stop talking about her boyfriend and now she loves me?

This one is crazy.

“And I love my wife” I add to remove any thoughts she might have about us being together

“I know, I know. I was just saying”

We drive in silence until I park at the entrance of the hotel.

It's such a coincidence that we booked in the same hotel.

I give the valet the car keys after grabbing my phone from the glove compartment where I tossed it in after speaking to Qhamu.

Thozama is walking behind me as I get into the elevator. I'm just happy she's a floor above me.

“I had fun tonight, it’s a pity I have to leave in a few hours. I would’ve loved to spend some more time with you guys” I say as the elevator shoots us up

“I’m glad you had fun”

I give her a hug when we stop at my floor and walkout

The first thing I do when I get to my room is to put my phone on the charger, remove my shoes then go to the bathroom to wash my face.

I’m too tired to shower so I just remove my shirt and jeans and get into bed.

I’m in bed, in fact, I feel sleep slowly consuming me when I hear a faint knock, at first it feels like I’m dreaming but I hear it clearer when the person on knocks again. frustrated I get off the bed, wear my jean, walk barefoot, and shirtless to go open the door.

“Thozama” I’m surprised to see her. I thought she’d be in bed by now.

“Mngobi”

“What’s wro—“ I don’t get to finish my sentence as her lips capture mine.

My first instinct is to push her back

“What the hell”

“I’m sorry, I thought...God, I don’t know what was I thinking. I’m so sorry” her eyes already glistening with tears

“Thozama, we’ve been through this” I say defeated.

I know how much this girl loves me but I’m afraid I can’t give her what she wants.

“I know, I know. It’s just the being with you, tonight brought back all those feeling I thought I buried”

Sighs

I signal for her to get in.

I show her a couch to sit on and I sit next to her after giving her a bottle of water.

“Thozama I know I hurt you and I’m sorry”

“I know you’re married Mnqobi but being with you makes so happy. I tried to forget about you but after

seeing tonight I went back to square one. I don't want to feel like this everything when I think of you, do you wonder why I didn't come to your wedding. I love you Mngqobi and no matter how much I try I can get over you"

I know she was tipsy or not drunk when we left the bar but I've got no doubt that she is sensible right now.

This is not the alcohol talking but her.

I run my hands on my head and sigh loudly

"Thozama I don't know what to say anymore. I wish I knew what to say or what do to make you fall out of love with me but I can't. I belong to someone else and I'm so..."

"Sorry... I know. Look, I don't want to cause any trouble between you and Qhamu. I just thought maybe we would rekindle our spark and have fun tonight but I guess I'm wrong"

"Very much wrong"

Qhamu May be miles away but I'll never cheat on

her. Not even with her.

I'm actually bewildered that she would think I'd cheat on my wife.

My phone rings just as I'm about to ask her to excuse me.

The Mrs flashes my screen.

I wonder what is she doing up so late

"Miss me" I answer

I wasn't prepared to hear this panicked voice I don't know

"Mngobi Qhamu is in labor"

"What" she can't be.

The doctors said she's not due until a week or so.

"Where is she"

"Midlands" only now I hear that it's Zanele's voice.

"Okay, Fuck tell her not to give birth until I get there"

"Mngobi, babe, what's wrong" Thozama asks worriedly.

“Mnqobi she can’t possibly stop labor, just get here” Zanele shout, just not sure why though but it’s stupid of me to want my wife to delay labor.

“Fuck, I’m on my way” I tell her before hanging up.

Thozama offers to drive me to the airport.

I give her a disapproving look when she first wants to go change her skimpy nightdress, I don’t have time waste and it was just inappropriate for her to come to me dresses in that manner.

I get into the driver’s seat while she on the passenger and I speed to the airport.

Thank God it’s a night so there’s no traffic.

It’s after 1 am when we arrive at the airport.

I don’t even say goodbye to her I just grab my bag and rush inside.

To my total dismay, the earliest flight to Pietermaritzburg will only be at 4:15.

Fuck.

I only notice when I go through my phone that

Zanele, My brothers called me a few times.

I first call Langa.

“Bafo” He sounds wide awake

“Qhamu is in Hospital, she’s in labor”

“I know. We are all here, just get here as soon as you can”

I pace back and forth for the rest of the hours until I board the plane.

An hour and a half later I arrive at the hospital.

I’m frantic as the receptionist directs me to the maternity ward.

All my brothers, including Qhamu’s brothers, are all seating on steel benches in the waiting area.

“Where is she” I ask

“In the ward, the doctor said she’s not ready for giving birth as yet” Mncedisi looks drained I’m sure they’ve been here all night.

I leave them there and walk into her walk.

She's pacing around.

I let out a sigh of relief when I see her big belly, understand this, I know she's in pain but I want to hear when she delivers our baby.

Her robe is opened in the back exposing her.

"Baby, I came as soon as I could" I rush to her side but the look she gives me stops me at my tracks

"I want you to get out of here"

Okay. What have I done now?

I've heard how a woman goes crazy during child labor but this I didn't expect.

"Baby—"

"I said leave" she shouts

"Mnqobi she's getting upset, please go out" I didn't even see MaNgidi.

"But ma—" she too gives me a look.

I've got no choice but walkout.

Zanele joins me after a few minutes

“Why is she angry” she scoffs before answering
“Mngobi you’d be dead if she wasn’t in labor right
now, what the hell were you thinking”

now I’m confused

“What are you talking about”

“Don’t you dare deny this”

“Zanele cut the dramatics and tell me what’s wrong
with Qhamu” I’m a very impatient man

“Qhamu heard the woman you were with over the
phone”

What...

I give her a puzzled look.

What woman is she on about now?

“What.. what are you talking about”

I’m seriously confused, I’d never cheat on my wife.

“Don’t act dumb Mngobi, I heard her too. She even
said, babe”

Oh fuck..

I walk back into the ward, calmly.

“Qhamu I can explain. I wasn’t with anyone. I didn’t cheat you on” her contractions has stopped so she just looks at me blankly

“I swear on my—“

“Don’t, just don’t Mngqobi. I heard her. Don’t lie to me”

“I’ll explain once this is over but trust me. I’m not cheating on you” right on queue she gets another contraction.

I’m by her side in a blink of an eye.

I hate seeing her in pain like this.

“Take this baby out Mngqobi” she has tears in her eyes.

I can’t take this, once the pain stops I rush out and call for a doctor.

I’m relieved when I see Dr. Mbhele our gyne walks to me.

She gives a warm smile before greeting

“I’m glad you’re here. Your wife is doing well” doing well?

My wife is in pain.

“She’s in a lot of pain, can’t she deliver now” she continues to smile and walks into the ward.

Qhamu is now laying on the bed with MaNgidi rubbing her back.

“Let’s see how far along are you” I feel uncomfortable when she puts her hand inside my wife

“4cm dilated, you’re doing so well” she says to Qhamu.

My wife is wincing in agony.

“What does that mean” I ask

She removes the latex gloves and straps the fetal heart monitor around Qhamu’s belly before giving me her full attention.

“As labor nears, the cervix may start to thin or stretch and open (dilate). This prepares the cervix for the baby to pass through the birth canal”

so basically that's her body stretching to accommodate the baby when it's born.

“How long before she gives birth”

The doctor chuckles softly and tells me she needs to be 10 cm dilated.

“And how long will it take for her to get there”

I'm horrified when she explains that it depends and in some instances it can take up to two days.

Imagine two days of Qhamu in pain.

Another contraction.

I start pacing when she screams and rolling around the bed.

how much more pain can she endure.

This is just too damn much.

“Mnqobi, please leave” Qhamu says through gritted teeth when the pain stops.

“I'm not leaving you” she needs to make peace with that and fast if she doesn't want to raise her blood pressure.

“I’m afraid Mrs. Ngcobo, Contractions during this phase will last about 45-60 seconds with 3-5 minutes rest in between. They will feel much stronger and longer—and as labor progresses, there is less and less time between contractions to relax try and save you energy. I know this is hard but let him be here for you. Believe me, you need him here”
the doctor raises her eyes to look at me

“Mr. Ngcobo please understand this is a very painful and difficult time for her. I ask you don’t stress her. Everything is going well so far and I don’t need her stressed which might cause complication”

I don’t even want to know what complication she refers to.

“Qhamu, remember to breathe as I showed you. I’ll be back to check on you again”

With that said she walks out.

I don’t know what to do as I watch Qhamu go through each contraction with agony.

She's shouting that this is all my fault and I should've have impregnated her.

I see Ma trying to holding in her laughter when Qhamu threatening to cut off my penis.

A nurse walks in reads the vital signs monitor before walking out, it takes all the restraint in me to pull her back and demand that she give her pain medication.

two later she's only 6cm dilated

I know the pain I'm feeling as she digs her nails deep in my flesh is nothing compared to what she's feeling so I endure as she pinches and almost breaks my fingers with her stronghold.

By the time she's 8cm dilated I'm numb to the pain she's inflicting.

"I hate you, I hate you, I hate you, I hate you"

she sings as another contraction hits her.

I know she doesn't mean it.

"I'm here" the look she gives me is enough to mute me.

“Breath In... and out...” I don’t know how does MaNgidi remains so calm with everything that’s happening.

She’s rubbing Qhamu where she strongly feels pain which is on her abdomen, groin, and back.

“Mngobi I can’t, tell the doctor to take this baby out. I can’t anymore”

it breaks me to listen to her painful cries.

I press the nurse call systems that are found on the side of the hospital bed.

Soon after another nurse walks in.

“The pain is unbearable, can you get her any pain meds please”

I plead.

“Let me get the doctor”

I’m happy when I see our gyne walk inside and give Qhamu an epidural.

I’ve read how this Spinal injection of epidural steroids can cause severe, potentially deadly side

effects. these side effects can include blindness, paralysis, and strokes but I don't ponder on that.

She's calm and that's all that's important now.

The doctor refuses when she asks to go to the restroom.

I've also read about how during labor other women get extremely strong waves that feel like diarrheal cramps.

It's after Four pm when the doctors say she finally reaches 10 cm dilation.

Qhamu and I briefly discussed this and then I didn't want to see any part of this but after seeing how much pain she went through I'm not leaving

"I'm going to count to three then I'll need you to push as hard as you can until I tell you to stop. Understand"

Qhamu and I both nod.

She's holding my hand tightly as the doctors remind her to breath

"Now one...two...three...push" with all the strength

in her she pushes as hard as she can.

“Good, now breath and give me another push”

my wife does as instructed

“Good that’s great... breath in and out for me”

I’m not brave enough to peep in-between Qhamu’s legs to see what’s happening but the doctor explained that as the baby’s head emerges she will momentarily ask she stops pushing while the baby’s mouth and nose are suctioned to clear out amniotic fluid and mucus.

“It’s important to do this before the baby starts to breathe and cry” MaNgidi added.

“You’re doing great baby” I say wiping sweat off her forehead.

I see ma rolling her eyes, I ignore her and concentrate on Qhamu.

“It’s almost over” I say

Now all nurses the room roll their eyes.

Just like Ma, I ignore them.

“Ready... “ the doctor says

“the head is out now the shoulders, I need you to give me another big push...One...two...three... push”

I feel the bones on my hand crushing that’s how hard she’s holding on to me as she pushes.

“Good... now another push for the lower shoulder”

I swear when this is over I’ll be needing a cast for my broken bones.

“Now one last push”

I hear a splash which is followed by a loud wail.

I wipe away my tears and kiss Qhamu on her dry lips.

Damn, I love this woman.

“It’s a boy” the doctor say as she puts my crying son on Qhamu’s chest.

I laugh out loud.

I thought we having a girl.

I watch tears stream down my wife’s face as she

watches the nurse wipes the vernix caseosa off the baby.

“a boy” Qhamu repeats.

I nod.

You know when she told me about her dream I just thought Sizi was high on those flowers from that garden but I guess the scan lied.

“I love you Qhamu” I kiss her before kissing my son.

I cut the umbilical cord like I did with Sizi and go back to holding her hand tightly as the nurse takes the baby away.

“4,2 kg” fuck!

no wonder Qhamu was so big.

Her after birth is smooth. I hear other mothers actually eat their placenta, crazy huh.

They stitch up her tears as I watch her eyes slowly shut and she drifts to sleep.

I don't know who do all these women do it but hai you deserve all the praise.

Childbirth is not easy, I witnessed that today.

I didn't think it would be possible to love Qhamu more than I do but damn I've fallen for her tenfold more.

I wipe away the remnants of my tears as Ma laughs at me.

QHAMU

The First thing I feel when I open my eyes in the excruciating pain on my abdomen then followed by another on my hoo haa.

I immediately wince but my lips lift up into a smile when I think about the little man I've just given birth to.

All the pain and suffering I endured during hours of labor went was worth it.

He's my pride and joy.

"What are you smiling for" I hear Mngobi's voice

For some reason, I knew he'd be staring at me.

Let's agree that he's a creep, well my creep.

"I'm just happy" I finally open my eyes.

Just as I thought my husband is hovering over me.

SHM

He kisses my nose before settling back in his chair.

"How are you feeling"

I totally ignore the little dazed feeling I get when I try to sit up straight.

"Wait, let me help" Mngobi presses a few buttons on the bed and it pops up

Now that I'm comfortable and seeing his ugly face, I remember hearing that girl's voice but I dismiss that memory and try and focus on what's important.

"How are you feeling" he asks again.

worry laced in his voice

“I’ve been better. How long was I knocked out for”

“A couple of hours” I nod

“So where is he, have you seen him”

“Yes I’ve seen him—“ of course, he’s seen him

“He looks like me” he gloats

I roll my eyes.

I’m sure he took something from me. Maybe my eyes.

I hope.

A nurse walks in pushing a baby bed.

I involuntarily smile.

“Here is your little man, he needs to be fed” I’m smiling like a retard as the nurse hands him to me and of course, he looks like Mngobi.

Couldn’t he at least take one feature from me?

“Hey baby” I can’t help think about Sizi

They look so much alike.

I wipe my tears and smile at Mngobi.

I'll be angry at him later, right now I just need to enjoy this moment and be happy with my little family.

I give the baby to Mnqobi.

I watch him as his own tears fall.

“Mfana ka baba”

he kisses his small lips

“You'll endure pink clothes, for now, my son” I laugh because he's wearing a pink long sleeve romper with a matching pink ribbed beanie and to make matters worse he's in a pink blanket.

It's not my fault the scan said it's a girl.

I should've trusted Sizi.

“Oh he will, for a while”

And MaNgidi warned us but we were both too excited so we bought and bought and bought so he'll just have to outgrow all the pink clothes we bought.

“No son of mine will wear pink. I'm going shopping

the minute you both get discharged” I roll my eyes and wipe my breast.

”will you also change his nursery” everything is pink and princessy.

“You bet on it”

With the help of the nurse, Mngqobi hands him back to me and I breastfeed, as painful as it is I do it.

I watch as he sucks on my breast as life depends on it.

I hear so this is a good time to begin bonding and I look forward to it.

I can't wait for him to look at me as he sucks on his milk.

I quickly wipe a tear as I continue to watch him.

I love him so much.

Is it too early for him to open his eyes?

“He’s hungry” Mngqobi is too close to us watching as his son eat me out.

“It looks like he’s going to love food” we all laugh

along with the nurse.

He feeds up until he's fully satisfied and sleeps.

The nurse walked out so it's just Mngobi, I, and our son.

I'm watching him sleep. I don't even want to put him down.

"He needs a name" I totally forgot about that

"You name him" we haven't discussed any names but I just thought I'd let him name him

He remains silent, just in deep thoughts for a while before smiling

"So Sizi was not ours. His purpose was solely to make peace between us, he belonged to our ancestors but this one is ours, he is our new beginning. What do you think of Sqalosethu"

"Sqalosethu" I recite the name

"Sqalosethu Ngcobo" I think I like it.

"It's perfect" I say looking at him before turning my eyes back to the sleeping Sqalo.

I love listening to his breathing and the tranquility he brought to my world.

“Hello hello, guess whose here”

did I say tranquil?

I take that back.

“Siyeza is finally here”

Lucas’ loud voice is followed by the whole Buthelezi’s combined with the Ngcobo’s testosterone.

I hope the name Siyeza will finally stop now.

It’s rowdy and chaotic in no time.

As always, Nqaba is on Mngqobi’s case. Gcina is arguing with Langa that Sqalo is part of Buthelezi as much but Langa is having none of that.

Rolling my eyes.

Makhosini and Misuzulu are just watching and holding in their laughter as Mncedisi forcefully take the baby from Mngqobi, who took him away from him the minute all of them stepped into the ward.

In no time my baby is awake and crying softly.

“Ah he cries just like Mngqobi when he was young” I roll my eyes at Langa.

They seriously woke my baby up just to hear him cry.

I swear I’m going to kill them one of these good days.

I’m thankful when I see MaNgidi walking in with Zanele and Amanda.

I thought Zanele left.

“Hey wena Mngqobi, What did you do to him”

“Me?” He looks guilty because he’s trying to soothe Sqalo back to sleep.

I’m sensing he doesn’t want anyone besides him holding Sqalo.

“Yoh he’s so big”

I watch as Mngqobi reluctantly let all the brothers hold him.

“Bhuti Balance his head” Mngqobi says when

Makhosini holds him.

Looks like Sqalo has an overly protective father here.

Next is Misuzulu to hold him, then Gatsha, Langa, and in the accenting order until we get to Gcina.

I see Zanele wipe away a tear as she takes him from Gcina. Isn't that soul-stirring.

I can imagine how emotive this is for her. I hope this will somehow help her see things from a different perspective regarding the termination issue.

"Welcome to fatherhood" that's Nqaba patting, no, more like slapping Mngobi on the shoulder.

"I started this long before you, so chill" we all burst out with laughter.

"Hey, hey. Let's not forget whose older here"

Thank god for MaNgidi who manages to put the baby back to sleep.

As always they are kicked out because of noise levels and thank heaven for that. I'm tired and I

need my baby to myself.

I'm so happy everyone is in love with the name Sqalosethu Ngcobo.

After bathing, I go back to my bed and Mngqobi and I watch Sqalo until I fall asleep.

It's in the middle of the night when I wake up to go to the restroom, I thought Mngqobi is asleep so you can imagine my surprise when I see him on the corner of the room rocking a sleeping Sqalo.

"Mngqobi" he slowly turns his eyes to look at me.

I'm not sure what's going on but he's in a gloomy state.

"Don't you want to put him on his bed so you can sleep"

He shakes his head still rocking him.

Now I'm dismayed.

I force myself to stand up.

it feels like needles are slowly pressing inside my abdomen as I walk closer to him.

He looks like a zombie, that's how exhausted he is.

I manage to take the baby from him put him in his bed and get Mngqobi in bed.

I'm not sure if he's sleepwalking or what but whatever it is, it's concerning.

I slowly walk to the toilet once I hear his light snores.

Once I've released my bladder I walk back.

I'm startled when I catch Mngqobi holding the baby again.

I thought I put him to sleep.

I won't lie I'm perturbed by his behavior but not enough to stop me from letting out a chuckle.

Mngqobi will be the death of me.

“Baby”

He looks at me

“Hey, baby. Can you believe I dreamt I was checking up on him so I woke up to check him for real”

Do I tell him that he wasn't dreaming?

"Oh" I actually want to laugh but I hold it.

"He's awake, I think he needs his feed" Haibo.

I wouldn't be surprised if he woke him up.

Shaking my head...

I huff at the both of them like I said I'm tired and in need of sleep.

with Mngobi's help, I breastfeed Sqalo back to sleep.

"He's sleeping now, lets sleep"

He reluctantly puts him back in his cot and joins me in bed.

Wonders never cease to amaze me.

I inwardly laugh at what just happened tonight as I drift back to sleep.

When I wake up in the morning Mngobi is hovering over Sqalo like a new parent that he is.

I think we need to talk.

"Good morning" I say yawning

“Hey baby” he doesn’t even turn to look at me.

That’s it.

“Mngobi sit, please” I pat the bed for him to sit next to me.

I thought I’d wait till we get home but clearly, this can’t wait

“I’ll be with you now, I’m still watching him”

“Now Mngobi, please”

If I didn’t know him as I do I’d say he’s rolling his eyes but I’m happy he’s sitting next to me.

“What’s up” I should be asking him that

“Let’s talk about last night for starters. You woke up twice to check on him, mind you he was asleep and I wake up to you hovering over him so tell me, my love, what’s wrong”

He’s looking at me quizzically as I say this

“What do you mean”

“You know what I mean”

“Can’t a father look after his son”

“Don’t play dumb with me. Not only did you do what you did but you didn’t want everyone else to hold him. I saw how you got when our brothers were here yesterday”

he huffs when he realizes I’m not letting this go and runs both his hands on his face

“I’m scared” he admits

“Of what”

“I’m scared that something might happen to him. Sizi was fine then next minute we were burying him. So I’m a little overprotective, I just don’t want to lose him too” now my waterworks starts

“And you won’t lose him” I say sobbing

“How do you know, we lost Sizi I can’t lose him too Qhamu.”

I quickly wipe my tears and lift his head up high.

“Listen, Sqalo is not going anywhere. He is going to grow up and be a big baby like you. What happened to Sizi is painful but nothing will happen to this one.

He's our new beginning remember so let's rejoice and enjoy these moments”

Sqalo is healthy as a horse I believe.

No scratch that, I know he's fine.

“I hear you, my love. I'm sorry I got you worried.”

I'm glad we talked but there's something else that's been weighing tons on my heart.

“Mnqobi who were you with, in J oburg”

to my surprise, I'm cool as a cucumber right now.

“What do you mean” he genuinely looks puzzled

“I was with Zanele when she called and I heard a woman voice over the phone”

“Oh that” he says casually

“That was Thozama—“ not that girl again

“What was she doing with you at that hour and she called you babe”

I feel my anger forming now.

I wish she was close to me so I can strangle her.

“Relax, I’m not sure exactly why she came to me but she said something about loving me and stuff and for the babe thing I don’t know—“ he says this with a nonchalant shrug

“—to be honest with you I didn’t even hear what she said. I was too preoccupied with what Zanele was saying to me”

I don’t understand how can he take this so lightly

“Mnqobi, that bit—“ I rephrase when he gives me a look that says ‘dare say that word’

“That girl has been after you since varsity and you just let her in your hotel room” I’m pissed beyond words

“Relax will you, I’ve only got eyes for you. I was actually going to tell you about her”

“Mnqobi—“

“I didn’t cheat on you Qhamu, hell you’re too much to deal with as it is now imagine if I had to cheat on you. Not only would I be dealing with you but I’ll have your brothers and mine to deal with as well.

And I, my lovely wife still value my life. You own my heart, body, and soul and you know it”

he pecks my lips and walks back to the now crying Sqalo.

I swear this child has no timing.

“Hey your mother Sqalo, she’s so jealous over me and I love it” he says to his son

“Don’t lie to my child please, bring him so I can feed him”

He laughs lightly, kisses Sqalo before handing him to me and kisses my forehead.

Around midday the nurse comes to help with many of my baby’s firsts—I mean his first bath and diaper change. She shows me how to properly hold and swaddle him, and how to care for his umbilical cord stump.

There’s too much to learn but I’m happy MNgidi will be staying with us for a few months up until I can manage on my own.

Mngobi walks in as I wrap Sqalo in a blanket.

He smells fresh I'm glad he finally listened and went home to shower and change his clothes.

I smell a hint of nicotine when he pecks my lips.

“What did I miss”

“Diaper change, bath, just the works”

“You'll show me how to bath him and all but I'm not changing any diapers” he even frowns his face.

“Oh, you are Mr and futures babies as well” I'm not even healed and here I am already talking about future babies.

“Oh no, no more babies not after the pain I saw you go through. Sqalo will be the only child. no wife of mine will go through that pain again”

Both the nurse and I burst out in laughter.

You should see how serious he looks.

Shame... child labor traumatized him.

I spend two more nights in the hospital. The doctor wants to be certain that everything is fine with both of us before getting discharged.

I watch as the doctor read through his files.

“Everything seems to be fine with this little man” Dr. Wilson, the pediatrician says smiling.

I can finally release the breath I’ve been holding.

Let me give all new mommies advice, never use goggle, I repeat never use goggle.

I was neurotic all afternoon as he was getting his final examination for any infection, jaundice, and other diseases.

The pediatrician also had to monitor his breathing and listen to his heart murmurs.

Goggle made my anxiety sky high when it started mentioning metabolic diseases, such as sickle cell anemia, whatever that is.

You can imagine you I felt when I read about him being checked to make sure his bowels are functioning properly, the examination of the genitals, and any swelling or soft spots of the head.

So I say this to all new mothers, don’t bother goggle or else like me, you’ll be neurotic and might end up

not enjoying your new baby.

With the last few checks, the doctor discharges us both.

At least I'll get to sleep in my own bed tonight.

One more insert then it will all be over.

Thank you to Miss Mkwanazi for suggesting the name Sqalosethu

[06/20, 18:39] Lynne: 77

Qhamu

Unedited

“Hao I thought you had a DNA test done” I hear Nqaba’s voice all the way from the kitchen.

He’s always here since he became Mnqobi’s bestie

“Phela you need to be sure before the ceremony is done” he adds

“No I didn’t. I wanted to but after MaNgidi continuously said she’s mine I just forgot about it”

“Ag MaNgidi was longing for a grandchild, especially a girl. wena you need to have a DNA test before we do this or else our ancestors will never forgive us” Langa

“And what if she’s not mine”

I sense fear in Zwelethu’s voice as he says this.

I can’t imagine what this talk is doing to him, I mean he’s been caring for that little girl ever since that lunatic Mandisa drop her on him and now she might not even be his.

“But still” I’m not sure if it’s Mncedisi or Langa that said that.

Their voices can be hard to distinguish at times.

“It’s been months Bafo, Mandisa could’ve come back for her but she didn’t—“

“Did you even look for her” Mncedisi interjects.

I’m sure it’s him.

“I tried but after a while I gave up. I don’t even want to think about the possibility of Nomfundo not being mine” Zwelethu.

“Not after the sleepless nights I’ve had” he adds

Speak of the devil and she shall appear lol...

kill me for calling her the devil.

The Miss walks in with her hands raised for me to pick her up

Without hesitation I pick her up after tossing the chicken in the oven and kiss her causing her to giggle

“Dada dada” that’s the only word she knows

“Hello my princess” I say tickling her.

Pap is cooking on the stove and salads are ready too what’s left is for the chicken to cook so that I

can feed all these men.

“I hear you but all that I’m saying is if you have any doubts that she’s not yours then do the test to be sure” Nqaba.

I don’t want to think about the possibility of Nomfundo not being Zwelethu’s daughter, that would not only devastated him but it would everyone, more especially now that we have all fallen in love with her.

Let me not forget that Zwelethu lost his girlfriend when he told her about Nomfundo’s existence.

He has lost too much for this child not to be his.

“And I need you to be sure before the ceremony”
Makhosini

Zwelethu wants to have (imbeleko), a welcoming slash introduction ceremony where Nomfundo will be introduced to the Ngcobo ancestors so this is the reason why these question are only arising now.

In as much as I want her to be his, we need to be sure.

I walk back to the lounge area where all the brothers are seated and put the last few beers in the bucket.

Nomfundo immediately raises her hand for Zwelethu when she sees him and he takes her.

Father's and their daughters.

Sqalo is sleeping peacefully on Mngqobi's chest, I've noticed he enjoys sleeping there more than his bed.

I love how inseparable they are.

"Let me take put him to bed" I say to Mngqobi.

He gives me the sleeping Sqalo who wakes up the minute I take him from his father but falls back to sleep again.

"MaShenge, What do you think" Makhosini's question catches me off guard

"Regarding what bhuti" I know exactly what but I'd hate for him to know I've been eavesdropping.

"About getting a DNA test for Nomfundo, phela we need to have imbeleko to introduce her to the Ngcobo family" I'm honored that he values my opinion but they have to discuss this with the elders

and not me.

“I’d say it’s wise but I’d also say speak to the elders first and here what they say—“ he nods

“Do you think she’s mine” Zwelethu

How do I answer that.

“Bhuti I’m afraid I can’t answer that. I’m not sure how things are done but maybe you should go see a seer and hear what he has to say”

with that said I politely excuse myself and put my son to bed.

It’s been a roller coaster in the last three months. A new born is not child’s play. From sleepless nights to midnight feeds, and the constant worrying I haven’t had time to myself. Even worse that Sqalo doesn’t want a baby bottle all he want is to suck my nipples.

I quickly strip my clothes and get into the shower.

Five minutes is enough, I wrap a towel around my body and step out.

Thank god he’s still sleeping.

I'm looking myself in the mirror as I apply lotion.

My stomach is a little flappier, I have stretch marks and my boobs are not as firm as they were and to make matters worse my husband hasn't touched me since Sqalo was born.

I won't lie I'm hurt.

He doesn't even look at me the same way he used.

I tried but failed to initiate sex, I think somehow I've become too subconscious about my changing body or maybe Mngobi doesn't find me as desirable as before.

I pull on a long flowing dress and a matching doek, this is how I've been dressing for the last few months ever since MaNgidi has been staying here but tonight she's spending the night in Matsheni which gives Mngobi and I sometime to be alone.

My chicken is roasted to perfection so I dish up for everyone.

As always Zwelethu compliments my cooking.

"Ah wena if my brother didn't marry id make you my

wife” he jokes

Everyone is amused except for my husband of course.

“Not funny Zwelethu” I inwardly roll my eyes and continue eating.

“Qhamu, Amanda complains that you’ve been ignoring her lately so I’m bringing her next weekend”

There goes my appetite.

I don’t know what did I ever do to her but she’s distant and I’m kind of getting a negative energy from her.

I last saw her at the hospital right after I gave birth and nothing ever since. I called her but it’s either she’s not available or she can’t talk for long so tell me whose been ignoring who here.

“Don’t worry Bhuti Nomfundo’s party is in a month time so I’ll see her then”

He’s not convinced but let’s it go.

It’s around past eight when they leave.

I've long finished washing the dishes and my kitchen is clean.

If it was any other day I'd be angry that Sqalo is still sleeping because he'd be awake in the middle of the night but not today, in fact I'm happy he is sleeping.

I'm horny and craving for my husband tonight.

Sorry to be so blunt but yes.

I leave him on the couch where he is watching tv and go to our bedroom and pull on my sexy red bra and its matching garter set.

I didn't think it would fit with all the weight I haven't lost.

It feels weird looking myself in the mirror like this.

When Nomcebo gave me this lingerie I thought she was crazy but here I am.

I chuckle lightly and stare at my reflection

I hate how my stomach looks so I pull on a silk robe over it.

"Qhamu, Mngqobi is your husband" I give myself a little pep talk before walking down the stairs.

Part of me wants to turn back as I see his back but I gather enough confidence and stand in front of him.

“Hey baby”

At first he look a little bit confused but his mouth stretches wider in a smiles when he catches on.

“Mmm Mrs Ngcobo, is that you” He says pulling me with the hem of my robe.

“What do we have here” He says unfasten the robe.
my stomach!

I’m forced to close my robe because I don’t want him to see how I look now.

He raise one eyebrow at me waiting for an explanation but instead I straddle him.

“I’ve missed you” I kiss his nose first

“I missed you too” he gives me a lustful look and kisses my lips before I can.

I love how he devours me, this man own me and he knows it.

he kiss me deep, biting my lower lip softly before

letting go.

“How about we take this upstairs” i suggest

I’m dripping wet and so ready for him.

“Are you sure, I know the doctors said we need to wait for three months and we’ve reached but are you sure you’re healed” his lustful eyes are gone but replaced with concern.

I want to roll my eye but

“I’m healed” I tell him.

I healed the first few weeks but kind of thought he wouldn’t want to touch me.

“Are you sure, I mean we can do other things without going all the way”

Penetration is exactly what I need right now

I shake my head and kiss him.

I’ve wrapped my hands around his shoulders kissing him like how I used to.

“I’m ready” I tell him panting

“Let’s go” I climb off of him and pull him so he can stand up.

My lady part is already twitching needing him to devour all of me.

It’s been the longest three months of my life.

I’m at arms length when he pulls me back to him that I almost cash into his hard chest

“Why upstairs when we have the whole house to ourselves” I like the sound of that

“I want you right now, right here” he sits back on his couch allowing me to bestride him again.

I lean in and plant a sultry kiss on his lips.

“Mmm” I moan in his mouth.

He twirls his tongue causing me to instantly want him in me.

I help him take off his t-shirt as he removes my robe.

So what if he sees me with flappy stomach and stretch marks.

His wet lips leaves my lips to nibble on my neck

while he squeezes my boobs over my bra

“Mmmmm” a groan erupts from the back of his throat

I run my hand down his rigid stomach and down his bulging groin and rub his manhood over his jean.

I don't know when did he unclip my bra but I feel his warm tongue rolling over my hard nipple.

“Mnqobi” I moan again.

I can't take this anymore of foreplay.

I unbuckle his belt hastily and unfasten his jean but the sound of a throat clearing stops me from pulling his zipper down.

“Ma” we both shout

I in mortifications and Mnqobi in irritation.

I don't even ask what the hell is she doing here because well, I'm embarrassed so I quickly cover my bare chest with my robe and run up the stairs without looking back.

Fuck.

I change as fast as lightning, including my soaking panty and hide under my duvet cover.

I've never been so embarrassed in my entire life.
How am I going to look at her tomorrow?

Imagine how awkward that will be.

Mnqobi walks in a few minutes later fully clothed and irritated beyond.

“What the hell is she doing here” I ask

He shrug

“She says MaNgidi asked her to come help you out”
He's tone is flat which indicates he's bored.

“She could have called”

“That's what I told her” he strip his clothes

I gulp when I see his manhood semi hard.

“You could join me so we can finish off what you started” as temping as that is it's not happening.

I shake my head biting on my nail.

Mnqobi is a specimen, his body is built to perfection.

“Your loss then” he says and winks

I stare at his hard behind as he walks to the bathroom.

I’m zoned out when he walks out with shower droplets on his body.

He didn’t even bother wrapping a towel around his lower body.

“Like what you see” he teases.

I roll my eyes and look away.

I’m still too much in shocked to be horny.

MaTwala has no timing at all, I think it’s time MaNgidi moves back to her house.

I’m grateful she assisted me with Sqalo but now it’s time for her to leave.

I say this because of it wasn’t for her then MaTwala wouldn’t have witnessed what she did.

“Penny for your thought” Mngqobi I interrupts my trail of thoughts

At least he’s now wearing a short but still shirtless.

“It’s nothing”

“Try again” I sometimes forget he knows me more than I know myself.

“I think it’s time MaNgidi moved back home”

“I agree” okay!

That was easy.

“I’ll talk to her, I hate that she gave MaTwala our house keys without even discussing it with us. Sqalo is three months now I’m sure you’ll manage, besides I’m here too” I watch him as he gets into bed besides me.

“Alright then, do it politely please I don’t want her thinking I don’t appreciate her help, I’ll need her again when Sqalo start teething”

We both agree on that.

“How did MaTwala get here anyway”

“Sma brought her here, I’m thankful he delayed getting into the house”

“Yoh baby imagine—“

“Ey Qhamukile I don’t even want to imagine it”

I want to laugh at how angry the thought of Sma seeing me naked makes him but I chose not to.

We both lay in bed quietly, processing what happened in our minds.

Imagine how traumatized Sma would’ve been?

Thank goodness he was delayed.

I know MaTwala is going to tell MaNgidi and I won’t here the end of it.

I’m laying on his chest when he speaks

“So Baby vele you’re healed, I don’t want to poke kanti ngiyamosha” God.

Did he seriously say that?

“Yes I’m fine, I healed a while back but—“

“But what”

“I was afraid to tell you, phela you didn’t even want to look at me so I thought I disgust you in a way”

He immediately raise his head from the pillow and

looks at me hurt.

“Ini” he even sounds wounded.

“Mngobi have you seen how my stomach looks and I have these stretch marks that won’t go away” I’m afraid to look at him so I’m playing with my ring instead.

“Ini (What)” he sounds so confused right now

“I know you afraid to touch me now that I gained weight”

I know he is shaking his head unbelievably

“Wait, I’m confused. What are you talking about” he sits up straight

“I’m not as pretty as I was” I’m getting emotional

“Qhamu I don’t know what’s your definition of pretty but to me you haven’t changed on bit, you still my wife whom I love dearly, okay you gained a little bit of weight but that’s because you were caring that big headed son of mine for nine months and I sure as hell didn’t expect you to look the same”

he pulls me close to him because my tears have

made their way out.

“My love, as we grow. We change, our body changes but that doesn’t mean I love you any less in-fact I love you even harder”

“Is that why you didn’t want to look at me”

He lets out a loud exasperated sighs

“No, you don’t get it do you—“

now it’s my turn to raise my eyes and look at him

“The reason I’ve been afraid to look at you is because I get horny whenever I see you so I was afraid that if I looked at you I’d want to make love to you and you weren’t healed not because of that ludicrous reasons going through that pretty head of yours”

I hope he’s not just saying it.

“Really”

He kiss my nose before he answers

“Really, I’m going to grow old and I’ll probably grow a pot belly too but that doesn’t mean you’ll love me

less”

I roll my eyes.

Mngobi will never grow a pot belly.

“Sthandwa sam, I know it’s not easy but I love you for you not because of what you look like”

“I love you too”

“Good, now wipe those tears and kiss your husband” leaning in I give him an assuring kiss.

I’m a little wet when we break the kiss plus in panting.

“See, this is what you do to me” he uncover us so I can see his bulging penis

I can’t help run my hand over it.

Hard as steel.

“Mapholoba is ready and I know you’re dripping wet so how about we finish off what you started” He’s already on top of me before I can blink

“MaTwala is in the next room”

“More of a reason to make you scream, I want to traumatize her so she doesn’t even think of coming back beside she knows we married and this is what married people do”

I actually laugh out loud.

Who say stuff like this.

His hand is already under my top making it’s way to my twins.

“So what do you say” I’m ready to protest when his hand leaves my breast and goes into my pants

“Wet, so wet” I slightly open my leg to give him more excess to my honey pot.

He gazes his hand lightly over my clit, giving me a sensation I’ve been longing for for the past three months.

He’s sucking on my neck while his finger goes in and out out of me.

That it, MaTwala will just have to forgive me.

I’m pulling my pajama top over my shoulder when I hear a soft cry.

“Fock maan” Mngqobi scoffs

“That child has no fucking timing”

MaTwala is saved my Sqalo.

I'm dreading every minute to go downstairs.

How will I look at that woman in her eyes after she saw me naked and ready to ride Mngqobi?

I huff and pull the duvet over my head.

It's after nine am and I'm still in bed

I didn't get a wink of sleep thinking about what MaTwala is thinking.

Mngqobi walks in barefoot, holding a wide awake Sqalo in his arms.

He gets excited when he sees me but not excited enough to come to me.

“Baby I'm hungry, when are you coming downstairs”

is he serious

“Haibo, eat cereal or make something”

“Hai Qhamu I’m not eating cereal, I need a proper breakfast” is he forgetting what happened a few hours ago.

“Mngobi MaTwala saw us—“

“She disturbed us, this is our house I can have sex with you wherever I want she walk in on us so she’s the one who needs to apologize, not you, so please. I’m dying of hunger here”

I totally ignore his little rant.

“Did you speak to her”

“I can’t exactly ignore her. She’s leaving in a few minutes but I’ll go talk to her while you get ready” I agree to that.

He shakes his head and walks out.

I’m wearing a long dress and a doek pacing around when a text from Mngobi comes through

“Mncedisi just picked her up, now come down” at

least I can now breath

I'm less weary when I walk down the stairs.

I peep in the living room to check if she's really gone, I'm relieved when I don't see her instead Mngobi is with Sqalo and they are watching little baby bum cartoon, wheel on the bus cartoon is playing much to Sqalo amusement.

I shake my head and head to the kitchen.

I come to a complete halt when I find MaTwala washing a dish.

I'm tongue tied.

“Good morning Qhamu” she first greets

“Yebo ma” I go straight to the fridge and open it so it can hide my shame.

I feel her eyes on me not I dare not close it.

I'm so going to kill Mngobi.

She's humming a church's song happily, taking her own god damn time.

“I'll be going back to Matsaheni today”

“Okay ma” I speak with my face still inside the fridge.

I hear her chuckles and foot steps as she walks out.

Only now I can breathe

After the meeting the brothers had Zwelethu decided it's wise to get a DNA test. That was not disclosed to MaNgidi not sure why though.

She was disappointed when Mnqobi asked her to move back to her house but she understand shem.

After that awkward morning with MaTwala I've been avoiding her like plague but today it's a little difficult since well we are celebrating Nomfundo's one year birthday.

I'm happy Zwelethu postponed the test so we can have this day but I also feel like a part of him doesn't want to learn the truth as yet, be it bittersweet, it's inevitable.

I rush out the kitchen when I see MaTwala walking in, I'm not ready to face her as yet but I'm bored to see Amanda walking in with Nqaba.

“Hello Qhamu how are you”

“I'm good thank and you” I half smile at her

I really don't understand what her problem is.

“Good. You look good, motherhood is treating you well I see” I want to gouge out her eyes because she's giving me a cold stare but I smile at her instead m

“Thanks” I leave her and take my nephew from Nqaba.

Amanda might have issues but her child is my blood so she can go jump.

MaTwala is not in the kitchen when I return, thank God for that.

So I strap the baby on my back and continue making hotdogs.

MaNgidi has Sqalo strapped around her back and as always He's sleeping.

Mcm he sleeps during the day but is awake all night.

From the kitchen window I see Zanele walking in with Gcina.

I wonder what's going on there, phela the last time we had a proper chat she was ready so terminate my unborn niece or nephew and I've been preoccupied with being a new mom that I haven't spoke to her about it.

I watch as she says something to Gcina and they both laugh.

She's wearing a long flowing dress which conceals her stomach so I can't tell if she's protruding or not.

Ah, I leave Sbahle, the daughter of MaNdidi's neighbor to continue with making the hotdogs for the kids and walk to Zanele.

"I thought you wouldn't come" I say after giving her a hug.

She's glowing which gives me a little bit of hope.

"I wasn't planning on it but your brother dragged me here"

“So, did you tell him” as you can tell I’m not a very patient person

I like to shoot straight to the point

She rolls her eyes

“Yes I finally told him”

“And” is she seriously going to make me ask everything

“He was furious when I told him I want to terminate and he convinced me otherwise” I’m happy to hear that

“So does this mean you two are dating or what”

“Nope, he forced me to break up with Thabani though, said he doesn’t want to see me with any other guy” why’s Gcina so possessive.

“Mm I see. Where is Luu, I invited him but he refused and I’m surprised you’re here after you said you don’t attend kids parties”

“Vele i wouldn’t be here if Gcina didn’t force me to come—“ I can’t help look at her inquisitively

“Don’t get any ideas, he says he wants to watch my every move just Incase I try and terminate. Your brother is so dramatic I’m twenty four weeks now so I can’t exactly have the procedure done”

I drag her to the kitchen with me.

Lucas is with his boyfriend which is the only reason he’s not here and not because he doesn’t attend kids parties.

How dis appointing, a self appointed best aunty is not here.

Eye roll.

Once we done we go to the tent where everything is laid out. Nomfundo is seating in her els a from frozen themed chair and all the other kids are seating on their chairs as well.

It’s amazing how full it is for a kids party.

All my brothers are here, which I don’t understand why because Mondli and Gcina doesn’t have any kids yet.

Amanda demands her child as I’m helping Asa with

his party hat.

Yoh, this girl will be the death of me.

I give her the child and proceeds with what I'm doing.

Makhosini is chilling with Misuzulu, Langa and Gatsha and they are drinking, I heard there's going to be a braai later on.

Maybe if I press the right buttons, MaNgidi she will baby sit and I'll get to unwind and maybe have wine.

“Qhamu get the cake” Zwelethu instructs.

I'm shocked he managed to pull this through, of course we all helped but he did the most.

It's amazing how much of a great father he is. For his sake I hope the results will be in his favor.

I go back to the kitchen only to find MaTwala finishing up making juice.

“Makoti, I haven't seen you in a while. If I didn't know you better I'd say you're ignoring me” of course I'm ignoring you.

“No it’s not that ma, it’s been a bit crazy today”

“Mmmm” she says and hands a cup to taste the juice.

“It’s fine ma”

“Yaz Qhamu sex is very sacred, its between you and your husband, and you should have it at a comfort of your own bed in your bedroom, not where everyone can just walk in and see you—“ she claps once

“And what was that strings, lacy thing you were wearing—“ I’m looking down in embarrassment.

What was she doing in my house in the first place.

“I’ll take the juice out, follow with the cake”

I have to take a few minutes to compose myself before walking out.

We all sing the famous happy birthday song to the princess

Zwelethu is standing close to his daughter watching her lovingly.

He blows out the kindle and we all clap.

He picks her up and kisses her all over her face causing her to giggle sweetly.

I love their bond.

he stops laughing instantly when his eyes travel to the back of the tent.

I'm not sure what's happening but it feels like he's seeing a ghost.

I can't help look at the entrance of the tent and there stand a very petite young beautiful girl with an older man.

I'd say her father.

Zwelethu is staring at her with eyes full of hatred.

"You" Zwelethu says.

He's not shouting but his voice is laced with so much hate.

Now everyone is looking at her as tears glister in her eyes.

"I'm so sorry" she says.

Maybe it's one of his ex's

"Mandisa" oh shit!

This is the Mandisa?

Nomfundo's mother?

"What are you doing here" Mncedisi asks angrily

"I'm here for my child"

I thought this would be the last chapter but looks like I lied to myself.

[06/20, 18:39] Lynne: 78

AMANDA

Yoh this family and drama.

Mncedisi is ready to strangle this Mandisa chick.

“You dropped this child off here like she was nothing and now that she’s fully clothed and we all love her you come and demand her back” he shouts

“Wena you’re crazy” he adds

I fail to understand why are they fighting in front of everyone.

“I’m sorry Zwelethu but she’s not yours. I don’t know what was I think bringing her to you”

Zwelethu is just standing watching as Mncedisi rushes to Mandisa and strangle her.

The men she’s with and Misuzulu manage to get him off of her.

Like I said the drama is too much.

I can’t deal.

I leave them there jumping at each other’s throats and take out my phone.

I need to tell her what’s happening.

“Hello Mfazi”

“Hey where are you”

“Home why, I thought you were at that stupid party”

“Oh I’m there and so ready to leave. You know how this family is with drama I can’t shame. I’m coming”

Nqaba has Bandile on his lap so I take him from him without saying anything and strap him on my back.

“I’m leaving” I tell him

He gives a stern look but says nothing

“Are you coming”

He hates it when we fight in public so he takes my hand and we walk out of the yard.

“Amanda where are you going with my child” that’s all he cares about.

His child.

Well I’ve had it.

I unstrap Bandile and give Nqaba back his child.

“What are you doing”

“Nqaba we can’t be here, let these people people

deal with their issues without us being here”

He scoff

“Amanda these people are my brothers and right now Zwelethu needs me, you heard what that girl said. Nomfundo is not his child now imagine what’s that doing to him. For once stop thinking about yourself, take bandile home I’ll be there in a few hours”

“No Nqaba, Zwelethu is not your brother. I’m your wife and I’m saying let’s go home”

“I won’t be dictated by you and I’m certainly not going to argue with you”

I hate arguing with my husband but lately that’s all we’ve been doing.

He’s constantly at Qhamu’s house with the Ngcobo brothers and when I talk I’m bitter and jealous.

“What are you going to do ke, change Nomfundo’s paternity”

I watch as his pupil dilate in anger.

“Amanda go home before this conversation gets

out of hand”

He gives me a stern look when I roll my eyes at him.

I know how much he hates it when I roll my eyes at him.

I do it to annoy him.

“Let it be the last time you do that” he gives me Bandile and walks back into the yard.

I hate how he chooses them over me every time.

I know I’m not perfect, I have my own insecurities and he doesn’t help one bit when he chose his supposedly family over me.

I get into my car and drive to town.

Bandile is sound asleep when Nokhaya opens the gate for me once I reach her house.

“You look beautiful” I say giving her a hug.

Lungelo is treating her good.

“Not as good as you” I roll my eyes and sit down.

She bring us a bottle of buttercream Chardonnay

wine.

She has taste.

“Are you going to tell me what the dragon has done this time”

I sip on the wine first to calm me down

“Either than choose them over me” she rolls her eyes

“I told you these two families get so well like house on fire and what do you do, you marry one of them”

I laugh lightly at what she’s saying

“Nokhaya Nqaba might annoy me but I love him”

“Do you really” What is this woman saying

“Don’t get me wrong, what if you’re confusing love with gratitude—“

Huh?

“He saved you from Zithulele and killed your monstrous father for you so maybe you feel indebted to him for being your knight”

That's ridiculous

I love Nqaba I just hate how he puts his precious sister before me.

“That's Not it, I love my husband very much in fact. I just hate that Qhamu comes first. Remember what happened at her wedding.”

I don't even want to go back there.

Mnqobi fought with Lungelo but I ended up getting the bad side of the stick for wanting to hear Lungelo's side of the story.

I know Qhamu is not perfect and I wanted her to confess that she cheated on Mnqobi with Lungelo, well, that's what Nokhaya told me.

To make matters worse Qhamu slapped Nokhaya for nothing while she's the one that took Mnqobi away from her and what does my husband do, he gives me an earful for taking Nokhaya's side.

Since then my marriage hasn't been the same, Nqaba and I are always fighting, he wants me to end my friendship with Nokhaya but I won't let him

dictate my life.

I was with Nokhaya in that hell hole when I was kidnapped not with his precious sister.

“And I told you, Qhamu’s brothers will always chose her yaz at one point I thought they were sleeping with her. She is the only girl child after all”

Now that me just crazy but she’s right about them always choosing her over everyone.

Nqaba says Nokhaya is very manipulative and skimming but I don’t believe it not even one bit.

I wonder if Qhamu knows that Mngqobi forced Nokhaya to abort his baby.

“So baby girl be prepared to always be second, Qhamu is the princess”

The mention of her name repulses me.

Nqaba had to force me to go see her after she gave birth.

“Okay enough about my marriage, what have you been up to. You glowing are you sure you not baking”

I see her face fall but she quickly masks it with smiles shaking her head

“No, nothing like that”

“So, out With is”

“If you must I found me some side nyana someting”
Haibo

“Don’t look at me like that, Lungelo is hardly around and when he’s here he won’t stop talking about Qhamukile. Can you believe he once called out her name while having sex with me, imagine”

“Yoh I’m sorry” I’d kill Nqaba

“Ag that’s nothing to worry about. I’ll deal with her”
her?

“I mean him” I hate the sinister look plastered on her face right now

“What are you playing at”

“Nothing to worry yourself about. I’m planning to make Lungelo forget all about Qhamu and if I were you I’d make sure Nqaba forgets about Qhamu and that stupid family too”

“Meaning”

“Come to me when you ready to get rid of Qhamu but for now let’s drink and be happy”

I know she hates Qhamu for taking Mngobi but I hope she’s not planning on doing any harm to her.

“Any way nawe you should find yourself something to play with. Phela you need to relief all the stress Nqaba causes you”

I laugh out loud.

I’d never cheat on Nqaba.

It after ten when I drive back home, I’m a little tipsy but relaxed.

The lights are on meaning Nqaba is home. I’m praying there won’t be any bickering tonight.

I find him and his brothers pacing around, Nqaba screaming on the phone.

“Amanda, thank God you’re safe” Qhamu rushes to me and gives me a hug.

Eye roll.

what the hell is everyone doing in my house.

I see relief wash off their faces but Nqaba is now angry.

“Is this a time for a wife to get home” I don’t have the energy to argue

“Hello husband, did you sort out Nomfundo’s issue”

“I don’t have time for your sarcasm, we’ve been worried sick thinking something happened to you”

“We”

He looks at everyone around the room.

I don’t know why is Langa and Mngqobi here or all his brothers for that matter.

“You could’ve called”

“Don’t you think I did that” he’s shouting

“Oh sorry my battery must’ve died” im so relaxed right now.

Like I said I don’t want to argue.

“I think we need to go” Gatscha says.

Phew Thank god for that.

“Qhamu can you take Bandile with you, I’ll get him tomorrow morning”

Oh no, Yobanathi and Nandi might like it when Qhamu takes their kids but not mine.

“No, my child is not going anywhere”

Nqaba and I go back and forth arguing but I know I won’t win this once not when precious Qhamu has agreed to take Bandile.

Mnqobi seriously needs to give her more babies.

My heart breaks when she walks out with my crying baby.

That’s it.

I hate Qhamu now.

It took me a while to see it but thanks to Nokhaya I now realize it.

Nqaba comes back fuming.

“Where the hell have you been”

Here goes!

It's after three am when I feel him shake me.

At first I ignore him like I did earlier but he shakes me even harder that I've got no choice but wake up.

“Nqaba What is it”

“We need to talk” he's already seating up straight

“What's wrong Amanda and don't tell me it's nothing. What has Qhamu done to you”

Oh it's Qhamu again.

“That's just it Nqaba, it's Qhamu this Qhamu that I can't take it anymore”

“Amanda im not going to listen to you shout at me. It's either we sit and talk like grown up or you let me do the talking. Are we clear”

I nod

“Good, now tell me what’s your problem”

I sit up straight too and look at him

“Nqaba you changed—“

“I didn’t changed, you changed after you befriended Nokhaya. You don’t even know half of the thing she did to Qhamu but you chose to be friends with her even after I politely asked you not to. We were fine all these years, but soon after Qhamu’s wedding you changed I don’t know what that girl is feeding you but it’s poison and I won’t have a wife like that. I don’t know where you get this crazy idea that I choose her over you. You’re my wife, the mother of my child and I love you. Qhamu is my sister whom I love just as much so I won’t tolerate your little tantrums”

“Mnqobi you go to her every Sunday”

“Yes, I told you this before. That’s something my brothers and I do every Sunday. Our father used to make us sit and have breakfast all together every Sunday, even after we all got married we vowed never to stop that. I asked you I don’t know how

many times to come with me but you won't. The Ngcobo's even joined out little tradition but you my wife won't" he gets off the bed and dress up

"Where are you going"

"I need some fresh air. Amanda I don't know you anymore. I'm not stupid I saw how look at Qhamu, you've developed this feeling for her, I don't want to say hate because the woman I married is not capable of hating my one sister" he even wearing sneakers

"I don't hate her—" I just resent her.

"I just hate it when you go to her"

"Well you better deal with that little hatred then cause I'm not going to stop seeing my sister because of you. You may not know this but here we love each other, Qhamu is my only sister and I won't let you tell me how to love her"

Maybe Nokhaya was right.

Maybe he's sleeping with her or else why is he behaving like this.

“Amanda I don’t want to have this conversation again. I love you very much so I hope you deal with you issues before it’s too late”

With that said he walks out.

There’s only one way to deal with this.

I take out my phone and text Nokhaya.

Somewhere around town...

“I just want you to temper with the brakes”

I give him a brown envelope full of cash.

“Is that all”

“That’s all but make sure he dies. I want him out of the picture for good” he nods counting the cash.

I paid him enough to get the job done.

We shake on it before he exits my car.

MANDISA (once off)

In my life never have I felt like this which I don't understand because I've done this a couple of times before.

I've never felt as remorseful as I do now.

I've turned people lives upside down so why do I feel so sad for doing this.

I'm a nervous wreck as I get off the car with this man.

We've come to speak to the Ngcobo family after they refused to give me back my child yesterday.

I know I'm not perfect, quite frankly I don't have any rights over Nomfundo after I left her like I did but like now, I didn't have much of choice then.

Everything is forced on to me.

He knocks and Zwelethu's mother opens.

My throat is literally on my throat as I walk behind him and into the living room.

At least today it's just Zwelethu, two older guys, I assume his brothers and his mother. I'm not sure which one is his mother because there's two woman here but I'm happy all those guys from yesterday are not here.

"I hope you have come to your senses because I'm not giving you back my child" Zwelethu is angry.

I say nothing but bore the floor with my eyes.

"We came here to discuss a way forward" his voice has always been authoritative but not when it comes to this bunch.

"Baba with all due respect, Nomfundo is our daughter and you are not taking her anywhere. Your daughter came here months ago shouting how Zwelethu needs to take care his child and now that it suits her she waltz in here demanding her back—"

I don't dare look up but I feel the older brother's

eyes on me whilst he continues

“Ntombazane I don’t know what you thinking but coming here was a mistake, you’re not getting Nomfundo and that’s final”

“Ini, that’s my grandchild we talking about. My blood and we taking her home” he shouts.

“She’s my blood as much, so please leave”
Zwelethu.

I knew dumping this child on Zwelethu was a mistake.

For once Bra Steve’s plan didn’t work.

He thought Zwelethu would fall for his trap like how all those men did.

“Mandisa tell this boy who the father of that child is”

You are, I want to shout but I keep quiet and sob instead.

“Come on Mandisa, you’ve done this before” I convince myself.

But this is different, Zwelethu is different. He's not like those other men who gave me shit load of money to disappear he actually cares about my child.

What kind of a mother am I, I'm not only about to hurt Zwelethu, a guy I never even had sex with but I'm about to rob Nomfundo of a loving home and a father and that's all because of this monster.

"Speak up" he shouts

"Baba" I hate uttering those words because he's not my father and never will be.

"Tell him dammit" he shouts again

I'm trying my all means to restrain my tears

"He's not yours Zwelethu"

I knew he wouldn't remember what happened that night with a the drugs I spiked his drink with but he loves my child. Something I or Bra Steve could never give her.

Sighs

Let me stop speaking in riddles and tell you how I

find myself in this tricky situation.

I've been working at the strip club since I was sixteen.

Yes, sixteen.

I'd be lying if I were to tell you I'm from a poor or an abusive home, actually, it's the opposite.

My parents are both doctors by profession and my older brother is in Cuba completing his doctorate and here I am, the black sheep of the family. I went to high school in Australia but got expelled for using drugs in the school premises so my parents shipped me back home.

That was only the beginning, I want to tell you all about it but there's no time. Let just say I'm a rebellious child.

I had everything given to me in a silver plater, but that wasn't enough.

The "sleigh queen" lifestyle was more appealing than anything else and that was the end of me.

I befriended the wrong crowd and later I was

introduced to this life, basically what we do is defraud men, married men to be precisely.

I just got sloppy with Zwelethu.

“There, you have it, she’s not your child” bra Steve shouts

“Lalela la wena (Listen here), you made me care and love this child for all these months and now you come here and tell me she’s not mine” Zwelethu is hurt more than anything.

“Lets all calm down, I’m a nurse in Edendale hospital so I can organize a DNA test to be taken then once we are sure we will come up with a solution”

I see Bra Steve squirm in his sit, he doesn’t know that I didn’t actually have sex with Zwelethu.

In his mind Zwelethu is the father but little does he know that he is and that a secret I’m taking to my grave.

He clears his throat nervously

This has never happened before.

“Can we take her with us until then” He says

He wants to use Nomfundo to make more money for him.

“No, she stays here with us. Meet us tomorrow in town for the test” Zwelethu.

The angry guy from yesterday walks in with Nomfundo.

“What are they doing here” he shout when he sees us

“Calm down Mncedis i they are leaving now”

I watch as he disappears around the passage with my baby.

I see how they all love and cherish her. For once i need to stop thinking about money and how I enjoy this life and think about that little girl.

Okay back to how I got here....

I meet Bra Steve when I was at a club. He is a good looking man and the fact that he was loaded made him more appealing.

We started having casual sex but little did I know that he's running a business.

At first I was shocked when he told me all about it but I wanted in. The thrill of fooling with married men got me excited me so I became one of his girls.

I still remember the first guy I played. He was some business man, sweet and caring and he loved his family more than anything.

So when I told him I'm "pregnant", he paid me off to disappear and get rid of the baby and since then I haven't looked back.

The last guy I dumped Nomfundo to didn't take long to find me. He paid me millions to get out of his life. I thought Zwelethu would do the same but I lied to myself.

He's rich, which means he has resources so he could've found me if he wanted to.

We have no choice but walk out.

"I thought you did you research, this guy is not married"

I don't know what happened but my informant told me Mngqobi Ngcobo, the married brother was the one attending the meeting. So you can imagine how happy I was when I saw him at the club but a few weeks later I learnt that it was Zwelethu. He is just as rich so I didn't derive from the plan.

And now everything blew in my face.

“Are you sure he's the father, phela if he is. He will take her and we wont be able to make as much money”

No, she's not his child.

I'd be damned if I say that out loud.

“Yes, I'm sure. I'm sorry I know I flopped”

“Hell yes you flopped, be sure to be ready tomorrow I'll pick you up in the morning. I'm going to Edendale hospital”

I know he's going to bribe some doctor.

“Okay, make sure those test comes out negative” I tell him and get off the car.

I watch him drive away. I need to be sure he's not

watching me because I'm not planning to robbing
my child of a good loving father.

My bags are already packed.

I don't bother writing a note explaining to Bra Steve
why I had to leave so abruptly.

I may love this life but I love Nomfundo more.

I swear longer comments motivate me to write
more

[06/20, 18:40] Lynne: 79

ZANELE

Unedited

He walks in holding a tray. The old me would have

found all this sweet because he has never done anything like this, in fact, he would've given me money for fat cakes and transport fee but I know I shouldn't get too excited because he's just doing this because I'm pregnant.

"I got you breakfast"

He made eggs, tomato and cheese with a slice of bread.

"Thank you" I smile

I'm actually famished so I don't waste any time.

Eww, these eggs taste rubbery.

Vomit has risen up to my throat.

I quickly give him the plate and rush to puke what's left of yesterday's food.

I hate morning sickness.

He comes in with a glass of water just as I finish.

Now I wish I hadn't eaten

"How are you feeling"

“Like hell” what is he expecting.

I get back into bed and pull the cover up to neck level.

This yard doesn't feel the same without Qhamu.

We would sit in her room and talk about our future for hours and hours, that memory feels like it was just yesterday but now she's married with a child just like she had envisioned and here I am stuck with a man who doesn't even love me.

I remember how I used to sneak in this very room just so I could be with him. Then he's wasn't as hot as he is now but I still loved him.

God knows I tried to get him to love me.

I can write a novel on everything I did for him. first, I gave him my heart.

It was his to have and protect but he turned it into a play ground instead. secondly, I gave him my purity, the one thing I had vowed to give to the one who would marry me but even after that he still didn't love me.

Thirdly, why am I even counting, there's just plenty of things I did to prove my love for him.

I remember Qhamu once told me never to get on with her brothers but what do I do?

I fall in love with one and not only in love but I fall deeply to a point of no return but I've learnt to accept that I'll never be more than just a good shag to Gcina.

That's what he sees me as, someone he can release his semen on but not worthy to be given the girlfriend title.

I sometimes think I brought this upon myself, had I listened to Qhamu's warnings then I wouldn't be here or had I not asked us to be discreet in the first place, no, I should've just stayed away from him.

I remember three years back on the 14th of June, a day before my birthday. He called me and demanded that I come to "warm" him up, it was a very cold day. Snow was still lingering on the grass and I could hear the whistles of the blowing wind.

Foolish me, I dressed up and went to him running

like I was being chased but when I got here I found him banging his then girlfriend. I cried in front of him for the very first time but he was not fazed by my “little tears” and I quote. He gave me twenty rands to go back home, told me I was late so he made another plan.

I'll never forget that day.

I'm sure you are wondering why the hell am I still here after that but thing is I too don't know.

My heart won't let me leave.

My love for him won't let me leave.

But for the first time ever, today I woke up with a clearer mind, I can finally put myself before him.

I'm crossing to walk away and not because I longer love him. I still do, very deeply in fact but I'm walking away because I've realized my self worth.

“Gcina why am I here” I ask.

“Hao, I thought you wanted to here” him

“No, you dragged me here with you when I clearly told you I don't want to be here”

Gcina has this hold on me that no matter how far I run from him I still find myself naked, under him in his bed.

“But that’s not what you said last night, I remember you screaming my name to the top of your lungs”

I’ve got no words to respond to that and yes he’s right. I was screaming his name but that was for the last time.

I finally have the courage to say enough is enough.

‘God please give me the strength to move on’ I say a silent prayer before waking up.

I dress up silently as he his eyes bore onto my flash.

The little bump is visible, sometimes I wish I could turn back time then maybe I wouldn’t find myself in such a situation.

“He’s growing” he stand up to rub my belly but I put my hand up indicating that he shouldn’t step any closer

“I can’t do this anymore Gcina” my “relationship” with him has drained me so much emotionally.

“Can’t do what” he’s wearing a short and one of my favorite t-shirts.

It hugs him so well, exposing his well toned body.

“This—“ I point between him and I

“I can’t do it anymore. I want out”

“Is it the hormones again” I hate it when he say that

“No, it’s not the hormones it’s just me finally coming to my senses. Gcina I’m done with this thing we have, I refuse to be your door mat any longer”

I’m not angry

I’m just disappointed in me.

He looks at me puzzled

“Ntombi—“ He’s the only one who shortened my name to ntombi, everyone else calls me Zanele.

I think that’s another factor that contributed to me staying in this relationship. I though him being different from everyone else was sweet.

Believe me I know how ridiculous that sounds.

“—talk to me, what have I done” for the first time his voice is laced with a little bit of worry.

“That’s the thing you have done nothing. A big fat nothing. Gcina I’m tired of waiting for you to love me, I’m tired of you controlling my life. I’m not allowed to date while you live your life freely, well you’ll never hear me nag again you can do as you please and please let me be. I’ll respect my child and not date for as long as I’m pregnant but when I give birth I’ll do as I please. I haven’t figured out how we going to do this but I can only hope we co-parent for the sake of this baby but either than that I want nothing to do with you” god, it feels marvelous to finally say that.

He speaks only when he recovers from his shock

“Is this about that little boyfriend of yours” he doesn’t get

“No Gcina it’s not about him but you, I’m done being your back up plan. I’m done being your sloppy seconds”

“I don’t understand, are you saying you don’t want

us to date—I thought we are in this together and our child will grow up in a loving home with both parents” I actually laugh out loud unintentionally.

Is Gcina even listening to himself.

“And when did you decide that because a week ago you were with Khethiwe” this is exactly what he does when I try to leave.

Promise me heaven and earth only to drop me when the next skirt appears but I’m not falling for that shit this time

Please forgive my profanity. I’m not usually like this.

“I know but she’s not a factor, we can—“ I’ve heard enough

“No Gcina. I’m tired of waiting for you to love me like I deserve—“ I feel anger brewing in me so I breath in and out to calm myself.

I promised myself that won’t let emotions get the better of me.

“from today you and I are over. I don’t want you to call me about anything besides the baby and I’ll

reciprocate the same sentiment”

I’m done dressing up, I run my hands on my head pushing my hair back and tie my sandals.

He look at me until I’m done.

“Baby you’re hurting me” i think its only clicking in his mind now that I am serious.

“Tell me how to fix it and I’ll do it”

“Love me” I’m tempted to say.

My heart longs to hear those words coming out of his mouth but even if he were to say those words he wouldn’t be meaning it so what’s the point.

“You can let me be” I feel tears forming but I won’t let them fall.

I refuse to show him how hurt I am right now, I refuse to give him power over me.

He’s seen me vulnerable before too many times to count and each time he took advantage.

Sighs

“I’m leaving, I’ll let you know when the next

appointment will be but please, no phone calls or text before then” I say and take my hand back that’s on top of the drawer and walk out

He follows running behind me barefoot.

“I understand you’re angry but can I at least take you home”

I’m not angry, on the contrary I’m relieved. My mind I clearer, my souls is lighter, the heavy cement I’ve been carrying on my shoulder is finally weighing off.

“No it’s fine, I’ll use a taxi”

“Come one baby, I swear I just want to take you home” he didn’t have a problem with me using a taxi before so what changed now.

“Gcina I’m said I’m using a taxi” he sighs loudly

“So When is your family coming” I haven’t forgotten about that.

My dad and step mom are old fashioned so as old as I am they are coming to report that I’m pregnant to the Buthelezi’s.

“I’ll text you regarding that” I’m out of the gate

before I know it.

Part of me want him to run after me. I'm not brave enough to look behind and check if he's turned back or looking at me.

I increase my pace when I don't hear his foot steps behind me.

That's it, that's the end of me and Gcina.

I let tears I've been holding fall.

Why am I lying to myself, my heart longs for him, my souls is heavy with sadness, my mind is full of somewhat good memories we shared.

I cry all the way to the bus stop.

Everyone is looking at me weirdly in the taxi as I try to wipe away my unending tears.

I may be crying a river now but I'm crying over Gcina for the last me.

QHAMU

I'm on the phone with Mngobi whose telling me Mandisa is a no show this morning.

That girl seriously has a nerve. At first she leaves her child then comes back demanding her back and now she disappeared.

I actually want to laugh.

“Yoh so is Zwelethu taking the test” he’s already at the hospital so why not.

“I don’t know hey. He’s still talking to the doctor but I personally think it will be a waste of money because Mandisa said she’s not his child” my heart break for Zwelethu.

“Then how do you explain the similar features. Nomfundo has the Ngcobo eyes”

He chuckles softly

“MaNgcobo, What do mean she has the Ngcobo eyes—“

I let out a giggle

“I just think we all wanted her to be a Ngcobo that we seeing similarities in features”

that’s another way to look at it.

When did my husband get so bright?

“Just convince him to do the test. I know you think it’s a waste of money but you guys have a lot of it so why not” he laughs out loud

“Okay Mrs. Ngcobo let me go convince Zwelethu to spend your child’s inheritance then” I’m in stitches as we hang up.

The noise coming from the tv room remind me that I’m not alone in this house.

after that little episode with Amanda yesterday I got the rest of the boys to sleep over.

Amanda refuses to understand how worried we all were about her and Bandile, the world has become a dangerous place anything could’ve happened and not forgetting that she drove drunk.

I fail to understand what was going through her

head at that time but she should never put Bandile's life at risk like that.

After getting all my nephews I had to drive back to Matshani to get Sqalo.

Sma was kind enough to offer his help so he's here with me and the kids.

he gets on so well with Asa and Sqalo so they are always clued to him.

Bheki is a big boy now so he's watching tv by himself.

Bandile is still asleep, leaving Nkosenye who keeps following me around the kitchen as I prepare breakfast.

“What are you making”

“Breakfast” I answer

“What is breakfast”

“Food you eat in the morning” I have a feeling more questions are coming

“Do you only eat it in the morning” I swear if

Nkosenye didn't look so much like Misuzulu I'd say he's not his.

He talks a lot unlike his father but I guess he takes after Gatsha.

I answer each question while making breakfast for them.

My house look like it's been hit by hurricane Catarina. There's toys all over the place let's not mention their clothes.

Remind me never to take all these kids at once.

I feed Nkosenye while Sma feeds Asa whose hell bent on feeding himself.

Never mind that his spoon is half empty by the time it reaches his mouth while my rug is stained with oats.

"I don't know what I would've done without you Sma, you've been such a great help. I don't know how to repay you"

"It's nothing—but now that you've mentioned, there's is a way in which you can repay me" i knew

this was too good to be true.

Sma doesn't like kids I should've known the minute he jumped off the couch and offered to babysit that he wanted something

“With how much are you going to dent my wallet”
this child.

Lol

I can't believe I fell for his act of kindness.

“Not money. It's nothing major it's a tiny winy something something”

I have a feeling I won't like this, not one bit.

“Come out with it Sma”

“Okay okay, promise you will at least think about it”

“Sma why do I feel like I won't like this”

“You will but first promise me” I'm so going regret this

He's shut his eyes tightly with his finger cross waiting for me

He looks so cute.

“Okay fine I promise”

“Sis Qhamu remember you can’t break a promise”
okay that’s it.

“You don’t want money, Mercedes got you that play station you so desperately wanted so I’m out of ideas, what is it”

“Can you please ask bhuti to allow me to test drive his bm”

“You mean that car in the garage”

“Yoh Yoh Yoh sis Qhamu—“ He stands on his feet startling me and the kids.

“—it’s not just a car. That’s a machine, I’m talking about six hundred and seventeen horsepower, twin-turbocharged, twin-scroll 4.4-liter V8 that pumps out an even 600 kilowatts in standard M8 trim, top speed is 250 kilometers per hour—“

Sma is speaking foreign language here but the enthusiasm in his voice makes my heart melt

“Yoh sisi Qhamu Let’s not talk about the interior, top

-notch stuff and not forgetting the impressive tech, the leather seats—“

“My car has leather seat”

I think I'm a little jealous hearing him glorify Mngobi's car like this.

My car is beautiful too.

“Your car is nice sis Qhamu ne and no offense but it's nothing compared to Bhuti's”

it's official I hate Mngobi's car.

“My car is safer”

“Mmm your car doesn't have stability control which automatically senses when the car handling limits have been exceeded and reduces engine power and also applies select brakes to help prevent the driver from losing control of the car and a seating-belt pretensioners that automatically tighten the seatbelts to place the driver and the passenger in the optimal seating position during a collision”

Okay I'm done talking about cars.

Mngobi's car is cooler than mine.

I get it.

“Yoh okay Sma I get it, Mngqobi’s car is nicer than mine”

“Yes, So will you ask him for me” oh we are back here

“Why not ask him yourself”

“Ah he’ll refuse but I know he won’t say no to you”

I laugh at how manipulative he is.

I’m not going to fall for it.

“I don’t understand what’s so fascinating about that car” I say

All these kids are no longer eating but watching Sma as he continues to preach about just a mere car

“Don’t Tell me you’ve never been in that car”

I shake my head

Mngqobi hardly uses it anyway not that I blame him it’s a two seater car.

I think he just bought it cause he can afford it oh and to flaunt around as well.

“You missing out, speak to him and we will both go for a spin—“ I frown

I’m not spinning in any car

“I mean a drive, it’s Convertible drops in 3.1 seconds so make sure to have your sunglasses with”

*

What an interesting morning I had with Sma. I gave in and agreed to to speak to Mngqobi on his behalf, I just couldn’t say no to him.

I bribed him to drop off Bheki, Asa and Nkosenye at Misuzulu’s house where Yobanathi will get her kids and I’m with Bandile and Sqalo.

They are sleeping as I drive to Amanda’s house.

I’m hoping I’ll be able to talk to her so we can sort

out our issues, well I don't have any issues with her but it's no secret that she does.

The drive is longer because I'm driving at minimal speed but I arrive just after one in the afternoon.

She comes out and help me with Bandiles car seat.

"How are you feeling" I ask

She doesn't look good, her hair is all over the place, her eyes are puffy and she looks like she hasn't gotten a wink of sleep, she's just a mess.

"Amanda what's wrong" I ask again.

She's seating across me with a cup of coffee, she didn't bother offering me a cup or even a glass of water for that matter.

"I'm fine Qhamu"

"Alright then—" I won't push if she doesn't want to talk

"Can I ask" she gives a look that says continue

"Did I do something to you. Maybe I'm imagining things but I feel like you've been distant lately, even

Yobanathi noticed. I want to apologize if there's something I did which you didn't like"

"No you didn't do anything, but I'll appreciate if you can you stop discussing me with Yobanathi" So much animosity from her but I try and reach out anyway

"We were not discussing you, we all are all worried. Amanda yesterday you just disappeared and when you came back you were drunk. I'm sorry if I'm oversteeping but think about Bandile what if you got arrested or worse an accident"

I just want her to see the possible consequence of her actions.

"Qhamukile I'm fine, my child is also fine"

"But—"

"Qhamu please, I said I'm fine" okay.

I think I should quit now.

I tried.

"I see you don't want to tell me what's wrong but it's alright, I'm sorry if I hurt or offended you in any

way”

I can see I’m not welcomed here

I take my baby and strap him in the car.

She’s standing in the door way watching as I get into the drivers seat.

“Qhamu, can you tell your brother to come home. He doesn’t answer my calls but I know he will answer yours”

I’m not getting involved in her marital issues.

I don’t want to meddle in their business they are both grown ups and matured enough to deal with their issues.

“I’m sorry Amanda but you’d have to call him yourself” I say and get into my car.

MNQOBI

Today has been stressful. Zwelethu finally got the test done, in less than a week we will know the truth.

Enough about that. I'm with my family and I want to give them my undivided attention.

Qhamu is telling me about her talk with Amanda.

I don't know what to make of it but I'm sure Amanda is just going through some things and she's taking it out on Qhamu or my wife is just exaggerating.

"Let her calm down, I'm sure she'll be fine. You tried to reach out that's what's important" she's feeding Sqalo while I watch tv.

"I'm thinking of taking her out for lunch to cheer her up, I'll speak to Yobanathi and Sis'Nandi and hear what they think"

"Okay baby" she thinks Amanda and Nqaba are going through a rough patch but which marriage doesn't.

"Can you please speak to Nqaba" nope.

"Ha a baby, you just said you don't want to get

involved in their business but now you want me to and besides Nqaba hasn't said anything to me"

"Baby I think it's bad, from what I gathered I think Nqaba didn't even sleep at home. You need to talk to him man to man"

I laugh out not because of what she's saying but when did we get here.

She calls this a conversation but I say it's gossip.

"Sthandwa sam are we seriously gossiping about your brother here"

I won't lie it feels good to 'gossip' with her.

"We just talking njena but you right. We don't want to involve ourselves in their mess. Mhh i'd castrate you shem. Dare not sleep at home when we are fighting and you'll see"

Let me keep quiet.

This gossip is now too close to home, imagine me without balls.

Lol

Qhamu is crazy.

“And what are you going to play with when I no longer have balls” I tease

She laughs out loud.

“You’re crazy, oh before i forget, Sma asked me something”

“What does he want now” me

“Nothing major. He asks to test drive your car” my eyes involuntarily leave the tv and I look at her

“Which one” I don’t have a problem with him driving the ford ranger but not my M8

“The bm” She says casually

“Tell him I said no” Sma can’t even afford a single tired of that car.

“Come on Sthandwa sam, he was such a great help with the kids and I couldn’t say no to him”

she’s done feeding Sqalo.

I put a muslin cloth over my shoulder before taking Sqalo from her. He has a tendency of bringing up a

small amount of milk which always leave stains on my shirts.

“So you promised him my car” I want to see her face as I say this but I can’t because I’m concentrating on holding Sqalo so his chin is resting on my shoulder.

“Baby come one, it will just be for a few minutes”

I’m supporting by son with my one hand while the other gently rub and pat him on his back so help him burb.

I enjoy this part the most, I get to bond with him.

“No Qhamu, Sma is not driving my machine, that thing runs at 250 kilometers —“

“—Per hour, has V8 what what pump and 600 kilowatts in standard M8 trim”

“Do you even know what that is” I ask

She shrugs nonchalantly

“No but Sma does and he told me all about it. I promise I won’t allow him to speed plus he said it’s safe”

My answer is still no.

I shake my head and stand up.

Sqalo is fast asleep so I need to put him in his bed.

Qhamu is in the kitchen washing dishes when I walk back downstairs.

She refused to get a helper, said she can look after our home so I let her be.

I take another dish cloth and help her wipe the dishes.

“I’ve been thinking” it’s never a good thing when you wife starts like that.

“Mmm”

“Sqalo is almost four months now so I think it’s time I went back to work”

sighs

How I’ve been dreading this topic.

“You don’t need to work Qhamu, Whose going to take care of him while you go to work and please don’t say daycare. My son is still way too young. I

need someone to watch him twenty for seven and not only that but it has to be someone we both trust”

I bet she didn't think about that

She remains silence for a while before responding

“I'll ask MaTwala, I'm sure she'll be happy plus I'll pay her”

“So we will have to drive back and forth everyday. Matshani is an hour and a half away Qhamu, I don't know about you but I'm not prepared to drive that long when one of us can be home to take care of our child”

“No Mngqobi, I'll make a plan. I need to get back to work”

Looks like I'm going to have to put more effort to convince her otherwise I see.

“How about we wait until he turns one then you'll go back” I'm grasping at straws here but from the way she's looking at me she's not buying it.

“Which company gives its employees a whole year

maternity leave—“

I repeat she doesn't need to work.

“Cheryl needs me and to be honest I hate sitting at home all day waiting for you to come back home”
oh.

I'm not going to discuss this further for now, I'll be thinking of another strategy in the meantime.

After the dishes we both tidy up and watch a little bit of tv.

It's after ten pm when we go to our bedroom.

I watch her strip naked, I'm so happy she is no longer self-conscious about her body

I actually love this curvy body.

I watch as she gets in bed in her birthday suit.

I chuckle softly when she arches her back and presses buttocks against my hardening manhood.

“Mmm you sleeping naked today” I ask.

My breath has quickened a bit.

Only she has that kind of effect on me.

“On my wedding day I was instructed to sleep naked every night” I actually do laugh out loud.

What is she playing at.

“Are you sure you want to play that game with me” my hand is trailing up and down on her spine.

Her breathing has changed and she’s pressing her thighs tightly together.

Someone is horny.

“I don’t know what you talking about” she arches her bums even closer to my groin.

Now Mapholoba is hard as a rock.

Fuck it.

I’m too horny to play along to her teasing game.

I flip her so she faces up and get onto of her.

“I want you so bad”

“And you can have me, all you need to do is allow Sma to test drive your car” she says

I should've known.

“No—“

“Then get off of me”

Fuck.

“Okay okay, let's make a deal” she shakes her head smiling seductively.

She got me exactly where she wants.

I'm powerless.

“Come on, tit-for-tat—“ mapholoba is throbbing, frankly i don't have strength to negotiate I just need to be inside her but I hold on just until I get what I want.

“I'll let Sma drive the car—“ I watch as her eyes light up

“But only if you rethink about going to work. All I ask is for you to return when Sqalo is at least a year old”

She rolls her eyes but I press Mapholoba against her groin.

“Mmmm Mnqobi” she moans.

I'm winning.

she's just as horny and she needs me inside her just as desperately but unlike me she can't hide her flushed face or her horny facial expressions.

“Okay fine. But when he turn one I'm going back to work”

I'm happy with that.

“Now make love to me”

With Pleasure!

*

I'm woken up by a beeping noise, it sound like an alarm.

Abruptly I wake up, put on my pajama pants and grab my gun which is hidden in my safe.

“Mnqobi what's wrong, why is the alarm—”

“Shh, stay there” I don't make a sound as I take

Sqalo from his cot and give him to Qhamu in the dark.

Mphopomeni is the safest place to be so I'm surprised that the alarm tricked.

It could be nothing but I'm not taking any chances.

Not when it comes to my family.

I instructed Qhamu not to switch on any lights as I tip toe downstairs.

I first check the dinning area, then the living area and the play area, and nothing. Everything is as how we left before going to bed.

The last place i check is the kitchen and like the other rooms, nothing is out of place.

Let me check outside.

I'm ready to shoot at anyone who has come to rob us.

I use the kitchen door to go to the garage and nothing.

All our cars are still here.

There's no one but the garage door is not properly closed which might have possibly triggered the alarm.

I close it shut before walking around the house to check if there's anyone but no. Nothing look out of place.

I go back into the house and switch off the alarm.

I walk upstairs after speaking to the security company, they were already on their way but I assured them it's nothing.

I switch on the light when I enter our bedroom.

My poor wife is hiding Sqalo under the covers.

“What was it”

“It's nothing, the garage door was not close properly so it must've triggered the alarm” I must've scared her with my little dramatics.

“Mnqobi is that a gun”

Eish

I didn't tell her about it.

“When did you get a gun”

“A while back—“

“And you didn’t tell me” I’m not about to argue over a gun that I got to protect her.

“Sorry baby, I didn’t want to bother you with meaningless stuff. Go back to sleep I’ll take him back to his cot”

She wants to argue more but something in her tells her not to.

“This conversation is not over, I’ll let it go for now. And can’t he sleep here with us, it’s almost morning anyway”

no she said he needs to get used to sleeping by himself.

“I thought he needs to get used to sleeping by himself”

She gives me her puppy eyes that always melts my eyes.

“Please”

It's three forty in the morning, in two hours I'll be needing my morning glory so how am I going to do that with Sqalo sleeping here.

"What about Morning glory"

She rolls her eyes at me.

I've gotten used to that now, it used to irritate the living shit out of me but ag.

"I'll shower with you"

Does Qhamu always have to use sex to get her way and she knows just how much I love shower sex.

"I can't say no to that"

I shake my head chuckling and get into bed.

"I love you" my wife is so random.

"I know Sthandwa sam and I you"

I pull Sqalo close to me and let her snuggles closer to us as we drift back to sleep.

[06/20, 18:40] Lynne: 80

Unedited

ZANELE

I have a massive headache from all the crying I've been doing since morning but it was all worth it.

I cried myself to sleep but now I wake up with the certainty of knowing that Gcina and I are through and for good this time.

He texted asking if I arrived safely at home but I didn't bother replying.

The less communication I have with him the quicker I'll get over him.

It's after two pm now. I'm expecting Lucas to be here at any time.

I envy his life, he moved out of home and got his own place so now he is free to do be who he is without our father's watchful eyes.

I text him asking how far he is and go to the kitchen.

Aunty that's what I call my stepmother. Lucas' mother, she has prepared lunch for baba, thank goodness for that because i'm in no state to cook.

"How are you feeling" she asks.

"I'm better now"

I told her I was at Qhamu's the whole night.

I couldn't tell her I was with Gcina

Yoh

imagine a guy that got me pregnant nokwenza. Her and my father are already disappointed that I got pregnant out of wedlock never mind that I'm twenty-five and have a well-paying job that can support me and my child now imagine if I were to tell her I spend the night with the same guy who doesn't even love their daughter.

One thing you should know about my parents is that they are still old fashioned, I think I told you this before. I'm not allowed to move out as I'm a girl so I'll only be allowed to move out when I go to my in-law's house.

I don't know who made that rule but it looks like I'll be home for quite a while if that's the case.

"I'm close and boy do I have news to tell" a reply from Lucas comes through as I look for painkillers in the cupboard.

It takes our parents years to finally see Lucas as gay, hear me I said see, not accept and even so ubaba still think Lucas will someday "outgrow" being gay and will marry a girl and give him grandkids like Ntsika, our older brother.

He is the perfect son.

At least one of us made it on to their high pedestal because even Nompilo, our sister got divorced two years back and to my father she's a total failure.

"Grandpa is not good for someone in your condition—" I inwardly roll eyes

This headache is too much.

"But Aunty—"

"it has caffeine and aspirin which is not good for the—drink water instead" she interrupts

Things between us are longer as weird as it were when I first moved here, after my mother past on I had no choice but to come here because I had no one to care for me. As painful as it was she accepted me. I'm a constant reminder of my father's infidelity and I can imagine that wasn't easy for her. I just say she has a forgiving heart because not only once has she mistreated me or made me like I don't belong. She welcomed me with open arms and I'll forever be grateful.

I lost a mother but gained one in her.

Did you notice how she wouldn't utter the word baby, don't worry it's not her it's my father?

I didn't say he's abusive or something of that sort, no, he is just strict, too strict.

I take the glass of water and drink up.

I'm too emotionally exhausted to argue with her.

I politely decline the plate full of food and return to my room.

I'm chatting to the girls on WhatsApp, Nomcebo

created a group chat for all of us.

We've gotten close thanks to Qhamu's wedding.

Nomthandazo moved to Joburg so we hardly see her and Nomcebo is updating us on her new man. That one is crazy I tell you but good crazy.

'Yoh Mzala this one I want to meet'

'Is he good in bed'

Qhamu and Nomthandazo response simultaneously

I'm about to ask her to send us his pic when Lucas budes in without knocking.

"Ma tells me you not feeling well, what's wrong, is it the baby"

One question at the time please... don't you just love how caring he is.

"It's nothing I can't handle. You said you have news so out with it already"

seeing him just brightens up my mood.

I put my phone away without responding to the girls.

I'll talk to them later.

"I don't even get a hug"

he holds me tight before releasing me.

That his way of saying I'm here for you.

"My baby is growing, I can't wait for her to get here"

he brushes my belly.

I don't know the gender as yet but Lucas and I are hoping for a girl.

I'm too impatient

"She's growing, now out with it already. What the big news" he rolls her eyes and sits back.

I missed this.

If it were a few years back I'd be seating in between his thighs as he does my hair.

He sighs dramatically first

"So Mike wants to pay lobola" say what now?

Lobola?

I understand a lot regarding the gay community

however, this part I don't, so does this mean Lucas will also be paying Lobola for him or what?

“What”

I'm shocked really.

He's been with Mike for about eight months now and the happiest I've ever seen him.

“How does that work”

He shrugs

“I don't know, he says he wants to do right by my parents. I told him countless times why that won't work. Phela baba hates that I'm gay now imagine Mike coming here to pay Lobola, heeeeeee he will die shem”

I laugh because he's laughing too.

“Did you tell him ubaba still thinks you'll someday get married, have kids and all”

He rolls his eyes.

“Your father is so stubborn hey. He needs to understand that being gay is not a choice. I didn't

choose to be ridiculed all my life and to be sworn at for being me I'm simply born this way and he needs to accept it"

I wish it were that easy.

"Give him time I'm sure he will come around"

He laughs and I join him.

We both know that will never happen

"I've made peace with the fact that he will never accept me for me but what puzzles me is if he didn't notice I was different for all these years, I mean I used to play with Nompilo's dolls and I used to dress up in her clothes too. Ntsika fought everyone that made fun of me because I pretended to be a girl and you telling me that all that and he still believes I'm straight"

He knew Lucas was different but didn't want to acknowledge it or even ignored it and I'm afraid that's not Lucas' problem but his.

My father's loud baritone voice shouts my name as I'm about to answer Lucas.

Without wasting time I join him in the lounge area.

“Baba”

“Sit down, I have a serious matter I need to discuss”
I know he wants to discuss my pregnancy issue but
couldn't he wait until later on.

“Yebo (Yes) ba” I say as respectful as I can.

“Your mother tells me you're with child—“ I nod
drilling the floor with my eyes.

“Who did this to you”

“Gcina Buthelezi from Mvubukazi” I told Aunty
everything and I'm sure she told him but still, he's
asking.

“I'm sure you know where he stays” again, I nod.

“Good. Prepare yourself we will be going to see his
parents tonight, you are showing and people will
start wondering and gossiping about it soon”

I was waiting for this but didn't think it would be so
soon.

“Baba can't we wait a bit—“

“No Zanele, tonight and that’s final”

I nod agreeing because I’m not allowed to disobey what my father says.

His word is the law in this house.

“He doesn’t have parents” he needs to know this.

“He only stays with his older brother and the rest are married”

“Okay. Be ready at six, I’ll call Ntsika to take us there”

We are done.

I walk back to my room with a heavy heart. I’m not prepared to see Gcina after what happened this morning.

“Why the long face” Lucas asks

“Your father, what else”

“What has he done this time”

I narrate everything my father said including what happened between Gcina and me this morning.

As always he thinks my father could at least give me some time before going to Gcina's family.

I take out my phone and inform Gats ha that I'm coming tonight he replies back saying he'll make sure Misuzulu and Gats ha are there.

Lucas and I spend the whole day speaking about him and mike.

NOKHAYA

“And then, why are you so happy” he's just gotten off the phone with whoever that was and he is too excited for my liking

“Lungelo, I'm talking to you”

“Can't a guy be happy without being interrogated” looks like I have suddenly ruined his mood.

“Are you cheating on me”

“No, Nokhaya. I’m not cheating on you, not that I’d tell you if I were but to calm your tits I’ll tell you—“ he puts his phone back in his jean pocket and sits next to me.

“You see my love, soon I’ll have everything I ever wanted. A good loving wife and a son—“

“Are you planning on marrying me” he can forget about a son because I’ll never have any kids and he can’t marry me, Mngqobi is all I want.

“Don’t worry everything will be as it should be soon” he pecks my lips and goes out humming a song.

I don’t know what is he planning but he can’t marry me.

I need to put my plan in motion before he starts talking about marriage.

I take out my phone and call my puppet.

“Mfazi hello” the sound of her voice repulses me but I try to muster a smile

“Hello you, how have you been” I haven’t spoken to her after she sent me that text saying she wants to

be part of the “get rid of Qhamu” operation.

I can't believe how gullible Amanda is, she has a husband that loves her dearly and would do everything for her but no. She defies him so she can have this sham of friendship with me.

Lol... What a fool.

I'm Nokhaya kay'one...

I prey on the weak minds like hers, does she seriously think I care about her lol it's actually funny to sit and watch her hate Qhamu who has done nothing to her but love her and welcomed her as part of the family.

One thing I wish I could tell her is that Ngaba will never turn his back on Qhamu not even for her. Maybe I'll tell her when I'm done using her.

”are you sure you want in.” I ask

”yes I'm sure”

”okay. What do you think we should do to her”
watch as I manipulate her to think this sinister plan is all hers.

” I don't know, I thought you had a plan”

”me—“ I wish I could laugh right now

“I’m not the one married to Nqaba, who constantly disregard you because of his sister. What do you want to do, poison her or something”

“No Nokhaya, I may hate her but I don’t want to kill her”

I thought she would say something like that but I have plan B

“You right. You’re not murder, I’m just trying to help but I’m sure you’ll think of something. But Mfazi, I know how I’ll deal with Lungelo, I’m going to make him forget about Qhamu”

“How are you going to do that” let’s see if she’ll take the bait

“I have this drug that will give him amnesia, soon he will fully be mine”

“Mmm that could work. Do you think I should give it to Nqaba too”

“Nooo, why not Qhamu. Imagine how hurt Nqaba

will be when his precious sister no longer remembers him and that's when you'll come in. The perfect wife, you'll be supportive and help him deal with his pain and guess what, he will love you even more"

"Oooooooh you're a genius"

Just as I thought she took the bait.

"That will definitely work. I'll suggest we don't overwhelm her so we will give her space and I'll have Nqaba all to myself but I've been mean to Qhamu how am I going to drug her"

Do I have to do all the thinking here?

And that drug will not give her amnesia but kill her.

I'm planning to get a confession from Amanda saying she gave Qhamu the drug I just need to figure out how I'll do that without implicating myself.

Mmh In the end Mngobi will be mine again. I'll be there for him when his wife dies and not only that but I'll catch her killer as well.

Nokhaya, you're such a genius.

Mnqobi will have no choice but love me.

“Invite her and cook for her. Tell her how sorry you are about your recent behavior, put the drug in her drink or food. I’m sure you’ll think of something”

I’m done here.

One thing you should know about me is I always get what I want. So you can imagine when I got to Qhamu’s wedding and Amanda was also there.

I played a victim that I am and she believed me.

If it weren’t for Qhamu I’d still be with Mnqobi and I wouldn’t have gotten raped by Akin and his people.

This is all Qhamu’s fault and she’ll pay for it.

“I’ll come tomorrow for the drug then” with that said we hand up.

I’m smiling as I write a text, tomorrow Amanda will get this drug, and soon I’ll be rid of Qhamu.

Amanda is a true definition of a sheep, gullible as can be and the fact that she has family issues is just an advantage. she’s been a shadow of her missing sister for most of her life. Her mother

stopped loving her when the sister got lost and to make matters worse her mother married that baboon that raped me. I'll forever be thankful to Nqaba for killing him.

The same baboon killed her biological father.

So tell me how can she be fine after all that, don't dare think I feel sorry for her. Her troubled life is my ticket to a happy life with a man I love.

She got kidnapped by Zithulele because of some deal I don't know of and I think that broke her beyond repair. Nqaba really tried with her but she's just too broken and I used that to my advantage.

Don't hate the player, hate the game.

I want Mngqobi and I going to do everything in my power to make sure I get him, even if it means using the innocents.

ZANELE

I don't think I've ever been so nervous in my life, I don't know why because not even once has Gcina denied this baby, I guess it's because I know how unpredictable my father can be.

He can beat up Gcina for all I know.

I'm seating in the back seat with Aunty and ma'Qwabe, who is my father's older sister.

Ntsika is driving and my father is on the passenger seat.

My heart is ready to jump out of my chest as Mondli opens the gate for us.

It's after half six. I'm dressed in a long dress and I'm also wearing a doek which I don't understand why.

Mondli direct us to the lounge area where Misuzulu is seated with Gats ha and Nqaba.

Once my father has introduced himself he tell them why we are here.

“My daughter here is with child and it is to my knowledge that your brother is responsible”

I don't know how these things are done but shouldn't this be done by females. Aunty and mam'Qwabe are very much capable of doing this.

"I hear you baba but I'll let Gcina answer for himself" Misuzulu says.

Gcina first clears his throat

"Thank you. I'd first like to apologize for planting my seed in your garden without marrying your daughter and yebo baba I'm not going to deny that I'm the one responsible to the child she's carrying"

I'm surprised he shows such remorse to my parents.

"And I'm planning to do what is right by my child and Zanele'ntombi as well"

My full name sounds so long.

from the corner of my eye I see my father nodding.

"Spoken like a true man—" I inwardly roll my eyes at my father.

"I'm glad to hear that"

We spend sometime going through what will

happen next.

Gcina plans on first paying damages then lobola for his child but he assures my father that he will what's right by me as well. Whatever that means.

I'm relieved when we get back into the car without any fights or quarrels.

Ntsika hasn't said a word but I know he is pissed off.

I know he doesn't acknowledge that I'm now grown, to him I'll forever be that young little sister of his that I once were.

Looks like mam'Qwabe is sleeping over.

Ntsika leaves immediately after dropping us at home.

It's been a long day. I'm tired.

"Baby I know I hurt you before but I promise I'll make it right" a text from Gcina comes through just as I change into my pajamas.

Mxm.. I block his number on my Whats App, phone call and messages, I'll unblock him when I have to talk to him for now he needs to know that I meant it

when I told him I want nothing that has to do to with him.

I put my phone in silence before closing my eyes.

*

The following day..

Monday's are long and tiring but I'm happy schools will be closing for September holidays soon. A week is not a lot but at least I'll get some rest.

Being a grade one teacher is the hardest, I've struggled with teaching my learners how to hold a pencil, how to write their names, I don't know how many time have we through the alphabets and don't get me started on the numbers. The threes and twos are always facing the opposite directions but it gives me great joy when I see them progress to the next grade.

I started teaching right after varsity and I don't see

myself doing anything else.

To me, teaching does not feel like work but it's part of me, it's my passion and I wouldn't trade it for anything.

"Mam why is your stomach so big" I love my kids but I hate it when they ask me questions I don't know how to answer

"There is a baby in there that's why" I watch as her eyes ballon up in amazement

"A baby!"

I nod at her

Ntando is by far the smartest kid I've ever taught.

"how did it get in there"

"I swallowed her and now she's going to grow in here"

How were you going to answer that.

I watch as she squint her eyes processing my answer

"You swallowed a baby, did you have to crew it"

“Yes” can the questions end already.

“My mother told me that when I eat my food it’s goes to my stomach and I poop it out so will you also poop the baby out” she even has a disgusted expression on her face as she asks this.

“I’m so sorry I’m late” her mothers saves me.

She’s always late to pick her up not sure why because she's a stay-at-home mom.

“It will never happen again”

I nod and chuckle lightly.

She’s going to be late again tomorrow, I’m used to it.

“Mama mam’ says she swallowed a baby so is she going to poop the baby out like I do with my food” I laugh out loud.

“Stop asking such questions Ntando” she shouts.

“No it’s alright, kids are too curious generally and not only is Ntando curious but she’s too clever for her own good” I wave goodbye as they walk out.

Now it’s time I get home.

I gladly accept a lift from Mrs. Xaba's. She saved me the taxi trip.

She drops me right at the gate.

Mam'Qwabe's Toyota Yaris is still parked outside where I left it this morning meaning she's still here.

She's in the kitchen with Aunty, gossiping about other family members I'm sure. They both start ululating when they see me.

They both start singing sesimfumene happily

"Sesimfumene" is a wedding song Which translates
We have a bride

Let us go celebrate!

Let us ululate!"

But where it says bride they've switched up the lyric to "we have found the groom"

I'm startled at first but then it clicks. ma'Qwabe's has a daughter, she must be getting married but wait she's only sixteen.

I want to ask but they are singing so loud, I wonder

where is ubaba because I know he wouldn't allow such deafening noise in his house.

It's a party I tell you. Just as I think the song is coming to an end Aunty starts it all over again.

She looks happier than MaQwabe so maybe I'm mistaken in thinking it's her daughter getting married.

Lol.. I've just had the craziest idea.

Is it possible that Lucas told them about Mike wanting to pay Lobola?

Lol

Crazy right.

It's just my wishful thinking but why are they so happy. I know for a fact that they wouldn't be so jubilant about Lucas of lobola, in fact, aunty would be crying if not furious or maybe she's finally accepted that Lucas is gay.

Lol...

I should stop now, my parents will never accept that he is gay.

I want to join in their little celebration but I'm tired.

“Awo Ntombi why didn't you tell us he is planning to make an honest woman out of you”

“Mam'Khulu—“ What does she mean

“The Buthelezi boy—we received a letter this morning. He asks for your hand in marriage”

“What” shock is an understatement to how I'm feeling right now.

“He did what”

I can't believe Gcina.

He can't be serious.

my head is spinning

I need to sit down.

“Why does it look like she's unhappy about this”
MaQwabe.

“Ah she is happy she is just shock but don't worry
ntombi yam I was just as shocked”

what the hell is Gcina playing at.

My father walks in just as I'm about to leave these two ladies

“Ah there she is, I've always known you'd make me proud”

I don't know what to say

“Yaz baba when that boy said he'll do right by her I didn't think it would be so soon” aunty adds.

Did I tell you how speechless I am?

“I'm so proud of you ntombi yam—“ my father says proudly.

I've never seen him so proud, not even when I passed my matric with flying colors or when I graduated in varsity.

He gives me a warm hug something he's never done my entire life.

“I knew one of my daughters would make me proud. Lobola negotiations will commence soon, he wants to marry you before the baby is born”

Can I die right now?

After the excitement has calmed down I leave them and go to my room.

I don't know if I'm frustrated, angry, or if I just simply hate Gcina.

How can he do this when I clearly told him I don't want to be with him.

Look what has he done now, how am I going to look my father in the eye and tell him I'm not agreeing to this marriage.

He said he is proud of me, the one word he has never uttered to me.

I unblock Gcina and call him.

Tears are streaming down my face as the phone rings.

"I take it you unblocked me" he answers

"Gcina I swear I'm going to kill you, why the hell did you send that stupid letter after I told you I want nothing to do with you"

"Baby calms down, you're going to stress the baby. I'm sorry I didn't consult you but I'm planning to

marry you, the mother of my child. I'm sorry I hurt you all these years but I've realized I love you and nothing will stop me from making you my wife"

Why is he doing this to me?

He hurt me over and over again and just when I thought I'm rid of him he does this. not only has he hurt me but he's ruining my already collapsing relationship with my parents.

My parents will just hate me if I refuse to get married to him.

"I regret ever meeting you"

"You don't mean that"

he says quickly.

It's like he doesn't believe me.

"I do. I regret getting pregnant, I should've just aborted this baby then maybe I'd be rid of you forever"

I'm crying as I say all this.

Gcina has hurt me too deep this time.

“Please don’t say that that’s our baby. I know you don’t mean it”

I hear the desperation in his voice.

“Oh I do and believe me when I say I hate you” I hung up and switch off my phone.

[06/20, 18:41] Lynne: 81

Unedited

MNQOBI

”please Qhamu don't speed”

”will you relax, I heard you the first time I promise I won't speed” she says unworried

Qhamu doesn't know just how fast this car is.

”And remember, I'll get notified should you exceed over 120” I'm just trying to scare her.

”like really now baby—“ she rolls her eyes and hand

Sqalo to me

“—don’t worry I won’t exceed 60 I promise” she says nonchalantly and put her sunglasses on.

“How do I look” I chuckles while buckle Sqalo in his car seat.

“Like a million dollar”

“Hell yeah I do, I can’t wait to cruise on the highway, droptop baby” I think she’s more excited than she lets on.

“So we will meet in Mats heni”

“Yes, I’ll come to you when I’m done. I’m just not sure if I should go see Amanda first—“

I know she’s dramatically rolling her eyes behind those sunglasses at a mention of Amanda’s name.

“—or if I should go to Zanele”

I don’t know what’s happening with her and Gcina but whatever it is, is beyond me.

When Qhamu told me that Gcina sent a letter to Zanele’s family I was dumbfounded to say the least.

I've watched him play with the poor girl all these years and now that she's pregnant he suddenly loves her?

I don't believe it, maybe he's just doing it cause she's pregnant but that's none of my business.

“Why not go to Amanda then when you done you'll go see Zanele but don't take the whole day because you still need to take Sma for a spin”

I suggest

We were both surprised when she received a text from Amanda saying they should meet up but I also think my wife was just being melodramatic regarding her sister-in-law's behavior.

“Yes, ill do that. Is Sqalo secured safely” i sometimes wish I could roll my eyes at Qhamu.

“Yes, he is fine” I've done this more times than I can count and each time she checks if I strapped him right.

“Okay then. Let me love and leave you” she gets closer to me and gives me a kiss that leaves me

wanting more.

Part of me want to protest when her lips detach from mine, I need more of her, I want to drag her upstairs but I let her be.

She kisses Sqalo before getting into the M8

The mommas boy that is Sqalo start crying when he sees his mother drive out of the garage but that's nothing a pacifier cannot fix.

He is very much quiet when I drive out following behind Qhamu.

She wanted to take Sqalo with her but i too want to bond with him besides she needs to rest as she is always with him when I'm at work during the week so it's my turn now.

I drive behind Qhamu until I have to take a turn going to Matsheni.

All my brothers are home when I arrive. Zwelethu got the DNA results and he asked us all to be here when all is revealed.

Mncedisi immediately takes the sleeping Sqalo

from me when I enter the house. Nomfundo is playing with her toys on the floor next to MaTwala.

“Hey Mnqobi What are you feeding this boy, he’s so heavy” Mncedisi

“He has to be fat, all he does is eat and sleep” I say and they all laugh

“Look whose talking, I had to buy four cans of milk for you and manqoba” I knew MaNgidi will say something like that.

“Ah Ma I’m sure I didn’t eat as much as he does. I’ll be broke soon all because of him”

She shakes her head and take Sqalo from Mncedisi.

Sqalo is such a heavy sleeper.

He sleep through the noise no matter how deafening it is.

We engage in meaningless conversation for a while before Makhosini suggest we open the results.

I think we are all dreading the inevitable.

This would’ve been so much easier had it been at

the hospital where the doctor would be able to explain the test but Zwelethu decided that it would be best like this, with all us present at home.

Anticipation is killing me as Zwelethu opens the envelope.

“I can’t, Bafo you read” he gives the letter to Langa whose seating next to him.

He silently reads through it

“Read out loud” I interrupt

Like I said anticipation is killing me.

“The alleged father is excluded as the biological father of the tested child. This conclusion is based on the non-matching alleles observed at the loci listed above with a PI equals to zero. The alleged father lacks genetic markers that must be contributed to the child by a biological father. The probability of paternity is zero percent”

It’s dead quiet when Langa finishes reading.

“What does that mean” Zwelethu asks breaking the silence.

We all know what that means but I guess he can't believe it.

"She's not mine is she" he says before anyone can answer him.

We all look at him with sad eyes.

I can't even begin to imagine what he's going through.

He's been a father to Nomfundo for over eight months and now he hears that she's not biologically his.

"I'm sorry Bafo" Makhosini says pitifully.

Zwelethu abruptly walks out angrily.

Mandisa better dig a dipper hole and hide before Zwelethu gets to her.

AMANDA

I watch as she drives in my yard, wearing her sunglasses.

Yeee this girl thinks this world is hers.

She's wearing a yellow dress that is just above her knees and matching sandals.

Part of me wants to rip her apart but the not so jealous me acknowledges how beautiful she is.

I love her big Afro.

She always styles it to perfection.

"Sawubona" she greets

I smile and hug her.

I can tell she's surprised but she hugs me back anyway.

"How are you" I ask

"I'm good and you"

"I'm good. You look beautiful" I actually mean every word.

She's breath taking.

She follows behind me as I walk back into the house.

Ngaba left and took Bandile with him. I'm glad he's not here cause we always fighting these days.

And it's always about my friendship with Nokhaya.

He seriously needs to let it go.

"You look like yourself" Qhamu says

I'm wearing a jean and a simple t-shirt, my eyes are not puffy, my hair is not a mess so I agree with her.

I look and feel like myself today.

"That's the reason I asked you come—" she gives me an inquisitive look

clearing my throat I begin...

"look Qhamu. I've been mean to you for no apparent reason and I want to apologize."

She is taken aback by my apology which is understandable though, I've been a b-word haven't I?

“Oh—“ she’s even speechless

“Yes. It took me a while to realize it and I’m sorry”

“I hear you but I don’t believe you were mean for no reason. I know there’s something, you may not be comfortable with telling me but I forgive you nonetheless. Amanda you’re my brother’s wife meaning you’re now my sister, next time please talk to me if there’s something bothering you. I’m here for you”

If I didn’t know half of the thing she did to Nokhaya I’d believe that she’s genuine but Nokhaya did warn me that she’ll waltz in here and pretend to care but I won’t fall for it.

I sigh loudly pretending to be remorseful to an extent.

“You’re right. Qhamu I’m jealous—“

“Jealous, of who” she asks astonished

“Of you”

“Me?” she says incredulously

“Yes, you get all the attention. You have it all, a

loving family, in-laws that are ready to slay dragons for you, heck even both your mother in-laws love you. I'm not even going to begin talking about your husband he literally cherish the grounds you walk on.—“

I want to stop myself but I'm too vulnerable to stop
“You come from a perfect family where else I don't. You had loving parents and mine loved money more than they did me. I know it's not your fault but I can't help it, I'm jealous that all your brothers would literally stop whatever they are doing for you. It's so frustrating how Nqaba leaves me here alone every Sunday and goes to have breakfast at your house, your house Qhamu while he has a wife that's very much capable of making him breakfast. I don't know what power you hold over them but it's too much and it's not only your brothers but Mngqobi's brothers as well. I know you all have a history but part me part of me envies the kind of love they have for you. I want to be the center of attention too”
there I said it.

I told her everything.

I even have tears in my eyes.

She's looking at me with her popped as I tell her the truth.

“Amanda—“ she closed her eyes and takes a deep breath

“I'm sorry you feel like this and you're right the Buthelezi's have a history with the Ngcobo's but believe me it was not as rosy as it. People died, I lost a child. Mngqobi and I fought tooth and nail for us to be together, the Ngcobo's love me because Mngqobi and I glued back what was broken but believe me when I say they love you just as much. You're Nqaba's wife meaning you're on of us now. They would sly dragons for you too. Amanda I don't know why do you feel like I come from a perfect family and you're so wrong, we are anything but perfect. You have nothing to be jealous of. I understand you might feel otherwise regarding my brothers coming to my house on Sundays but that's only because that the only tradition that held us together after our father died. I've asked Nqaba to come with you countless times but you didn't. I

don't know what is it that you're jealous because there's nothing to be jealous of. Tell you what, how about we come here for breakfast tomorrow, I could use with a change to venue I'm tired of cooking for all these men"

Who is she fooling with her act of kindness.

She stole Mngobi from Nokhaya and she preaches about being a glue that holds these two families together.

This girl thinks everything is about her.

"It's alright. How about I come instead"

Be both agree that I'll go to her house.

I've cooked.

Nokhaya said five drops should be fine but I think that is too much so I just pour three drops in her juice and give her.

I watch her eat her plate finish and drink her juice.

I'm inwardly doing cartwheels and singing hallelujah.

Soon she will forget all about her family then I'll have my husband to myself while Nokhaya gets what's rightfully hers which is Mngqobi.

Once we are done she beats farewell.

Well... that went better than I had hoped.

QHAMU

Things went well between Amanda and I considering.

I can't wait to tell Mngqobi all about it. I know he'll think I'm dramatic when I tell him about Amanda's jealousy, he feels like I'm always exaggerating stuff.

I don't know what goes through Amanda's head at times but there's nothing to be jealous of, Ngaba loves her very much.

Let me not think about her.

I'm driving to Zanele, to be honest with you I don't see the fuss over this car. It's just like any other car plus there's this sound it makes when you increase the speed I guess that's how Mngqobi gets his notifications.

I park outside the gate and enter.

Lucas' mother is in the kitchen washing dishes.

"Sawubona ma"

"Yebo Qhamu, you look so beautiful. You're even glowing are sure you're not pregnant again" oh no...

"No ma. I'm not pregnant"

I'm back on birth control besides Sqalo is still so young to have a sibling.

"I'm just playing with you. Zanele is in her bedroom. Can you please cheer her up she's says everything is okay but I know she's not telling the truth"

this Gcina issue must be weighing a lot on her

After talking to her step mom I walk to her room.

"Zane" she's in bed

“Hey you. Must you always look beautiful kodwa” I roll my eyes and pull her duvet cover

“Go bath, I’ll be waiting” she first complain but relents and do as I say.

An hour later she smells nice and clean but she’s still in a gloomy mood.

“I’m sorry he did what he did. I don’t understand why would he do something like that” I don’t want to talk to Gcina about this.

Growing up I told myself I wouldn’t enter into my brothers businesses.

“To make matters worse my father is so happy he’s marrying me and i don’t know how to tell him I don’t want to get married”

Her dilemma.

“So what are you going to do”

She shrugs

“I don’t know. I wish I could just disappear and raise this child on my own without your brother breathing down my neck or my father wanting me to marry

him”

“Unfortunately you can’t do that. That’s my nephew or niece in there and I want to see them grow”

She rolls her eyes at me

“And I’m sure your brother will turn every stone up until he finds me” damn right he will.

“Tell me what to do Que” I’m too much of a good friend to say I told you so, she should’ve stayed away from Gcina like I said but what’s done it’s done.

“I can’t tell you what to do but what I’m going to say is do what me right for you. Gcina didn’t do things the right way I agree, he’s impulsive like that but I’ve got no doubt that he’ll be a good father” I know I’m being a hypocrite but part of me wants them to get married.

They would make a good couple though I think Gcina doesn’t deserve Zanele.

Gcina should let her be, if she doesn’t want to be with him he needs to accept that and besides he

had his chances and he ruined each and every one of them.

Zanele loves him but for her sanity I don't think she should be with him.

"Let's forget about my problems for a bit. Mngqobi finally allowed you to drive his beast" she's got love for cars as well which I don't understand.

"Yes he did all thanks to Sma. I'm actually going to see him from here"

"I'm sure he's excited" I think I might have an idea on how to cheer her up a bit.

"He is, how about we go for a spin" I see her eyes light up.

The Zanele I know is somewhere in there

"Are you serious"

"Yes let's go" she's out the door before I can even blink.

Lol

I miss this care free Zanele.

Gcina really hurt her and if I were him I'd back off or else she's end up hating him.

She first goes around the car admiring its beauty which I find ridiculous.

“Mmm when I buy a car, it will be something close to this” she says and burst out laughing

“But definitely not with my teaching salary” I shake my head and start the car.

She's so happy like a child in a candy shop.

She increases the volume when we get on the freeway.

“Step on the accelerator please” I'm so afraid, we are driving on high speed as it is.

“Zanele, you're pregnant you shouldn't be asking for such”

I see her rolls her eyes from the corner of my eye

“Come on you driving on 80 just increase to 100 at least” the road is empty so why not.

Wind is blowing on my face and I step on the

accelerator.

Zanele is happy singing out loud to the radio. I see the robot turning yellow and I step on the brick pedal to decrease the speed but nothing

“Qhamu slow down” Zanele shouts as we nearing the truck in front of us but nothing

“Zanele it doesn’t want to stop” I’m step hard on the brick pedal but nothing.

“Qhamu watch out” that’s the last thing I hear before we cash into the truck

[06/20, 18:41] Lynne: 82

Unedited

MNQOBI

”call her again” I tell Sma.

It’s after five and Qhamu should’ve been here a

while back and to make matters worse Sqalo has been crying non stop that I don't know what to do anymore, MaNgidi gave him Panado pediatric syrup but he's still wailing.

I have never seen him cry like this before and his cries are just too painful to bare.

“It's still ringing unanswered” Sma says putting my phone back on the table.

Part of me doesn't wanna worry but this is out of character for Qhamu.

She always answers my calls no matter what.

“Maybe she's driving” MaTwala says

“The car has a handsfree mode which she uses every time”

I'm getting frustrated more than anything.

Sqalo needs his mom.

I give Sqalo to MaNgidi and try calling Qhamu myself.

Her phone rings unanswered the first time but a

bold voice answers when I call the second time.

“Theo hello”

I check the screen to see if I called the right person

“Hello who's this”

“Hi Sir, this is Theo. Do you know Mrs Q Ngcobo”

“Yes, she’s my wife. Where is she”

I ask a little panicked

“Mr Ngcobo, I’m a paramedic who responded to the scene of an accident in R617 main road which your wife was—“

“Was my wife involved in an accident” I interrupt him.

He's too slowly spoken for my liking

“I’m afraid so sir, she and the young lady she was with have been rushed to Midlands hospital”

I don’t even want to ask how is she doing.

I know she’s alright, she has to be alright.

I try not to think of the worst. as I thank Theo and

end the call.

“What’s going on?” Mncedisi asks hurriedly.

“Qhamu has been involved in an accident I’m going to Midlands hospital. Ma can you please look after Sqalo” I’m trying to be as calm as possible.

I see tears forming in MaTwala and MaNgidi’s eyes.

“Oh thixo wam. Why do bad things keep happening to that poor girl? It’s fine Mnqobi rush there I’ll follow”

Mncedisi offers to drive me there.

I don’t want to call the rest of the brothers before I know exactly what’s going on.

Mncedisi drives silently until we reach the hospital.

“Hello sisi” I greet the lady at the reception

“Qhamukile Ngcobo was involved in an accident and she was brought in here” I tell her

She presses a few times on her computer and direct to the correct floor.

Mncedisi is following behind me until we reach our

destination.

The doctors come to us after an hour of waiting

“Good evening Mr Ngcobo, I’m Dr Moodly” he shakes my hand

“How’s my wife”

He smiles giving me hope

“Your wife is one strong woman. She has no broken bones, it’s just a few fractures from the collusion which are not fatal however we still running more test to see if there’s any internal bleeding. she’s scheduled to go for a CT scan in thirty minutes and from there I’ll know exactly what’s going on”

I sigh in relief.

“Thank you very much doc, when can I see her”

“Right after the scan, you’ll be able to see her—“ I nod happily.

Judging from Mncedisi’s smile he’s happy too.

“—oh Mr Ngcobo do you know the lady she was with” I’m not sure if it’s Zanele or Amanda

“I’m not sure who she was with”

“Oh I was hoping you’d know her. Unfortunately she was not as lucky as she was.”

“Can I see her maybe I’ll be able to identify her”

I don’t want to know what Nqaba will do should it be Amanda and I can’t imagine how Gcina will be should it be Zanele and his unborn child.

“Of course, please follow me” I leave Mncedisi in the waiting area and follow behind the doctor.

I can’t say I’m shocked as I see Zanele with countless pipes on her body.

“I know her, she’s my wife’s friend. I’ll contact her family and let them know” I tell the doc and go back to Mncedisi.

I don’t know who to call first, my brothers or her brothers first.

”bafo” I decided to call Makhosin and by pure luck he’s with Langa and Gatsha.

At least now I won’t have to be the bearer of bad news to Gcina.

Makhosini is saddened to hear Qhamu is in the hospital again after everything she's been through but at least he agreed to inform everyone else regarding the accident.

MaNgidi is the first one to arrive with Sma as I pace back and forth frantically.

“Yaz bhuti If it wasn't for me she wouldn't have driven that car, I asked her to ask you and look what happened now” Sma

I don't want him to blame himself for any of this.

It could've happened to anyone.

“No Sma, it was an accident it's not your fault”

The rest of the family walks in.

Nqaba is with the crying Amanda, you'd swear Qhamu died with the way she's crying.

Misuzulu walks in with Mondli who looks very worried.

I told Makhosini to mention that Qhamu is fine but I guess he didn't or her brothers will just never stop worrying about her.

“Where is Gcina” I ask

“He’s coming with Zanele’s parents” oh

I nod at Mondli answers because I have nothing to say.

The rest of the brothers walks in until we are all gathered around the hospital making noise.

I swear we will be kicked out soon.

The doctor walks in and look at all of us amazed.

We get this all the time.

“They are family” I had to say it because I can tell he’s wondering who all these people are.

He smiles showing me the scan like I know what I’m looking at

“We got the CT scan results and everything seems fine. There’s no trauma to the head or any internal bleeding—“ his smile fades and it is replaced with worry

“—however we found traces of ethylene glycol in her blood”

“What’s that” Mondli

“It is the top ingredient in antifreeze, among other chemical substances. And it’s actually one of the number one homicidal poisons”

“POISON” we all say in unison

Where the hell did Qhamu come in contact with this antifreeze poison that this doctor is talking about.

“What do you mean Poison doctor” I ask

“I’m afraid that’s what we found in her blood. Do you know anyone who would want to hurt your wife”

KILL?

Am I hearing this doctor?

Someone intentionally gave my wife this poison?

“Wait doctor, what do you mean kill”

“Mr Ngcobo ethylene glycol is very deadly which I highly doubt Mrs Ngcobo would willingly ingest it unless she tried to commit suicide”

“No, she would never” I yell.

Not my wife.

“Then I’m afraid someone wanted her dead. Like I said Mr Ngcobo, ethylene glycol is very deadly it is a chemical commonly used in many commercial and industrial applications including antifreeze and coolant. It helps keep your car’s engine from freezing in the winter and acts as a coolant to reduce overheating in the summer. The reason why most people use it to poison others is that ethylene glycol has a sweet taste, a perfect quality in the hands of a poisoner. Plus, buying antifreeze is not generally seen as a suspicious activity so no one would suspect that you going to use it to kill someone”

I’m shocked.

Why would anyone want to hurt Qhamu. Haven’t she suffered enough in life.

“So now what will happen to Qhamu” I’m too numb to think of such questions.

The doctor turns his eyes to Nqaba to answer him

“We still flushing out the deadly toxins in her body.

It will take a while but I'll do my best. I'm just glad she was admitted before any damage could've been done to her organs”

I'm speechless.

I was with Qhamu this morning and I ate breakfast with her from there she went to see Amanda and Zanele so where did she come across this poison.

I'm so confused.

I refuse to think one of the ladies might've given her the poison but why?

What's the motive?

Could Zanele be angry at Gcina that she'd wanna hurt Qhamu to get back at him?

No, not possible.

I know how much Zanele loves Qhamu, she'd never do anything to harm her then there's Amanda.

I can't think of any reason she'd wanna hurt Qhamu.

I'll just have to ask Qhamu when she wakes up.

“Are you sure she's going to be fine” I snap out of

my trance and ask the doctor

“Yes. She might have side effect from the medication we gave her like nausea and vomiting but its normal. The poison it self causes vomiting as a result of gastrointestinal irritation but she’ll be fine” I need a smoke.

Nqaba is busy comforting Amanda whose crying so hard so I can’t drag him out with me for a smoke.

“Doctor, How lethal is this poison” I’ll smoke after this question

“Very, Severe toxicity may result in coma, loss of reflexes, seizures, and irritation of the tissue lining the brain. The toxic metabolic by-products of ethylene glycol metabolism cause a build-up of acid in the blood but that won’t happen to your wife but I have to report this to the police, it's my duty to.” I don't like the look he's giving me as he says this.

Does this man really think if kill my wife? He's just crazy.

I nod at him and walk away.

I meet up with Gcina and Zanele's parents as I exit.

NOKHAYA

"at least one dead after collision on the R617 road. The deceased 27 years old man died on the scene leaving two young women critical. They were rushed to Midlands hospital where they immediately received help. The one-woman remains unknown while the other has been identified as Qhamukile Ngcobo" I smile as the news anchor shows the picture of the accident.

It's true when they say God does answer our prayers.

I didn't need Amanda after all, but for fun ill just show Mngobi all the text between us.

"investigating offer Khumalo reports—" an old men wearing a police uniform appears onto screen

“It seems like the two women where in high speed when they collided into the truck, the young man was a driver and died immediately. We still investigate the matter as it appears that the M8 was tempered with”

Police and their overly exaggerated imagination.

They shouldn't waist any resources on that accident, it's simple, Qhamu can't drive.

I take out my phone and call the fool that is Amanda.

“Hello” she sounds like she's been crying

“Hey mfazi I hear Qhamu was involved in a accident, is she dead yet”

“Nokhaya how can you, you said that thing is not deadly. I didn't say I want to kill her I just said I want her out Nqaba's life. Do you know what you have done” Who is she scolding at?

This girl doesn't know me, I can end her marriage in a blink of an eye.

“Amanda don't you dare shout at me like I'm you child—“

“No Nokhaya, you just said the drug will give her amnesia not kill her. Do you know how hard it was listening to the doctor explaining how dangerous that thing is”

“Amanda I’m not a doctor I don’t know how these drugs and poison works and let’s not forget this was your idea. I told you I was going to use it on Lungelo but you wanted it for Qhamu so please don’t dare blame me for your doings” it was my plan but she’s too weak to even think of that.

All the blame will be on her once all is revealed.

“I’m going to tell Nqaba, I’m going to tell him everything”

Is this spout brat crazy or what.

I can’t let her do anything like that.

“Don’t be crazy. How about you come to my house tomorrow so we can talk” I’d be damned if I let her tell Nqaba the truth.

Lungelo walks in just as I hang up on this fool.

“Hey” I greet.

He's been in a good mood lately Which I hate so let me break his heart.

“I just saw on the news that Qhamu was involved in an accident and by the look of things it's bad” I watch as his face change.

He's now angry

“What, what do you mean Qhamu was involved in an accident” I inwardly roll my eyes at how dramatic he is

“Yes, she was driving Mnqobi's M8. You know—“

“Fuck it was suppose to be her” he's out of the door before I can even ask what he means.

ZANELE

My body feel like it has been run over by a truck full of cement. I open my heavy eyes but the light is too

much for me so I close them again and slowly open them again adjusting to the light.

The first thing I see is Gcina sleeping on a chair that's besides my bed. I can't move nor make a sound because of the pipe in my throat so I watch him until he wakes up.

He is startled that I'm awake but he smiles when his eyes meet mine.

"Oh baby you're awake, I'll go get your doctor" he's out before I could protest not that I'm able to.

A female doctor walks in and help remove the pipes from me.

She checks my eyes with that annoying light of hers

"Good, now tell me can you feel your body"

I nod. The immense pain I'm in is unbearable.

I can feel the blade on my leg.

"That's good. You broke a leg during the accident but apart from that you're fine"

I close my eyes and blink the tears back.

I afraid to ask about my baby.

Part of me knows what happened but I refuse to acknowledge or accept it.

“I’ll give you another dose of pain killers, you should get some rest and I’ll come see you again” she says and walks out.

Gcina has been here throughout watching as the doctor checks on me.

I clear my throat and open my mouth

“Hi”

“Hey” we have so much to talk about and yet we both can’t find the words

“How is Qhamu” I ask instead

“She’s good. Her doctor says she’ll soon be discharged”

I’m happy to hear that.

“That good” I say with tears threatening my eyes.

I wish I could forget that accident. One minute we were cruising the next we collided with s truck. I

don't know how we both survived but by the grace
of the lord here I am

“Are you fine, do you need any pillows”

I shake my head.

I don't need anything but my baby.

We remain silent until I can no longer take it

“The baby is gone right” I ask with tears already
streaming down my face

He nods getting closer to me.

“I'm sorry there was nothing they could do. You
miscarried at the accident scene and by the time
you got here it was already too late”

I see pain in his eyes.

I don't have any words to comfort him with.

“I'm sorry too”

We both remain in silent for what feel like eternity.

“Where are my parents”

“They went home to bath and change, Lucas,

Ntsika and your sister went to get something to eat”

I nod and close my eyes again.

I feel numb I think the pain medication is working or maybe I’m just numb to the pain of losing my baby.

“I guess your marriage proposal is off the table then” I know I shouldn’t be having such conversations especially with how I’m feeling but I need to deal with this so I can start my new life without him.

“What do you mean”

he’s looking at me right on my eyes as he asks

“Now that the baby is gone. Ang’thi you wanted to marry me because I was pregnant well you’re free now”

He stares at me long that I start to get uncomfortable especially because I don’t know what’s going through his mind.

“I don’t know what makes you think I wanted to marry you because you were pregnant. Ntombi I know this will be hard to believe especially after

how I treated you but I love you. Baby or no baby I want to get married to you.” I don’t trust him.

Not after everything.

“I want to start over, let’s wipe the slate clean and start this all over” I shake my head

Gcina has hurt me way too much to trust anything he says.

“Let’s forget about marriage, let’s forget about our past. This is me and I’m saying I’m willing to work hard to prove to you. You don’t have to agree to date me but all I’m asking for it’s a chance to prove myself”

Where was this Gcina for all these years.

“I can’t, I’m sorry I can’t. I waited for you for too long and now I can’t anymore. I don’t hate you Gcina but we just can’t be together. I’m sorry I’m gonna have to ask you to leave”

Seeing his face makes me weak.

All I want is for him to wrap his arms around me but I won’t let a moment of weakness get to me.

We lost a child but I know we will both move past it separately.

“I understand I’m not going to fight you but I’ll show you just how much I love you. But baby I’m not leaving you like this. I’m here for you” he kisses the back of my hand before leaning back on his chair.

We remain silent until my family walks in.

[06/20, 18:41] Lynne: 83

unedited.

AMANDA

I know I somewhat hate Qhamu but not enough to actually want to kill her. I don’t know what Nokhaya gave me but she promised it wouldn't be harmful but look what happened now, Qhamu nearly died and it’s all because of me.

I can’t stop crying because of guilt.

How can I let jealousy consume me like this?

How did I let Nokhaya convince me that Qhamu is a threat?

I wipe my tears and look at Nqaba next to me.

I hate myself for causing him so much pain.

Qhamu is his sister and the thought of someone trying to kill her kills him and I know this.

I've decided I'm going to tell him the truth.

I don't care what Nokhaya thinks. I'm telling Nqaba the truth.

I feel my phone vibrate in my pocket.

It's Nokhaya, she's been blowing my phone ever since I told her I'm going to come clean.

I can't do this anymore.

Guilt is eating me alive.

I know Nqaba will be furious but I also know he will forgive me eventually and we will find a way to move forward.

I get off the car once he parks.

He follows silently behind me as we go inside the house.

Lethu, our nanny is watching tv

“Hey sisi, how is she”

she asks worried.

She knows Qhamu from Mvubukazi.

“By the grace of God she is fine” I don’t want to get into more details regarding this I hate myself enough to relive what I did.

Nqaba greets her and goes straight to our bed room.

I first check on the sleeping Bandile before going to our bedroom.

He’s in a shower.

I change into my pajamas and get into bed.

Once he is done he joins me.

“Baby”

I break the silence.

“Mmm”

“She’s fine, she wasn’t hurt so don’t worry she’ll be fine”

I know I’m dreading this but I don’t know how to start.

I can’t exactly say say “hey baby I’m the one that poisoned your sister because of my jealousy” I’d be dead before I even finish that statement.

I need to be clever about it.

Like I said I know he’s going to forgive me but I’m not stupid, he will be furious so I need to tell him when the time is right.

Maybe I should wait until Qhamu is healed and out of hospital.

No.. I have to tell him today.

Procrastinating or coming up with excuses won't help me in anyway.

I have to do this and now.

I sit up straight

“Nqaba i have something to tell you”

He sit up straight too and looks me me adoringly

“Before you say anything I want to apologize for the way I've been treating you—“

I look at him appalled

”I've realized life is too short to fight over things that don't matter. I don't approve of your friendship with Nokhaya and never will but I promise I'll try not to get angry over it. Amanda I love you baby, when we were at the hospital I just imagined you in that bed and that made me forget about our meaningless

fight.”

I don't know what to say partly because I didn't expect him to be so talkative after what happened today. You see when something is hurting him he prefers to be in his own world but today it's different.

I look him in his eyes as he continues

“Seeing Qhamu in that bed made me see what's important and baby I know you think I love Qhamu more than you but that's not true. I love you so much maybe I treat Qhamu the way I do because growing up we've always protected her. I've never told you this but Qhamu was only eight years when our father died and not only that she saw the whole thing. She was there when Sgidi poured petrol over him and lit that match that ended his life. No child should ever witness such horror. We made our father a promise that no matter what we were going to look after Qhamu. And for so long it has only been us, her brothers protecting her. We had to play

a fatherly role to her I won't lie it was hard but together we held on and here we are today"

Im a mess

Tears are streaming down my face.

I didn't know they went through such. Nqaba never talks about his childhood. I wish I could take back all the horrible things I said and did to Qhamu.

Her brothers were only protecting her from the horrors of their past.

I let Nqaba hold me tight and I continue to cry.

"I'm telling you this because I want you to understand why I'm like this when it comes to Qhamu. She's my only sister and I wouldn't let anyone to hurt her or you"

How do I turn back the hands of time and undo what I did?

“I’m sorry if I made you feel unwanted or made you feel like I love you less. I sometimes forget Qhamu is no longer that little girl I had to protect but a married woman with a child. To me she’ll always be that little girl I had to protect but I promise I’ll give you just as much attention and I’ll try and show more affection. All I ask is for you not to make me choose between you and her because I love you both so much”

I’ve been with Nqaba for years but never has he opened up to me like this. Never has Nqaba been so emotional vulnerable to me.

If only he had told me this before then I wouldn’t be here.

I now understand why he’s so overprotective of Qhamu. I can’t imagine what it must’ve been like to watch your father burn to ashes in front of you.

I had my fair share of hardship but I didn’t have to watch my parent die.

Nqaba wipes my tears with the palm of his hands.

I hate myself more for hurting Qhamu.

“I’m sorry with the way I’ve been behaving lately. I know I haven’t been easy to deal with and I’m happy we are talking about it”

How do I tell him about the poison when he’s just trusted me with his past.

“I love you too my husband” I say smiling.

He reciprocate my smile and leans in to kiss me deep.

Even the way he kisses me it’s different.

He’s pouring all of his emotions in just a simple kiss.

I open my mouth and let him kiss me.

“You’re my life Amanda. I’d kill anyone that would try and hurt you just like I’m going to kill whoever poisoned my sister”

I swallow down the lump on my throat caused by fear and try and reply

“Let’s not think about that right now. Qhamu is fine. Let’s focus on that”

“You’re right” he says and sighs

I feel his anger.

I don’t know what is he going to do to me when I tell him it’s me.

In case I wasn’t clear before, I’m not going to tell him about the poison, not now at least.

Not when my husband has just opened up his heart and let me in on his vulnerability.

I’ve fallen deeper in love with him .

Today he’s shown me a side of him that I never knew existed. My husband is always closed off, Yes he makes jokes and is always goofy but he’s so detached to his emotional side and today he

displayed that side without hiding.

I'm not going to ruin this moment.

We both lean in and kiss each other hungrily.

Soon I'm naked under him while he pounces slowly in me.

I hold on to him vigorously and let my tears fall.

I've been such a fool. Nqaba loves me.

Usually when he makes love me he leaves emotions out of it but today he's feeding me all his pain.

I cry more.

How can I be such a fool.

"I love you"

he whispers softly close to my ear.

I love count as to how many times has be repeated those three words.

I hold on to him tighter and an orgasm hits me hard

but he doesn't stop. He makes sweet love to me through it all.

“I love you” I say panting.

QHAMU

Meanwhile at the hospital

It feels like a dream because I'm fast asleep probably sedated but I know I'm not dreaming when I feel a figure close to my bed.

His mainly cologne tells me it's a guy. I know it's not Mngobi he doesn't smell like this, in fact none of the brothers smell like this.

I try and open my eyes but I can't because of the

heavy medication the doctor gave me.

He explained that he needs to flush out the deadly toxins out of my body.

“Oh my love” I don’t recognize that voice but it sound familiar

I try to open my eyes again but it’s futile. My eye lids are too heavy.

“I’m so sorry. This wasn’t meant to happen like this, he was suppose to die not you.”

I feel his lips on my forehead

“I promise you we will be together one way or the other. You’ll be mine again, we will raise our boy together like we it should be. I love you so much”

I feel his lips on mine before medication knocked me completely out.

MNQOBI

Two weeks later...

I've been here at the police station for three hours and this stupid police man has been asking me the same questions over and over again.

“You know when you called me here I thought you'd tell me you found the fool that tried to kill my wife not accuse me of tempering with my own car and feeding her poison” all these accusations are ludicrous.

Why the hell would they think I tried killing Qhamu.

“Sir we are trying to do our jobs here and that's catching the criminal who tried to kill your wife. And in most cases it's always their spouse” I huff exasperated.

“Why would I want to kill her”

“You tell us. Was she cheating on you or maybe you found a new girl and you want to eliminate her without going through divorce. We know you too are married in community of property and she stands to benefit when you too divorce but my best guess is money. Maybe you tried killing her for her life insurance”

I can't help laugh out loud.

This has got to be the most ridiculous thing I've ever heard.

“In case you don't know. I own a well established company that makes a lot of money, I couldn't care less about my wife's life insurance money and if you had worked hard enough like you have on coming up with those dumb theories you'd know my wife will get everything should we get divorced”

not that we will—I want to add but I won't bother.

This police officer is too dumb for me to waste my energy on.

“That's what they all say. Tell me what did you do that day”

“For the last time We woke up next to each other like we’ve been doing since we got married, took a shower together, had breakfast and went our separate ways. I went to Matsheni and she went to Mvubukazi to see her sister-in-law”

If only they spend as much time trying to catch the real culprit than questioning me like I’m the guilty one.

I’m done here.

“Gentlemen am I arrested”

“Not yet, we are—“

“Good then. Please inform me when you catch the right person but i have to go now. I’ve got a wife to see in hospital plus a son to care for, please excuse me”

I don’t even wait for their response.

I take my car keys and phone and leave the office.

“Mnqobi—“ I turn to him

“Don’t leave the county, we are watching”

“I don’t intend to”

*

At the hospital...

I find Qhamu with Gcina. He comes here everyday to see Zanele I’m not sure if it’s out of guilt or what.

“Sanibona” he’s seating in Qhamu bed and she’s eating.

“Hey baby, have they found who tried killing me”

I give her a kiss and shake my head.

“apparently I’m the one that tried to kill you”

she burst out laughing

“Oh god you’re serious”

she says when she notices I’m serious

“Yes for your life insurance money”

she laughs again and this time Gcina joins her.

“I knew they wouldn’t find whoever did this but I didn’t think they would actually think it’s you” Gcina.

“Ah well. Langa and Mondli put the word out I’m sure soon we will know who did this”

whoever it is they are as good as dead.

“Ya it’s only a matter of time. Let me leave you two. I need to go see Ntombi even though she won’t talk to me”

his voice is laced with sadness.

“And that” I ask as soon as he’s out

Qhamu shrugs

“I don’t have all details but he says Zanele hates him”

that’s one topic I don’t want to discuss.

There’s always a side to choose so I’m not going to comment.

“Mmm” I hum.

She rolls her eyes

“Please talk to him” what.

“Hai baby. He has Misuzulu, Gatsha, Nqaba and Mondli, all four brothers to talk to”

“Please baby. I know how my brothers are they told him to fight for her but right now he needs to back off a bit and let Zanele be”

I hate it when she gives me that puppy eyes of hers. They are my weakness, I just agree to whatever she wants

“No Qhamu...”

“Please, I’ll even do that thing that you love” my wife is very manipulative.

“How, you were in an accident”

“Okay fine. But please baby I promise I’ll never ask anything like this before. I feel like it won’t be the same to to talking with Misuzulu and them”

I can’t believe I’m agreeing to this

“Fine but you owe me” she blows me a kiss and pats a space close to her for me to sit

“So did you find out who your mystery man was” she told me about a guy that was here and he supposedly kissed her.

I just think she was dreaming.

Phela she was heavily sedated with medication plus her story doesn't app up.

I admit I was pissed off at first but the doctor explain that medication sometimes causes fuzziness to the brain so she might've imagined all that.

It would've been nice had she dreamt about me not a total stranger but she didn't have control of it right.

“Are you going to stop with that” Its amazing how I find it as a joke now plus I enjoy teasing her about it.

“Yes I'm done now about about you get a proper kiss from your husband this time”

I lean in and kiss her deep.

I missed her lips.

“So what do you have for me” she says breaking the kiss

“You didn’t ask for anything”

“I know but when you visit someone whose in hospital you can’t come empty handed so what do you have” I shake my head and give her a slab of chocolate.

“How is Zwelethu”

I told her the test came back negative. I know how hurt Zwelethu is but it’s been hard to talk to him because he’s been distant these past weeks I think he’s looking for Mandisa.

Hell will break lose should he find her.

“He’s hanging in there”

I know how much Nomfundo misses him.

Speaking of Nomfundo, I need to get Sqalo from MaTwala in Matsheni. She’s been helpful I won’t lie.

I don’t know what would I be without her.

“Do you think he’ll ever accept Nomfundo” that part I don’t know.

All I know if we all love her.

“Right now he’s still angry maybe with time he will. Baby let me go get Sqalo i don’t know how I’m going to survive with him all night” she laughs lightly

“Good luck with that” I really need it.

Sqalo sleeps more during the day than at night.

I kiss Qhamu and leave.

Gcina is outside smoking when I walk out. I might as well get this over and done with.

“How is she” I light my own cigarette as well

“She still doesn’t want to talk to me, I don’t know what to do anymore. I dumped all my girlfriend but she still won’t butch”

“Even that girl that drives an Audi, what’s her name again the one from Lesotho, pule something”

I know how much he loves that one.

“Puleng, even her. I left her for Ntombi but she still

doesn't want me"

I puff my cigarette

"Ntwana Tell me, do you really love her or you just feel guilty"

I ask after puffing out.

He ponders on my question for a few seconds before answering

"You know at first I didn't love her. I saw her as a girl that threw herself at me and I used that to my advantage plus she was always available when I wanted her so I made her an option I knew she'd always be waiting for me so I thought I'd play around and when it doesn't work out I'd have her"

Mmmm why did Qhamu ask me to do this.

"But as time went by I started loving her without realizing. I didn't want to admit it so I'd constantly do stupid things to push her away but she didn't and she got pregnant"

He's not answering my question but I let him continue without interrupting him

“I didn’t plan on it, it just happened but I knew she was the girl I wanted to have kids with so no I’m not here because I feel guilty but I’m here because I really do love her”

I see...

“Ntwana beka ne, I don’t know what happened between you two but she’s hurt and you constantly being here frustrates her so don’t overwhelm her, hlehla kacane. And let her deal with her pain”

Qhamu briefly told me what happened between them. I don’t know what Gcina did to Zanele but he really hurt her and he needs to back off a bit and holler her be.

“But I want to help her deal with her pain. I know I’m the reason of most but I’m here to rectify that”

“Sure I hear you but she’ll just hate you more. Woman are complicated mfana just let her be and when she’s ready she’ll fine you”

“Mnqobi mfana I’m scared that she’ll move on and find a guy that will treat her better” who would have thought that Gcina was a talker

“Then if she finds her happiness else I think it would only be fair for you to let her be but don’t worry about the future. Give her a moment to breath and figure things out and if she lets you show her how much you love her. Don’t pressure her though, prove to her that you’re capable of loving her like she deserves”

“Sure.”

My phone rings just as I’m about to bid him farewell.

“Lover boy”

“Nqaba what do you want” he’s been annoying since he fixed things with his wife.

“Ah aren’t you happy to speak to your brother-in-law” I chuckle lightly.

“Nope. I’ll be happy when my wife is out of hospital”

“Don’t be such a baby she’s getting discharged in two days but that’s not why I called you. Mondli found a guy that was paid to temper with your brakes. I’m on my way to Joe’s right now so meet me there”

I don't waste any time.

I tell Gcina and he drives behind me.

Nqaba is already parked at the garage alongside Mondli, Gatsha and Langa. Makhosini and Misuzulu are helping Zwelethu locate Mandisa and so far it has been futile.

It's like Mandisa vanished on the face of the earth.

“Good you're both here”

Mondli says opening the boot of the car.

He drags a guy who look about thirty out of the boot.

Look like Mondli already beat him up roughly.

“I'm going to ask once. Why did you temper with my brakes”

“I swear I didn't know it was yours—“ like he knows who I am.

“I've worked with Makhosini before I swear I wouldn't cross him. Had I known he was your brother then I wouldn't have” he sings

“I'm not going to ask again”

“Some guy asked me to temper with your car, I swear I didn’t know”

I don’t know where does Gcina get a gun from but he pulls it out from his belt and shot him on his leg.

“Start talking” He has this mean look on his face that I have never seen before not even when he shot me.

He is angry but i would be too. He lost a child.

“Lungelo wanted you dead not your wife. I don’t know why but he said I should make sure you die”

He says wincing in pain.

I know a few lungelo’s so I don’t know which one is he talking about or why he’d want me dead to begin with.

“Where do we find this Lungelo” Nqaba.

Gatsha and Langa are just watching.

“I meet him in town, I don’t know where he stay”

He sounds like he’s crying but there’s no tears in his eyes.

His tough I'll give him that.

“Then you'll take us to him”

He protest at first but relents when Gcina promises to put a bullet in between his eyes.

He's bleeding so we are forced to bandage his wound before going to town.

It's after eleven pm when this Lungelo guy drives to where we are parked.

We made sure we are away from all the city cameras and where people might see us.

“That's him”

the guy says when he sees a car approaching us.

I feel anger brewing in me.

This stupid fool wanted me dead but for what?

He's not my enemy, in fact I don't have any enemies so why would he want me dead.

I'm left with Langa and Gats ha in the car while the

guy limps to Lungelo's car

I say guy because I didn't bother asking his name.

He knows not to mess with us if he values his life.

Nqaba made sure he won't double cross us, he can be scary when he wants to be.

The fool and Lungelo are in a car for about ten minutes before they both walk out.

It's a bit dark so I can't see this Lungelo person probably and it doesn't help that he's wearing black.

I get off the car when they are nearer to us.

"What this, MaE what's going on man" Lungelo asks
Gatsha and Langa are both out of the car and ready to ambush this Lungelo fool.

I guess the guy's name is MaE

I step closer to them

Lungelo Lungelo Lungelo... this is the same bastard that tried to ruin my wedding.

Qhamu's ex or whatever he is.

"Why the hell would you try and kill me" I shout

He laughs sardonically before answering me

"Simple. You're the only thing standing on the way for Qhamu and I to be together" this guy is crazier than I thought

"Qhamu doesn't love you dude" I'm actually not angry anymore.

He's will be dead soon so why should I waste my energy on him.

"Is that why she kissed me while you two were still together"

To be continued...

apologies if there's any errors I don't have time to edit.

[06/20, 18:42] Lynne: 84

MNQOBI

I'm quiet as Langa drives back to Joe's garage.

There are too many thoughts going through my head. I know that fool in the boot and Qhamu were once upon a time close but why would he say Qhamu kissed him while we're together.

I know Qhamu wouldn't cheat on me.

I sit back and ponder at what he said until we reach the garage.

I'm the first one to get out of the car, Makhosini is here.

"Where is Zwelethu" I ask him

"Following a lead with Misuzulu, where is that fool that tried to kill MaShenge"

Gatsha and Nqaba drags both MaE and Lungelo out of the boot

“Bozza” MaE almost shout, surprised by Makhosini’s presence.

“MaE why would you betray me like that, you wanted to kill my brother” Makhosini is so chilled I, it’s scary.

“I swear bozza I didn’t know it was your brother’s car or else’s I wouldn’t have done what I did”

“So you don’t do your research” I ask

“No I just do the job no questions asked” I laugh and move to sit next to Gcina.

He’s been very quiet thinking hard. At least he has calm down now, he was angry when we left him here when we went to get this Lungelo fool.

I’m sure Lungelo would be dead by now had we gone with him.

Gatsha and Langa work together and fasten Lungelo to a chair, MaE has a bullet in his leg so he won’t be able to run away from us.

I know they are going to kill him which I don’t care but it’s after twelve am now the sooner they kill him

the sooner I go home and get some sleep.

“No questions asked huh—“ Makhosini steps closer to MaE grinding his teeth.

“You almost killed my brother’s wife and her friend and you just say you do your job no questions asked. You must have a death wish”

We watch as MaE beg Makhosini not to hurt him.

“Bhuti can we deal with Lungelo first” I’m seriously tired.

I stand up and stand in front of Lungelo.

“So you paid that fool to temper with my brakes meaning you wanted me dead but what I don’t understand is why would you poison Qhamu”

“Someone poisoned my Qhamu” he asks surprised.

As for my Qhamu...

“Why would I give her poison I love her. I wanted you out of the picture so I can be with her”

I’d laugh if I didn’t believe him.

“So you didn’t poison her” Mondli asks

“Why would I, I love her” hearing him utter the word love makes me sick especially because he’s talking about my wife.

“What did you mean she kissed you” he smiles and leans back.

Fear no longer plastered on his face.

“Wouldn’t you love to know” I’m not playing games here.

“Lungelo I swear I’m going to kill you” I say trying to intimidate him

“I know you’re going to kill me but that wouldn’t change the fact that your wife cheated on you with me”

I wasn’t angry but now anger is forming from the pit of my stomach

I unleash all the power in me and punch him on his nose that he bleeds instantly

“Beat me all you want but it wouldn’t change that she cheated” I give him a few more punches until Nqaba pulls me away.

“Don’t let him get to you, that’s what he’s trying to do man” I huff and move back.

I don’t even want to imagine Qhamu cheating on me.

“Didn’t I tell you to stay away from Qhamu” Langa steps closer to Lungelo.

“You know him” I ask frustrated

He blatantly ignores me and continues to shout at Lungelo

“Didn’t I”

Lungelo smiles through his bloodied lips.

His teeth are red with blood.

“I love her too much to stay away”

Langa scoffs

“You’re very brave I give you that but you have no idea what I’m going to do to you”

“Oh I do, I bet you’re going to put bullets in my head right, or not, you’re going to castrate me first and hang my testicles around my neck then only after you’ll kill me”

This guy is messed up.

“That’s what you do right, you did it to Khaya so I’m sure you’re going to do it to me too”

We all remain quiet for a minute.

This fucker knows more about us than he shouldn’t.

“You’re right we are going to do just that—“ Mondli breaks the silence.

“I killed Khaya and I’m going to kill you too”

Out of nowhere Gcina pulls out a gun and shots him straight in his chest.

We all watch as he empties all his magazines on him.

Lungelo slowly falls to the ground, still tied to the chair.

“Gcina what the hell—“ only when Gcina is done Gatsha shouts

“he’s not afraid of dying so why torcher him—“

I’m scared of Gcina.

A vein from his forehead is popping out and his grinding his teeth while trying to steady his breathing.

“This bastard killed my child, my child” now tears are threatening his eyes.

I shift my gaze when I hear Lungelo gasping for air with blood coming out of his mouth.

Makhosini draws out a gun and shots him in his head.

The fucker smiles before taking his last breath.

“Ngcobo I told you not to make any mess, whose going to clean up” Joe has been watching as all this happens

“Don’t worry I’ll send my guys to come and clean, Gcina lets get you home”

Gcina is now silently crying.

He’s been harboring sadness pretending that all is okay but I knew he was going to burst at some point.

“My child is gone and it’s because of him” he shouts pointing at the dead Lungelo on the floor.

I know how it feels like to lose a child, a part of me died with Qedusizi but I hope Gcina comes out of this dark place he is in.

“I’ll take care of him” Gatsha says and takes Gcina outside with him.

“And this one” I even forgot about MaE.

He’s ready to piss himself.

That’s how scared he is.

“Bozza yam, I swear I didn’t know it was your brother’s car”

“Okay, what do you want me to do with you then” who the hell asks such questions.

“Bafo why you asking him. He’s as good as dead” Langa and I agree.

It’s horrible to witness a man beg another man to spare his life. Not only horrible but MaE looks pathetic.

“Bafo I’m leaving now” I’m really tired.

“Ah you going to miss the party” Nqaba says

“Shouldn’t you be going home to your wife?” I ask

“Don’t worry about my wife. I know just what to give her and she’ll forgive me”

“Good to know” if I were to say the same thing he’d knock me out.

He always says I can’t talk about sex with him because it’s Qhamu I’m having sex with, his sister.

“I’m out” I leave them there and drive back home.

I still need to talk to Langa about Lungelo though, I have a feeling he knows something I don’t.

AMANDA

Nokhaya has been a pest in my life. I can’t breathe because she calls every two seconds of the day begging me not to tell Nqaba about the poison I feed Qhamu.

“Nokhaya I’m telling him, I can’t keep the secret anymore”

“And what do you think will happen huh, he’s going to leave you—“

“Nqaba would never leave me—“ I cut her.

I know how much Nqaba values family, he will be angry, yes but he would never end our marriage.

“Don’t say I didn’t warn you” she says and cuts the call.

Nqaba comes out of the bathroom fully clothed.

“I’m going to see Langa, we still trying to figure out who poisoned Qhamu” I was hoping we’d spend time together but I’m not complaining he’s been home with me all week.

“Okay, send my greetings” I’m slowly trying to accept the bond they all share.

“I think I’ll go see Qhamu at the hospital-“

“She’s getting discharged, maybe go to Mpophemeni” I hate driving and Mpophemeni is so far.

“I’ll call her”

“Okay I’m out then” he gives me a kiss that leaves me wanting more.

“I’ll make sweet love to you when I come back, wear that red lingerie for me” I want to undress him and make sweet love to him now but I try and hold it in.

I watch as he walks out.

“I love you” he says before walking out the door.

I love him so much.

I don’t have any plans, it’s Thursday and most people are at work but I’m a housewife so I’ve got nothing to do, hold that thought. I’ve got my inheritance to spend.

Chikoze left all his fortunes and dimes in my name so I’m filthy rich.

Bandile is with his nanny, I quickly take a shower and dress up and jean and t-shirt.

I’m going shopping.

The drive to town is short. I first go to earth child

and get Bandile a few things. I'm planning on seeing Qhamu so I get a few things for Sqalo as well. I don't know if I'm trying to make myself feel better after what I did but I get Qhamu a few dresses from forever young too.

It's around two when I leave the mall.

My phone rings just as I enter the road.

It's Nokhaya.

Sighs

“Nokhaya—“

“Hey Mfazi, yaz I've been thinking, you're right you need to tell Nqaba” what?

This is the same person that was hell-bent over me wanting to confess

“Oh” I don't know what to say

“Yes, I mean Nqaba is your husband and you have to trust him but Mfazi I need your help with something. I'm planning on surprising Lungelo so I need you to help me choose an outfit. Where are you”

“I’m on my way home. Send me pics I’ll help you choose”

She says I have good taste and I agree.

“A picture Amanda, come here plus I’ve got something I need to show you”

I know she won’t relent so I agree and turn around going to her house.

She opens the gate like she usually does when I visit her.

“You look beautiful” she says hugging me.

Reluctantly, I reciprocate her hug.

Something is amiss with her, her smile doesn’t meet her eyes but I won’t ask.

She offers me juice but I get myself water instead.

“Hao and then”

“It’s nothing I’m just thirsty” she nods

“I’m coming” she disappears into her bedroom and comes back with three different outfits.

“I love the red dress, what’s the occasion”

“Lungelo and I had a fight two days ago and he hasn’t been home so I’m planning on surprising him with candlelight dinner to show him how sorry I am—let me get others”

It’s good to see she’s working thing out with Lungelo.

I’m still checking other dresses when I feel a heavy metal hits me on the back and I fall down

What the hell...

“You’re not going to mess with my plans” I hear Nokhaya say before darkness engulfs me.

*

I wake up tied to a chair and my head is banging.

“Oh good you’re awake” she’s now wearing Nike running tights and it’s a t-shirt.

“Nokhaya what have you done to me” I feel my

blood dripping down my neck.

“Just making sure you’re not going to tell Nqaba anything”

She smiles

“Did you seriously think we have a genuine friendship, Yaz Amanda I’ve never seen someone so easily manipulated like you—“ she claps once chuckling

“Hai you’re such a fool, wena you’re doom doom doom.”

I’m not sure what’s going on here.

Why am I tied to a chair? I try and fiddle out of the tight robes but it’s futile

“Cut these things off of me Nokhaya”

She laughs shaking her head and walks out.

Only now everything starts to make sense, Nokhaya has been using me all along and I’ve been too much a fool to believe everything she said.

“Help, help anyone out there please help” I scream

with tears blurring my eyesight.

“HELP!!”

I’m surprised when Nokhaya walks in pressing her phone.

“Oh don’t cry everything will be as it should be, Nqaba is going to divorce your ass that’s if he doesn’t kill you after he listens to this—“ she presses her phone and I hear my voice

“Nokhaya I’m so scared but I did it, I put the poison in her food. Oh god what have I done—“ after I poisoned Qhamu I called her and this witch recorded our conversation

She pauses it

“Imagine, I Nokhaya will be the hero” she says giving a sinister smile

“You’re delusional if you think that will get Mngqobi to love you” she laughs out loud

“Look who you calling delusional if I were you I’d look in the mirror but don’t worry baby I’m Nokhaya kay’one, I always have a plan”

Nqaba was right.

Nokhaya is unstable and sick..

“You’re crazy, I hate you”

“Oh Hunny save the energy you’re going to need it when Qhamu get here”

“Qhamu is she here. What did you do to her”

“Nothing yet but have you noticed how she loves playing hero, well I have something planned out. In the end, you will kill Qhamu and I’d be the hero that will catch her killer, Amanda my love, don’t play with the sharks of your not willing to swim”

I watch as she smiles at me.

I loath this girl.

I hated Qhamu for so long for nothing, it was all her. She planted lies in my head. She manipulated me and I feel for it all.

“I’ll never kill Qhamu” I say with conviction

“Don’t stress yourself about that, everything is worked out. I’m the brains remember so just relax

oh and I wouldn't scream if I were you it would be futile to this whole house is soundproofed" with that said she walks out.

I don't know what is it that she's planning but I'm not going to kill Qhamu, I'd rather die than to kill her.

MNQOBI

"Bhuti I just need to know what you heard"

I had to ask Langa what he meant that day to Lungelo.

When I left Makhosini chopped off all of Mae's fingers to teach him a lesson.

I'm surprised he didn't kill him

"I think you need to talk to your wife"

"I will just tell me what you heard and I'll be on my

way”

He sighs

“You didn’t hear this from me when Qhamu was in the hospital after giving birth to Sizi I walked in on her speaking to that fool—“ he stops

“Hai man Mngqobi go speak to Qhamu. I feel like I’m gossiping here”

Langa is so frustrating

“Come on Bafo” do I really have to beg him

He sighs again and continues

“It’s been so long I’m not even sure if this is what he said but he said Sizi was supposed to be his or something like that.”

I feel anger brewing

So Qhamu cheated on me.

“Are you sure that what he said”

“I told you I’m not sure like I said that’s something you need to discuss with your wife”

“But Langa how can you not tell me”

“Hey Mngqobi a lot happened that day and I forgot about it until that fool reminded me besides I don’t think it’s a big deal from what I heard Qhamu didn’t do anything with him”

He was supposed to tell me.

“Let me go, I’ll see you around” I’m disappointed that he failed to tell me that my wife cheated on me.

I meet up with Nqaba on the door

“Loverboy where are you going, we need to talk about Qhamu”

I’m not in the mood so I don’t reply.

I’m supposed to fetch Qhamu from the hospital as she got discharged but I think seeing her will not do me any good.

Instead of drive home, MaTwala has Nomfundo startled on her back and Sma is eating.

“Where is Mncedisi” I need him to get Qhamu because right now I’m too pissed off.

“He’s on taxi duty this week” oh I forgot it’s during the week

Sqalo is sleeping.

I hate to wake him up so I pick him up carefully not to wake him up and start him in his car seat.

“Why don’t you leave him here for a few days, phela Qhamu is only being discharged today I’m sure you too need time together and I don’t think she’s fit enough to care for a baby for now” MaTwala says as I pack his bags

“It’s alright, I’ll take care of him”

I’m just angry at what Langa told me that I’m taking it out on her.

“I’ll see you weekend”

I haven’t seen Zwelethu in two weeks I just hope everything is going well on his side.

I call Mncedisi but his phone takes me to voicemail.

I don’t want Makhosini knowing about this as yet so I call Langa and ask him to get Qhamu at the hospital.

At first, he refuses but after a few minutes of convincing he agrees.

QHAMU

I'm waiting for Mngobi to come get me, I miss sleeping next to him but mostly I miss my baby.

The doctors managed to drain all the poison in me so I'm good to go.

His phone rings unanswered.

Oddly, he always answers my phone.

“Hello” I'm happy to hear a hoarse voice but I'm disappointed when Langa walks through my ward

“Mngobi won't be able to make it so he asked me to come to pick you up”

“Where is he, he's not answering my calls” he

shrugs and picks up my bag that's already packed.

After signing the discharge forms we leave.

Langa is a lover of cars.

His car is always clean and it smells nice too.

I settle in the front passenger seat.

Langa is humming to the song playing on the radio as drives out.

I spoke to Mngqobi last night and he was too excited that I'm finally getting discharged so what changed. I know for a fact that he wouldn't ask Langa to come to get me if everything was okay.

"Bhuti" he looks at me once and back at the road again

"What's going on, is Mngqobi okay" I don't know why am I thinking of the worst

"Yes he's fine"

"Then why isn't he here with me"

He sighs

“I should warn you, he’s not happy with you right now so when you get home let him cool off”

Huh, not happy with me?

“What did I do” I ask bewildered

“Lungelo” What does he have to do with anything

“He’s the one that fiddled with the M8 brakes he wanted Mngqobi to die”

Lungelo, why would he want Mngqobi to die.

“What.. which Lungelo is this”

“Your Lungelo” I hate how he says “your”

Lungelo has never been mine and never will be

“Bhuti I don’t understand”

“Qhamukile I don’t know what happened between you two but just know Mngqobi is pissed off because Lungelo said something about you cheating with him. For your sake, I really hope that not true”

I sense his anger so I sit back and not say anything.

I don’t know what’s going on here and frankly, I

don't want to know but by the look of things,
Lungelo told Mngqobi what happened between us.

I feel tears stinging my eyes but I refuse to let them
fall.

Langa drives silently until we reach Mpophemeni.

I'm reluctant to get off the car but what choice do I
have.

I'm waking behind Langa when he opens the door
"Surprise" they all shout.

"I'm so glad you're okay" Lucas says walking to me
and gives me a hug.

I was expecting any of this.

There's a big banner with the words "welcome
home" written on it.

Nomthandazo came all the way from Joburg.

I hug her as tears stream down my face.

"How are you"

"I'm good. I'm sorry I couldn't come to the hospital"

“You’re here now” I hug her again.

Langa disappeared somewhere around the house.

“Mzala how are you feeling, have they found whoever tried to kill you” Nomcebo asks

I shake my head.

This is all so overwhelming.

I haven’t seen Mngqobi and I won’t lie I don’t want to see him.

“We just thought of doing this because we couldn’t come to the hospital” Nomthandazo says.

I’m glad they are here.

“After here we going to see Zane” she’s getting discharged soon as well.

I walk upstairs to change, Mngqobi is seating on the bed deep in thoughts.

“Hey” I know he’s angry because he keeps popping his knuckles

“Hi” he replied coldly

“Mnqobi I swear I didn’t cheat on you” why should I delay this

“Believe me, my love, I didn’t”

“Then What did you do”

“Nothing he kissed me but nothing happened I swear” he stands up from the bed and walks closer to me.

“I want you to tell me everything and for your sake, you better not lie” I’m afraid of him.

I have never seen him so angry especially at me.

I let the tears fall

How did we get here?

“It happened years ago Mnqobi it shouldn’t matter”

He gives me a look that says dare say that.

“It happened when I was in Durban, I swear it was just a kiss nothing happened”

“Qhamukile Did this happen after or before we got married”

“Mnqobi please don’t do this”

“I’m not going to ask again”

“It was before we got married, I swear it didn’t mean anything. I stopped before I could do anything and I came to you. Mnqobi you’re all I love. I’m sorry I kissed him I’m so sorry Mnqobi” he laughs and steps away from me

“I can’t believe this, so this happened the same weekend we got married. Qhamukile did you marry me out of guilt”

I walk closer to him and hold his hands but he yanks his hands away

“No, I swear I married you because I love you. What happened between Lungelo and I meant nothing baby, I don’t love him never have for that matter you’re all I want” he shakes his head

“I’m going out, don’t wait up”

“Mnqobi please” I manage to stop him before he could walkout.

“I’m sorry baby, I swear on my father—“

“Don’t, your father was not there when you kissed him. Don’t dare swear on his grave. Let go of my arm. I can’t even stand you right now—by the way your boyfriend is dead”

He yanks his arm yet again and goes to the nursery

I don’t have time to nurse my heartbreak, I’ve got guest downstairs but what does he mean he’s dead.

Mngqobi is not a killer. He can’t possibly have killed Lungelo.

I wipe my tears and step into a cold shower and let the cold water cascade down my body.

Five minutes is enough.

I pull on the first dress I see and walk downstairs.

Lucas is eating my chocolates

“I thought you’d never walk down, were you and Mngqobi still doing the hanky panky” I roll my eyes and sit next to him.

“Where is Nomcebo”

“Outside with Langa” didn’t she say whatever that

was going on between the ended

“Hao I thought they were through” I say

“I thought so too but your brother-in-law is too hot to resist” she says walking in.

She looks flushed.

I won't even ask.

Mnqobi walks down carrying Sqalo. I missed my baby.

“I'll take him” I stop at my tracks when Mnqobi gives a deadly look.

“No, he's coming with me. I'll sleep in Matsheni tonight” with that said he walks out.

I'm defeated.

How do I make it right, I know I shouldn't have kissed Lungelo, one night of weakness could end my marriage.

I walk back to the ladies with a tail between my legs.

They can tell something is wrong but they don't ask.

We engage in meaningless topics until they leave.

Now I'm all alone in this big house.

I call Mngqobi but his phone takes me straight to voicemail. I can't call any of his brothers because I don't want them to know about businesses.

Langa already knows more than he should as it is.

I go to bed with a broken heart.

It's after ten pm when I get a call from a number I don't know.

It might be Mngqobi

"Mngqobi" I answer

"No Hunny it's Nokhaya" I hang up.

Don't tell me Mngqobi went straight in her arms.

She calls again but I ignore her calls until she sends me a video of Amanda tied to a chair bleeding.

I call her immediately

She lets it ring to voicemail but she answers when I call her again

“Hello Mrs. Ngcobo” this girl is crazy

“Nokhaya what game are you playing”

“This is not game love just get here if you want to save her life. No police and don’t even try to call any of the brothers because of you do then she’ll die before they even get here”

She hands up immediately after that and sends the GPRS coordinates.

I try Mngqobi’s phone but it’s on voicemail.

I call Nqaba

It rings unanswered, the next person I call is

Misuzulu

“Qhamu I can’t speak right now” he says and hangs up.

Nokhaya calls just as I’m about to call Makhosini.

This time it’s a video call.

I hesitatingly answer

I’m shocked when I see a big knife on Amanda’s

neck.

“I told you not to call any of the brothers”

I watch as presses the knife on Amanda’s neck until
blood oozes out

“Okay okay, Nokhaya I’m coming don’t kill her
please”

“Tick tock” she says and cuts the call.

I dress up in a loose t-shirt and a pair of jeans.

I take Mngqobi’s gun from the safe and secure it
around my waist.

I’m tired of Nokhaya.

Tonight she dies

[06/20, 18:42] Lynne: 85

Unedited

NARRATED

I'm Joburg..

Zwelethu is following up on his last clue regarding Mandisa's whereabouts. He looks under every stone to no avail. All his hard work has been futile up to so far

Everyone that has come in contact with Mandisa has no idea where she is but a colleague of hers managed to give Zwelethu the name of the hospital where her parents work.

The drive to Brenthurst hospital is long more especially because neither him nor Misuzulu is familiar with Parktown.

They park and go inside.

They are greeted by a beautiful reception

"Good day miss, I'm looking for Dr Zungu"

"I'm sorry sir you have just missed him"

Zwelethu huffs frustrated

"Can you give us his contact details" Misuzulu says

in English.

He's not sure whether the lady understands Zulu.

"I'm afraid I won't be able to—" she replies in Zulu
amazing both gentlemen.

Seeing how desperate they look she suggests

"Let me call him for you"

They watch as she presses the phone with her long
nails giving them a warm smile and she waits for
Dr Zungu to answer his phone.

Dr Zungu answers on a third ring

"Zungu hello"

"Dr Zungu it's Palesa, there's two gentlemen looking
for you"

"Is it my patients" he asks a little annoyed.

He's had a long day.

"No sir"

"Then Tell them to Make an appointment"

Zwelethu rudely grabs the phone from Palesa

“Bab’Zungu this is about Mandisa”

The Dr goes silence savoring What Zwelethu is saying.

It’s been so long since he heard a mention of his daughters name

“Hello did you hear me sir”

Clearing his throat

“Uhm Yes, how do you know my daughter”

“Well she dropped a her daughter on me claiming that she’s mine but as it turns out she’s not and your daughter has now vanished in the face of the earth”

Silence.

Dr Zungu is still digesting what Zwelethu has said.

“This is no matter to be addressed over the phone. Let me speak to Palesa”

Zwelethu hands the phone to Palesa who listen to the Dr’s instructions.

After hanging up she writes the doctors address on

a piece of paper and hands it to Zwelethu.

Him and Misuzulu don't waste anytime but drive to diepkloof extension where Dr Zungu is waiting for them at the gate.

Misuzulu's phone rings just as he's about to shake the doctors hand.

"Qhamu, i can't speak right now" he drops without waiting for a response and shakes the doctors hand.

They all step into the house where Mrs Zungu is waiting.

Her husband briefed her on what's going on.

"I first want to apologize by coming so late at night"
Zwelethu starts

"I've been looking for your daughter for about two week but I haven't been lucky"

The parents first give Zwelethu a little background on Mandisa's wild behavior.

Zwelethu also gives them a little background about how he meet her but he is interrupted by a knock.

Mrs Zungu stands up and goes to the door

“So you saying she left you with a child and never—“ Dr Zungu is interrupted by his wife scream

They all stand up and rush to the door.

Zwelethu blinks repeatedly not believing his eyes.

He went hell and back looking for her.

“Zwelethu” Mandisa says horror stricken

QHAMU

The drive to Nokhaya’s place is short because it’s at night and there’s no traffic.

I park outside the her gate and use the small gate to enter.

Looks like she’s expecting me or else she would’ve locked the gate right.

I won't lie I'm literally shaking in my boots from fear as I walk past her lawn.

She has a nice house I'll give her that.

I don't know what I'm doing but first walk around the house to see if there's anyone around before entering the house using the kitchen's door.

My mind is blank all that I'm thinking about is getting my hands around her throat and squeeze hard.

She immediately switches the lights off so I'm forced to use my phone's flashlight

"Nokhaya" I shout terrified.

It's completely quiet that you can hear a pin drop but I know she's here.

I know her games.

"Nokhaya" I shout again, stepping further into the house.

"Nokhaya stop with your silly games. I'm here what are you going to do now" I'm scared yes but the little anger i feel inside gives me some sort of

bravery I didn't know I had in me.

Maybe it's because I've heard enough of this girl and what pisses me off the most is that Mngqobi has a soft spot for her.

I don't know what is it that she has but she sure knows which buttons to press in him.

Maybe she knows him more than I think but what I know is Mngqobi is not here to rescue her this time.

She has tormented me for far too long and it's time about time I deal with her.

“Hey wena Sfebe come out and show your face”

Mngqobi would be so angry if he were to hear me swear.

Ag why am I even thinking about him. It's his fault I find myself here.

He refused to completely take Nokhaya into our lives all he does as say meaningless words to her but she somehow always waltz back into our lives.

Nokhaya is a problem here, she is still making our lives hell even after all this time and yet he is

infuriated by what happened many moons ago.

“Nokhaya” I’m annoyed now.

This bitch better show her face.

“I don’t have time for this” I’m holding a door handle ready to walk out when I hear a voice.

“Nokhaya I’m so scared but I did it, I put the poison in her food. Oh god what have I done—“

Immediately, I come to a complete halt.

“Are you sure this won’t hurt her. What if Nqaba finds out... oh Lord he’s going to kill me”

I’m hundred percent sure that’s not Nokhaya’s voice.

“Nqaba would kill me, this is his precious little sister we talking about”

I close my eyes refusing to believe my ears.

That’s Amanda’s voice.

Her last statement reeks of nothing but hatred.

My heart sinks.

How can she.

How can she poison me.

What did I ever do to her for her to hate me so much.

I feel tears streaming down my face.

“Amanda” that comes out as a whisper.

The lights come back on and Nokhaya walks in holding a phone in her hand laughing.

“Wow that was fun” she says walking closer to me.

I’m numb.

I don’t even move when she stands close to my face, giving me her most sinister smile she can muster.

“Nokhaya why.. why” my voice breaks. cloaked with emotions

I’m ready to break down and cry.

“Why—ask your sister in law” the joy in her face tells me this was well thought out, I don’t know if it’s hate I feel but I’m repulsed by the thought of Amanda.

I remain unmoved as Nokhaya puts the phone in her breast and only now I see the long butcher knife

she's carrying.

“Move—your loving sister in law is waiting for you to rescue her”

I only move when she pushes me past the passage and into what looks like a bedroom but its empty.

Only Amanda tied to a chair.

I no longer have energy to fight, hearing so much hate on Amanda's voice disempowered me.

I sink on the floor crying when I see the bloodied Amanda

How can she.

“Qhamu, Qhamukile” I hear Amanda's voice.. I'm so ditched from my surrounding that she sounds very afar.

“Amanda you poisoned me” that's all I manage to say

“I'm sorry, I didn't mean to. Qhamu please stand up I didn't me to. Nokhaya is going to kill us”

I hear her.

“Did you really think this weak thing would come to your rescue—wee Amanda you’re such a fool yaz, don’t you know how weak she is. She wont do anything cause she’s weak”

I hear Nokhaya’s voice followed by her sinister laugh.

Her hateful words pierce my heart.

she’s right about one thing though, I’m weak. I don’t know what was I thinking coming here in the first place.

Nokhaya will always win.

“This thing is weak, I don’t know what Mngobi sees in her. J ust watch her, pathetic as one can be”

Hearing her repeat how weak I am ignites something in me.

I’m not about to let Nokhaya mess with me like I have, plus Amanda sobs give me some sort of strength. The quicker I deal with Nokhaya the quicker I get to deal with her.

My anger comes back, tenfold this time.

I'm a Buthelezi, the daughter of the feared Bheki and the same blood that runs through my brothers veins runs through mine.

I wipe my tears with the back of my hand and formulate a plan in my head.

Qhamu you're all alone, your brothers are not here.

I inwardly tell myself.

Growing up I've always let my brothers protect me, they fought my battles but none of them are here.

I'm faced with this psychopath all alone.

This bitch has messed with the wrong person.

“Haaa now this is what's going to happen—“ Nokhaya is looking at Amanda as she continues

“I'm going to kill Qhamu then frame you—“ she says pointing her with the knife.

“Then I'm going to send Mngqobi that recording of your confession and guess who will be the hero”

She squeals excitedly patting her self on the shoulder

“Me”

I don't know why does she think that's a great plan but I've had just about enough of this bitch.

I abruptly stand on my feet and match to her.

She was not expecting this from me so I catch her by surprise when I punch her right on her eyes.

“Bitch” she swings her knife at me which manages to scratch me on my arm but not deep enough to cause any damage.

I grab a fist full of her hair and pull. She's trying to stab me but to no success all that she has managed to do is inflict minor scratches on my arms.

We continue to fight until i feel a blade slice through my thigh.

“Fuck”.. I don't usually curse but you'll have to forgive me.

This floozy managed to stab me this time.

I manage to step back pressing my hand on my bleeding thigh.

I underestimated her.

“You fucken stabbed me”

“And I’m not done”

She says walking fast closer with her knife pointing right at me.

It’s only coming back to me now that I’m carrying a gun.

I pull it out from my back waist and point it at her.

“Stop or I’ll shoot” that manages to slow her down.

She’s startled at first when she sees the gun but she soon smiles.. looks like something clicked in that crazy head of hers

“Oh baby you don’t have it in you” she’s taking her slow strides towards me still smiling.

I watch as she gets nearer and nearer

I close my eyes and pull the trigger.

“Bang!!” I’m scared to open my eyes.

I feel my heart rate quickens, I feel it drop to the pit

of my stomach.

What have i done.

Why did I let Nokhaya get into my head.

will I be able to live with myself knowing I'm a
murder.

I'm jolted when she screams in anguish... I open my
eyes.

A bullet landed on her shoulder...

good!

At least she's not dead.

I was aiming for the head by the way.

Don't worry I confuse myself as well... I want her
dead but I just don't have it me to kill her.

"I'm going to kill you" I shout

At least that managed to stop her from coming at
me.

"Bitch you just shot me" she says unbelievably

"I was actually aiming for the head" now I'm no

longer scared.

I limp towards her, I swear I'm no killer but I'll turn into one because of this psycho

“What.. scared now” my thigh is throbbing but I refuse to be a weakling that Nokhaya perceives me as.

I continue limping towards her.

In a blink of an eye she's behind Amanda holding the knife against her neck.

“One more step and she's dead”

I sense fear in her voice.

I look at Amanda, tears streaming down at what I once thought was a beautiful face.

But what's beauty with an evil heart.

I'm amazed that I feel nothing for her.

“I'm sorry Qhamu, I didn't mean to poison you. Nokhaya manipulated me and I was dumb enough to fall for it”

If it was any other day I'd feel sorry for her but this

is the same person that teamed up with Nokhaya—can't you believe it with Nokhaya, my sworn enemy and poisoned me.

Unbelievable!

I told Amanda about Nokhaya escapades after Nqaba rescued her from Zithulele because I saw how rapidly their friendship was growing, everyone else also warned her about Nokhaya but that still didn't stop her from skimming with her behind my back.

I trusted Amanda with my all and what does she do she spits right on my face.

Wow so much for loving someone...

Am I too much of a weakling that when people see me they see nothing but a toy to play with and toss once it has been used or am I too loving that everyone starts confusing that with weakness?

“I'm so sorry Qhamu, I should've believed you. Nokhaya is bad news”

“Shut up” Nokhaya shouts knocking Amanda out

with her elbow.

I'd clap if I wasn't holding a gun, Amanda's sobs were starting to annoy me.

"Just one more step and Bandile will no longer have a mother"

Nokhaya just knows what gets to me.

I come to a complete halt still pointing the gun at her.

As much as I hate Amanda she's Bandile's mother.

My nephew, and I'd hate myself if he were to grow up without his mother knowing I was able to stop it.

Nokhaya means every word, her eyes say it all.

She's willing to do whatever it takes to make sure she comes out a winner in this situation.

I've long concluded that Nokhaya is not stable.

One more step from me and Amanda is dead, the knife is pressed so hard against Amanda's neck that blood is starting to drip.

"Nokhaya why do you hate me so much, what did I

ever do to you”

“Hate you—I don’t hate you I loath you. You took Mngobi away from me.”

“Mngobi was never yours to begin with” I’m not about to lie to her.

She needs to wake up from this dream she’s in, Mngobi has never loved her okay maybe once upon a time but he was never hers.

He is mine and mine alone.

“Oh no baby girl, he was mine. Until you showed up with your perfect little figure and your big hair and you know what he did—“

tears are streaming down her face.

Her hair is a mess from our fight and her t-shirt is also torn.

She’s a mess.

“—He forgot about me. My MAN forgot about me. I don’t know what voodoo magic you used on him but today it all ends. I taking back what’s mine”

For the first time ever, I see Nokhaya for what she is.

A lunatic crazy bitch.

I thought she was crazy when she falsely accused her uncle of rape but no she's not crazy, she's demented.

Not even a psychiatric doctor can help her. She's beyond repair.

She's pure evil.

“Drop the gun and step back”

I look at the unconscious Amanda and all I see is Bandile.

I may hate, no hate is a strong word... I may dislike Amanda but I love Bandile way too much to let his mother get killed.

“I said drop that fucken gun”

Sighing I drop the gun and step back

I watch as she drops the knife and sprints towards the gun but I get to it before she does.

We wrestling for the gun, she's too powerful.

We both fall on the ground still holding the gun,
none of us is willing to let go.

Nokhaya is on top of me when I hear a loud bang!!
bang!!

The gun went off.

Twice!

I feel my t-shirt dampen with what look like blood.

No long after I feel the blood running down my
shoulder blades flowing down to the floor.

I'm too scared to move so I close my eyes and let
the darkness consume me.

NARRATED

Back in Mvubukazi...

“Her phone is taking is still on voicemail” Nqaba shouts frustrated.

“Are you two fighting or something” Gatscha asks
Nqaba shakes his head.

“No, just when I think we are fine she does this”

Nqaba has been home waiting for Amanda to get back, he even bought her flowers, something he has never done in his life.

He tries the phone again but it’s still on voicemail.

It’s now after twelfth am which is odd for Amanda not to be home.

She sometimes comes home late when they are fighting but now Nqaba is puzzled because they are fine.

“What if something happened to her Bhuti” he says trying not to panic but failing miserably

“No I’m sure she’s fine”

“No I can feel it, something is wrong”

They’ve alerted the Ngcobo brothers about the

disappeared of Amanda and they are also out looking for her. Makhosini was unable to go with Zwelethu because he is handling business so Misuzulu offered to help.

“Try calling the tracking company”

“Eish why didn't I think of that” Nqaba says dialing.

The tracking company managed to tell him where Amanda's car is.

He gets in Gatsha's car as they speed off.

Twenty minutes later they park outside the gate.

They are both bemused when they see Qhamu's car outside.

And observing how it's parked, it looks like she was in the rush because she didn't switch the car off and her lights are still on.

They manage to open the gate and walk in.

“What happened here”

Nqaba asks as he sees broken pieces of ornaments on the floor.

Gatsha draws out his gun and walk further into the house.

Many thoughts are running through their head but a big portrait of naked Nokhaya catches Gatsha's eye.

"This is Nokhaya's house" now worry stricken they rampage every room until they get to the last room at the end of the house

"No no no no" Nqaba runs to his wife while Gatsha rushes to the unconscious Qhamu of the floor.

Nokhaya is laying on top of Qhamu unmoved.

Nqaba manages to wake Amanda up.

"Baby what's happened"

Tears stream down Amanda's face when she sees Qhamu.

"Nokhaya.. Qhamu.. oh God noooooo" she raves hysterically not saying anything

"Call an ambulance" Nqaba shouts at Gatsha.

"It's all my fault" Amanda continues to cry hysterically.

Good night...

[06/20, 18:42] Lynne: 86

AMANDA

Tears, mucus, and saliva are dripping down my face as I watch Gatsha roughly remove Nokhaya on top of Qhamu and try to revive Qhamu back to life.

There's too much blood on the floor.

I'm not sure if Qhamu is shot but I know I'll never forgive myself if something happened to her.

"Call an ambulance" Nqaba shouts again.

He has managed to unfasten the rope Nokhaya used to bind me with.

I cry more as I kneel next to Gatsha.

There's too much blood on Qhamu chest, I don't

know if she's shot or what but Nokhaya still body tells me she's shot.

"Qhamu, Qhamu" Nqaba is now crouching next to us shaking Qhamu.

"Is she shot" I ask.

Only now they inspect her.

"NO!"

relief hurtle down my body

Only now I can release breathe I've been holding

Gatsha slaps her hard, I'm sure it's because he no longer knows what to do but that manages to do the trick.

I fall back exhaling when she starts gasping for air.

"Qhamu, Qhamu" both Gatsha and Nqaba are hovering over her.

I'm just happy she's alright.

She frantically begins to inspect herself for any gun wounds

”you are alright, you're not shot,” Gatsha says embracing her with a bear hug.

Nqaba is right by my side squeezing life out of me.

“Baby I’m fine, I’m okay” I assure him squeezing just as hard.

“Are you sure, you’re not hurt right” I shake my head.

I can’t imagine my life without Nqaba.

He only gives Qhamu a hug once he’s sure I’m fine.

That sight alone makes me regret everything, how did I ever think Nqaba love Qhamu more than he does me.

They both help Qhamu stand up right.

There’s blood gushing out on her thigh.

Gatsha rips out a part of his t-shirt and wraps the cloth around Qhamu’s thigh.

“What the he’ll happened here” Nqaba

I’m too focused on Qhamu to explain

“Let’s get her to the hospital”

“I’ll get the boys to clean this up” Gatsha says as Nqaba and I walk behind him as he carries Qhamu to the car. I’m clasping on Nqaba’s arm for dear life. Right now I don’t want to talk I just need him close to me.

We all get into their car, Nqaba and I in the front seats while Gatsha takes the back seat with Qhamu. I’m afraid to look back, I know Qhamu hasn’t forgotten about that recording but part of me hopes she doesn’t tell Nqaba.

We all silent as we arrive at the hospital.

Nqaba takes out his phone calling Mngqobi while a doctor attends to Qhamu.

I refused to get checked because I know physically I’m fine but I’m dreading each minute for us to get out of here.

Gatsha has called all the brothers and informed them about tonight’s nightmare.

Thirty minutes later Mngqobi arrives with Langa in his tracks, he is breathing fire. He greets and walks

straight into Qhamu's ward without saying anything else.

"What happened Amanda, how did you and Qhamu end up at Nokhaya's place" I'm too emotionally and too ashamed to answer Gatsha so I let my tears do the talking

"It's okay my love, shh don't cry it's all over now" my sweet husband says wiping my tears.

We all go into Qhamu's ward, Mngqobi looks ready to kill her that's how angry he is.

"The wound is not too deep. I managed to stitch her up and she's ready to go"

I didn't even see the doctor

At least she won't be spending the night here.

We leave shortly after the doctor writes her a script for pain meds.

We are in the parking lock when Qhamu calls out for me, looking back i watch as she walks closer to me.

Nqaba's hold is unrelenting "baby let me speak to her" only now he lets go off my hand.

I walk away from him to meet Qhamu half way.

If looks could look of be six feet under

“I’m giving you tonight to tell Nqaba or else—“ her voice carried so much hate

I swallow down the lump on my throat and watch her walk away.

I won’t lie, I had hoped she would have forgotten about that recording.

I’m trying to hold my tears as I walk back to Nqaba.

He says nothing but puts his arm around me as we walk to Gatsha’s car.

I settle in the back seat with him next to me and close my eyes.

How I wish all this was nothing but a bad dream.

“Misuzulu is on his way back and he needs answers. Amanda I hope you’ll be ready to answer him tomorrow” more like in a few hours.

It’s after three am now and I want nothing but a good bath and sleep next to my husband.

I'll come clean first thing when I wake up.

As I've said before he'll be so furious with me but part of me knows he'll forgive me. He wouldn't let Bandile grow up with his parents apart, I know he will never let that happen.

I close my eyes, snuggle closer to him and breath his scent in, God I love my husband.

QHAMU

The silence is too much, not even the radio is playing. It's just me and my thoughts.

Mnqobi hasn't said anything since we left the hospital, not that he spoke to me when he arrived anyway.

I know he's furious because his forehead is furrowed and he keeps popping his knuckles as he

drives.

he's seeking answers and I should explain why I went to Nokhaya's house in the first place but right now I just want to rejoice that I'm alive.

When that gun went off I thought I got shot so I must have lost consciousness right that seconds but everything got clearer when I woke up.

I killed Nokhaya.

I couldn't help staring at her lifeless body as Gats ha carried me outside.

How do I live with myself now knowing that I took a life?

Now that everything is replaying back in my head I realize how stupid it was of me to go to Nokhaya all by myself but again what was I to do?

That girl took so much from me, she tormented me for as long as I can remember.

She's dead, no I killed her and now she torments me even more than she did when she was alive.

I'm a killer!

I don't feel any relief I thought I'd feel, I wanted her dead but instead I feel far worse than I did before she was dead.

I don't know what it is I feel but self loath can begin to describe it.

I'm a murderer.

Never have I thought I'd construct a sentence that has Qhamukile and murderer in it.

I quickly wipe my tears with the back of my hand and put my hand on Mngqobi's thigh.

I need to feel his body close to mine.

I don't care if he's angry at me or what. Had what transpired today turned out differently he'd be widowed and I six feet under.

I don't know how am I going to live with the guilt. I killed a human being, be it the nuisances that is Nokhaya Makeyiza it still doesn't change that I'm a murderer.

I watch as Mngqobi contemplates whether to remove my hand or hold on to it.

I guess he chooses the latter because he lets my hand rest on his thigh.

I'd feel better if he would entwine our fingers together but I should be grateful he didn't remove my hand, right?

He parks outside the garage but none of us moves.

"Mnqobi I'm sorry" he totally ignores me and continues staring at nothing but darkness.

"I want us to talk before turning myself in"

His face changes immediately from anger to worry.

He looks at me with his protruding eyes, pity written on his pupils.

"I killed her" saying it out loud feels more real than it did when I said it in my thoughts.

"I'm sorry baby, I'm so sorry I killed her" now the tears I've been holding manages to fall out.

I don't know if any of you have killed anyone but believe me the aftermath is not easy to deal with.

"Qhamu" he pulls me closer to him.

” I know, I know. You hate me and I don't blame you, who would love a murderer” he forces me to jump over the gear and straddle him.

”Shhh I don't hate you, I could never not even if I tried”

He's holding on to me for dear life.

How can he not hate me when I hate myself?

He lets me cry until I'm calm.

” Qhamu I'm so furious at you right now, I thought I lost you dammit” he hugs me tighter before letting go.

”do you understand how scared I was when Nqaba told me he found your lifeless with Nokhaya on top of you”

His anger is slowly creeping back in.

”no sit here” he shouts when I attempt to get off of him

”what was going through your head when you went to her huh. You know very well how crazy Nokhaya is but that didn't stop you. Did you want her to kill

you”

Oh, he's angry okay.

”what you did today was irresponsible if not stupid. What the hell were you doing there to begin with”

I narrate the whole story, from him storming out on me to receiving a call from Nokhaya with a butcher knife on Amanda’s throat minus the recording issue.

I want Amanda to tell Nqaba first.

”but still that didn’t stop you from going to there. You telling me she had a big knife on Amanda’s throat which should’ve scared you off but no, you play super hero and fly to the rescue. Qhamukile tell me, are you the police wena—“ Words fail me so I just shake my head.

“—or yini sewaba yisigora wena”

I knew he’d be angry but not this much

“No” that’s all I say.

“Awus ho (Tell me) did you stop and think about how all this would impact us huh”

Shaking my head I find words to respond

“Mngobi i tried calling you but your phone was on voicemail and I just lost it when I saw her holding that big knife and ready to kill Aman—“

“So it’s my fault that you went there, just because you couldn’t reach me you thought it’s best of you went there yourself.”

Yoh.. I shake my head

“And what if she had killed you” he doesn’t even let me finish my sentence so I’m just going to remain silence and let him rent

“Then what” he huffs frustrated

“I didn’t die njena” I guess not..

“Qhamukile I fail to understand how do you not see how wrong you were. You could’ve died, she could’ve killed you and for what” Haibo

What does he mean for what

“Mngobi that girl terrorized me for too long and each time you didn’t deal with her appropriately like you should have. She kept on coming back to our

lives and each time you let her waltz in like she has a place between us so I'm sorry I did what you couldn't do"

He raises his eyebrow, not in confusion but in what looks like amazement or shock I don't know.

He wasn't expecting me to raise my voice.

"—or what, do you still have feeling for her" he lets out a sinister chuckle shaking his head

"What I couldn't do.. are you hearing yourself. So you wanted me to kill her, is that what you're saying"

I don't know about killing but he could've done something

"I'm not a killer Qhamikile and neither are you"

That stings considering I just killed Nokhaya.

"And don't you say I have feeling for that girl" he says grinding his teeth

"Are we clear" I nod.

"Good. You know very well I have never loved her"

I know this but anger makes one say meaningless things unintentionally.

“Mnqobi I’m tired, can I please get a bit of sleep before going to the station”

He adjusts his chair before holding my waist.

Sighing he speaks calmly

“Qhamukile unlike Nokhaya, You’ve got so much to lose. A son, a husband, brothers, and friends who loves you dearly. It just infuriates me how you fail to understand how all this not only affects you but everyone around you. When you were playing superhero did you stop and think about Sqalo, what if you died. What was I going to tell him”

I sit quietly letting his words sink in.

I grew up without a mother and I wouldn't want my child to go through what I went through.

And why is he ignoring the police station topic.

”Qhamukile not only are you a wife but you're a mother and next time you better think about that before you play Jesus, wanting to save people”

The reality of what could've happened is only hitting me hard now.

I put my arms around his shoulders and lean in, pressing my forehead on his

”There won't be a next time, I promise” it was stupid of me to go to Nokhaya and I realize that now.

”I don't think you understand just how much I love you Qhamukile. I swear I was going to kill myself had something happened to you”

I shut him up with a kiss.

”don't say things like that, I'm here, Sqalo has both his parents and that's all that matters”

I don't know for how long because I'll be rotting away in a prison somewhere underground soon.

Sinking yet again I kiss him.

This time he doesn't let go when I try detaching my lips from his, instead, he deepens the kiss.

I can't help let him in.

I let his tongue dance to the same rhythm as mine.

It's not long that I feel his hands under the t-shirt I got from the hospital after mine was disposed of because of all the blood, Nokhaya blood.

Let me stop thinking about that filthy wizard.

"mmmm" I moan when his cold hand reaches my nipples.

Instantly, they get hard and my whole body yearns for his touch.

"baby" I moan in protest.

I'm tired plus I still have stains from Nokhaya's blood which I'd like to wash away and not forgetting that my thigh is throbbing.

I think the pain meds are slowly weighing off.

"shhh"

He takes my t-shirt off before I can protest again

"I want to feel you close to me," he says.

I think his sudden need for me has something to do with all that happened I almost died and that alone scares him half to death no wonder he's so gloomy

all of sudden.

Lungelo is forgotten, for now at least and it's just us the two reassuring each other that we here, alive and well in each other's arms.

I wish it could be like this forever.

I let his hands roam all over my upper body as I help him out off his t-shirt as well.

He is nibbling on my neck giving me sensations he only he is able to muster, I love how desperately emotional needy he makes me feel, only he is able to strip me off my hard exterior and make me want nothing but be emotionally bare to him.

I get an electrifying feeling when his warm mouth covers my hard nipples causing my clitoris to throb rapidly in need of his touch.

I unbuckle his belt and unbutton his jeans, I'm not so patient. Not when he has managed to make me feel this way.

I need to feel all of him in me.

We manage to get naked without getting out of the

car. His jeans are on his ankles and my yoga leggings which the hospital was kind enough to lend me are somewhere around the car. I think he tore them when he took them off, we both hasty that's all.

His penis is hard as steel. I stroke it a few times reminiscing on how hard it has made me come in the last few years.

I love how thick it has become.

I'm still straddling him making it easy to bounce up and down or rock my hips, and adjusting my angle to allow him to stimulate my clitoris.

slowly, I sink in letting my vaginal walls grip his hard lengthy and wide penis

I breathe in first allowing my insides to adjust to the length first before moving.

I don't get used to it no matter how many times we make love.

My hands are wrapped around his shoulders allowing me to balance myself, I need the strength especially because my thigh just got stitched up but

watch me as I temper with it.

Don't be surprised if I'm back at the hospital again when I finish here.

He holds on to my waist directing me on how he wants it.

Slowly I twirl my waist rocking back and forth...back and forth...back and forth....clench my insides... Let go...

I want to feel all of him in so I hold on to my butt cheeks parting them apart and throwing my head back in the process to give his penis more leverage to penetrate deeper and I begin to rock back and forth again...

He loves it when I'm in control.

I increase the speed and the intensity, this allows me to keep it at a rhythm that he enjoys plus my vulva and clitoris are very accessible for him to play with.

"mmmm baby" his groans tells me I'm doing him well...

Our sex life is great but this is on another level, it's just extraordinary.

It's full of emotions, raw, bare emotions.

”oooooh baby ah ah ah ah ah” dear lord he's in too deep.

The penetration is just too deep.

I first adjust his seat and lay forward, prop myself up on my forearms on the headrest almost like we laying in missionary position, I on top though at least that managed to do the trick.

It no longer feels his length poking right at my womb.

Slowing down my pace, I begin to rock up and down.

I'm too close now, I feel my insides clench and something forming from my core.

I'm close!

I'm close!

I'm close!

”ahhhhh” I scream when a wave of nothing but pure

sensual orgasm rips me apart.

He hasn't reached his happy ending as yet so he holds on tight to my waist and pops his buttocks up allowing him to thrust deep in me.

I know he's close because he upped his pace.

"oh baby" I know his eyes are shut and I feel his sweat dripping down.

This has been too intense.

"ahhhh" he sings exploding in me.

I feel his warmth inside me.

We both panting trying to catch our breath.

He kisses me deep and bites my bottom lip before letting go.

Ouch..

That's actually painful

"Qhamukile if you ever, I mean ever try and play superhero like you did today. I swear to the Ngcobo ancestors you won't live to tell the tale"

Haibo... I thought we were fine.

"i love you damit" he says angry all over again and clicks his tongue.

Okay.

"i know and I love you"

MNQOBI

It's after five when I drive to Nokhaya's place. I don't know how everything got so messy so fast.

Just yesterday Qhamu was discharged from the hospital but no, it was not enough that she wasn't hurt during that accident she had to be Amanda's savior.

I don't know even want to know how she got to Nokhaya's place in the first place.

All that I'm thinking off right now is making sure that whoever was asked to clean up Nokhaya's place did a squeaky clean job, i don't want this coming back to bite us in the ass.

I left Qhamu fast asleep, I think the pain meds knocked her out.

I'm tired myself but a man gotta to do what a man gotta to do.

Looks like Mncedisi managed to collect Qhamu's car like I asked.

I park outside the gate and enter.

I walk around to see if everything is in order, I don't know how this place looked like but it looks decent. The guys managed to clean it very well.

“Hey photo copy—“ Mandla says coming from one of the bedrooms

He was Manqoba's friend so I'm guessing that photo copy name rubbed off on him.

“I thought you were Langa, when did you arrive”

This Explains why he's so chilled and not ready to

kill.

He is expecting Langa.

“Just now. Everything looks clean”

“All in order”

Me: “Are you sure Mandla I don’t want anything linking back to my wife”

Him: “I wouldn’t do that to madam, everything is clean. No one will even know she was here”

I nod and walk around to fully satisfy myself.

Langa walks in just as I walk out of one of the rooms

“Bafo, I thought you’d be home with your wife” he says shocked to see me.

“I came to check if everything won’t lead back to Qhamu”

He chuckles softly

“Don’t worry. These guys have done this many times. No one will suspect anything”

I nod

“So what did you do to the body”

“Burnt it along with Lungelo’s. Stop worrying there’s no trace of Qhamu or Amanda being here”

I’m confident but only because Langa is the one who assures me.

“What do you think Amanda was doing here in the first place” I shrug

Nqaba will tell us.

“Whatever it is I’m sure she’ll tell Nqaba, Bafo let me go. Qhamu is a little spooked about everything she even wants to go to the police station so I need to be there when she wakes up”

He nods

“Mngobi take it easy on her, it’s only going to get worse. She killed a person so she just won’t move on and forget about it, talk to her about it and be there for her”

Langa has gotten very fond of Qhamu I’ve noticed and who would’ve thought, remember how mean he always was to her.

“If you don’t mind I can talk to her. You’ve never killed anyone so you won’t understand what she’s going through but I have so I can maybe help if you let me”

“Thank you Bafo I’d appreciate that. I’ll also take a few weeks off but you’re welcome to come through any day”

I know this is only the beginning, all our brothers will soon be hovering over her trying to help.

After spending a few minutes with Langa I leave.

I’m walking outside the gate when Mandla calls out my name running towards me

“I found these when I was cleaning, I’m sure they belong to your wife”

He says handing me two phones and a gun.

My gun...

heeee Qhamu took my gun to this battlefield, I’m not sure if I should be proud or scared.

where did she even learn how to shoot.

I'll have a talk with her about this later.

I thank Mandla and walk get into my car.

One phone belong to Qhamu yes, the screen is cracked but I do see the screen saver of Sqalo and I sleeping.

She love taking pictures such random pictures of us.

The other one is not as badly cracked but my picture is the screen saver.

I'm wearing a navy blue slim fitted suit with a white collar shirt, matching tie and brown Oxford shoes. I remember that day very well because Qhamu chose that outfit for that photoshoot. I was interviewed by Forbes magazine for being a successful young black inspiring entrepreneur.

I'm baffled, I know for a fact Qhamu has one phone unless she if she was hiding this one but why.

Eish password...

I toss both phones in the armrest console and drive back to Mpophemeni.

I first need to check if Qhamu is mentally and

emotionally ready before I get Sqalo from MaNgidi.

I grab both phone and rush upstairs.

I smile when I see her still peacefully sleeping.

I first put the gun back into the safe and hit the shower, I need it after the sex Qhamu and had.

there's only dry pizza leftovers from yesterday, when Lucas and the hand were here.

I make myself cereal and settle in front of the tv.

Oh ya.. mysterious phone.

I try Sqalo as a passcode but nothing.

Something in me tells me this particular phone belongs to Nokhaya.

Qhamu's phone doesn't have any passcodes like mine.

'Nokhaya' wrong again.

Think Mngobi—think... oh Nokhaya was obsessed with me.

I try my name but again wrong...

'Mnqobi and Nokhaya' wrong again..

That's too long and be a pass code any way.

I'm forced to wait five minutes because I've entered an incorrect password too many times

Come on think Mnqobi..

I used to shorten her name to Khaya back when we used to fuck and she used to call me boo

'Boo4khaya' incorrect

I'm ready to quite now, maybe I'll take it to those Indians in town.

'Boo loves Khaya' and what do you know. It's correct. Why didn't I think of that first.

There's lots of pictures of me from magazines and old pictures I used to post on Facebook.

This girl was crazy enough to even picmix herself, myself and Sqalo with the words 'family' as caption.

I don't know where the hell she got Sqalo's pictures from but seeing all his pictures in Nokhaya's phone infuriates me beyond.

I wish I could resurrect her only to kill her again.

There more pictures of me and her Ag I won't go through all of them.

I go to her Whats App's

It seems like she was communicating with Amanda frequently.

Her chats go back as far as couple of months back.

There's plenty of voice recordings

I press and listen to one

Ag, Amanda was just telling her about her shopping.

So they were friends, even after we warned Amanda about her.

I press on the other recording

“Oh hey baby—“ that's Qhamu walking down the stairs but I've already pressed play

“Nokhaya I'm so scared but I did it, I put the pois on in her food. Oh god what have I done. Are you sure this won't hurt her. What if Nqaba finds out... oh Lord he's going to kill me. Nqaba is going to kill me,

this is his precious little sister we talking about”

I stand up.

I don't know if it's anger I feel but I'm seeing red.

Amanda poisoned Qhamukile.

“Mngobi wait—“ Qhamu stops me just as I'm ready to fly out of the door.

Her calmness is very peculiar considering Amanda almost killed her.

“Amanda is going to talk to Nqaba first”

What..

“So you knew she poisoned you”

Her drilling her eyes on the floor tells me she knows definitely about this recording

“Qhamukile, you knew Amanda poisoned you and you didn't tell me” I'm fuming now.

How can she keep such a big thing from me.

I walk to her and grab both her upper arms

“When did you find out” my words comes out slurry

because of the anger in me.

I see nothing but fear in my wife eyes but I feel nothing right now.

Not even her fear will help subside my anger

“When dammit!” i shout, shaking her

She better not lie if she knows what’s good for her.

I see tears form in her eyes

“Mnqobi you’re scaring me” she whispers

I’d be afraid of me too...

“I said when!” A tear finds her cheek but it does nothing to me.

I just want to get my hands on Amanda and end her like she wanted to end my wife.

“Speak dammit” I throw the phone I have on my hand against the wall scaring her even further

“Yesterday, Nokhaya made me listen to that recording when I got to her place” she says as fast as she can

Even after listening to the recording she still fought her, she could've left Nokhaya's house right that minute or she could've told her brothers about it because with the way Nqaba was holding on to Amanda i doubt he knows about this.

“Mnqobi Amanda is Nqaba's wife, my brother and I'm scared how this will affect him so I wanted her to tell him herself. Think about what this will do to Bandile”

Her saying this enrage me even further

”no Qhamukile, did she think about Sqalo or me before she poisoned you”

I shout

I don't think Qhamukile understands.

Had she not been involved in that accident she would be dead as we speak.

Sqalo motherless and I widowed

That accident was a blessing in disguise to say the least.

”Mnqobi—“

“No she didn’t—She almost killed you dammit and I’d damned if I let her be” with that said I grab my car keys and drive to Mvubukazi.

That Amanda girl better pray before I get my hands on her.

—

Continue being ‘stinch’ with your comments shem...

[06/20, 18:43] Lynne: 87

Unedited

MNQOBI

Compassion without boundaries leads to self-betrayal because when you're so compassionate and forgiving with no boundaries people will abuse you.

I wish my wife understood that, Amanda tried to kill her, she could've been dead but, no, because she has such a good heart she's willing to let go and let Amanda live happily.

As that crazy as that sound, that's just who Qhamu is.

Forever selfless and thinks of everyone else first, those are the two qualities I admire most amongst others about her but this is different. Amanda poisoned her without even batting her eye.

Sure, daunting problems confront us every day. But there are far more positives than negatives—and good-hearted people like Qhamu dwell on what's going right rather than what's going wrong and maybe someday I'll be like that too but not today.

Today, anger is oozing out of my pores, my hands itch to beat her up until she no longer breathes.

I roughly open the gate and rush to the door passing her car next to Nqaba's.

I don't know what time is it but the sun is scorching hot which tells me it's close to being midday.

I'm forced to bang the door because it's locked.

Hell yes, I attempted getting in without knock first.

I bang again, with the same intensity and power.

Amanda opens the door with Nqaba behind her tracks.

“Mnqobi—“ Nqaba says alarmed

Amanda look at me without saying anything

”wh—“ she stops mid sentence.

I'm not sure if it's because she just realized I might know about her secret or if, like her husband, she is baffled by my wrath

I feel my nose flare up in anger.

My rage has increased tenfold than when I left my house, seeing her ignites detestation I didn't know I was capable of feeling, especially for her.

Just like my instant hate, her tears fall immediately too.

She knows why I'm here.

"Mn...Mngobi...I... I... I can explain" her words come out as a whisper as she backs away from me.

"Explain what, that you wanted to kill her" I'm making my way to her as she continues to back away

"She told you" why is she surprised by that.

Don't tell me she expected Qhamu to keep this a secret, how sick is this girl.

"who told who what, What's going on here. Amanda, Mngobi why are you so angry" Nqaba asks confused

We all standing in the kitchen, inches away from Amanda and him just a few feet away from us.

I say nothing but I surprise myself when I feel my palm sting.

I didn't think I had it in me to lay a hand on a woman,

I've always controlled myself no matter how provoking the situation might have been but I guess Amanda managed to bring out the monster in me.

Amanda is holding herself on her right cheeks with tears continuing to fall down her cheeks.

Nqaba manages to get in between us and pushes me back just as I raise my hand again to give her yet another slap.

A jaw-breaking punch lands on my face.

"ouch" I can taste my blood.

Nqaba's punch leaves me staggering trying to find my balance but another punch comes through and this time not only do I stumble I fall.

He's on top of me before I can even blink throwing his painful punches.

"I'm going to kill you for hitting my wife" he snarls at me slamming his fist on my ribs

Channeling the anger in me I roll him over and begin to punch him just as hard.

I can hear Amanda's voice screaming for us to stop

“Your wife almost kills my wife”

I shout unrelenting with my fist.

“What’s the hell is going on here” I hear Misuzulu boldly voice bellowing.

He pulls me away from Nqaba and Gatsha hold me back restricting me from getting to Nqaba whose now on his feet and trying to fight Misuzulu’s strong hold.

“Stop it maan” he roars again.

Panting I shout “tell them what you did” pouting at Amanda

“Wipe those crocodile tears and tell them”

“Mnqobi calm down maan—Nqaba what’s going on here”

Nqaba answers breathless

“I don’t know, he just came here and slapped Amanda for no reason”

“No reason, for no reason. Amanda Tell them or I will”

She looks at me with pleading eyes

Qhamu might have fallen for her innocent look, I'm not.

“It was here, it was here that poisoned Qhamukile.”

Silence

“What” Gatscha says incredulity breaking the silence

“I’ve always known you’re crazy, but to accuse my wife of something like that it's just wrong” I ignore Nqaba because I too wouldn't believe if I were to hear such accusations about my wife

I focus my glare at Amanda.

”talk”

Now everyone is looking at her.

She claps the hem of her t-shirt looking at all of us.

Guilt glistening in her eyes

She shifts her gaze from me to Misuzulu then Gatscha and she stops at Nqaba

”talk dammit” I'm impatient

“I’m sorry” she finally speaks

“No no no no no no no no you didn’t” That’s Nqaba

“I swear I didn’t mean to. I’m sorry”

In a speed of lighting Nqaba is next to her with his hands around her neck.

“You did what” I’m not sure if he’s squeezing but Amanda looks pale.

Misuzulu manages to pull him off of her before he strangles her to death.

“I’m sorry Nqaba I’m sorry baby”

A back slap from Nqaba lands on her face, I thought Misuzulu was holding him tightly or maybe Nqaba is just as powerful that he managed to free himself.

Amanda wipes away the blood in her nose.

“Nqaba stop it, calm down” I see Gatscha has recovered from the shock.

Misuzulu forcefully pushes him outside before he can do any more damage to her.

“Why, why Amanda” Gatscha asks. He hasn’t moved

from his post but I see gate if not anger in his eyes.

“I’m sorry Bhuti I swear i didn’t mean to. I let Nokhaya hey to me”

Ive got nothing to say but one thing for sure is that she’s sleeping a prison cell tonight.

“What... Nokhaya, What does she have to do with any of this”

She starts narrating how she befriended Nokhaya again after my wedding, what angers me most is that I told her how poisonous Nokhaya is, was rather.

She says she didn’t mean to poison Qhamu and that she was jealous of her. You know, just like in that recording her voice is laced with hate and resentment.

“Jealous” Gatsha

“I’m sorry Bhuti I swear I didn’t mean to”

“Sorry that you almost killed her or sorry that you got caught” I voice out my thoughts

Like I said, you can hear her unrepentant tone.

You can taste her dishonesty

It's all over her breath as she pass it off so cavalier
and I know she doesn't mean her sorry, she's just
saying it because that's all we want to hear.

I'm don't here.

My wife needs me.

I leave them both standing there and walk out.

Nqaba is a little calmer now

I know I should've spoke to him first before causing
a fight, I guess it's human nature to act out of anger
and that what I did.

Misuzulu seems to be the one doing all the talking.

"Hao you leaving"

"Yes, I need to be with Qhamu" he nods lightly

"Don't worry I'll deal with Amanda, just focus on
Qhamu and I'll take care of the rest"

It's my turn to nod.

Amanda is part of the family but so is Qhamu.

I'd hate to be in Misuzulu's shoes right now but I trust him.

I turn my eyes to Nqaba. I know he is just as angry as I am but his face softens when he looks at me and just like that, all is forgiven.

I return his apologetic shrug and get into my car.

AMANDA

Thank goodness Mngqobi left, imagine how difficult would it been to apologize to my in-laws while he's here. I won't lie I'm surprised Qhamu told him. I expected her to be a good girl that everyone says she is and shut her mouth but no, she had to blurb to her dearly husband.

I was so happy when Nqaba threw a punch that left him dis oriented.

Mnqobi and Qhamu think they are so perfect.

Eish.. I wish I could go on but I need to explain to my husband why I did what I did and because he loves me he will forgive me and his brothers will have no choice but forgive me too.

Gatsha has been quietly standing in my kitchen gawking at me.

I'm a little uncomfortable because he's usually talkative but right now he's looking at me like he's ready to bury me.

I wipe my tears and watch as Nqaba and Misuzulu walk in.

At least Nqaba is calmer now.

“Let sit” we all follow Misuzulu to the lounge area.

Gatsha is seating towards the edge of the couch, and Misuzulu is standing up so I settle next to my husband. I want to hold his hand but he's it's difficult to do that because he's folding them to his chest but at least I'm feeling his body next to mine so that gives me some sort of solace.

I spoke too soon, he clicks his tongue and moves away from me just as I get comfortable.

That hurts.

“I don’t know what the hell is going on here so Amanda I’ll let you explain”

How do i make Mis uzulu understand that I did what I did out of jealousy.

“Thank you—“ I start.

My head bowed and my voice as respectful as can be.

“Firstly bhuti I’d like to apologize for everything I did. I didn’t do all that because I wanted to but it’s because Nqaba was no longer giving me attention as his wife but he gave Qhamu attention and worst you all do it so I guess allowed my jealousy consume me that I saw her as a threat—“

That nothing but the truth.

“Amanda, you are talking but all I hear is meaningless words. Why not take accountability for your actions. You nearly killed Qhamu, my only

sister for what huh, because I give her attention. Didn't I apologize I about that, yaz I thought we were passed that or at least working on it but clearly you were not. What the hell where yo thinking, did you think we wouldn't find out" Nqaba is getting angry all over again.

He huffs and lean back on the couch after running his hands on his face.

"I can't do this" he says and walks out.

I allow my legs to carry me and run after him but Misuzulu stops me before I reach him.

"Let him cool down"

"Bafo I cant stand this witch I'm leaving" Gatsha finally speaks.

Hearing him use such words towards me breaks my heart.

Gatsha has always been too fond of me, after Nqaba rescued me Gatsha was the only brother who would constantly check up on me to see how I'm doing.

He showed me how much he cares even though Nqaba and I were not even dating then.

He looks at me right in the eyes that I start quiver.

“The only reason I haven’t killed you is because you’re my brothers wife but unlike me, Mngqobi is not Nqaba’s brother but Qhamu’s husband and I fear what hell do to you”

I tremble with fear as I watch him storms out.

What does he mean he fears what will Mngqobi do to me?

Mngqobi is a child and Nqaba will never allow him to hurt me, I know that for sure.

Misuzulu is just as angry if not more but he’s controlling his anger impeccably, I know he’s angry because his eyes are red and like Gatsha he can’t stand to look at me.

“Amanda I really hope you poisoning Qhamu was worth it because you’re about to loose everything. There’s going to be a family meeting tomorrow at my house for your sake do show up”

With that said he walks out.

He's bluffing.

He's just trying to scare me I convince myself.

Nqaba is going to forgive me and all this will be over soon.

I spend the rest of the day cleaning and cooking.

*

I woke up when I hear a sound of a key turning. I turn my eye to the clock on the wall, 2:56 the time reads.

I must've slept on the couch waiting for Nqaba to come back home. I want us to talk about this so we can move on.

He emerges from the kitchen in staggering just a I stretch myself.

Sleeping on a couch is very uncomfortable.

“Ah my lovely wife” he slurs

he is drunk, very drunk.

“My one and only love” he says smiling

he has a half empty bottle of Hennessy in his hand.

I don't even want to know how he got home but I'm glad he's safe because he is in no state to drive.

He walks in further into the room but he trips on the rug causing him to fall flat on his face but to my surprise he saves the bottle. He didn't even spill his brown alcohol.

What have I done.

Nqaba has never drunk this much before.

As hard as it is to carry a man as tall and bulk like Nqaba I help him sit on the couch.

I exhale once he's seated.

He's heavy.

He pulls me by my hand and kisses me, not all is lost after all.

We continue kissing, part of me wants to take it further but I know it would be wrong of me so I pull away and sit next to him.

“I love—“ he burbs out loud

“—you” he continues.

I expected him to forgive me but I didn't expect it to be so easily.

I know what you're thinking, he's drunk and might change his mind tomorrow but I know Nqaba more than you, he's my husband after all. He will forgive me.

“You're the most beautiful girl I've ever meet—“ I know he is drunk but hearing him say all these things gives me a warm fuzzy feeling inside.

“I want to forgive and forget about what I did—“ I'm sensing a but

“And I probably will after sometime—“ spoken like sober man but Chikoze, my step father once told me alcohol stifles reasoning skills and contemplating repercussions. As a result, people are more likely to

tell the truth while intoxicated, offering up brutally honest, and unfiltered feelings without any fear so right this moment I'm sure I'm forgiven.

My husband will eventually forgive me and we will be fine again. I'll have to convince his brothers how sorry I am but everything will be as it should soon.

“—but I can't. How do I stay married to someone capable to killing, not only killing but killing my one and only sister. I love you Amanda but I also love myself hard enough to know I can't stay in this marriage”

I feel walks caving in on me.

What does he mean he can't stay married to me. He can't divorce me, I won't allow him. He loves me too much to let me go.

“I want a divorce” i shut my eyes not wanting to believe what he's saying.

“Nqaba no”

“I've made up my mind” I let my tears fall.

He can't do this to me, not when I love him this

much.

He manages to stand on his own, leaving the bottle on the table and stagger towards our bedroom.

Nqaba can't do this to me, I refuse.

I abruptly stand and follow him.

I find him pulling out a suitcase. He cleans out his t-shirt in the wardrobe followed by his jeans.

"I'll come back for the rest" I can't let this happen.

I follow him out shouting and begging.

He drops the suitcase in the passage and goes to Bandile's room.

"Nqaba nooo, please I'm begging you. Don't do this, please" he's packing Bandile's clothes in his bag.

Like his suitcase, he drags it out

I don't know how does he manage to do all this as drunk as he is.

He calls out for Gcina to come to take both bags.

I'm screaming and crying as Gcina puts Nqaba bag

over his shoulder and holds Bandile's bag and walks out without saying anything.

"Nqaba, please. I'm begging you don't leave me, please"

He doesn't even look at me. He goes back to the lounge area and takes his bottle.

He raises his bottle mid-air ready to take a sip when suddenly, he holds it right there and turns his head to look at me. I don't know what's going through his head right now but he throws the bottle against the wall and it shatters. Alcohol staining my curtains and furniture, broken bottle everywhere.

I'm so scared, Nqaba has never been violent.

"you might have put poison for me for all I know" he turns his feet and goes to Bandile's room.

Hearing him say that breaks my heart, how can he even begin to think I might poison him.

I love him more than I love myself and I'd never hurt him.

I'm afraid to follow him just in case he acts in a

violent manner but I gather some courage and follow after sometime.

I find him wrapping the sleeping Bandile with a blanket

No...

don't tell me..

Not my child...

"no Nqaba, you can't take him" I'm right by his side ready to take my son away from him.

"watch me" he scoops him roughly that he wakes up and starts crying.

Nqaba' is drunk, he's not even holding him right. I'll never forgive myself should anything happen to my child.

I try taking Bandile from him but he's not letting go.

My child is crying painfully as his mother and father pull him in opposite directions.

"Nqaba stop it, you're not taking him"

"Amanda I won't let an evil person like you raise my

child. I'm taking him, I don't want you to feed him
jealous and envy. You're evil and I won't let my child
be exposed to such"

I'm pulling Bandile by his legs while Nqaba is
pulling on to the upper body.

My heart bleed as he cries but I'm not letting Nqaba
take him, especially not when he's drunk.

Gcina and Mondli runs in while Nqaba and I
continues to pull and argue about Bandile.

"Stop it maan, both of you. You're hurting him" I
only let go when Gcina takes Bandile from us.

Gcina is not drunk so he can take Bandile for now.

"Where is he going with my child" i didn't mean he
should leave with my child.

I attempt to run after him

"I wouldn't do that if I were you. Gcina is very
impulsive when he is hurting. He lost a child and
you tried killing his sister, now imagine how hurt he
is, unless if you want to die follow him" I stop in my
tracks when Mondli warns, casually so.

I've heard Gcina once shot Mngqobi on the chest.

"Amanda I'd suggest you get some sleep. We both know very well Nqaba will never leave Bandile here, I'll bring him tomorrow morning when you've calmed down"

"Don't give her false hope Mondli. She's never seeing Bandile ever again" Nqaba shouts and stumbles out of the room.

I'm left with Mondli who looks at me shaking his head.

"I'm going to be honest with you. Nqaba will do everything in his power to make sure he gets full custody and as much as I don't want you near Bandile you're his mother but prepare yourself for a battle, this is only the beginning."

Qhamu once said Mondli is the reasonable one so I need him in my corner

"Please don't let him. He can't take my child away from me"

He shrugs nonchalantly

“Oh he can and he will, believe me—“ he lets out a chuckle

If he wasn't angry like his brothers I'd say he's being sweet but I know it's just a sinister chuckle.

“—Amanda loyalty means everything to us, it's what binds us together but you chose to team up with an enemy and for that I'll never forgive you. I'm glad Nqaba is divorcing you—“

“He doesn't mean it. He's angry but he will never divorce me, he will come around”

I know he will, he has to.

Again, he lets out a chuckle.

“You're funny—I don't know who do you think you're married to but this is Nqaba Buthelezi we are talking about. I'd suggest you start making peace with the fact that your marriage is over”

“Mondli please, talk to him for me. Please I'm begging you”

He shakes his head.

“You poisoned his sister and not only that you

teamed up with an enemy Amanda. None of us will ever forgive you not even Nqaba, your soon to be ex husband”

Mondli is my last hope to saving my family. What will I be without Nqaba and Bandile, I've never imagined life without them.

I get on my knees crying holding on to Mondli feet.

“Mondli please forgive me. I didn't mean to poison Qhamu, I'm sorry. you're my last hope. Don't let Nqaba take my son away from me. Please I'm begging you. What can I do to fix everything”

He wiggles himself out of my hold and stands further away from me.

He looks at me long without saying anything.

He's the only Buthelezi I can get through to at this point. His eyes change from anger to compassion.

I think he feels sorry for me.

I don't want to disturb his trail of thoughts so I continue letting my tears fall.

His eyes are soft..

“Amanda—“

“Mondli please. I’ve got no one to turn to. You guys are the only family I have so please help me. I swear I’ll work on my problems and I’ll apologize to Qhamu”

Instantly, His eyes turn from being soft to being red with fury.

Just a mention of Qhamu’s name and everything is ruined. See why I don’t like this girl.

Just a mention of her name and Mondli’s face changes.

Jealousy aside...

“Mondli I’m begging you”

He looks at me with his burning eyes.

“You made your bed Amanda, now lie on it”

[06/20, 18:43] Lynne: 88

Unedited

MISUZULU

The following day.

I watch my wife's jaw drop, I too was as astonished like she is after hearing half of the things Amanda did.

“And I'm afraid I won't be able to deal with this. I want to strangle her but how do I do that to my brothers wife”

I've never been so conflicted over anything before.

Qhamu is my sister and Amanda is Nqaba's wife, Bandile's mother. How do I choose one over the other, how do I tell Nqaba to stop loving his wife.

“And how is Nqaba taking all this”

He's is a mess.

Mondli called me last night and told me all that happened. One thing you should know about Nqaba

is that he doesn't love easy but when he does he does deeply.

I watched him grow up and enter meaningless relationship, to him it was all about sex and when things got serious he would drop that girl and move on to the next. That was who he is but everything changed when Amanda came into the picture

He stopped playing around.

He dumped all his girlfriends.

he started caring about Amanda.

I witnessed as he fell in love, deeply in love with her.

I had never seen him as happy as when he was with Amanda. She brings out something sweet in him and I was so happy that he finally committed to someone.

He married her and lets face it Nqaba isn't the type to just get married so I was confident that they were going to spend their lives happily together.

I huff and get off the bed.

I need to go see him after he drank himself half to

death.

“He’s a mess. He took Bandile and they are at home right now”

From what Mondli told me Nqaba was in no state to care for him so I bet Gcina did all the work.

Mondli and kids?

I don't think so.

She too gets off the bed and hands me my slippers. She hates it when I walk around the house barefoot.

Says something about catching cold.

She’s sweet.

“Yoh I’d take my child too if I were him—“ except that he did all that drunk what if Gcina and Mondli were not there.

“So what happens now” I shrug.

I’ve got no idea how to handle this, back then handling such matters used to be easy. It was the us against the Ngcobo’s but now it’s a Buthelezi against Buthelezi’s so how do I fix it. Family means

everything to me but loyalty mean just as much if not more besides Amanda is not to be trusted, not after she tried to kill one of her own.

” I don't know lovey, I'll go speak to Nqaba, hear what he wants and I'll take it from there”

She nods taking my outfit for the day out of the wardrobe.

” I'll go check on Qhamu later I imagine she's not okay, not after Nokhaya tried to kill her and now this. Yoh Amanda is something and you know my love I refused to believe Yobanathi when she mentioned she changed and this was just before Qhamu got married but this I didn't expect”

”thank you, sthandwa Sam. I haven't had time to check on her, a lot has happened all at once. Tell her ill come see her before Sunday”

”will do but do you think she'll be okay to host us this Sunday phela you all get so rowdy and loud when you're all together” good point

“For a change lets invite them all here, Qhamu does not have to lift a finger but we will all be together as

a family”

She looks at me horrified.

Hao we are not a bad, okay maybe just a little but Qhamu tolerates us

“I’ll ask Yobanathi and see if she can host.”

I laugh out loud.

After her and Gatsha got married we went to her one Sunday, Gcina and Nqaba made so much mess that she said she’ll never do that to herself again and mind you back then it was only us the Buthelezi’s, and no Ngcobo’s. imagine how rowdy we are now that we are one big happy family, some of us married with kids.

Yobanathi wont handle us.

“She’ll never agree so you taking one for the team my love”

I leave her horrified, she hates cooking especially for a big crowd but she has never had a problem with us going to Qhamu’s house, she says is a better cook anyway.

I exit the bedroom and go to Nkosenye's room.

He's playing with his car toys on the floor. I knew he was awake.

"baba look, it looks like bab'Makhosini's car"

I chuckle lightly

Makhosini drives a Ford F-150 pick-up truck and this looks nothing like it.

I brush his head and sit next to him.

Regardless of all the problems around me I make sure I have time for my family.

"I'm hungry"

"me too son, let go make something to eat"

He follows behind me, imitating me as I limp to the kitchen.

I try by all means to be a great father to my son, he looks up to me so much that failing him is not an option.

I put him on the kitchen counter and raid the cupboards.

He claps beaming with happiness when I take out a box of chocolate cheerios.

I shake my head smiling at him.

He loves these things.

”baba hide them ne or else Asa will finish them again and I’ll cry”

I laugh.

That's my son for you.

”When did he finish them Nkosi”

”yesterday when he was here” he means last week.

”but Asa is your brother my boy and you need to share with him”

”like how he shares his toys with me” I nod at him

”yes like how he shares his toys with you” he nods and opens his mouth as I feed him.

I don't eat cereal at all and my wife knows this.

She will soon be here soon cooking something solid for me to eat.

”baba how come does Asa have a brother and I don't”

he says out of the blue

”what do you mean, you have Asa, baby B, Bandile and Sqalo as brothers”

He remains quiet for a while, glancing at me.

I know he's in deep thought.

” I know they are my brothers but Bandile stays with baba—“ that's Nqaba

“—and Sqalo stays so farrrrrrrrrrrrr away with baba too” That's Mngobi

My son is dramatic.

Mpophemeni is not as far as he makes it out to be.

“—but both Baby B and Asa stay with Baba” he call us all baba.

What his point.

“Yes my boy that's because Asa and baby B are brothers”

He looks at me even more confused.

“But they are my brothers too” he has tears in his eyes.

Did I sound like I said they are not his brothers or my son I just being a baby?

I feed him a spoon full to prevent him from crying.

Eish, how do I explain this to a three and a half-year-old?

“You are right they are your brothers, all of them okay”

He nods and opens his mouth again.

Kids...

“I also want another brother whose going to stay here with us”

Does he even understand what is he saying?

“A brother”

“Yes or a sister like fundo” he heard MaNgidi call Nomfundo that and since then he calls her fundo too.

I'm still trying to find my words when Nandi gracefully blesses us with her presence.

She changed into a long dress.

“What are you two doing”

“Eating” Nkosenye answers before I do.

He is too clever for his age.

“Nice, can you give me some” he frowns shaking his head.

Looks like I have some teaching to do, he needs to learn to share.

“Ah Baby you don't want to give your mother food”

He hasn't stopped shaking his head.

“ha ah, but I'll share with my sister.”

She turns her eyes and gives me a blank stare

“He wants a sibling”

•

”Talk to Mngqobi, you know how unstable he can be. I need to deal with this without his interference”

I'm with Makhosini. Unfortunately, I have to deal with this with Gatscha on my side while he deals with Zwelethu's crazy situation.

”sure ill talk to him. He is stubborn but I'll make him see reason. We don't want to involve the police especially because Amanda was there when Qhamu shot Nokhaya but make sure she gets the message loud and clear. We can't look over our shoulder for the rest of our lives afraid that she'll one day wake up and tell the world about Nokhaya's death”

Makhosini is always thinking ahead but I don't want to scare Amanda off just in case she blurbs about Nokhaya's death to anyone.

” I don't think she will use that against us”

He shakes his head.

”Misuzulu clearly you don't know the lengths a scorned woman would be willing take to get her way, need I remind you Amanda tried to kill Qhamu.

Had it not been for that accident we would be singing a different tune. I won't tell you how to run your household but whatever you do don't let Amanda use this as leverage.”

” I hear you. Let me go hear why she did all this”

”heee what's happening to you, why are you going all soft on me. The Misuzulu I know doesn't listen to reason when one messes with family. I know for sure she'd be dead”

I guess people change

”We don't kill women”

”even the once that mess with our loved once”

I run my hands on my face huffing. Makhosini is frustrating to me.

”she is Nqaba's wife”

”who he is divorcing. Stop making excuses and deal with this because I won't be able to handle Mngqobi for too long”

I don't have it in me and kill her, she is Bandile's mother and Nqaba's wife. Yes, he says he wants a

divorce but that doesn't mean he doesn't love her.

"let me go deal with Zwelethu's issues. Yaz when all this ends I swear I'll be full of grey hairs"

I laugh at that.

"what are you talking about, you have grey hairs already"

"you wish" we exchange a 'weird' handshake before he leaves.

Mandisa's parents flew down here to discuss Nomfundo with the Ngcobo's so he's going to deal with that.

Sighs.

I find Nqaba seating on a couch shirtless smoking. He looks a little better than the state I found him in.

"he left"

I nod and sit next to him.

I found Makhosini here, he came to check on him a soon as he heard what happened.

"How are you"

”fine”

He's not fine but Nqaba hates discussing feelings with anyone, he has always said that's gay tendencies.

”Alright then. Clean up we are going to see Amanda”

”Can I take a rain check. I'm really not in the mood to see her”

”I'm afraid not. where's Mondli and Gcina by the way”

”Gcina went to see Zanele and Mondli took Bandile to Yobanathi. Don't bother calling them they made it crystal clear they don't want to be in the same room as her and i think it's better they don't join us. Unlike the rest of us Gcina can't control his anger, he will kill Amanda and I won't be able to live with myself—“ he chuckles bitterly

“She's my son's mother after all”

I nod and stand on my feet.

I even forgot about Zanele being in the hospital, the

last time I spoke to her doctor she was doing well and if all goes well she'll be discharged in a couple of weeks.

He puts on a t-shirt and we leave.

The drive to his house is silent. I don't know what to say.

"I heard you want a divorce"

"what else can I do"

I shrug and look ahead on the road.

"I love her and it frustrates me that I love her this much but I can't be with her, not when she's capable of killing. You know had it been a mistake then maybe I'd forgive her and move on but she planned everything. It was all premeditated and that scares me the most, I no longer trust her so I can't be with someone I can't trust"

"I support whatever you choose to do even if you forgive her." I really don't know what to do, it hurts me to see him this hurt.

"don't worry about that, soon she will be out of our

lives for good”

He sits back and puffs on his seventh cigarette since he woke up, mind you it's only eleven not forgetting he woke up around past nine.

I park outside the gate and we both enter.

He says it's his house so he doesn't even knock.

Amanda is in the kitchen cooking up a storm, she's dressed in what looks like a new bride attire. Long dress, head scuffs and all.

She give me a little bow, murmuring a respectable greeting.

I give Nqaba a confused look.

“This one is crazy” he says and walks out of the kitchen.

“I wasn't expecting you all so early. Fell free I'll be right with you” she says smiling.

I leave the kitchen as confused as one can be. Does she seriously think we came here for her food and since when does she cook.

She always uses caterers whenever we visit.

Ngaba emerges from the bedroom with suitcase.

“Hao baba why is the suitcase for” I didn’t see Amanda joining us.

“Baba, since when do you call me baba” he is as confused as I am.

A knock comes through before she answers.

“What’s going on with her” I ask as soon as she goes out to attend to whoever is at the door.

“I don’t know but whatever it is it’s an act. I know my wife”

I nod and sit back.

Gatsha joins us.

Now that we are all here I can begin.

“I thought Mondli and Gcina would be here too”

“Well they refuse to breath in the same air as you do and unlike me they have a choice but you should be happy dear wife, they are not here to kill you—Eish I should’ve came with my dear friend Jonny it looks

like this is going to take a while”

Amanda ignores him and goes to back to the kitchen.

I'm afraid Nqaba will continue to find solace in alcohol I need to put a stop to it before he turns himself into a raging alcoholic.

Amanda comes back with a bowl of warm water.

she first kneel in front of Nqaba with a bowl for him to wash his hands

he clicks his tongue at her.

Seeing that Nqaba is not washing his hand she moves to my side.

I'm compelled to wash my hands, not because I'm ready to eat her food but because I'm spooked.

She hands me a clean white hand towel to wipe my hands before going to Gats ha.

She leaves Gats ha and i horrified as one can be.

“Hai shem poisoning our sister was not enough now you want to kill us all” Nqaba says in disbelief

when she walks back in with a tray full of food.

“Nqaba I didn’t put anything in this food. I just want to show you all how sorry I am. I’m even willing to apologize to Qhamu for everything I did to her if it means earning your trust again”

“Amanda are you listening to yourself” Gatsha asks.

“What do mean Bhuti”

“Don’t waste you time Bafo, Amanda has finally lost her mind—“ Nqaba turns his eyes to Amanda

“Tell me, do you seriously think you cooking for us will fix everything. You’re delusional” he turns his eyes to me

“Bhuti coming here was a mistake. I’m sorry but I can’t be here any longer but whatever you do don’t eat her food—Wena Amanda I’m done with you, my lawyer will be in touch, don’t call me, don’t text me. Going forward we will communicate through our lawyers. You can keep the house and your car I don’t care. You have millions of rands in your accounts from the inheritance to sustain your lifestyle for the rest of your life but you can forget

about ever seeing Bandile, he's better off without you. Bhuti Call me when you done"

he takes my car keys on the hand-rest and walks out.

Anger it's what making him to behave like this.

"Sit down Amanda" I'm done taking her charade lightly.

"I don't know if you understand the magnitude of your wrong doings, what you did is unforgivable and inexcusable. You tried killing one of your own and that I cannot forget. I'm sure you know this I take care of my own and just like Qhamu you're one of us but I'm afraid I can't do that. So this is what's going to happen, you saw for yourself Nqaba wants nothing to do with you, you will grant him the divorce and he gets to keep Bandile, I'll talk to him about allowing you to have limited supervised visitations but that's all"

She's crying now.

"Bhuti please I'm begging you. Please talk to Nqaba he can't leave me. I love him so much I didn't mean

to hurt him”

“I’m afraid you got yourself in this situation”

She stops crying and wipes her tears like something has suddenly clicked in her mind.

“Talk to Nqaba he can’t leave me not now not ever or else—“ she’s no longer the sweet Amanda I once knew.

“Or else what” I say with a hard face.

I don’t take threats too kindly

“The police will know who killed Nokhaya” instantly the monster in me consume my whole body. Now I’m no longer seeing her as my brothers wife but as an enemy that she is.

“Amanda are you threatening me” I grind my teeth standing on my feet.

Gatsha is as angry if not more.

Amanda will die if she doesn’t tread carefully

She stands as well and look me straight in the eyes with a hard face.

“No it’s not a threat. All that I’m saying is make sure Nqaba doesn’t divorce me and I’ll forget who killed Nokhaya”

A sound of hands clapping startles is all.

Oh it’s Nqaba leaning of the wall clapping his hands.

“There she is, now that is my wife not that sweet little innocent person you portrayed to be earlier on. You see why I have to divorce her Bhuti she’s evil hearted—oh don’t worry about me I’m not here to stay. I forgot my stash of expensive taste, don’t mind me continue but a little advice dear wife, if I were I’d run and hide far away where Misuzulu wouldn’t get to me”

He goes to a cabinet where he stacks his expensive alcohol and pulls out a bottle of J onny walker odyssey whiskey and inspects the lid

“One can never be too careful now. I need to check if it’s still sealed phela I’ve been leaving with a poisonous snake for too long” he says

Amanda talks before he walks about

“Nqaba don’t this I please. I’m begging you. I’m sorry okay. Let me go to Qhamu and apologize I’m willing to apologize for the rest of my life if it means being with you. Please understand, everything I did was for us but I see now how wrong I was so please Shenge don’t leave me please”

Now she’s begging

“Qhamukile will—“

“She will never forgive me I know but all of this is her fault—but I’m willing to look overpass that just so we can be together”

He chuckles bitterly

“How is this her fault”

“Don’t you see. Everyone loves her she thinks she is better than everyone and I wanted that too but it’s okay. I’ll forgive her”

There’s something wrong with this girl.

“Amanda you still blaming Qhamu for your actions instead of taking accountability for your actions. Why are you blaming Qhamu when you’re the one

that went behind her back and teamed up with her enemy on top of all that she still went to save you when your so called friend had you at her mess y. So tell me my wife, how is any of that Qhamukile's fault. Qhamu loves her own and I know for sure she wouldn't have done what you did to her and you're so wrong, you're the one who needs to ask for her forgiveness not the other way around—" he chuckles again

"And ironically, she will forgive you, in fact, if I were to tell her what's going on here she'd beg me not to leave you but you're right about one thing everyone loves her and not because she thinks she's better than us all but because she's selfless and puts everyone before herself. She ran to help you when that friend of yours took you, risked her life for you. She could've died that day. Mngobi could've been widowed and Sqalo without a mother but you don't see that. All you see is an enemy in her, someone to compete with it's a pity you're all alone in this competition, in essence you're competing with the man in the mirror—" he so calm right now.

He was angry alright but not anymore.

He turns his eyes to look at me

“Bhuti this is a waste of time. My marriage is over maybe just maybe had I not heard what she said then maybe I’d be considering giving her another chance and work on my marriage you know but not anymore not when she threatened to take this to the police. She wants Qhamu to be jailed for protecting her in the first place. Amanda you need to hear this, Qhamukile loves you like a sister and to proof that she risk her life protecting you. Not only did you lose me but you lost a sister in her someone who loves you unconditionally”

He wipes away a tear that fell from his eyes.

Never in my life have I see a grown Nqaba she’d a tear, I mean never.

Not even when we buried our father.

He glances at the bottle of whiskey he has in his hands, shakes his head and leaves it on top of the tv stand before walking out.

We all remain silence.

It breaks me to see him like this and it's worse because Amanda doesn't even realize the magnitude of her ways. She has managed to hurt Nqaba beyond.

“Bafo deal with this because it won't be pretty should I take over”

Gatsha says and follows behind Nqaba.

He means every word.

Makhosini warned me this might happen but I thought she'd never stood this low but I guess I was wrong.

I step closer to her, stopping just inches away from her face.

“I want you to listen and make sure you listen because the next time we have this conversation it won't be this pretty. I want you to disappear, I never want to see your face ever again”

I'm not longer Misuzulu the family man but Misuzulu the son of Bheki, he didn't take kindly of

anyone who dared to mess with his family and neither will I.

“Mis uzulu I mean it, make sure Nqaba doesn’t divorce me or else I’ll spill everything. You all act so innocent, at least I’ve only tried killing without succeeding but what about you all. Let’s not forget who killed Zithulele, detective Manqhele and Chikoze, my father remember him”

“Amanda—“

“And I know you won’t hurt me. I’m your brothers wife, your nephews mother and you vowed not to kill women, right”

That’s it..

I’m done talking.

I push her against the wall and circle my hands around her neck.

With just a single lift, she’s mid-air with her feet dangling.

I squeeze hard

I need to teach her a lesson, one she will never

forget.

“You seem to know too much but you’re right I killed them all and plenty more and you’re next” I squeeze even harder that she starts gasping for air.

She's fighting to no avail.

I let her go once her pupils start dilating

she falls on the floor coughing, I crouch next to her and force her to look at me.

”I kill to protect my own and rest assured I will kill you. Woman or not I’ll kill you.” I stand up straight, straighten my pants.

”you don't want to have me as an enemy” I say lastly and walk out.

AMANDA

I've never been so scared my entire life but one thing for sure Misuzulu is bluffing.

I'm coughing gasping for air still recovering from his strong squeeze.

I thought he'd kill me but now I know he won't.

I saw it in his eyes, he'll never go to an extent of killing me.

Nqaba would never let him hurt me. I know that for sure.

They are all angry but they left me no choice. I now have to blackmail him in order to save my marriage and you bet your last cent this is not over but like him I was bluffing about going to the police.

I'll have Nqaba, come rain or sunshine thought, he will forgive me.

Maybe I should seduce him and get pregnant in that way he will come back again. I remember how he couldn't leave my side when I was pregnant with Bandile so it shouldn't be any different. I don't understand why can't they all see I'm not the

problem here but their sister.

My train of thought is jolted by my ringing phone.

I stand up from the ground rubbing my neck. It stops ringing just as I take it on top of the coffee table but it rings almost immediately

“Mrs Buthelezi hello”

“Hello Mam you’re speaking to Charlotte Vezi from central bank, regarding your accounts. Is it a convenient time to speak”

“What is this about”

“I’d rather not discuss this matter over the phone however it’s with great urgency that you come to the Pietermaritzburg head office. When will you be available”

I’ve got nothing to do today so but I’m not in the mood.

“I’ll come tomorrow” I say and hang up.

She calls again but I switch off my phone.

The Buthelezi’s didn’t even eat my food.

I put everything in a container and put it on the fridge.

I miss Bandile but I guess it's a blessing he is with Yobanathi.

She called me earlier and told me not to worry.

Operation get pregnant??

Maybe a little shopping won't hurt and just like that I have plans for the day.

I take a quick shower.

It's after two when I finish preparing. I'm dressed in a long dress, sandals and I wrapped my neck with a light scarf to hide Misuzulu's bruises.

I used make up but it's not too helpful and my light skinned makes everything look worse than it looks.

I'd hate for people to stare at me like I'm a domestic abused victim.

Car keys, check.

wallet, check.

Ag there's still clothes I bought for Bandile and

Sqalo the car.

I gracefully drive out my yard playing we belong together by Mariah Carey.

The mall is not as full as I thought it would be.

I first go to wollies and get two bottles of red wine, chocolates, strawberries and cream.

Next stop is temptations, I need to get something sexy for my husband.

Between the sexy red matching bra, and it's matching panty carter set and the black one Nqaba will want to be in between my thighs the moment he sees me in these.

The queue is not long. I'm behind one lady and three more behind me.

“Next”

The cashier smiles as she scans my stuff.

“One thousand eight hundred and ninety, will it be cash or card” do people still ask that.

Who still walks around carrying loads of cash

anyway?

I give her my black card and punch in my pin.

“I’m sorry mam can you try again it’s declining” I punch my pin again.

“I’m sorry it’s declining again” impossible.

I’ve got loads of money in my account.

“Try again”

She does as instruct but it declines.

“I have millions in my account. Your machine is not working” I shout.

“I’m sorry mam, don’t you want to go maybe try and withdraw. I’ll keep this with me until you come back” the cashier lady says sweetly.

I take my card from her and storms out but not before I hear the three ladies behind giggling.

I check my banking app but I’m unable to log on because I’m blocked out.

Angrily, I walk to the brunch.

I don't have time to stand in a queue like everyone else so I shout for the manager.

"Mam please calm down, the manager will be with you shortly" one of the staff says trying to calm me but I'm having none of that.

Why are my account blocked. Somebody needs to explain that to me.

A man who looks like he's in his late thirties calls me to his private office.

"I'm sorry Mam let's check and see what the problem is"

I give him my drivers license as proof of identification.

He presses a few times frowning

"Mrs Buthelezi it appears all your accounts were frozen" I got that part but why

"And why the hell is that"

"It says here that Mr Chikoze's assets and everything else linked to his name has been frozen due to an ongoing investigation"

What's does all this mean.

I take out my phone and call my lawyer.

“Tom, all my accounts are frozen because of Chikoze, why is that”

I ask first thing when he answers his phone.

“Oh hey Amanda. I was just about to call you. More evidence linking your father to a number of drug and human trafficking cases were found so the hawks manage to get a court order to cease all of his assets”

What??

“I don't understand Thomas. What do I have to do with everything. I inherited everything so basically Chikoze no longer owns all this but me”

“Remember you refused to sign everything so technically everything still belongs to his deceased estate and not you”

Is he saying what I think he's saying.

“Can they do that, I mean the man is dead”

“He is dead yes but his acquaintances are not, not sure if you know Akin but he was arrested along with the rest of his people and just like your father’s estate, their’s are also frozen. Amanda this runs deeper than us and right now I can’t do anything until the investigation is over”

“No Thomas you can’t say that. Do something, I don’t have any cent in my name and you know this. I’m at the bank as we speak but they can’t help me too, you know I’m unemployed so do something I need at least a few thousands to get me by until this thing I sorted”

“I’ll see what I can do”

I apologize to the manager and leave.

No more shopping for me.

I’m forced to drive back home.

Nqaba’s phone doesn’t ring, it doesn’t even take me to voicemail when I call which means one thing, he blocked me.

So much for my get pregnant operation.

It's after five, usually Nqaba is home this time of the day and he'd be in Bandile's room playing with him.

I miss my family this house feels cold and lonely without them.

I call Yobanathi

"Hey manda"

"Hey how are you"

"I should be asking you that. I heard I'm sorry"

"Don't be. I'll be fine, Nqaba will forgive me eventually" I convince myself.

Part of me knows he won't but I refuse to believe it.

I saw the way he looked at me after I used Nokhaya's death as leverage but what was I to do?

I refuse to let Nqaba go.

"Amanda I don't know what's going on but I pray you find yourself for Bandile's sake. It may be too late for you and Nqaba to fix your marriage but Bandile need his mother in his life so please. Speak so someone"

There goes miss perfectionist..

“I don’t need a shrink Yobanathi, I just need Nqaba”

“Mmm Listen I have to go—“

“I’m coming to pick Bandile up”

“I’m afraid I can’t let you take him. Gatsha made it clear that I shouldn’t allow you here” hee who does Gatsha and Yobanathi think they are.

Bandile is my child.

“Yobanathi I’m coming” I hang up before she says anything else.

My phone rings just as I take my car keys

It’s Thomas, my lawyer.

I wasn’t expecting his call so soon but I guess he worked his magic like always.

“Hey Tom, tell me the good news. When will I have access to my money now”

“I’m afraid that’s not why I called—“

“Oh”

“Yes I’ve just saw divorce papers from David desk, are you and Nqaba divorcing”

David is Thomas’ friend.

They works at different law firms, in fact, Thomas recommended David but why is he telling me about divorce papers.

“What do mean divorce papers, whose divorce papers”

I hope he didn’t call me to tell about a strangers divorce I have my own issues to deal with.

“I mean just that. Im in David’s office as we speak looking at them with your name sprawled across. My guess is you will get served soon”

Nqaba can’t be serious with this divorce charade.

“I’m not getting divorced Tom, Nqaba and I are

having minor issues that's all"

"Amanda, the man wants full custody of your child as part of the settlement. I don't think that's a minor issue"

"Why is David showing you that, it's illegal. You can both get fired" I shout.

"Slow down. David is not here, I'm trying to get you prepared for what awaits, you can stop with your meaningless threats"

Inhale... exhale..

calmly

"It's true Thomas he's divorcing me"

"sorry" he's just saying out of obligation not that he

means it.

“It alright because I’m not going to grant him what he wants. You’ll make sure of it. We are going to fight this”

Thomas has always been a great lawyer to Chikoze so I’ve got no doubt he’ll fight this for me too.

“We.. Amanda I’m not a divorce lawyer but even so how are you going to pay me, with your recent cash flow problems I doubt you’ll be able to even afford retainers fee” him

“But.. but I thought you were helping with that” me

“That was before I knew you were getting divorced, your husband was going to pay me so now that he’s leaving you whose going to pay me” him

“Come on Tom, you know you will win this and I’ll have my inheritance back and you’ll get your share. You can trust me, you know I’m good for it” me

“I won’t lie to you. It doesn’t look good. You might never get that money so I’m afraid I won’t be able to help you with this one”

He hangs up without waiting for me to respond.

How can Nqaba do this to me after everything we we’ve been through.

I take the bottle of wine and drink, drinking my sorrows away.

I’m crying and drunk by the time I finish the first bottle.

I ate all the chocolates too and sprayed all the cream down my throat.

The second bottle awaits now.

I call Nqaba but like before nothing.

I'm scrolling through my phone wanting to send him a WhatsApp message when I press on the status' icon by mistake.

Qhamu's happy family fills my screen.

It's her kissing Mngqobi on his cheek while he is holding a toothless smiling Sqalo.

They are so perfect.

'Our life is not perfect but having you by my side makes everything worth it. I nearly died but God said it's not my time yet and I'm thankful for that. I've been given a second chance at life and I'm going to love you two harder than before. abo Mapholoba bam... my not so perfect family'

The caption.

I feel somethings in me awakens.

Why does she have to have such a perfect life.

I can see the way she's kissing Mngqobi she's

gloating

she's posted so I can see how perfect her life is,
while my family falls apart.

She won't get away with this.

I quickly wash my face and change into a jean, a
light jacket and sneakers.

I'm a little drunk so I request an Uber.

Twenty minute later I arrive.

I give the driver my last cash and enter the premises.

There's no queue thank goodness for that

"Hello sisi how can I help"

Sargent Mabunda asks

I know her name this because of the name badge
she has on

"Sisi is everything okay, how can we help"

I swallow the lump on my throat

"Sisi—"

"I'm here to report murder"

Your comments motivates me I won't lie.

FYI: I enjoyed this insert more when I was writing about a conversation between Misuzulu's and his son. My fave!

[06/20, 18:43] Lynne: 89

Next day.

Unedited

ZANELE

I'm tired of being in hospital now my doctor said I'll be discharged sometime next week which seems to

be in years to come. It's been two weeks of horrible hospital food but thanks to Gcina I get to eat a little bit of junk when he comes to visits which is every day, without fail.

I'm actually expecting him any time now.

Things between us are okay, if you can call it that. I speak to him when he speaks to me and that's just about it. Our conversations are not what it used to be before, now they are flat and—not really boring but they lack something. Maybe it's because I'm always cold towards him for no reason I know he broke me but at least he's trying to mend me.

I tried to let go of the past and be happy when he's around but I can't, not when he's done so many horrible things to me.

Part of me wants him so bad, I miss his scent, I miss his kisses and I miss feeling him inside of me but when I think of everything part of me can't help resent him.

I know I'm confused but not everything is black and white, there are somewhat grey areas in life.

My heart wants him but I'm never trusting that organ again, so I'm using my brains instead.

So now you understand why I'm always so conflicted when it comes to him.

And I know what you thinking, that I should just let him go to find inner peace but how do I when he gives me that peace maybe part of me wants to hurt him like he hurt me so I'm keeping him close to me or maybe just maybe I'm afraid of losing him.

I won't lie, I wish things were what they were before, behind his hard exterior that the world perceive him as there's a sweet little boy in there and that's the Gcina I know and love... did I say love?

Err let me stop thinking about him.

My family and colleagues have been very supportive. The principal sent flowers and said I shouldn't worry about work up until I'm myself again.

Ntando calls me almost everyday asking when am I coming back. I'm sure her mom is annoyed now.

I miss her too.

Lucas introduced me to his boyfriend,

Mark.

Mmmmmmmmm that's all I can say.

The good looking one's are either gay or heartbreakers.

Mark doesn't have such a bubbly personality like Lucas which is why I think they get along so well. Imagine two Lucas' in one relationship.

Yoh, that's a recipe for disaster.

Speaking of Lucas, he told our father about Mark wanting to pay Lobola but as expected he just told him to stop embarrassing him.

He says the only Lobola he's focusing on it's mine.

Lobola!

Eish.. now I have to talk about Gcina again.

We haven't spoken about that pending issue as yet but I doubt he will want to marry me now that I lost the baby I know he said he loves me blah blah and

that he doesn't want to marry me because of the baby but why hasn't he raised the issue since that day.

I know he said that just so I don't get heartbroken.

I'm not stupid I know he only wanted to marry me because I was pregnant.

Sooner or later I'll have to tell my parents that the only Lobola they'll be discussing it's Lucas'.

Gcina walks in just as I fix my pillows.

He has headsets on and he smells of chimney.

"Hello" that's cold.

He doesn't say anything else but sits on the chair opposite the bed without removing his headsets.

Someone is in a sour mood.

I wave my hand because he doesn't hear when I call out his name.

He removes his left headset

"What?" Okay that's it.

“What’s wrong” He’s never been this cold towards me, in fact, I’m the only that’s always behaving like a b-word when he’s here.

“Nothing” he puts back his headset and leans back on his chair.

The music is loud that I hear what he’s playing.

I wave my hand again.

Just like before he removes one headset.

“Why are you here” I’m angry now.

He doesn’t have a right to ignore me like he is.

He lifts his one bushy unibrow—people Gcina is handsome alright—looking all confused.

“What do you mean”

“I mean what are you doing here if you’re just going to pretend like I’m not here. You have your headsets on and blatantly ignoring me”

He doesn’t say anything but stand up to make his exist

“Gcina!”

He turns around and look at me at least he removed his headsets

“What’s wrong and dare say nothing” I know Gcina very well.

He’s not a talker, he’s rather spend the whole grumpy than tell me what’s eating him up.

“Nothing Ntombi”

“Don’t you dare tell me it’s nothing, something is wrong” I shout.

“Okay, do you wanna know what’s wrong—“ he shouts back

“Everything, everything is wrong. I don’t know my mother because she died when I was still a baby, and as if that was not enough I had to see my father burn to ashes when I was just nine years old, BLOODY nine years but of course I had to grow up and be a man. A darn man! Tell me what do men do huh what do men do. They smoke right so ja I started smoking when I was sixteen. Men fight right, they fight for power, dominance and territory, they fight because they want to show everyone else

whose boss so jah you guess right I beat up a boy half to death when I was in grade eight to proof I was a man. I found myself in juvenile prison but I got out. Quit school because men don't go to school. Bayaphanda! (Hustle) but even after all that I still didn't feel man enough. If Drinking and everything else didn't make me a man then only thing was maybe going to fill the gap and that was sleeping around. I changed skirts like underwear simply that what men do. They don't love because being in love takes away their muscularity, makes them weak but sleeping with every girl makes them a man amongst other men so I did just that. I'm a man now, with thick skin right. I'm a DARN man now"

I'm in tears

I claim to love him but I have idea he felt this way. I know he had a sour childhood but never have I thought it was this deep.

"Gcina—" my voice is breaking.

My hear is breaking for him.

"Why are you crying, you want to know right so let

me tell you everything”

He shouts.

He is breaking my heart.

He has tears in his eyes but he doesn't let them fall.

“You are crying but I don't cry because men don't cry. I must've been a baby the last time I cried because I don't remember when last that was—“

He stops to draw breath or to maybe to suppress his tears I don't know.

“Then there was that stupid rivalry between us and the Ngcobo's. I constantly had to look over my shoulder, fearing for my life. Everyday was battle. Misuzulu has enough on his plate as it was. He had us to care for, put food on the table and fight this battle too but just like everything in life it ended I thought we'd finally be happy but no the universe hates us, the world hate the Buthelezi's. Now I lost my child because of some obsessive person who was after Qhamukile and not only that but Nqaba is

drinking himself to death because his wife tried killing his only sister, his wife, his body wife wanted to kill his sister and you know what's worse, is that he loves her. He loves her with everything in him. He can't even report her because she is the mother of his child. My brother is in pieces because right now and I even don't know how to help him so yes Ntombi there is something wrong. My whole bloody life is what's wrong!"

Only when he turns around to leave I see nurses and the security guard at the door.

They too like myself are watching at Gcina. I'm sure the security cane running to see what's the commotion about.

Now everything makes sense, why he is so closed off and refuse to speak about feelings.

His been hogging at his painful last for too long.

I hurt my leg when o get off the bed trying to run after him.

The pain I feel is nothing compared to what I feel inside.

“Gcina” He’s always down the corridor making his exits.

I try and run after him but the nurse stop me before I even reach anywhere further from my door.

“You going to hurt yourself. Go back to bed”

I want to scream and shout for to stop me but Gcina has attracted too much drama at it is so I turn back to my bed without protesting.

“Let him cool off first. I’m sure he’ll be back”

To be honest this nurse is irritating me, she doesn’t know Gcina like I do.

I take out my phone the minute she’s out of my sight and call Gcina.

His phone rings unanswered but takes me straight to voicemail when I call for the second time.

I’m afraid something might happen. Gcina has this anger in him and just one wrong word he’ll hurt you.

Lucas has Ngqaba's number, he stole them back when he had that little crush on him but Gcina said something about him drunk and Amanda trying to kill Qhamu. I don't know what that's about but Amanda wouldn't do that.

I call Qhamu.

She answers after the third thing

"Hey you" her voice always sweet

"Hello Qhamu. I don't know what's happening to Gcina but he just stormed out angrily here"

"What do mean"

"He's not himself and I'm afraid something might happen to him or he'll do something stupid. He's angry about your parents dying and everything else"
I hear her quickening breathing

"Qhamu"

"Don't worry about him, he'll be fine"

She didn't see what I saw.

"Qhamu he said something about Amanda trying to

kill you. What's going on"

She remains silence for a bit

"Its nothing serious. Let try and find him. I'll call you back once I find him okay"

I spend half of my day worried about Gcina.

It's the two o'clock visiting hour when both my parents walk in with a plastic bag full of fruits.

Eish this is another reason I hate being here.

"Where is Mkhwenyana (son-in-law) today"

my father likes Gcina.

No hello no nothing but he's always asking about Gcina.

"He was here but he left"

"Mmmm I hope you're not the reason"

Haibo..

"Ha baba I'm not the reason" I inwardly roll my eyes.

Aunty is sweet, she cooked dumpling and chicken stew so at least I get to lay off on hospital food

today.

My doctor walks in just as I feast on.

She gives me a disapproving glance, she only wants me to eat their tasteless vegetables.

“Hello ma, hello baba” she speaks a bit of Zulu.

“Hello Ndotakazi (daughter)” I swear if Ntsika wasn’t married he would have organized their wedding already.

“I have good news. Everything looks good so I’m discharging you tomorrow”

You should see me.

I’m beaming with happiness but I can’t entirely be happy because Gcina is not here to celebrate with me.

“That’s good news indeed. Did you hear that, you’re going home.” he says happily as well.

“Finally, she will stop complaining” aunty adds

“I’m just sad I’ll no longer see your beautiful face again. You know, it’s a pity my son is already

married”

Both aunty and the doctor laugh

My father can be cheesy when he wants to be.

“It’s a pity indeed—“ I think she’s just being modest

“You remind me so much of my father, he too wants what it’s best for his only son. My brother” the doctor.

I see my father shake his head

“Oh Ntsika is not my only son, the other one is—“ I watch as he struggles to find the right word to describe Lucas but one thing for sure he will never utter the word gay

“—friends with other guys”

The doctor looks confused.

“Oh you mean gay” she says.

Okay things are weird now.

“So doctor when can I go back to work”

“Not anytime soon. try not to strain your leg I don’t

want you back here again and I recommend plenty of rest. First thing tomorrow I'll bring the discharge form and I'll see you again for you check up”

Things are still weird when she leaves. My father needs to accept Lucas is gay.

MANGIDI (once off)

“I think it's time I retire now” I tell MaTwala

I'm not as young as I used to be, I feel it on my knees plus o have grandkids that will keep me busy.

“You will get bored here at home” she says changing Nomfundo's diaper.

We are preparing for the meeting with Mandosa's parents.

That girl has managed to turn Zwelethu's life upside down.

It's been two and half weeks since I saw him, I know he was looking for her. Part of me wishes he didn't find her I say this because her parents are here to take Nomfundo away from us because she's not Zwelethu's biological father but even so Mandisa doesn't deserve this child after dumping here and leaving without a conscious.

"Ma can I borrow your car" Smangele says coming from his bedroom.

"Haibo What's wrong with taxi's and where are you going anyway"

"I'm going to see a friend. Please ma I'm running late" I look at him inquisitively

He has the same look his brothers had when they started dating.

"I hope you're not going to see your girlfriends with my car"

"Hai ma don't, I don't have a girlfriend"

"Who is she"

"Ma I don't have a girlfriend, MaTwala tell her

please” MaTwala is in stitches.

I know very well Sma told her about it

“You want to check your girlfriends with my car so I have a right to know her. When am I seeing her”

“Hai let me go” he’s out the door before I can say anything else.

Why is he comfortable to talk to MaTwala but not me.

“He said he won’t bring her here because you’ll whip them both like you did Mngqobi and Qhamu”

I laugh along with MaTwala.

I’m sure those two even forgot about that.

Langa walks in first followed by Makhosini.

“What did you cook. I’m hungry” He’s already looking inside the pots.

Mncedisi walks in after a few minutes

“Hao MaNgidi why didn’t you say your car has a problem”

Huh..

“Sma says your car has a problem so he borrowed mine” I laugh out loud.

He’s their brother alright.

I don’t know how many times have they tricked me.

“It’s nothing major, the mechanic will come check it out”

He nods and joins Langa in the kitchen.

Zwelethu is the last one to walk in.

Nomfundo immediately jump for him, she’s so happy to see.

“Dada dada” she says excitedly clapping her hands

My heart breaks when he sits far away from her without even looking at her.

I hate this Mandisa girl even more.

The Zungu’s join us after a few minutes

“Thank you very much for allowing to meet with us. It’s with my understanding that my daughter

wrongfully accused Zwelethu of being the father of her child” the man who introduced himself as Zakhele Zungu says

“Phumzile—“ that’s his wife

“—and I weren’t aware that Mandisa was pregnant to begin with. She left home a long time ago, we don’t know where has been all these years so we were surprised when she came home we are very disappointed by her actions however we are here to unburden you by taking back the child”

I feared that day Mandisa would come back claiming her child but I didn’t think it would be so soon.

“Nomfundo was not a burden to us but we acknowledge that she’s not rightfully ours so we welcome to take her” that’s Makhosini.

Nomfundo’s bags are already packed and ready She cries for dada when MaTwala hands her to Phumzile.

Her cries are just too painful. These people are

strangers to her all she knows it's us but as painful as it is we don't have a choice but let her go.

Zwelethu stands up and take Nomfundo from Phumzile and hushes her.

She quietens down immediately.

No one could ever understand their bond.

We all watch as he hushes her to sleep.

This must be hard for him too.

Mncedisi brings out her bags, car seats and everything thing else that's hers.

Once she's asleep the Zungu's take her.

“I'm sorry I brought so much heartache in your lives. Zwelethu I'm sorry for what I did to you I just wanted my child to be brought up in a loving home by a loving father and I knew you'd give her just that but I went about it the wrong way and for that I'm sorry”

That Mandisa's pathetic apology.

Soon they drive away.

Nomfundo is gone forever.

ZANELE

Its a little after ten when Gcina walks in my ward.

“Hey” he gives me a feeble smile

I pat the space on the bed for him to sit.

He reluctantly sit.

“I’m sorry”

“You have nothing to be sorry for. How are you feeling” I ask

“Better” he looks better

“I’m glad. Look Gcina I’m sorry you had to go through all those things”

“I don’t want to talk about that. I just want to sleep”

I pull me so he can lay next to me.

I'm happy when he obliges without any arguments.

"I'm here to talk whenever you're ready"

He snuggles closer to me and sighs.

"I'm getting discharged tomorrow" I tell him changing the subject.

One thing I know about Gcina is that he will never talk about his feeling.

"That's nice. I'm sure you're happy"

"Yes will you come visit me at home" my fears are slowly gripping in.

Now that I'm getting discharged ill be home where he won't be able to come see as frequent as he does.

"Sure I'll come but we first need to discuss the Lobola issue"

Here's another topic I've been dreading

"Oh"

“Yes, Tell me do you seriously love me or you fixated—“ I remove his head from my chest and look at him.

What the hell does he mean?

“No, I don’t mean it like that. I mean you had this massive crush on me since you were a teenager. You saw how much of a bad boy I was but you still you let me pop your cherry—“

he means o let him break my virginity

“Not only that but I treated you badly for most of our relationship but you still stayed. I didn’t forced you to stay but you did, why, is it because you love me or you just fixated with me”

I let that question ponder a little before answering

“I don’t know but what I know is I’ve never felt anything like I do when I’m with you. I don’t know how to explain it but I’m drawn to you. no matter how much I try and believe me I tried but I can’t

stop feeling this way. I still get that tingly feeling in my stomach when you're around but not sure if it's love or fixations. You know even after all the horrible things you did to me I don't regret ever approaching you or letting you pop my cherry for that matter"

"Mmm I don't know how love feels like but I want to try it out with you. I too want to now what it feels like to love"

I've never seen him so emotional before and I admit it feels good.

"So you want us to date" I have to clarify

"Yes" okay o didn't think he'd be so in front about it.

My words are stuck down in my throat.

I love Gcina but am I ready to date him free everything that's happened.

"Ntombi breath Yoh—" I chuckle only because he's smiling

“I’m aware that I broke you and I realized I never apologized for that. I’m sor—“

“No need to, you apologized already” I cut him

“No I just said sorry because that’s what you wanted to hear. I didn’t mean it then but I mean it now. I’m sorry Ntombi I was too caught up in my own world that I hurt the only person who’s ever loved me. I don’t want you to believe me but I want you to see through my actions”

I won’t lie it hurts a little hearing him say he wasn’t sorry at first but at least he’s being truthful.

“Ntombi after today i realized being a man has nothing to do with girls, alcohol and dominance but everything to do with character. I’ve been behaving like a boy but that’s all going to change. I want to change for you” him

“Gcina don’t do it for me do it for yourself” me

“You’re right. I’m doing it for me so I can be a better person—“ he sighs loudly

“I think it would be best if we stop with Lobola talks—“ What..

I know I said I didn’t want anything that has to do with him but I didn’t mean it.

I told you my heart and brain are always in constant battle.

“I need to proof myself worthy of your love first. I realized I rushed things by asking for your hand in marriage. There’s a lot that I still need to work on before we get married. You deserve someone with no baggage or at least that has dealt with it and I haven’t”

What is he saying.

“Gcina are you breaking up with me” we are not dating but you know what I mean.

He laughs lightly and kiss my chin.

“I don’t know why did I kiss you there, I’ve seen Mngobi do it to Qhamu so it must be the right thing to do—to answer your question no, wait are we even dating”

I hit him playfully on his shoulder.

“I’m asking for you to allow me to work on myself first, I don’t know how long that will take but if it takes long then you’ll have to accept me as I am because I won’t allow you to be with another man besides me”

I sigh in relief.

“So what do you say. We wipe the slate clean and

start over”

I’m happy with that.

“Where did you go to when you left here”

“I drove around until Bhuti Mis uzulu found me. Let me guess you called Qhamu”

I nod smiling nervously

“Figured. I had a talk with Bhuti, I didn’t want to hear half of the things he said but I’m glad we got to talk. And thank you” he pulls me closer so I lay my head on his chest.

We have never not even once lay like this.

After sex he usually gives me money for taxi and if I spend the nigh he just turns around and sleep but it feels good to be like this with him.

We lay in bed trying to get to know each other.

It's funny how we were quick to sleep together without knowing about each other.

He's hates soccer, whether watching or playing he hates it. He says he watched it just to fit in.

"I enjoy singing"

"You lie"

"I'm telling you"

I force him to sing which he refuses but after sometime of begging he sings some masKhandi cheesy love song.

I fall in love with him harder than before.

His voice is just pure melodic.

WOW

He's playing with my hair, again he saw that from Mnqobi.

We have a long way to go but I'm happy he's here.

QHAMU

‘Which ones do you want’ he sent me three different pictures.

‘The pink one’ i reply to his Whats App

I don’t know how didn’t I buy sanitary towels or even tempos when I was doing my grocery shopping.

I started my periods now so Mngqobi had to go look for pads for me.

It’s a little after ten pm. I don’t know which store is open but he found them and I’m happy with that.

A knock comes through just as I put Sqalo in his bed.

Who could it be so late.

I rush downstairs.

“Who is it” no called to inform me that they are

coming

“The police” a bold voice shouts fro the other side.

I fasten my gown to hide my short pajamas and open the door.

Two officers are at my door

“Good evening”

“Hello sisi we are looking for Qhamukile Ngcobo”

“I’m Qhamukile how can I help” please don’t tell me something happened to Mnqobi.

“You’re under assets for the murder of Nokhaya Makeyiza”

What..

“How.. what.. no.. I didn’t”

“Don’t even try denying it we have a witness that saw everything”

I’m cuffed before I know it.

I’m just blank.

Who saw me?

Mnqobi said the place was cleaned and nothing would be traced back to me.

“Can I call my husband” I only speak when they open the back of the van.

“You’ll call him at the station. Let’s go”

He doesn’t even read me my right like they do in the movies he just violently shove me inside the van.

I’m not even fighting but they are using so much force.

“My child. Officer my son is sleeping upstairs”

I’m crying now.

“Nduma go take the child”

“Officer can we wait for my husband to get home first so he can take him”

“Hey what do you think we were doing here. Your husband will find him at the station”

No.. no...

this can’t be happening.

“The Baby is sleeping, can’t we wait for her husband to get here” I hear her.

I’m guessing she has Sqalo with her.

I can’t see her because the van is closed now.

“Hai maan let’s go. These rich people think we work for them, let’s go. I’ll call social services when we get to the station”

I don’t hear her protest but I hear the ignition.

I going to jail.

[06/20, 18:44] Lynne: 90

QHAMU

The drive to the station is long because I’ve been detained by the Pietermaritzburg police in J abu Ndlovu street and not Mpophemeni police.

I don’t know whose driving but whoever it is is a terrible driver. He’s driving roughly through the dongas not caring that I’m handcuffed and losing

balance in here.

I've stopped crying and silently enduring the pain.

I mean what's the use of crying when I'm guilty anyway and I'm sure whoever reported me has corroboration evidence to solidify this.

I see the city lights, we are close to the station now, I just want to get out of here and hold my son.

I'm hearing his loud cries meaning he is awake now.

His cry pierces my heart, he needs me just like I need him.

The car comes to a complete halt I guess we've arrived. I hear my son's cry fading before the male detective opens for me.

"Where is my child" i ask the minute he opens the van.

"Come out!" He roars

"Where the hell is my child" I say rebuffing to get out.

He drags me out with my leg, this is the same police

brutality the South African is against.

“Where is my child” the defiant in me shouts.

He has managed to drag me out the van and I’m now standing still. I won’t move until I see my child.

“Hai marn move” he shouts grabbing my arm painfully and pushes me inside the station.

I refuse to be a weakling, not when my rights are being violated like this.

I’ve read and seen the news about police brutality but I always thought everything was exaggerated but now that I’m here I see how unnecessary it is for them to use force and even more so that I’m not fighting or resisting arrest.

“Book her in” he says to one officer at the front desk.

“Where is my child” that’s the only thing I care about.

“He’s with Sargent Nduma, she’s calling social services to come get him—Ngudle take her”

“Can I make a call for someone to come get him”

“No, what do you think this is. That child will be

taken by social services and he'll end up in an orphanage somewhere but if he's lucky some rich white couple might adopt him”

What??

That can't happen, not when he has a father who loves him.

The thought of my son in an orphanage evokes my tears.

a female who I assume is Ngudle takes me to another room where they take my finger prints and mugshots.

I'm just silence as she searches me.

Once she's done she directs me to an interrogation room.

I can't phantom how my rights have been violated ever since I got here and everyone will pay for this.

“Ready to confess”

I've seen in movies how people always ask for a lawyer

“I’m not saying anything without a lawyer and when am I getting my phone call”

I don’t know if this applies in South Africa but I’d be damned if I confess.

He chuckles softly and leans back on his chair.

“Sisi I don’t have all night. Let’s make this easy for the both of us, you confess and you’ll get your phone call”

Now it’s my turn to sit back and chuckle.

This man messed with my child, Sqalo should be home sleeping but instead he called social services for him he could’ve easy waiting for Mngqobi to take him before cuffing me like some serial killer.

Had he not messed with my child then maybe I’d make this easy for him.

“What’s your name” I ask

My obstinate determination is to make this difficult for him

I’m praying Mngqobi is up and about searching for me.

“Girly, this is not a movie and like I said I don’t have all night but I see you want to play games so I’ll let you spend the night hopefully tomorrow morning your head will be clearer”

I scoff when he walks out.

Sergeant Ngudle comes back and take me to the holding cell that’s already filled with more ladies.

Prostitutes to be exact.

The minute she locks the heavy steel doors my tears come flooding down.

My strong persona gone and replaced with the frightened me. How did I end up here, my life was perfect before Mngqobi, his psycho ex has come back to haunt me yet again.

I settle in the corner blocking away the prostitutes voices as they swear at me.

What the fuck are you looking at...”

“Ya baby girl you look like you don’t belong.....”

“Ah What did she do...”

“Leave the princess alone....”

“I want those shoes”

Blocking them is seemingly impossible.

There is nothing else to do but stare at the four thick grey stone walls surrounding me. The chipped paint and cracks tell me this is an old building. I dare not raise my eyes but I can feel other prisoner eyes as they gouge at me.

I'm slowly going mad, theorizing absurd meanings from the walls' blank stares, maybe confessing is the only way out.

An hour passes by or at least it feels like an hour when one by one they fall asleep.

I don't know how they managed to sleep in those hard cement concrete beds but one of them said they are used to it now.

The lights go off and I'm swallowed by the darkness of the night.

The faint voices coming from the front die down and the night is as silent as the grave.

The events of that night flood my brain like a tidal wave.

I see Nokhaya coming to me, her will is to kill me. End me and take what's mine.

And that is Mngqobi, my everything.

Everything replays like a broken record, her vile words, her scream, her baleful laughters but that's all vague compared to the vivid POW POW sound as the gun went off. By the end of it all she was dead.

I killed her.

I get on my knees hoping God hears my prayers but these walls can not hold a prayer, nor my spirit. And so I call to the universes, I promise all the good things I will do when I'm released. I pray for my redemption and absolution from the guilt of killing her.

I close my eyes in hope to catch some sleep but nothing, the only thing I can do right now is hope that this is only a bad dream, one dream I'll wake up from in the crack of dawn but who am I kidding.

*

I don't know when or how I managed to sleep but the sound of chatter and laughter is what I hear when I open my eyes.

Morning light is slowly creeping in those high windows.

After two hours or so Officer Ngudle walks in and release everyone else except for me.

“Detective Mdluli will come back for you”

She says and walks away.

I'm forced to remain in the cell breathing in the foul smell coming from the toilet before the man of the show shows up.

It's the interrogation room again.

“My source tells me your husband, his brothers and your brothers helped get rid of the body. I know for sure the victim was burnt and it's only a matter of

time before I find out compelling evidence against everyone else but you my dear, I got you. I know you killed Nokhaya Makeyiza. if you confess I promise to not implicate your family, they will all go free and your child will at least grow up at home with his father. Just think about him, you'll be in jail, your husband will be in jail, his brothers in jail, your own brothers too so whose going to look after him huh. If you love him then you'll confess”

That has managed to break me, I let my tears fall.

I endure more of his nasty and atrocious behavior and his threats about Sqalo spending the rest of his life in an orphanage before giving in.

“Okay fine, I'll tell you what happened—“ I suck in as much breath as my lungs can contains and exhale

Today he has managed to break me.

I can't hold my tears in and just like a predator that he is he preys on my fears, my child is the only things that means the world to me so I'll confess if that means he will

I watch as he leans back on his chair and smile.

“Good now that wasn’t hard was it”

“I’ll tell you everything but after I make my phone call”

“Remember not even a lawyer can help you get out of this one” He says and tosses me a cellphone.

MNQOBI

Im going crazy not knowing where Qhamu and Sqalo are, I don’t know where to begin looking. Makhosini and Misuzulu have their people searching but so far nothing.

“How about we issue out a reward” is empty my bank account for them.

“I don’t think that’s necessary sir, if this is a case of kidnapping then whoever took them will make contact” detective Msomi says.

I'm at Mpophemeni police station filing a missing person report.

Misuzulu opened one in Mvubukazi police station and Mncedisi opened one again in Matsheni.

I don't know how these police work but looking at how things are done nothing is in sync.

"So when was the last time you saw her"

I bang the table frustrated.

How many times must I repeat the same thing to this stupid cop.

"Mngobi calm down"

I ignore MaTwala and look at the cop

"Why isn't there anyone looking for my wife and child"

"Where you two having problems or something" I swear I'm going to strangle this cop.

"Stop asking me stupid questions and start looking for my family. They might be dead for all I know and your asking me stupid questions."

“Sir I’m just doing my job. I need to understand why she would just leave”

I told him over and over again that Qhamu wouldn’t just leave but he says there’s no forced entry in my house and everything looks normal which means Qhamu left on willingly.

“Call other police stations and alert them. Call every police station here in KZN for that matter” he looks at me like I’m crazy.

“Do you know how many police station are here”

“I don’t care just do something”

“That impossible however I will send a dispatch notify other police stations”

“How long will that take”

My phone rings just before he answers.

I press the red button and indicate for him to continue.

“It won’t take long—“ my phone rings again interrupting him.

I'm about to hand up when Zwelethu tells me that it might be important and that I should answer

“What” I answer

“Mnqobi, Mnqobi Baby” That’s my wife’s voice.

“Qhamukile where are you”

“I’m at Pietermaritzburg police station. I’ve been arrested”

What?

“Arrested, I’m confused”

She sighs

“There’s a witness who says they saw me kill Nokhaya” I feel all air leave my lungs. Langa’s guys made sure nothing comes back to bite us.

“Qhamukile don’t say anything else I’m coming there”

I angrily walk out of the station without saying anything else.

Langa is the first person I call as I drive away.

Zwelethu will drive MaTwala and MaNgidi.

“Bhuti Qhamukile has been arrested,
didn’t you say no one will find out”

“Mngqobi what do you mean she’s arrested.”

“She’s in Pietermaritzburg as we speak so tell me
Bhuti are you sure you cleaned that place”

“I’m sure Mngqobi. I’ll call Misuzulu and let him know
what’s happening, we will find you at the station”

Nothing makes sense.

Langa has done this before and all this time he
didn’t get arrested so why now.

I’m speeding when Amanda comes to mind.

She’s the only person who was there when Qhamu
shot Nokhaya.

No.. it can't be her but if not her then who?

I rush home and send myself that voice note where Amanda admitted to poisoning Qhamu and rush back to the police station.

All the brothers are there when I arrived.

Misuzulu turning the whole police station upside down.

“You arrested an honest woman without any proof and where the hell is this witness you're talking about” he shouts at some small bodies cop.

“The witness told us everything. She saw what happened”

“You mean the same witness that almost killed my wife” I play the recording shocking everyone.

The cop himself is shocked.

“How.. how” he stammers

“I want my wife released and my son here with her and you better make sure you arrest this crazy

lunatic before she sends more innocent people to jail”

He makes a few phone calls before releasing Qhamu.

She can't stop crying as she holds on tightly to me.

After thirty minutes or so a social worker walks in with Sqalo in her arms.

“Bhuti I'm taking my wife and son home. Please deal with this”

I'm pissed when Qhamu tells me about the night she had.

That cop is going to pay for this, why didn't he allow her to call him.

I repeat he is going to pay for this, including that Amanda girl.

AMANDA

Nqaba is here packing the rest of Bandile's clothes and toys.

I'm tired of fighting so I'm just watching him as he pack.

"You'll come back soon I'm telling you"

He ignores me and stuff everything in a suitcase.

Msomi told me Qhamu has been arrested soon they'll be hear begging me not to say anything.

I'm just doing this so that Nqaba can stop this divorce nonsense. I won't testify to my allegations but only if Nqaba doesn't divorce me.

A knock comes through just as I sip on my wine.

I'm following Nqaba like a cray person.

Msomi is at the door with two female officers, Makhosini, Mncedisi, Mondli and Misuzulu.

"Hi" I wasn't expecting everyone to be here.

"Mrs Buthelezi we are here with a warrant of arrest"

I look at then puzzled.

“You’re under arrest for attempted murder by
poison.”

What?

He doesn’t waste anytime I’m cuffing me and
throwing me in the back of the van.

How is this possible.

*

I spend the night in a holding cell, I was denied
police bail but what hurt most is that Nqaba didn’t
even come check if I was okay.

A lousy state lawyer has been appointed to
represent me in court.

I’ve been to court a few times in my life and in all
occasions the law was on my side but not today.

The magistrate refuses me bail now I have to spend
four months in jail before my hearing.

I feel my life slipping away as I change into the orange uniform.

My life is over.

Westville prison is now my new home.

Later!

[06/20, 18:44] Lynne: 91

Unedited.

MNQOBI

Two days later.

Qhamu is a mess, she keeps crying not believing

that Amanda is capable to such. I too didn't see this coming I thought Qhamu was exaggerating regarding this whole Amanda thing but now I regret taking it so lightly.

She's holding on to Sqalo for dear life, my son can't even breathe because Qhamu is harboring him.

"Qhamu, Sqalo is fine. stop hogging him"

She insists he sleeps with us not that I'm complaining but I suggested we take him to MaNgidi for a few days just until she gets over sleeping in a cell but she's bluntly refused so I got a nanny instead.

her. "Mnqobi he slept at a place he doesn't know. He is still traumatized and he needs me to be close to him"

Me: "yes I get that but he's fine now. You on the other hand is not, do you want to talk about what

happened”

She ignores me and continues rocking Sqalo.

”he is sleeping, don't you want to put him in his bed,” I say

”he’s been restless for these past few days so it’s better if I hold him”

After Sigh loudly I switch off the tv and turn my whole body to her direction.

”Qhamukile do you wanna talk about it” I know Qhamukile and her behavior tells me something happened that day.

” I don't want to about it”

”I'm Your husband Qhamukile, trust me”

She sighs suppressing her tears

I take Sqalo from her which she protest to at first but I give her a stern grimace which forces her to relent.

It's true, Sqalo was restless the first day he came back home but he's fine now. It's just Qhamu's neuroticisms taking over.

She's seating on the far corner when walk back from putting Sqalo in his bed.

I don't know what that cop did to her but I'm about to find out.

I sit next to her and pull her close to me.

Her body feels warm and I guess I am just as warm because she snuggles even closer

“Talk to me”

“Talking about it will take me back there and I just

want to forget about it”

“And how’s that been working for you—look baby I too want you to forget about but clearly you finding it difficult. How about we talk it through together. I’m here for you Qhamu”

She stills for what feels like forever before she speaks.

”I’m scared”

fear evident in her voice

”of what” she lays her whole body on the couch with her head in my thighs.

I’m playing with her hair as she expresses her fears.

”losing you and Sqalo when I go to prison”

What?

I let her continue without interrupting

”Amanda already told that police officer what I did and I'm sure it's only a matter of time before he starts digging and what happens when he finds out that I killed Nokhaya. I will go to prison Mngqobi but unlike Amanda it will be for a very long time. I know you said Langa and his guys cleaned everything but what if they missed something, you didn't see how Msomi treated me. He was so sure of what he was saying, I'm telling you he won't let this go. it's only a matter of time Mngqobi, only a matter of time before he find something connecting to Nokhaya's death”

I feel her shoulder shaking meaning she's crying.

“Don't worry. That won't happen”

“How do you know that, that man refused me a simple phone call all he wanted was to put me behind bars. I saw it in his eyes, he knew I did it he just wanted me to confess and I don't see him letting this go. Mngqobi what's going to happen to

Sqalo when I go to jail. What's going to happen to you"

I let her cry until she calms down.

It's clear why she's been hogging Sqalo for these four days every since she was leased.

"Firstly, nothing like that will happen. You're not going to any prison, not now not ever and secondly Msomi has no proof regarding what happened, he took Amanda's word but as proven Amanda is not a reliable witness. She has proven to be jealous of you so no magistrate will take her word plus her lawyer requested for psych evaluation before her trial so trust me, you're not going anywhere. Msomi is only relying on Amanda testimony without any proof besides what other proof does he have and by the way there's no body so technically she can't be declared dead as yet, right now he's investing her disappearance not murder"

I bend a little and give her a kiss through her tears

I hope that makes her feel at ease but who am I kidding this is Qhamu, she will worry until kingdom comes.

“But there’s Nokhaya’s phone”

“Sorted” I long disposed that phone.

“What about my statement. He said I need to come and give my statement”

“No need for that. Unless he comes here with proof that you’re guilty but until then you’re not stepping your foot in that station ever again”

“But Mngobi I killed her” I look around to see if the nanny is somewhere around.

I breathe out when I don’t see her.

“No you didn’t kill her. You were defending yourself so I don’t need you beating yourself up about this. Nokhaya got what she deserved end of story”

“But—“

“No buts Qhamu. I don’t like seeing you feel guilty over this, do you want to talk to someone, like a professional or something”

I feel her roll her eyes.

“And tell her what”

Oh jah.

“Okay maybe not that but please no more feeling guilty. She’s out of our lives and for good this time”

I comfort her more, continuously assuring her that

this is not her fault.

“So he refused you to call me”

“Not only that but he threatened me about Sqalo going to an orphanage, our brothers and you getting arrested for covering up for me. Mngobi he treated me so horrible, he didn't even want to listen to what I had to say all that he wanted was a confession”

I rub my hands together restraining the monster in me from coming out.

He could've just arrested her but he decided to threaten her as well.

It's after eight, the sooner Qhamu goes to bed the sooner I deal with him.

I lift her up bridal style and walk to our bedroom.

She's smiling when I lay her gently on our bed.

“Don't smile, my back hurts. You're too heavy”

I see her facial expression change from a smile to a

frown

“I’m joking, you’re light as a feather my love”

That’s a lie.

She’s not as slender as she was but I’m not complaining in fact I love her body even more now that there’s more meat in her bones.

And don’t get me started on her behind.

It’s rounder and firmer. It has become my greatest obsession after her boobs.

“Don’t you want to join me” my plan is to tire her so she doesn’t wake up tonight.

She shakes her head.

I drop my pants simultaneously with my underwear and let Mapholoba out. He is pulsing, needing attention.

I watch as she swallows nothing, she wants him.

“Your loss then”

I know she's watching as I walk into the bathroom
butt naked.

The hot showers helps relax my muscles.

After showering I wrap a towel around my waist and
walk out.

She has changed into her nightwear and chatting
on her phone.

“Yobanathi says Bandile is settle in”

“That's good to hear. I'll go check on Nqaba
tomorrow—“ she's looking at me as I say this
seize the moment Mnqobi.

I drop my towel causing her eyes to widen.

I'm sure she wasn't expecting Mapholoba to be up
and ready.

He's painful because he wants nothing but to be
buried deep in Qhamu chest of treasure.

“Put that thing away”

I actually do laugh out loud and join her in bed.

“Mnqobi wear some underwear”

She finished her periods yesterday so there's no escaping this one.

“I don't know about you but I was told to sleep naked” I pull her close to me and kiss her.

“Mnqobi we can't, not tonight Sqalo is sleeping with us remember”

“I'll go take him once I'm done” I get on top of her and kiss her deeply before she says anything else.

Her moaning in mouth indicates she's hungry for me so I don't waste anytime.

Soon she's naked under me and screaming my name as I pound on her deeply.

“Mnqobi... Baby... you in too deep”

she's close. I can feel it.

I increase my pace to give her the pleasure she so desperately wants.

I'm relentless in my hard thrust. I'm a man on a mission.

I thrust deep until she orgasms but like I said I'm a man on a mission so I thrust right through her orgasms.

By the time I empty my seeds in her she's thoroughly fucked and exhausted.

Five minutes later she's snoring.

Mission accomplished.

She will be sleep all night.

•

It's after twelve when I get a message from Mandla.

I paid him to trail Ms omi.

I needed to know his likes, his dislikes, his patterns,

basically I needed to know everything about him.

He is again on night shift this week.

he's a shitty cop.

He accepts bribes from true criminals and free animals that deserve to be chained and caged but he had the decency to arrest my wife, Sqalo's mother someone who is not even a danger to society.

Well he's going to pay for it tonight.

"He just left his mistress place" the text reads.

Fucken heating bastard.

He has a good wife waiting for him at home and he's busy whoring around.

His wife is better off without him after all.

"Don't let him get away" I text back.

I get off the bed, carefully not to wake Qhamu and dress up.

My gun is safely secured in my safe after Qhamu took it but I hope today it's the last time it's used.

I've instructed the nanny to check on Sqalo because he sleeps during the day and plays during the night which gives Qhamu and I sleepless nights but tonight I want my wife asleep.

Thirty minutes I arrive where Mandla has Msomi tied to a tree.

"You. Did you do this" Msomi shouts when he sees me.

"Yes I did this. You messed with me when you took my wife. do you know your little speech about my son growing up in an orphanage traumatized her. Now she's always hogging him afraid he's going to lose him."

My little rant is getting me fired up.

I start punching him hard over and over that he starts bleeding.

I managed to knock a few of his teeth out.

I shouldn't have worn a colored t-shirt though, now his blood is all over me.

“I’m sorry, I didn’t mean to scare her like that. I didn’t know Amanda tried to kill her I swear I won’t do anything please sir, please let me go”

I’ve unleaded all my anger at him so I’m able to chuckle and step back.

“Don’t beg, you look pathetic—“ I step backwards even further observing my handy work.

I’m proud.

His face doesn’t look recognizable anymore.

“Let me let you in on a little secret, you see Amanda might be crazy but she told you the truth. Nokhaya is dead, killed by my wife”

“Wh...what.”

“Yes Msomi, Amanda told you nothing but the truth”

“Mnqobi we don’t have all night”

He takes out a gun ready to shot.

“Mandla wait, Let me do it. I want to do it myself”

Immediately I see Msomi pants getting drenched with urine.

I want to laugh but situations doesn’t allow me and Mandla and his guys are just stoic which tells me they’ve seen this more times than I think.

“No man Mnqobi. Langa is going to kill me should he find out about this, now imagine when he finds out I let you kill someone Hai maan”

“He doesn’t have to know about this, none of them have to know. All this ends here.”

He shakes his head looking at the two guys he came with.

I just wish he would understand how important this is to me. My brothers have always been there for me fighting my battles but this is the one thing I need to do. I have to man up and do this not only for me but for Qhamu and Sqalo.

My family.

right this moment it's me looking after what's mine.

“Come one majita I won't tell if you don't. I need to do this. Langa nor Makhosini is not here so how will they know”

“Ah mina my lips are sealed bozza” the taller guys says when I look at him

“Sure sure bozza me too”

I look at Mandla

“Fine but don't waste time, we have to get going”

I take out my gun and point at Msomi.

I thought I'd be scared but I instead I feel nothing but hate for this man.

He deserves a bullet right between his eyes but again he'll be dead before he even hits the ground.

I want him to suffer before he dies.

“And nou” Mandla asks when I drop my gun.

“I'm coming don't kill him” I run to my car and empty

the plastic bag that's been in here carrying
Qmamu's sweets treats.

I got them the day she was arrested, somehow her
periods make her crave for chocolaty stuff.

I walk back with the plastic in hand.

Msomi is screaming begging for me not to kill him
but his cries falls on deaf ears and he can scream
all he wants it's futile.

No one will hear him.

“Dying from a gunshot is an easy way to die and
you don't deserve that, I want you to suffer”

I fasten the plastic over his head securing it around
his neck and watch as he suffocate.

He's a relentless man, he keeps fidgeting, fighting
to free himself but it's all futile.

Few minutes later he takes his last few breathes.

It gets too silence when his screams and cries fade.

“Yoh Remind me not to mess with you”

Mandla says breaking the silence.

The two other guys are speechless.

“J ust don’t mess with what’s mine”

“Pay up boys, I told you he’d do it” one guy says
snapping out of his shock.

The other guys shot him with an evil eye and
Mandla gives him a grimace that day dare say one
more thing.

“What is he talking about” I ask confused.

“We made a bet. I thought you wouldn’t be brave
enough to kill but I guess I was wrong”

I laugh at Mandla

He didn’t have to look so scared.

I too am shocked at myself. I didn't think I'd be capable to killing someone especially so gruesomely.

“How much was the bet”

“A thousand each ” I'm offended.

Just a thousand.

I shake my head and unfasten the dead Msomi.

Now it's time to make everything look like a bad accident.

QHAMU

Hearing light shower droplets hitting the tile I wake up.

It's still dark outside, I switch on my lamp and locate my phone. Four seventeen the clock reads.

Mnqobi is not next to me and the shower is on.

My body is in knots after what he did to me and as proof I slept throughout the night.

I grab the gown on top of the otto man and walk to the bathroom.

The first thing I see is his muddy shoes, the whole bathroom is a mess.

There's a black plastic bag next to the bin.

He walks out of the shower just as I'm about to open it but he rushes and takes it from me.

"it's just dirty clothes" he says fastening the plastic.

That's only when I see his bruised knuckles

"mnqobi what happened to your hands"

"oh this—" he looks at his hands once and turns his eyes back at me.

“It’s nothing. what are doing up so early anyway”

I should be asking him that.

“I woke up when I had the shower but why are you showering. Heading to the farm?”

”nope as a matter of fact I'm from there. One of the workers forgot to close the gates so some of cows managed to get out the security office called me cause the alarm was triggered”

I nod and go back to bed.

Like I said my body is in knots plus I’m still sleepy.

•

It’s a little after seven when I wake up again.

Mngobi is not in bed but the bathroom is clean now.

I take a shower, dress up in a dress and walk down

stairs.

Mam'Gladys is feeding Sqalo who cries when he sees me.

He's such a mama's boy.

My heart breaks a little when Ma'Gladys refuse when I want to take him.

“He will do this all the time when he sees you. He has to eat”

I sulk

Mnqobi walks in the kitchen happily

“Morning my love” he gives me a kiss.

I push him back when he deepens the kiss.

Mam'Gladys in the same room with us.

“What-“

I open my eyes widely at her direction “Mam'Gladys knows we married or kanjan (What) ma”

“Yes son, and I'm happy you show her how much you love her not all young couples are as happy and in love like you two” I inwardly roll my eyes.

He just likes Mngobi.

“See. Mam’Glays doesn’t mind, breakfast is ready”

I roll my eye at him.

He pecks my lips before I walk out of the kitchen.

Oh he seriously made breakfast on his own, I can tell from the burnt toast and eggs.

Am I forced to eat all this plus his bacon doesn’t look crispy at all.

I dish up a small portions and sit in front of the tv.

I change the tv channel. I can’t deal with Enews so early in the morning.

It feels like I’m biting on hard rocks when I bite on the toast that just how badly burnt it is.

It’s the thought that counts right?

Hell no, not when I won’t have any front teeth when I’m done here.

He walks back and seats next to me.

He switches the tv back to Enews

My life every morning. I forgot how much he loves the news.

I can't wait for him to go back to work so I can enjoy tv by myself.

“So Sqalo is teething” I noticed two little white teeth growing just yesterday.

“So fast, my baby is growing soon he'll be sneaking around here with girls”

Only Mngqobi can say such.

I give him a disapproving grimace.

”what, he is a Ngcobo and us Ngcobo have that charisma you can't help fall for us”

”oh really”

”yeap. Exhibit A—“ he says pointing at me

“You feel so hard for me”

“Oho don't turn this around, you're the one that—“

I stop when the news anchor says something that catches my attention

“A polo vivo register to detective Msomi from Pietermaritzburg police station was found burnt beyond recognition in R617, forensic experts Mduduzi Mbetshana reports that it seem may that the car was in high speed and the driver lost control and hit a tree. An unrecognized body was found inside the car burnt beyond recognition so test will be conducted to conform whether the victim is detective Msomi—“

I don't hear the rest of what she's saying because I'm shocked to say the least.

I hated the man for what he did to me but for him to die like that.

I can't even imagine what his family is going through.

I turn my eyes to Mnqobi whose looking at me like he's been caught stealing.

“Mnqobi are they talking about the same guy that arrested me”

He shrugs nonchalantly

“Unless if there’s another Msomi whose a detective in Pietermaritzburg” he says carelessly.

“Please tell me yoi you don’t have anything to do with this”

I find myself asking.

He looks at me hurt

“I’m sorry I’m sorry I asked. I know you didn’t do it. You’d never do something like this”

Mnqobi May be a lot of things but he’s no murder.

I want to be sad but with the way Mnqobi is looking at me I can’t.

I quickly finish my breakfast and bond with my son.

I’m not going to stress myself about Msomi who was ready to make my life a living hell.

Mnqobi and I spend the whole day bonding as a

family.

[06/20, 18:44] Lynne: 92

Unedited

ZANELE

I'm finally home. My step mother has been treating me like a crippled. I'm not allowed to do anything, all that I'm allowed to do is lay in bed all day and eat.

I swear I'll be big as an elephant by the time my leg heals.

I'm not complaining though she's been very helpful.

It's Saturday my father is at home which gives me an opportunity to discuss the lobola issue.

I take my crutches and limp to the lounge area.

He is watching Orlando pirates play against Amazulu.

He is a big pirates supporter but he gets a little conflicted when it plays with Amazulu because it his homelands team.

I sit on the opposite couch and watch the game with him until the referee blows the last whistle blows.

It's a draw one-one.

“Pirates missed lots of chances, that fool missed a penalty—“ he shout pointing at some I don't even know.

“With the way they've been playing this season, we can forget about winning championship. Chief will win it but not if Sundowns can win the next three matches”

He gets a little enthusiastic when talking about all things soccer.

I let me blurb about soccer until the next how starts.

”baba I want us to discuss indaba yelobola (dowry issue)”

”should'nt we wait for your mother first” I don't think

he cares much that she's not my mother but step mother.

“She said I should talk to you”

He decreases the volume and turn his eyes at my direction

His stare is intense so I look down and play with my hands.

“Baba Gcina and I think it’s best if we put the issue on hold for now”

“And why is that” he is not shouting nor is he surprised but his voice is stern.

“A lot has happened, losing the baby made me realized how we rushed into things baba I won’t lie, I’m not ready for marriage and Gcina understands that so we both decided to put it on hold until we decide otherwise” he leans back on his seat

“Did you two break up” we were never a couple to begin with.

“Cha (no)baba. But we both not ready for marriage”

He shakes his head.

“Zanele I don’t understand what you’re saying. So are you telling me that boy will be happily ripping the benefits of a married man while he doesn’t want to marry you”

He means sex.

“Cha baba. He won’t be doing any of that. We will remain friends until we are ready”

Judging from the way he is shaking his head, he doesn’t agree to any of this but he doesn’t have much of a choice”

“I’m sorry baba for bringing such shame into your house, I know how excited you were that I was getting married and hopefully soon I’ll get to be the bride you want me to be”

“You didn’t bring any shame, I’m just disappointed but if you feel like you’re not ready then I’ll have to understand. I almost lost you in that accident which kind of gave me perspective. I’m not going to force you to get married, all I want is for you to be happy and if not getting married gives you that happiness then all is well. Before your mother died I promised

her that I'd take care of you and ntombiyam I'm trying to do just that. I don't want you to be stuck in an unhappy marriage so I'll call your uncles and inform them that the negotiations are off" whose is man sitting next to me and what happened to my strict father.

I nod with tears threatening to fall.

I stand up and limp away again but I stop just before I exit the room.

"Baba can you please consider Lucas and Mark's issue. Lucas needs you just as much" I say holding my breath.

"Zanele go to your room" the authority in his voice leaves no room for protest or I limp to my room.

The rest of the day is boring as I'm not allowed to do anything.

Gcina has been helping Nqaba deal with his issues. My heart bleeds for him.

I don't know what possessed Amanda to do half of the things she did but I'm glad she's out of their

lives for good.

The Buthelezi's are better off without her.

I've had dinner in my room and I'm chatting to my colleagues. They are updating me about work when I call a call from Lucas.

“What did you say to your father”

“Nothing, why”

“Why the hell does he want to see me all of a sudden”

I shrug as if he can see me

“I don't know, maybe he wants to talk to his son”

“Oh please, that man pretended I don't exist half of my life and now he wants to see me. You know I'm surprised he even remembers I'm his child”

I hear the pain in his voice but as always he masks it with his dramatics.

“Just come hear what he wants”

I hear what sounds like a kiss in the background and Lucas moans in my ear.

“Ewww Lucas—“

“Hey I was in the middle of something when your father called”

“Bye” I hand up giggling.

Look like my father is finally reintroducing himself to Lucas’ lifestyle, well I hope.

AMANDA

Three moths later.

Westville woman detention center.

“The first step to healing is to admit that you have a problem. Blaming other people for you wrong doings will only make things worse. Malinda I’m happy you finally noticed how your anger

consumed you”

I joined a support group which was suggested by my lawyer.

I don't see a point of it all, how is talking about my problems going to help me.

“Amanda do you have anything to share with us”

I shake my head like always.

“Come on. You don't even have a story to tell” Fiona says exasperated.

She used to be drug mule before she got arrested.

I shake my head again.

“Ag I don't see why do you even come. All you do is sit in that chair anyway. Next time rather sit in your cell and not bother coming here”

“Ladies ladies, remember we are all here to help each other out. Amanda is here cause she needs help let's not make her feel unwelcome. She will talk when she's ready” mamabetty our counselor says.

She's in her mid fifties.

She was arrested when she was just seventeen for killing her mother. She served her sentence here in westville but now that she's out she's helping out other inmates.

I go to my cell.

I hate being here because it's cold plus I've lost weight in just three months.

Nqaba hasn't come to see me not that I'm expecting him to, not after everything I did to him.

I think being here helped me a bit, I'm starting to see things from a different perspective.

"I need a cell phone" I tell MaGift whose my cell mate.

Like myself, she's waiting for her trial but unlike me she's been here before.

"And what will I get in return" I pop my head and give her a blank stare.

Did I mention how hard are these bunk beds.

"What. This is prison. Nothing for mahala"

“Okay forget I said anything” I lay on my back facing the ceiling.

Being on the upper bed sucks but not as much as the food.

In the morning we get to eat porridge and oats and if we are lucky we get peanut buttered bread with tea.

My health diet went out the roof the minutes I stepped in these doors, now I eat tin fish for supper.

I spend the next few days attending the support group and today it's not any different.

“MamB you know ever since you started talking to us, I realized I messed up with my family. Can I borrow your phone I need to call my sister and apologize” Leshelle says.

She's a young beautiful colored girl. She's here because she stole her grandmothers sassa card to feed her drug addiction so her family got tired of her and called the police on her.

“Shelly you know that's not allowed”

“Come on, mamaB. I know you can make I happen besides it’s not like we convicted, we all still waiting for trial” mambetty shakes her head.

“I’ll see what I can do”

Nothing new here, it’s the same talk about how one needs to face their demons and talks about healing, and asking for forgiveness

“Amanda who would you like to ask for forgiveness from” that caught me off guard

“Qhamukile, my sister-in-law” I answer mambetty before I can stop myself.

They all look at me.

“Why. What did you do to her”

I breathe in thinking about all the horrible things I did to her.

“For almost killing her” I guess I’m talking.

I breathe in again

“I was so jealous over the relationship she had with her brothers and her in-laws that I ended up

poisoning her” I say and lean back on my chair.

“Was—you say was. So are you no longer jealous of her”

I let that question sink in.

“No—I don’t know—maybe I am just a little bit”

She writes something on her book and let me continue

“She has everything I’ve been dreaming about since i was a little kid—“

“Mind talking about your childhood”

“There’s nothing much to talk about. My father was a police officer. I can’t really say anything else because he was hardly home. His life was all about work, he comes from seshego I don’t know his family either. He died when I was I was about seven then my mother remarried the person who killed him—“ I shrug my shoulders

“For money I suppose—“ I chuckle softly “—The bustard was loaded I’m telling you anyway I didn’t really care much about him or their relationship but

because of him my mother and I were no longer a family we once were. She started neglecting me and attending his wild parties. They decided to shipped me to boarding school, I guess I was a burden. She never came to visit not even once so I kind leant to be on my own. One Christmas holidays I came home and there was a child around the house. They had a child and I didn't even know about and things from there only went from bad to worse. It was like I didn't exist, Thandolwethu was the only child. She got all the attention and love, she became their world and I was left on the sidelines anyway a few years later she got kidnapped and I still, I lived in her shadow. My mother couldn't cope with her disappearance so she found solace in alcohol and drugs. I don't think she even knew who I was because she'd refer me as Thandolwethu all the time. I sucked it up and lived she eventually committed suicide, on her suicide note she wrote about how she couldn't live without her precious daughter. Not even once did she mention me everything was about Thandolwethu. When I was twenty three the unfortunate happened, I got

kidnapped by my stepfathers people. Oh I forgot to mention he got all his millions from trafficking young girls and turning them into sex slaves. We can all agree that the guy was a monster but not even once did he treat me badly, I guess he somewhat felt guilty about murdering my father. Zithulele, his “partner” kidnapped me to teach him a lesson. Him and his people raped me countless times, I was tied up with barked wires on my wrist and angles, he said I was disobedient. He would watch and laugh as his people had their way with me. I endured that for about three months before a Good Samaritan rescued and not only that but he was my Prince Charming. He married me regardless of what I went through. He love me—“ I sighs loudly “But here I am now. In pris on for almost killing his sister who did nothing to me”

Everyone is silently looking at me with pitiful eyes.

“That’s a lot—“ mamBetty breaks the silence.

“You went through lot. How was your relationship with your sister in law”

“Good I guess. She was like a sister I never had, she’s so good to everyone even to the people who have wronged her. That girl is incapable of hating” I laugh out loud when Nqaba’s words replay in my head.

He was right, I lost a sister in Qhamu, someone who loved me unconditionally.

“If she’s so good to everyone why hate her so much”

“I don’t know. Maybe it’s because she got all the attention”

She writes again on her book

“Amanda do you feel like Qhamu is Thandolwethu”

I frown looking at her

“No.”

“Let me rephrase. Do you feel like Qhamu gets all the attention like Thandolwethu did”

I nod.

“How does that make you feel”

I let the question ponder for a few seconds

“Angry. Thandolwethu took everything from me, her father killed my father, my mother loved her more she got everything she wanted she was their little princess and I, nothing” I feel emotions engulfing me.

I haven't cried about this before so why now.

“Just like Thando, Qhamukile gets all the attention, everyone worships the ground she walks on. Just like Thando when she steps in the room all eyes turn to her. My own husband enjoyed spending more time with her and her family more than with me. Just like Thando she took everything from me”

I let my tears fall.

Mambetty hands me a box of tissues before speaking.

“Amanda I think your hate is misplaced, you confuse Qhamu with Thandolwethu. Seeing everyone love Qhamu like you say they do evoke

unresolved issues you have. Your hate isn't really directed to Qhamu, it could've been anyone for that matter. Qhamu isn't really the issue but the issue is your past. Your parents wronged you but they are not here, you need to forgive them in order to move on—“

I scoff.

I'm not going to forgive me for what they did to to me or rather what they didn't do. I hate them, all of them.

“They are dead, Thando is not here but you allowing them to still control your life. Your jealousy towards Qhamu isn't the problem it's just a facade of the real issue. I'm going to give you a task. I want you to think of all the good things Qhamu has done for you versus the bad and from there I want you to do the same with your parents.”

I can actually come up with all the bad things my parents did right now everything is in the top of my head just like I can come up with all the nice things Qhamu has done for me.

“That’s all for today”

I stand up and go to my cell.

Three more weeks of routine but today is my hearing day.

My lawyer is here, he’s not confident at all part I guess part of knows what my fate is.

He’s wearing an over sized grey suit. He pulls out an envelope.

“Are you ready for today”

I nod rubbing my wrist.

I don’t think I’ll ever get used to the handcuffs.

“Whats in there”

I ask he puts another brown envelope on top of the other.

“Your psych evaluation report” I nod again.

Shame the guy is still new at this, I just hope I get a short sentence but either way where will i go when I get released, I’ve got no family maybe they should just lock me up here and throw away the key.

“And in that other envelope”

He scratches his head avoiding eye contact

“Come on, Pule. What could be worse than being here”

He plump himself on the chair opposite me and sighs

“Divorce papers”

How cruel can Nqaba be, it's my hearing and he thought it would be best to serve me this today out of all days.

“I'm sorry. I've had them with me for a couple of weeks now I didn't know how to tell you”

I breathe in and grab the envelope.

What's the use of fighting this. Mondli once told me I made my bed.

I grab is pen and sign initialing each page.

“Now that that's out the way can we go”

Pietermaritzburg high court is a long way.

“You didn't even read the term”

I smile at Pule, he's so sweet, too sweet to be a lawyer of you ask me.

“Don't worry. I know my husband—ex husband. He doesn't care about the house and everything else, he just want custody of our son and I think he's better off without me, Nqaba is the better parent anyway—don't feel sorry for me” I say when he gives me pitiful eyes.

I'm tired of getting that look.

He sighs and walks out.

The prison warden cuffs me again and direct me to the back to the police van.

Prison in Pietermaritzburg is full so that's why I had to come here.

QHAMU

I watch as he sulk.

Mnqobi is such a baby at times.

“Can you not wait six more months at least”

I ignore him and put my blouse on top of the bed.

“We spoke about this”

“I know but baby look at him. He is still so young” I laugh and dress up.

“It’s just an interview Mnqobi, I might not even get the job so relax please”

“Promise me you won’t take the job” why the hell would I pass an interview and not take the job.

Mnqobi is just crazy.

I finish preparing in record time.

“Are you and Nqaba still taking the boys out”

“Yes. Zwelethu is joining is. Nomfundo is visiting” that’s nice.

I’m happy the Zungu’s allows Nomfundo to visit.

“I’ll see you later then. Love you” I peck his lips and

Sqalo's too.

"Maybe I should impregnate you again" I laugh walking out.

Mnqobi would rather get me pregnant than let me go back to work again.

He's crazy, let's thank god for contraceptives.

I arrive in town jus in time.

The court is not full, thank god for that I don't need anyone seeing me.

I hate that I lied to Mnqobi about a job interview but what else was I going to do.

I sit in the back and wait.

First her lawyers walks in with a briefcase in hand and the prosecutor joins in too.

The court room is empty, not even one person from Amanda's family is here. I notice a few young faces, law student I reckon but either than that there's no one else.

She walks in wearing an oversized dress and

pumps.

I won't lie my heart breaks.

She lost a tremendous amount of weight, her skin no longer look as radiant as it did.

She looks even older.

She notices me and flash me a faint smile which i can't help reciprocate.

We all stand when the Judge walks in.

The prosecutor argues his case as to why Amanda needs to be jailed. He says she's a danger to society, I'm saddened when he uses Chikoze's dealings against her.

Her lawyer does a lousy job, he's stammering throughout as he reads her psych evaluation report.

I didn't know about half of the things she went through.

My parents might've died when I was young but I know they loved me.

I wipe my tears as Pule mentions how she was

neglected, kidnapped, raped and tortured.

After two hours the judge finally gives the sentencing

“Mrs Amanda Buthelezi you are sentenced to six years in prison with no possibility of parole”

I let my tears falls.

She needs help not jail.

[06/20, 18:45] Lynne: 93

At the Park.

(Unedited)

MNQOBI

I only have one child but I sometimes feel like they are five. Sqalo is too energetic not to mention when he sees Bandile and to make matters worse,

Nkos enye is also here.

He runs faster than Bandile and Sqalo who can even walk a distance without falling but I'm enjoying.

Zwelethu has been clinging Nomfundo to him.

I open the bottle of heineken and drink

”you're brave. Drinking while with Sqalo is never a good idea, Qhamu will chop your head off”

I laugh and gulp down my beer.

” I'll handle her” I reply Nqaba.

He looks better than he did two months ago.

He shaved and not drunk for a change.

”don't call me when she puts you out”

Zwelethu laughs at that.

”It happened only once”

”mmm—look at your child” Sqalo is eating dog poop.

I take out my phone and snap a few pictures before standing up.

He cries when I throw away the hard poop.

This boy.

“He’s a Ngcobo after all” I give show Nqaba a middle finger and give Sqalo a stick sweet instead.

“How has you been man” Zwelethu asks.

“I’m getting there” Nqaba is talkative than normal.

I think he’s slowly healing.

His phone rings and he stand up to answer.

“Mandisa finally brought her back huh”

“Yes, she says Nomfundo cries for me but I’m happy she’s here.”

“When are you getting married and starting a family of your own” I ask.

He looks at me inquisitively and gulps down his beer.

“Not anytime soon. After this whole Mandisa saga I doubt I’ll be getting married anytime soon”

Nqaba comes back smiling just as I’m about to

answer Zwelethu.

“And then” he shakes his head at me before answering

“You’re so noisy—That was my lawyer, Amanda signed the divorce papers” I’m surprised.

“That simple”

“Yep, I’m glad she’s not fighting this” I don’t know if he’s hurt or relieved but his voice doesn’t give away anything.

“Isn’t her trial today”

“Yes, she got six years”

“I’m sorry man” Zwelethu

“It’s alright. I’m finally a free man—what do you say, let’s have a guys night”

“What—are you sure, I mean she just signed today are you sure you want to go out”

Maybe he needs a good fuck after all he’s been through

“Yes I’m sure but not the kind you’re thinking. I’m

thinking we all chill at my house with the kids” my eyes involuntary turn to the kids.

Bandile is trying to imitate Nkosenye whose trying to do a cartwheel.

His head is on the grass while trying to lift his feet up.

“You mean them” Nomfundo is now plugging grass and putting it on Sqalo’s head.

“Yes them it’s going to be fun. Nappy changes and feedings, it will be a night to remember”

“I’m game but it won’t really be a guys night.

Nomfundo might behave like a boy around then but she’s a lady In case you don’t know” we all agree to tonight.

After that night I almost burnt Nomfundo with hot milk I swore never to look after kids but having Sqalo showed that this parenting thing is not as hard, well—let me rather say other times are easier.

We can all agree that parenting is hard and half of the time I don’t even know what I’m doing.

I sent an sms to Qhamu letting her know about tonight.

Later in the evening at Gatsha's house.

QHAMU

"I could get use to this"

"Me too. It feels so good" Yobanathi says moaning as the masseuse work on her shoulders

After Mngqobi told me about his boys night I decided to pamper the ladies with massages and wine.

"I wast thank Nqaba for coming with this idea. My house is so quiet right now. There's no kids running around breaking everything they come across"

We all laugh

“And there’s no Nkosenye to ask when is his sister arriving” that boy seriously wants a sibling.

“Five more months mommy” Sis’Nandi is pregnant with her second baby.

Misuzulu is over the moon.

“Can it be soon. I’m tired already”

I’m not any other kids anytime soon. Sqalo’s labor pains are still fresh in my mind. I remember everything maybe once I forget the pain I’ll try again but for now I’m chilled.

I’m happy and relaxed when the masseuse finish.

Now I’m relaxing on the couch with a glass of wine along side Yobanathi and Nandi is on some juice tip. Misuzulu would kill her if she drank while pregnant.

“So I went to Amanda’s trial today”

Yobanathi chokes on her wine while Sis’Nandi look at me with her jaw on the floor.

“What—why, after everything she has done to you”

“Sis’Nandi o couldn’t help it. I wanted to see her I

guess. She almost killed me—“

“Exactly, more of a reason for you to stay away”

I understand why they feel this way but they don't understand how I feel.

Amanda almost killed me, I don't now what is it that I wanted to archive by going to her trial but I guess I wanted to her for the last time.

I wanted to see if she felt sorry for what she did to me.

“You don't understand”

“Understand, hai Qhamukile. Amanda tried to kill you and not only that but she got you arrested. What if Mngqobi didn't have that recording, you would be in jail while yena atanasa put here. Mngqobi is only to be so pissed off when he hears this”

Can Yobanathi stop.

“I didn't say I went there because I wanted her freed”

“Then why did you do” why vele?

“Closure”

“What closure”

“Closure sis Nandi, I wanted to know why did she do it, why she poisoned me”

“And did you”

I sip on my wine after shaking my head.

“Her lawyer read all the finding from her psych evaluation, Amanda needs help. She has a very painful past and—“

“Hai Qhamu I’m going to have to stop you there. You had a painful past but you don’t go around hurting people who love you. Amanda brought this upon herself when she befriended that Nokhaya wizard so stop it, stop feeling sorry for her.”

“I agree with Yobamathi on this one. Stop thinking about her. If she needs the help you say she does then let the state help. She’s not your problem, and I don’t want to hear you say you went to her or else I’ll be forced to tell Misuzulu. Amanda almost killed you, she did that out of her own free will so please

stop feeling like you owe her something. Focus on your family and leave Amanda out cause of you don't, you're going to lose Mngqobi. He told you countless times to stay away from Amanda and you have defied him but it end now. You'll lose your marriage because of someone who didn't even think twice about getting you arrested.

I nod and sip on my wine.

“Fine I'll stop but promise me you won't tell your husbands”

“I promise but let this be the last time. I won't hide this again from Gats ha”

Maybe it's time I let all this go.

God knows I tried reaching out to Amanda and each time she threw me under the bus.

We spend the whole night talking and laughing.

Amanda chapter is closed.

Three years later.

AMANDA

I've been attending the support group and I won't lie it's been helping. I've come to realize how everything I did to Qhamu was my fault.

My jealousy towards her was was to rife and for no apparent reason. All that she did was love as a sister but I messed that up.

I'm taking sewing classes, it's quite enjoyable plus I read a lot now.

“There are six things that the Lord hates, seven that are an abomination to him: haughty eyes, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that devises wicked plans, feet that make haste to run to evil, a false witness who breathes out lies, and one who sows discord among brothers”

I read out loud.

This scripture reminds me of the woman I see when I look into the mirror.

I teamed up with Nokhaya

I poisoned Qhamu

I got her arrested

I lied

I, I, I.

I blamed Qhamu for my misfortunes

I was jealous of her.

I'm too blame.

I pointing a finger at her forgetting that three more fingers were pointing at my direction

“Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me..” I pray.

MamBetty said I needed to forgive myself for everything I did and only then I can ask Qhamu to forgive me.

I put Bandile picture on the page I've just read.

He's only a few months in this picture I'm sure now he's a big boy.

He will be turning four in two months time, my baby.

I miss him everyday.

I grab my phone under the pillow and dial her number.

My heart is beating right out of my chest and her phone rings.

"Hello" her voice soft as I remember

"Hello" my tongue is stuck somewhere in my throat

"Whose this" I'm sure she can hear my breathing

"Mxm" that's followed by a click of a tongue and she hangs up.

I breathe out air I've been holding, switch off the phone and put it back in a little hole I made in the mattress.

Mambetty has been such great help.

MNQOBI

“Baba is Bandile coming to my party” it’s Bandile’s party not his but I dare not say that to him.

“Yes my boy”

“And Asa too” mind you the party is in two months time.

“Yes”

“What about fundo”

“She’s coming too, they are all coming” I answer him looking at him through the rear view mirror.

My son is a total replica of me and it scares me so much that he took so many of my trades too.

I park just outside the restaurant which Qhamu owns.

After two years of searching for a job to no avail she

decided to open her own restaurant.

The restaurant is still under construction, Buthelezi constructions has been doing to good job. I'm not complaining with any of the revamping, Mondli and Gcina assured me that everything will be completed in the next few weeks.

The farm will delivers eggs, fresh meat and fresh vegetable for her restaurant so basically we keeping everything in the family.

I unstrap Sqalo from his seat and we both walk into the restaurant.

To safety precautions, I don't enter.

"Mr Ngcobo, how are you" I've seen her face around, Qhamu said she's the decorations designer or something

"Hello Mrs—" I don't know her name

"It's actually Miss Esselmont" I shake her extended hand.

Okay can I have my hand back now.

"Where is my wife"

“Oh she said she had something to take care of in town”

She didn't mention anything to me.

“Alright. See you then” I leave before she says anything

Qhamu's phone rings unanswered when I call her.

I strap my champ back in his seat again and get in to the drivers seat.

That designer later comes running before I reverse out.

“Mr Ngcobo—“ I roll down my window

“I need your opinion on this—“ she pulls out two photos in her file.

“What setting do you think will work upstairs. I'm thinking elegance and classy but Qhamu wants outdoor seating. What do you think”

I squint my eyes trying to look at the two pictures.

“I don't know. Shouldn't you be discussing that with my wife it's her restaurant after all”

“Yes but I thought maybe we can sit down sometime and discuss ideas”

“Miss—“ I’m terrible with name

“Just call me Clair” she says with a collgate smile plastered on her face

“Clair, I don’t know anything about designing. Speak t Qhamu about it so if you don’t mind I need to get home” I roll up my window up and drive out.

Mncedisi’s call comes through just as I turn into Mpophemeni.

“Bafo”

“Was Qhamu moody when she was pregnant”

I laugh

“What did Phephile do now”

“Bafo I can’t take it. She asked I buy her wings imagine I was in the middle to something important but angithi shes more important there I run to chicken licked, I come back home she’s crying saying I bought her chicken licken wings and she wanted pie Bafo I swear I’m close to killing her”

I laugh harder.

“Mngobi this is not a laughing matter maan”

“Sorry Bafo, Qhamu was not bad, but every pregnancy is different. Suck it up and hang on believe me all the running around will be worth it when you hold your child”

“Mxm why did I bother calling you, I forgot how soft you are. Sma is hiding from her. Phephile is scary my bother and I hate it” I can’t help laugh again but this time he drops the call.

*

Later on the evening.

Qhamu got takeaways for us which is a surprise because she usually cooks, especially during week days.

I eat alone because she said she’s full, when I’m done I throw away the paper bags and go upstairs.

She's in bed already covering herself.

Okay.

I strip and go to the shower

She's pretending to be asleep so I let her be.

Her phone rings just as I'm about to switch off the light.

"Hello"

"Hello who ever you are stop calling me" she clicks her and throws her phone away and pull the blankets over her head.

Something is definitely wrong.

"Who was that"

"I don't know Mngobi you just heard njena"

"What's wrong, you've been moody lately"

"Nothing im fine"

"Clearly something is bothering you"

"I said it's nothing Mngobi" she roughly throws the blankets away crying and goes to the bathroom.

I block the door with my foot before she could slam it.

“Talk to me, what’s wrong”

“I said nothing”

“We are not going to sleep if you don’t tell me”

“Fine, I’m pregnant happy” he opens the door and walk past me.

I can’t help the smile that finds my lips.

“You’re pregnant” I can’t even hide the excitement in my voice.

“Just when I start a business you get me pregnant. Why Mnqobi” I seriously want to laugh.

“I’m sorry. I thought you were on a pill”

“Me too” and somehow this is my fault.

“I’m sorry I got you pregnant okay but don’t worry about the restaurant I’ll take it from here. You don’t even have to lift a finger I’ll do it all for you”

We get into bed and let her cry on my chest.

Why is my wife so dramatic

[06/20, 18:45] Lynne: 94

Unedited

QHAMU

Mnqobi is holding on to my hand so tight as we walk onto the doctor's room.

He's excited he can't even hide it.

We wait in the reception until our names are called.

"Mrs. Ngcobo you're back" Dr. Lulama shakes my hand

"he doesn't trust that I'm pregnant"

"that's not true doctor, I just want to see for myself"
he too shakes the doctor's hand and we go to the consultation room.

"Yesterday we just took the pregnancy test of you

want to we can take the sonar to see how far along are you”

Mnqobi agrees to it before I do.

I didn't miss this I swear.

After changing I lay on the bed and the doctor applies the ultrasound gel on my flat tummy.

My heart jumps for joy when I hear a little heartbeat.

“There it is, six weeks preg—wait. Hear that”

Mnqobi and I look at each other wondering

“The second heart beat”

Am I hearing the doctor.

“What”

“Listen to that” I can't hear anything after what he just told me.

“So two babies”

“Yes two heartbeats means twins” Mnqobi gets on his feet and start dancing.

I roll my eyes and watch the screen.

“That’s the Ngcobo sperm” he sings.

The doctor writes a script and we leave.

“I need to go to the restaurant and check how everything is going, Clair mentioned she had some problems with the electrician so please take me there”

“I told you not to worry about it. I’ll get Mondli to check it out we are going home. I want you to put your feet up high and watch as i slave away”

That sounds like a plan except the last part where I’ll be watching him slave away. Mngobi can’t cook and I’m not about to put my kids lives in danger by eating his food.

He calls Mondli but he’s not available so he says he will send Gatsha instead.

True to his words

Mngobi lets me do nothing when we get home.

He attempts to cook beef stew when all is over I eat bread with Amasi.

At the restaurant.

Gatsha arrives after five. The contractors are gone and Clair whose busy on the phone arguing with the plumber remain all by herself

“Shit” I’m late Gatsha think to himself rushing in.

“Be here tomorrow!” Clair shouts and hand up.

“Hello” she turns around and her eyes fall straight on Gatsha’s full lips.

“Hello” she greets after catching her breath

“Mngobi mentioned you had a problem with the electricians”

“Yes they didn’t fix the wiring upstairs so now my people are unable to put up the lights” her voice comes out sweet.

She thought Mngobi is handsome but he has nothing compared to the man in front of her.

His tall structure and broad shoulders is what she's looking for in a man and lets not get started on his physics.

“Okay I'll get them to come tomorrow”

Gatsha is in a rush to go pick up Asa from Nqaba's house.

“Wait—I didn't catch your name” her erotic voice is smooth and melody to Gatsha's hears.

His fantasy has always been to have sex with a white woman.

“Gatsha—“ his voice comes out just as smooth of not smoother.

He extends her hand and she firmly shake.

“Clair—Miss Clair Esselmont. I don't know if you're in a rush but I'm in need to a different opinion”

“I have a few minutes to spare” Clair smiles and lead him upstairs where she has all her work spread out.

She hands him the two picture he showed Mngqobi and ask for his opinion.

“I don’t know anything about decorations but I’ll love whatever you chose. I’m sure it will be as beautiful as you are”

Clair smiles and sit down.

“You’re such a charmer” she says playing with the ends of her hair.

“It’s true you’re beautiful. Id love to sit and discuss all this (pointing at all the paper on the table) with you but I need to pick up my son from my brothers place before my wife gets home”

That’s his way of telling her that he has a wife because he sees that Clair is such a flirt.

“That’s a pity. I was hoping we would sit and brainstorm ideas but your loss then”

“What will get in return if I help you brainstorm”

“Wouldn’t you love to know but like you said you have a son to pick up and a wife to get to”

Gatsha takes out his phone and send Yobanathi a text and Ngaba too.

“Im all yours”

They both sit and talk about meaning less stuff until Gatscha makes his move.

Clair has been giving him hints ever since he got here.

“I think I like this color more, not only will it highlight this place but it looks good on you too”

Her bra is slightly showing from her blouse so Gatscha was able to see the color of her bra.

“How would you know what color looks good on me if you’ve never fully see it”

Standing up Gatscha pins her against the table and give her a kiss that leaves her breathless.

He pulls her skirt up and pulls her panties to the side.

Clair has already unbuckle his belt.

She zips down his pants and pulls out ushenge.

“Wait.. wait.. I don’t have condoms” he says breathless.

Her white skin leaves him breathless.

“It’s a good thing I came prepared.” She pulls out a condom which she intended to use with Mngqobi out of her purse and tears up.

She rolls it down Gatsha length and turns around
Without waisting any time Gatsha slams in to her.

QHAMU

“Your phone is ringing” Mngqobi shouts from the bedroom.

I’m in the bathroom enjoys the bubble bath he has prepared for me.

“Answer it” I’m sure it’s the unknown person who keeps calling but doesn’t say anything when i answer.

My body feels fresh and revived.

I don't want to get out but I'm forced to because the water is started to get cold.

I wrap a towel around my body and exist.

Mnqobi is laying on the bed on his phone.

I'm sure he's reading about how to care for twins pregnancy.

I change into my nightmare and get into bed.

I'm horny tonight.

I get closer to him and run my fingers on his stomach

"Mm uh I'm reading. Look it says here that it can happen that the babies can share the same umbilical cord which could be risky"

I'm not even two months pregnant and already I'm ready to give birth.

I thought he was too much with Sqalo but clearly he wasn't.

"I'll read it later" I kiss his jaw line followed by his lips

“And they could be identical like Manqoba and I. That has always been my fear imagine same looking babies, how am I going to tell them apart”

I should quit while ahead.

“Mnqobi I’m horny please, we can talk about the twins after sex”

He shakes his head still reading.

“They could also be premature. After Sizi I don’t think I’ll survive another preterm baby. Check here they are saying there could be serious complications”

“Which are relatively low” I finish the sentence because he clearly reads what he wants to.

“Mnqobi are we having sex or not”

“Baby this is more important, don’t worry I’ll sex you up when I’m done here”

Mxm!

What is more important than sex right now.

I turn around giving him my back and close my eyes.

I keep fidgeting because this throbbing feeling in between my thighs won't go away.

Mnqobi is still reading from goggle which will only increase his anxiety levels.

I'm not going to bother, I'm going to have a healthy pregnancy he can worry alone.

My phone rings.

I grabs it from the night stand and answer

“What” I shout.

Blame Mnqobi for my outburst.

“Qha...Qhamu” her voice says I'm a whisper

“Who the hell is this”

She goes silence for a while that I start thinking that maybe I should just hand up

“It's me.. it's Amanda”

“AMANDA”

At least that managed to get Mnqobi's attention.

“Yes”

I hang and switch off my phone.

“Was that Amanda Amanda” looks whose angry now.

“Yes”

“What does she want” how am I suppose to know.

I hung up immediately after she said her name.

I shrug my shoulders.

“Block her. Better yet give me that number she’ll know me”

The rant!

I ignore him and pull the blankets over my head.

I admit hearing her voice after such a long time scared me a bit.

After the talk I had with my sister-in-law I decided to close Amanda’s chapter and I’ve never not even once have thought or mentioned her name.

“You refused when I asked for sex so leave my phone alone”

He scoff and takes my phone.

“I’ll give you sex if that’s what’s making you grumpy and as for Amanda, I don’t want you to have any sort of communicating with her. She’s out of our lives please don’t bring her back”

I wasn’t planning on it.

I meant it, I’m done with her.

I changed networks to MTN now.

[06/20, 18:45] Lynne: 95

Unedited

Back at the restaurant

Gatsha grunts as he trust one last time before

spilling all his cum in the condom.

He pecks her lips and pull himself out of her.

“That was good”

It was actually better than he had imagined.

“I’m impressed” she says pulling her skirt down.

“I’d love to stay but—“

“Yes, your wife and kids are waiting. Maybe next time” she wipes herself and give Gatsha a packet of issues which he wraps the condom with and wipes himself too.

“Next, I love the sound of that” he puts the condom and the condom foil in his pockets, gives a kiss one last time before leaving.

He’s in a happy mood as he drives to pick up Asa and Nqaba’s house.

His fantasy finally came into reality.

He parks outside Nqaba’s house and walks inside.

Asa is already sleeping with Bandile.

“What’s with that smile” Nqaba asks

“Can’t I smile for no reason”

“You sent a text saying you’re late and now you’re smiling for no reason if I didn’t know you I’d say you uphuma kuyozisula (can’t translate)”

“You know me too well—let me go before she starts blowing up my phone”

“Make sure you don’t get caught with your finger in the jar”

“When have I ever. Do you ever wonder why you never got caught, don’t forget you learnt from the best” they both laugh as Gatsha walks out with Asa sleeping in his arms.

He throws away the issue but he did not throw everything away as the condom wrap remained in his pocket.

Yobanathi is home and has prepared supper.

He first put Asa in bed and joins his wife on the dinner table.

“This smells nice” yobanathi is a good cook.

“Thanks, hows your day looking tomorrow. I need you to take some of your stuff to the dry cleaners I’ll be doing he laundry, I hope you didn’t forget to bring all of Asa’s clothes from Nqaba”

“I forgot them. I’ll ask him to bring them. I’ll be at the restaurant overseeing if the all is well. The electricians messed up and Mondli is not around to monitor so I’ll go there tomorrow”

The dinner is peaceful with Gatsha throwing his jokes here and there making his wife laugh.

Gatsha gets in the shower while Yobamathi sort the laundry with color coordination.

Once she’s done she gets in bed. Gatsha joins her after a few minutes.

“Ain’t you still on your periods”

Yobanathi shakes her head running her hands all over her Gatsha.

He’s not in the mood for sex, not tonight anyway. Clair work him out and he’s tired.

“But remember you’ll start bleeding again should I

poke you so let's do it tomorrow" he pulls her close and closes his eyes.

It's been a full week without sex and yobanathi is frustrated.

After some time she closes her eyes.

*

In the morning

By half nine Gatsha is gone to the dry cleaners and Yobanathi is halfway through with her laundry.

She searches Gatsha jean that he was wearing day before and throws it in the machine with the rest.

"Heeeeeeee God don't let this be a test please" her heart breaks when she sees the condom wrap.

It's opened meaning it was used.

She steadies her breathing tryin to calm down.

anger and dis appointment consumes her that all

she's seeing is red.

After everything we've been through he cheats, how many times have I forgave him for this. I thought it was all over but clearly not. It's true when they say a leopard never changes its spots she thinks to herself as she pulls all of Gatsha's clothes from the wardrobe.

Her heart breaks, how can the one man who void never to hurt her ever again to this to her.

"Ma babNqaba is here" Asa's little voice jolts her from her devastating trance.

She quickly wipe away her tears and turn to look at him.

"Tell him I'll be right down" she goes to the bathroom the minute Asa is out of her sight.

She washes her face with cold water before walking downstairs.

"Hello"

"Hello, Gatsha said I should bring these" he has a bag full of Asa's clothes.

“Thanks. I’m busy with laundry. Tea” her voice breaks.

She’s trying to hold back her tears.

“No thanks. I’m in a rush”

“Alright then. See you weekend” she tried to muster a smile

“Is everything okay, it looks like you’ve been crying”

“I’m fine, it’s just a bad reaction to the new face cream I’m using. Do you mind taking Asa with you. His disturbing me and I need to finish”

Doubtfully Nqaba nods

“Why is not at day care by the way”

“Gatsha thinks his chicken box will come back so he said he should stay at home for a few days”

Asa goes and get his back and e lineage with his uncle.

Tears Yobanathi has been trying to hold come back.

Angrily, she goes back to the bedroom and takes all his t-shirts and put ths in the bath and opens a tap

of cold water.

She already has bleach in her hands so she pours all of it in the bath.

She grabs the scissor and cuts all his pants in half. She furiously cuts up his jackets as well.

Once satisfied with her handy work, she takes his sneaker collection and pees on them.

By the time she's done she's tired and breathless.

His phone rings unanswered the first time but he answers when she calls again.

“Baby I’m in the middle of something, can’t talk right now” he says breathless

“Are you with her” she’s crying

“Baby, Yobanathi what’s wrong my love”

“I said are you with her and don’t dare lie to me. I found the condom wrap, Gatsha why are you doing this to me. Why are you cheating on me”

“I don’t know what you talking about. I’m not cheating on you, I’ll never do that. I’m coming right

now”

He says and hang up.

At the hotel.

“Fuck my wife needs me. I have to go” he gets off of her and dress up.

“I’ll call” she says disappointed.

She was in the middle of an orgasm when Yobanathi called

“No I’ll call you” he grabs his car keys, phone and run out.

He find his wife sitting on the couch staring at a blank tv.

Her tears have dried up but her heart doesn’t feel any better.

“What’s going, Yobanathi What’s happening”

She stands up and throws the condom wrap on his

face.

“That’s what’s wrong”

“What’s this”

“I should be asking you that, I found it in your pants. Gatscha are you cheating on me”

“No, I’m not cheating on you. Why were you snooping in pants anyway”

“Don’t ask me that bullshit—“

“Hey you might be angry but never speaks to me like that. I said I’m not cheating on you I don’t know how that got in my pants but I’m not cheating on you”

She lets out laughs

“Fuck” he shouts running his hands on his face.

“Get out of my house—“ he gives her a blank stare

“I said get out of my house. If you’re not going to admit then get out, I don’t need you the kids don’t need a cheat of a father so get out” she shouts

“And go where. Yobanathi im not cheating on

you,how many times must I tell you that. I'm not cheating on you”

She leaves him there and goes to Bheki's room and take his cricket bat.

“If you're not going to leave voluntarily then I'll make you” she swings the bat at him but he ducks before it could find his face.

“I said leave” she runs after him up the stairs and into their bedroom.

Gatsha sees his clothes in half on the floor.

“You tore my clothes”

“I'm yet to do worse” she swings the bat again at him. This time it manages to hit him hard on his back.

He runs downstairs and gets into his car.

I'll let her cool down first he thinks to himself as he drives out.

QHAMU

Amanda hasn't stopped calling, I blocked her number but she managed to get another SIM card. I don't know how can she do all that in prison.

Mngqobi is out, thank goodness. I can't deal with his overbearing self.

We only found out yesterday that I'm carrying twins and he's already picking up diets for me. I swear one of us will be dead by the time these babies are born.

Can you believe we had vanilla sex this morning because he doesn't want to take any risks.

It's going to be a long eight months to come.

I answer this time.

"Amanda can you stop calling me"

"Qhamu I'm sorry. Can I just have five minutes of your time and I swear after this you'll never hear

from me again”

Sighs

“Speak”

“Thank you. Uhm I want to start by saying I’m sorry for everything I did to you. I swear if I could turn back time I would and this time I’d do things differently.

Qhamukile you were so good to me and I took advantage of your good heart and I’m sorry—“

“Why Amanda, why did you do all those things to me. You poisoned me, got me arrested why”

“Jealousy, I was jealous of you and everything you had. I don’t want to make my past an excuse but it contributed as well. I’m healing now, being here is actually good for me. I managed to find myself, I’m not there yet but I’ve made some progress. I don’t have much airtime. I just called to tell you how sorry I am, I’m not expecting you to forgive me but it would mean a lot if you do—“ I breathe in and out.

“I’m sorry Amanda but I can’t forgive you, not after

everything”

Why am I lying to myself.

I forgave her the minute I saw her in that court room three years ago.

“I understand. I’m very sorry. It’s Bandile’s birthday in two months can you please kiss him for me and tell him how much I love him”

I won’t lie I’m touched.

I can’t imagine myself away from my family. Sqalo and these two unborn babies are my life.

“I don’t know if I’ll ever see him again so I’m asking you to please remind him how much I miss and love him. When he’s older to understand tell him why i has to leave him. How is Nqaba”

“He’s good”

“I’m glad. He deserves to be happy I really hope he finds someone whose going to love him more than I did, please tell him not to hold any grudges, tell him to love just as hard. It’s my fault that we fell apart and not his. He didn’t do anything wrong”

“Look Amanda I have to go now”

If I let her continue speaking I’ll find myself on my way to Durban just to see her.

“Before you go. I have letters I need to send Nqaba and Bandile , can I use your address. I’m afraid Nqaba will tore them apart before he even reads them”

“Sure” I say and hand up.

I’m surprised I haven’t cried.

[06/20, 18:46] Lynne: 96

Unedited.

ZANELE

Gcina and I have been really good friends these past few years, and no, we not together nor are we friends with benefits. We just simply good friends.

Interesting things happened, my father finally acknowledged Lucas that he's gay. Lucas stays in Cape Town with his husband.

Their wedding was fabulous, my father didn't allow Mark to pay Lobola but at least he attended the wedding.

Gcina's call comes through

"Hello"

"Hey where are you"

"I'm at about to get into bed why"

"I'm at the corner" best believe it I'm still afraid of my father even after Gcina and I almost got married.

I wear a gown over my nightdress and sneak out.

As always he's parked at the corner down my street.

"Hey" I greet him when i get in

to the front passenger seat

"Hey" he gives me a feeble smile

I'll wait for him to tell me what's eating him up.

“I’m sorry for coming in so late. I couldn’t sleep”

“Oh it’s okay, why what’s wrong” he runs his hands on his face and sighs

“Can I ask”

“Sure”

“Do you think there’ll ever be a chance for us to be together like a real couple” I’ve been enjoying our friendship that a being in a relationship with him has never crossed my mind.

Hear me, Gcina will always be a big part of my life but somehow I feel like him and I are better off as friends.

“Maybe in future, why”

“I meet someone” I feel my heart drop.

Why does it hurt me that he’s meet someone

“Oh” that’s all I can say right now.

Words have dried out in my mouth

“We not dating or anything but I like her and I want to pursue a real relationship with her but I also don’t want to be unfair to you. I want to know if there’s any chance for us cause I don’t want to lead any of you on”

I guess it would be unfair of me to tell him not to pursue anything with her if I’m only seeing him as a friend.

“Oh” words fail me again.

“Yes, Ntombi It’s been over three years now. We need a way forward, it’s either we together or not. I’m sure you also need to know where we are, be honest and tell me how you feel”

Sighs

“You’re right three years it’s a long time. Gcina I won’t tell you who to see and who not to, if you lover her then go for it. Don’t let me stop you”

“Ntombi I love you—“

“And I love you too Gcina but let’s admit it we are not in love with each other. Maybe we are still

holding on the past. I think it's time we let go and move on" why does it hurt so much to say those words.

"Are you sure"

I nod "I'm sure"

He nods too and remains silence

"Well I hope this is not the end of our friendship"

"Not anytime soon. Who is she" I know I'm hurting myself more but I need to know

"Her name is Velile, she's a church girl, beautiful too. She just recently moved to Mvubukazi, she's just different from everyone I've been with. I feel like myself with I'm with her—" his face lights up when he speaks about her. Maybe he's in love with her.

"—you should hear her voice, it's so sweet and—I'm sorry. I got carried away"

I won't like and say I'm happy for him, why should I lie to myself. I don't want to be with him and yet I don't want him to be with anyone else

"And what about you. Isn't there anyone whom

you're talking to”

“Yeh there is but it's nothing serious” I lie.

My relationship status is as dead as dodo

No candidates, nothing.

“You don't have to lie to me. Next time just remember that no one knows you like I do”

Awkward!

I laugh out nervously and so does he.

We end up laughing genuinely as how weird we are being towards each other.

“I want to meet her”

“You will but for now let's me work my magic in winning her heart cause she's already won mine without even trying”

I smile at him.

“I'm happy when you're happy”

“And I'm truly happy—look Ntombi o want to apologize for all the horrible things I did to you. You

didn't have to but you forgave me and continued being a good friend to me. I'm really sorry"

"It's water under the bridge" I don't want to be reminded of the past because that's all that it is, the past.

"It's all forgiven and forgotten, let's live in the present and forget about the past—"

"Again I'm sorry"

"It's fine. Let me love and leave you before he even notices that I'm not in my room"

He laughs sweetly at that. He came up with the name.

He gives me a hug and whispers that he loves me before I jump off the car.

That's just what Gina and I will ever be, friends.

I love you more I send him a text and get into bed.

Tears I've been holding fall.

The following day.

Yobanathi managed to get her kids to school regardless of the turmoil she currently finds herself in.

Many thoughts runs in her mind. Was she not a good wife to him?

Was she not enough?

Is she the reason he cheated?

All these questions and no one to answer her.

This has been their first serious fight since they got married, she slept without her husband last night, she missed him but she doesn't want to let him play him like that.

The first time Gatsha cheated she forgave him because they were not that serious into the relation but now they are married with kids and he still cheats.

She can't down anything so she settles for an apple.

Anger still engulfing her.

She goes to the bathroom and drains the water out, put all his wet messed up clothes in a black plastic and throws in it a bin.

She does that to all his other clothes.

By the time she's done she's breathless and panting.

She grabs her phone and go to WhatsApp

Gatsha posted a pic from last with Nqaba and Bandile chilling on the council having fun.

This picture was taken after she got Asa From Nqaba's house.

Oh so he's having fun while I'm miserable, I'll show him who I'm made of she think to herself as she log onto the tracker app.

It's shows that he's at the mall.

She quickly dresses up and drives to library mall.

She first goes to the paint shot and get a black spray paint and rushes to where Gatsha is parked.

CHEATER!

CHEATER!

CHEATER!

CHEATER!

She spray paints that one word all over Gatsha's red car, everyone is looking at her like she's crazy and that's just what she is, a crazy, hurt, deranged wife.

Once satisfied with her work, she drives back home.

“So she messed up everything” Nqaba says laughing

“I mean everything, my jeans, my suits, my fucken collection of sneakers these clothes I'm wearing are all I have”

Nqaba accompanied Gatsha to buy a few clothes since well Yobanathi ruined everything.

“I have to go see her I'm sore she's calmer now”

“I thought you were a pro, how did she find out”

“She found a condom wrapper inside my jeans. I don’t know how did I not throw it away. Now my marriage is hanging by a thread because of that silly mistake”

“Was the blood pussy worth all this drama”

“Nope but it was one hell of a pussy”

He pays and they leave.

He drops his plastic on the floor in shock when he sees his car

Ngaba is on his knees laughing his ass out.

“No no no no no Fuck that girl is crazy, why would she do this to my car. FUCK!” She keeps shouting the word fucking walking around his car.

“You’re lucky she didn’t burst the tire”

“Oh no, I know my wife she planned all this. She wants me to drive around with it like this. Fuck that woman”

The spectators are laughing at him some girls high five each other taking videos.

Boss move, hai that girl is leadership one woman shouts happily.

Gatsha angrily picks up his plastic and gets in to his car.

“Hai no after today I’m convinced Yobanathi is crazy. How the hell did you end up with her”

Gatsha has always like the quiet obedient girls who believes that men do cheat and it’s no train-smash

Till this day he still wonders how he ended up with a wife as crazy as Yobanathi

“The crazy once are hard to resist. I love Yobanathi but she’s starting to piss me off now”

He drives to his house.

Nqaba remains outside while he goes inside

“Yobanathi!” He shouts searching each room.

Yobanathi drives in her yard and parks on her parking post. She smiles when she sees her handy work.

She greets Nqaba who is smoking.

Asa is following behind her.

“Mama why does baba’s car look like that”

“I don’t know Baby ask him”

Gatsha is frantically pacing in the lounge waiting for her

“What the hell did you do to my car” he shouts

“Gatsha you’re scaring Asa” he calms down when he sees his son hiding behind his mother and right that moments he regrets everything.

He sighs and takes Asa kissing him all over his face.

“I’m sorry. Baba is just angry”

“Are you angry because someone wrote on your car”

“Yes someone has been a bad girl so she wrote on daddies car”

Asa nods and wiggles him myself out of his father’s hold.

“Mama what’s a cheacher “

“Why, why do you ask” yobanathi is unpacking groceries

“Cause a very bad girl wrote it on my fathers car”

Gatsha is leaning on the kitchen counter watching at his son and his wife.

He could loose all this and for what?

For a two minute pleasure.

“It’s your dad’s car ask him”

“A cheater is a very bad man who hurts the people he loves” Gatsha answers.

“Yobanathi I didn’t cheat on you. I don’t know how that wrapper got into my wallet I swear” she scoffs and continues with what she’s doing.

Gatsha goes upstairs into his sons room and pack a few close for them and take them to Nqaba.

“Please get Bheki from school. I don’t want them to witness any of this. I have to speak to Yobanathi without them being here”

“I should’ve came with my car, now I have to drive

your colorful car” Nqaba takes puts the bags in the boot and buckle Asa in his seat.

It’s time to get Bandile from day care either way so Asa won’t be bored.

Gatsha goes back to the house to find Yobanathi crying.

He comforts her with a hug which she needs

“I didn’t cheat my love believe me. I didn’t. I’m thinking maybe the condom wrap into my pockets when I went to throw Nqaba trash”

“How stupid do you think I am. It would help next time for you to think before you start uttering lies. Gatsha am I not enough for you. Why do this huh I thought we were happy”

“Baby we are happy. I didn’t do anything, I didn’t cheat on you my love” she nods and stand up.

“I’m hungry, should I make you something to eat” he says going to the kitchen

“Yes sure”

She makes him yesterday left overs and crushes

sleeping pills inside.

She's not done with Gatscha, not before he admits.

She puts some sleeping pills in his juice and give him.

She's eating fruit salad.

“You said you hungry, why you eating a fruit salad. That's not food”

“I'm fine. Eat your food” Gatscha looks at her questionably.

“Are sure there's no poison in here”

“Mxm. I get mad I'm crazy I make you food I'm trying to poison you. Gatscha what do you want from me” she says pretending to cry.

“I'm trying to be a good wife to you but you cheat on me, is it because I'm not pretty enough, don't I take care of you enough”

“Okay don't cry I'm eating” he eats his plate and drink his juice.

Twenty minutes later he's passed out on the couch.

He's too heavy for Yobanathi to drag him upstairs so she drags him to the room downstairs where he lays him on the bed and strips him naked.

She runs to her car and get the razor she bought specifically for this.

I'll make you admit I'm telling you.

She cuts him lightly under his feet and rubs hot pepper on the cuts.

"He says I'm crazy, I'll show him crazy" she sits on the chair watching as he sleeps waiting for him to wake up.

[06/20, 18:46] Lynne: 97

Unedited.

"What does she have on me, What does she do that is so dayum good that would make you give up all the love all the trust and the stuff that you built with me does she know my name, Did you ever tell her that she was taking and breaking the bond that we

strengthened through blood sweat and tears over the years?"

—Another relationship by Syleena Johnson.

The song is on repeat as Yobanathi cries.

Her anger gone and replaced with pain that she's been avoiding to feel. Her heart feels empty, she's doing the only thing that she can which is to cry.

It's been almost five hours since Gatsha slept and I'm as much as she hates him right now she can't help worry.

He hurt her but doesn't mean she wants him dead. He's still the father of his kids after all.

She stands from the floor and goes to his side and starts shaking him.

After a few more shakes Gatsha wakes up groaning.

"Oh I'm glad you're fine" she was starting to panic.

The first he feel is his pounding headache followed

by the excruciating pain from his feet.

“What did you do to me”

He runs his hands on his naked body.

His whole body hurts from being dragged across the house.

“Yobanathi what the hell did you do to me” He attempts to stand on his feet and that only when he sees the blood

“Yobanathi what the hell!”

“Gatscha look what you made me do, this is all your fault. You make me do crazy things. Whose wife” she’s not shouting but crying.

Her voice is breaking

“You turning me into a crazy person. Why Gatscha why”

It breaks his heart seeing his wife break apart like this and knowing it’s all because of him.

He pulls her close and lets her cry on his chest

“Just tell me the truth”

“And what good will that do, I messed up I know”

“Who is she”

“Some girl I don’t even know”

“Is she pretty”

“Baby don’t do this please, I feel bad enough that I hurt you”

“What’s her name”

“Yobanathi come on. Stop hurting yourself like this”

She continues to cry holding on to him. How does she let go of a man who broke her but still need solace in him.

“I hope she was worth it. I’m sorry about your car—I’ll get the first aid kit for your cuts”

She washes his cuts and bandage both his feet.

“You can sleep here for tonight but I want you gone first thing tomorrow morning” she leaves him still naked on the bed and goes to her bedroom.

She packs all his toiletries and the rest of his socks and other clothes she didn’t ruin and pack them in

one bag.

As painful as it is Gatsha forces to stand on his feet and walk upstairs.

He glance the bag close to the door once and goes further into the bedroom.

Yobanathi is silently crying under the covers.

”yobamathi I'm sorry. I don't know what to say or do. Please stop crying”

He gets under the covers and his her.

”for how long have you been cheating”

”I meet her yesterday at Qhamu’s restaurant. We had sex and that was it. It didn't mean anything”

”if it didn't mean anything then why do it”

”my stupidity I guess, I've had a fantasy of having sex with a white woman and she was available.

Look baby—it did mean anything. It was a once off thing I swear it won't happen again. I won't lose you over a meaningless shag. You and the boys are my everything and i was stupid enough to risk it all. I'm sorry okay”

She lift her head and look at him.

This is the man she feel in love years ago, her friend warned her about his ways but she still went for him.

Everyone close to her was against this relationship but she fought to be with him because she love him.

She leans in and kisses him.

The kiss is long and sultry.

“Make love to me” she says breaking the kiss

“No baby I can’t. You’re hurting and I’m not going to allow you to use sex as an escape”

“Gatsha it was so easy for you to have sex with her but you don’t want to with me”

“We both know that’s no it”

“Please Gatsha make love to me” she takes off her t-shirt and help him out of his.

He is just powerless, he knows she will wake up tomorrow and regret this but he doesn’t know how to stop it either.

She helps him out of his pants and lays on her back. Gatsha gets on top and kisses her. She slightly opens her legs and he's in.

She sucks in air when her husband's penis separates her folds and fills her.

"I'm sorry my love. Please forgive me"

He starts moving slowly apologizing with each thrust.

She's holding on to him crying silently as emotions envelop her.

"I love you and only you baby I'm sorry"

She has blocked Gatsha's voice refusing to believe he's sorry.

Deep down she wants to forgive him and be a happy family but she knows he'll never change and maybe it time to let go.

He lift her leg over his shoulder and pounder deeper Yobanathi is moaning in his ear as he thrust.

Getter closer and closer he lifts her other leg and

gets deeper and deeper.

Yobanathi cries even harder when she orgasm and he follows after he.

“I’m sorry my love” he gets off of her and gets a towel and wipes the both of the before cuddling.

Soon Yobanathi sleeps.

After taking painkillers Gats ha finally sleeps too.

First thing she does in the morning when she wakes up is bath and wake him up.

“Awo Baby, why you up so early come back to bed” he still doesn’t believe his wife forgave him so easily.

“No, you need to leave. I’m done with you. The only communication we will have is regarding the boys nothing else. We will discuss visitation, they are your kids and I won’t keep them away from you. You’re welcome here anytime to spend time with them but tell me advance to o can give you guys space. I packed everything that belongs to you, seeing that I ruined most your clothes there wasn’t

much to pack I'm sorry about that too.

Her hands are folded on her chest.

"I'll call Nqaba yo come pick you up"

She walks downstairs and make self breakfast.

Gatsha shows up limping.

"Baby last night, I thought—"

"You thought wrong Gatsha just because I opened my legs for you then it means I forgave you. I was using you, I was horny and you were here but now it's time for you to leave"

"I can see you're still mad, I'll give you space. I'll use the guest bedroom in the meantime but I'm not moving out. What will we say to the boys. No I'm not leaving"

"No Gatsha, you don't get to make the rules. I'm not the one that went and slept with some blond bimbo you did, your ruined us. I don't care what you'll tell the boys but you and I ain't living on the same roof. You're leaving if not then I'm moving"

"Fine I'll go stay at home for a few days but this is

crazy. I slept wit her once—“

“So I guess that makes it okay”

“I didn’t say that. All that I’m saying is—“

“Gatsha I don’t care about that. You can go fuck her more than this once. You and I done. Please lock up and leave my keys with bab’Nkosi.”

She walks out as he’s about to say something.

•

It’s been three weeks since Gatsha moved out, the house feels lonely without him there’s no one to tell his jokes and make everyone laugh.

Yobanathi hasn’t been feeling well lately.

Bheki gives her a glass of water and she winces her mouth.

“Should I call baba” he asks worried.

He has never seen his mom worried before.

“No I’ll be fine. Did you give Asa his Cheerios”

“He’s eating right now”

“Call your father to come pick you guys up okay” he does what he’s told.

Gatsha doesn’t even waste anytime in driving to his house.

The boys are watching tv when he walks in.

As always Asa jumps on him but bheki is a big boy now so they exchange their secret handshake.

“Where is your mom”

“Upstairs, shes vomiting yuk.” Asa even frowns his face.

He puts Asa down and rushes upstairs.

Yobanathi is already back in bed covering herself with her blankets.

“Hey baby—“ she rolls her eyes

“Stop calling me baby. Why are you up here. The kids are downstairs”

“Asa mentioned you’re sick, what’s wrong”

“You know how he is, he likes exaggerating everything. I’m fine”

He puts his hand on her forehead feeling her temperature

“You’re burning up. I’m taking you to the doctor”

“No I’m I’ll be fine besides I can take myself to the doctor”

He ignores her and goes to the wardrobe and pulls out a dress for her.

It’s the beginning of winter so it’s a little chilly.

He pulls out a jackets as well.

“Have you had a bath”

“No”

Without hesitation he goes to the bathroom and fill the bath.

“What are you doing” she asks

“Taking off your clothes Unless if you want to bath

fully clothed besides it's nothing I haven't seen before”

He strip her naked and baths her.

She's feels better than she did when she's all done and dressed up.

The boys are happy to be with both their parents.

The receptionist welcomes them when they get to the GP and after explaining her symptoms the doctor takes her blood and gives her something to stop the vomiting.

They all go to Mac Donald and have breakfast as family like they used to.

AMANDA

“You've been behaving very well so I'll submit an appeal, if we can't get you sentenced reduced the

least I can do it get you out on parole”

I’m happy to hear that but I don’t want to get my hopes up just Incase the application gets denied.

“What are the chances that it will be approved” Pule smiles at me before answering

“I’ve done this before and that case was more serious than this. Don’t get into any trouble and all will be well”

“How long are we looking at here”

“Two to three months. I’m here to help you Amanda, I failed you when I represented you I was still new in this which is no excuse but I’m here to fix that. You don’t deserve to be here, we all make mistakes in life and I think you’ve leant yours. Continue taking with your support groups and everything will be alright”

I smile feebly

“Don’t put the application as yet. I don’t have anywhere else to go. I’m better off in here than in the streets”

Mambetty takes my hands into hers

“Nonsense. Mi casa su casa. You’re welcome to stay with me until you get on your feet. Who knows you might even put your degree in use”

I doubt there’s someone out there whose willing to hire an ex con but I smile at her instead.

Mambetty sees good in everyone.

“Let’s me leave you ladies and don’t worry Amanda everything will be alright”

“Pule can you please give these to Qhamu for me” I give him the two letters I’ve written for Nqaba and Bandile.

“Qhamu the one you poisoned” I’m so embarrassed by that and I get chills each time someone says that.

I still can’t believe I went to such lengths to get rid of her and for what?

“Yes. She’s expecting them”

He nods and exist.

“Everything is going to be fine. You might’ve lost all

your blood family but I'm here now and I'm your family”

Mambetty treats me like a mother I never had.

-

Three more inserts and we are done.

[06/20, 18:46] Lynne: 98

Unedited

QHAMU

A months later.

The renovations are finally complete now I can open my restaurant.

It's been a stressful few months but it was all worth it.

"Where are you" a text from my event coordinator comes through as I finish the finishing touches of my make up.

Can't you believe I'm late for my own restaurant grand opening, bab'Mkhize would be so disappointed.

'On my way' I reply back.

I've been telling her that for about an hour now.

My hair looks very elegant, Lucas, my hairstylist braided two beautiful braids at the front which meet at the back where there is a large bun.

What would I do without him.

I quickly strap my block heel, take my clutch and leave the bedroom.

Mnqobi is impatiently waiting in the car.

"You look beautiful" I smile and straighten my dress.

I'm wearing a sheer bateu sheath dress, thank God

my baby bump is not showing or else my outfit would be ruined.

Mnqobi is holding my hand as he drives.

We arrive just after 30min.

Everyone else is already here I'm guessing this is where I make my grand entrance

I roll my eyes at Clair when she comes to me panicking.

“Thank goodness you're here. I was starting to panic. Everyone else is already inside, we are about to start”

She did a job job in making sure that this place it is what it is, the place is elegant and classy. I like that she included African antiques in her decorations, it gives this place a sense of home away from home.

I follow behind her inside where everyone is already gathered around I stand over the red ribbon with Clair next to me.

Hiring her came with its benefits, she invited influential people, I'm talking magazine editors,

prestigious photographers, KZN mayors, bloggers, the list is endless and because Mngqobi and my brothers are now business men, they invited their people as well.

I see success.

Clair taps a spoon on the glass to get everyone's attention.

“Thank you all for being here to celebrate this special day with us. I'm now going to let the woman who made all this possible speak for her self” she steps away and stand from a distance.

Now all eyes on me.

I clear my throat and look at the crowd, it's a big crowd. My eyes find Mngqobi's in the mist of everyone's eyes and he winks at me.

Tension and nerves weigh off just by seeing his face.

“Good evening everyone, I'd like to personally welcome you all to Urban Que's Today we celebrate the grand opening of the restaurant. I'm so thankful

to so many of you, who have been with me every step of the way to ensure that this day would finally come. Owning a restaurant that caters African food has always been a dream but today it has finally come to pass and I have each and everyone of you standing here to thank. Let's have fun and enjoy. Once again Thank you all for coming”

Everyone claps their hands as Clair assembles all my family and friends next to me. Gatsha and Misuzulu holding the stretched ribbon, myself and the rest are posing for a picture behind the ribbon.

Clair mentioned that I should make sure the scissors are open, to make it appear the ribbon is about to be cut when pictures are taken. I let the photographer take more pictures before cutting the ribbon.

I hope the influencers got as many pics as they could.

Mnqobi gives me a pec before speaking

“On behalf of Qhamukile, my beautiful wife I'd would like to thank each of you for taking time out

of your busy schedule today. Thank You”

“And don’t forget all the profits from tonight will be donated to starfish greathearts foundation. This is a charitable organization that helps orphaned and abandoned children by building and strengthening families for them to live in and grow with love, security and respect. Let’s all work together to bring life, positive change, hope and opportunity to orphaned and vulnerable children in South Africa. Once again I thank you all for coming” I add.

Now that’s out of the way, we can all party and have fun.

All the brothers are here except for Gcina whose baby sitting all the kids with Velile.

I’m sad his relationship with Zanele didn’t work out, part of me wanted them to work out but I guess some things are just not meant to be.

This new relationship with Velile looks promising plus she looks like a sweet person so maybe it might just work out. Her sweet, shy, reserved and down to earth nature might just be what Gcina

needs to balance out his impulsive, crude and presumptuous personality.

Everyone is having fun except for Yobanathi, she is seating alone looking like all the weight of world has fallen on her shoulders.

She's not even drinking which is no unlike her.

Mnqobi is not here to monitor what I eat so I put a few spicy chicken enchiladas on my plate and go to Yobanathi but I bump into Nqaba first.

“Bhuti, I see you having fun”

“Yes. Everything looks good, so you're officially a business owner”

“Yes” I pat my shoulders.

This is the one thing I'm proud of, I didn't allow Mnqobi nor my brothers to help. Yes, financially they helped, no let me rephrase I got a loan from them which i intended to pay back.

This is my baby and mine alone, I don't need them claiming any rights to this restaurant.

“I'm so proud of you” he gives me a warm bear hug.

I stuff one enchilada in my mouth when he lets me go, they are so tasty and Mngqobi wants me to only eat healthy food.

The word healthy doesn't exist to a pregnant woman.

“Thank you. I've been meaning to talk to you” I open my bag and give take out the two letters I received from Amanda's lawyer.

Ive had them for about three weeks now and I've been guarding them with my life. I can't risk Mngqobi seeing them.

Hey phela it would be world war two all over again.

I hand him the letters.

I know it's not the right time but when an opportunity rises you need to act besides I'm doing this now because I know he won't be able to act all crazy in front of every one.

“I'm sorry but they are from Amanda—“ his face changes instantly

He pops his knuckles and throws the letter on top of

the table next to us.

“Wait—I stop him from leaving my sight.

“I understand you’re still angry but Bhuti you can’t pretend like she never existed, she was your wife and not only that but she was Bandile’s mother as well—I’m not here to tell you to forgive her, you can even throw away this letters that’s addressed to you but please, give this one to Bandile when he’s old enough to understand. Amanda had issues and I can only pray she’s getting the help she needs in prison. I’m not going to ask you to go see her but please accept these letters”

This time he takes them and put them inside his suit pockets.

“How is she—I know you’ve been speaking to her”

Should I lie? Do we call it a lie when we protects the once we love?

“Please don’t tell Mngqobi I’ve been taking to her but to answer you, she’s fine. She made such a progress”

He shakes his head and kiss my cheek

“You are so forgiving. After everything she has done, you still talk to her. I don’t know how you do it and sometimes I wish I could be so forgiving as you but when I think about all the horrible things she did I can’t. Amanda ruined our lives and for that I can’t forgive her”

“I understand and I’m not asking for either of you to forgive her. I just feel like everyone deserves a second chance in life”

“Second chance my ass”

I can’t help laugh

“So any new girlfriends, potential wife nyana”

“Hey yeka Indaba zabantu” he kisses my forehead and walk away.

I doubt he’ll ever get married again, Nqaba is my brother and I know him like the back of my hand.

Yobanathi!

She’s no longer sitting where she was, I glance around and see her waking outside.

I follow behind her.

“Sis Qhamu, congratulations. Thank to you I’m wearing a suit tonight” that Sma.

Will I ever get to Yobanathi.

“And you look very handsome” he reminds me of young Mngobi.

He blushes and walk away.

Lol.. I can believe how much he has grown.

“Is this her” I hear Yobanathi shouting from around the corner.

I rush there.

By the look of things Gats ha was standing with Clair

“Is this the whore you cheated on me with” she shouts again.

I forgot how crazy Yobanathi is and what does she mean he cheated.

“Yobanathi calm down, you’re attracting attention. Let’s go home” he begs.

“I said is this her”

He doesn't say anything but hangs his head low.

I'm still trying to phantom what's going on here when Yobanathi lands a hot backslap at Clair face.

She's horrified, I'm sure she has never seen anyone get ghetto on her white behind.

I grab Yobanathi's hand before she can do anymore damage.

“I'm sorry baby” so it's true he cheated.

I want to slap him so hard across his face.

Men who can't keep their dick in their pants infuriates me.

“We are done Gatscha you here me, we are done”

She runs inside going to the ladies room. I'm disgusted by my brother right now so I follow her.

She's crying.

There are two ladies staring at her which I ask politely to excuse us.

I join her and sit flat on my ass and comfort her until she's calm.

“Qhamu your brother cheats on me with a white girl, imagine a white girl and to make matters worse I'm pregnant with his child”

Her tears come flooding again.

She's pregnant!

“The one time I use sex to hurt him I end up pregnant”

Yoh!

Sis Nandi walks in just as I try to formulate a sentence in my head.

“Hey what's going on”

Yobanathi narrates the whole story of how she found a condom wrapper in his pockets and to make matters worse he denied it.

Why deny cause he was caught.

We all on the floor crying along with her.

“Looks like we are all pregnant at once huh” I say.

They both look at me with their eyes popped out.

“Yes, I’m pregnant. Twins”

We are all laughing by the time we stand up from the floor.

“So what now”

Yobanathi shrugs her shoulders

“I don’t know, it hurts so bad but I still love him. I don’t know what to do”

“Don’t rush in to doing anything. I’m sure he realizes his mistakes and I’m sure he will rectify them. I love you so much SisNathi and I love you even more when you’re with him. I won’t tell you what to do but please consider forgiving him. Not for the kids but for you. I know how much my brother loves you”

“What would you do if this was you and Mngqobi is the one that cheated”

Eish!

Why is she doing this to me.

I’d probably castrate him.

I know I'm about to be a hypocrite right now but this is my brother we talking about. I only want wants best for him.

“I don't know—I'm tempted to say divorce and leave his ass but I'd be lying to myself. I love Mngobi, if he's showing remorse and wants to work on us I'd give it a try. I know to forgive is not easy but I'd try because I don't see myself without him”

That's the truth.

She nods.

“Yobanathi do what you feel it's best but I advice you cool down first, don't make any hasty decisions. This is no longer about you alone but there's now three kids involved. Don't stay in an unhappy marriage for their sake because it will only damage them and also if you're willing to forgive him do so wholeheartedly. I won't tell you what to do but just think about it okay”

She nods “has Misuzulu ever cheated on you”

“Not that I know off but you'll never know with these men” I love how Sis Nandi is making yobanathi feel

at ease

“Well ladies, what do you say we get out of here”

My ass is numb and cold from these tiles so I don't even contemplate at Sis Nandi suggestion.

Our make is ruined from the crying we did and thank god sis Nandi came with her bag.

After powdering and fixing our mascaras we exits the bathroom.

All the Buthelezi brood are outside waiting, Mnqobi too.

Gatsha look like he got a fist from Mis uzulu because I know he's the only one capable of punching him.

“We've been worried” Mis uzulu says

“We are fine but I think I should leave now”

Yobanathi

“I'm coming with you” Gatsha's noise is attracting attention.

“No you're not” she shots back

“Yobanathi you’re my wife and I’m coming with you finish and klaar”

This was suppose to be a drama free event but I guess not, not when the Buthelezi’s are involved.

We listen to them argue back and forth until Misuzulu interjects

“Yobanathi you’re in no state to drive, let Gatscha drive you home”

He knows very well how stubborn Gatscha is, he won’t stop until he gets his way and Yobanathi knows this too.

She sighs and walk out.

Yoh hai now my event is ruined.

Gatscha comes out running after his wife, he opens the front passenger door for her but she ignore him and opens the back door instead and bangs the

door.

Gatsha sighs and closes the door and goes to the drivers seat.

“I’m sorry Yobanathi, how many times should I apologize. I cheated yes but I’m sorry”

“No you’re not sorry, you’re sorry that you got caught and what the hell where you doing with her in the dark corners, wanted to sneak in kisses you don’t have to hide dear husband, you and I are through”

He looks at her through the rear view mirror

“You and I are not done. You’re my wife and it will remain that way for as long as I live”

She ignores him and takes out her phone from her purse and starts chatting to her friends.

She’s blushing and smiling with her phone making Gatsha angry and jealous.

He increase the speed cracking his knuckles angrily.

He storms into the house when they arrive and start pacing around the house.

“Who the hell were you chatting to, are you fucking cheating on me” he shouts when Yobanathi gets into the house

“Why not, that’s what we do in this house right”

“Yobanathi I swear I’m going to kill you”

She ignores his rants and climbs up the stairs to her bedroom.

Once in the shower she let the tears fall. She quickly recovers and gets out.

Gatsha is pacing in her bedroom when she gets out of the shower

“I know you’re not cheating you trying to make me angry, I won’t let you get to me. I want us to work on our marriage”

“But that’s just the thing Gatsha, I don’t want to work on us. This is all your fault, i was nothing but a good wife taking care of you and your children but still that wasn’t enough, so please get out of my house. Your whore is waiting. Bring back my kids tomorrow”

She gets in bed and switch off her lamp leaving him standing there.

He sighs and goes to the bathroom.

When he's done peeing he washes his hands but a box of a pregnancy test in the bin catches his eye and he damages through the bin and finds three positive pregnancy test.

He pick up all three and rushes to the bedroom and switch on the light.

“What is this”

She rises her head from the pillow and see him holding the pregnancy test mid-air.

Her hearts starts beating fast, right this moment she regrets letting him in the house.

When the doctor told her she's pregnant she didn't believe it so she bought pregnancy test instead to confirm.

“How filthy are you. Why are you going through my bin”

“Yobanathi I said what's this”

“As you can see, those are pregnancy test”

“All three of them have two lines does this mean you’re pregnant”

“Yes Gatsha I’m pregnant”

A smile finds his lips.

He air punches happily and rushes to her.

“Baby, see this is fate, the universe wants us to be together. I’m sorry I cheated my love. I promise I’ll never do it again. This baby might just be what we need, I promise I’ll be a good husband and a father to all our three kids” he’s happy he can’t even hide it but his smiles fades immediately when Yobanathi says

“I’m pregnant yes but who said this is your child”

With the said she cover her head with the duvet and close her eyes.

Gatsha starts hyperventilating, trying to breathe.

“I swear I’m going to kill you”

He roughly pulls the covers and hold her up.

“Whose the father” he shakes her scaring her.

“I said who is the fucken father” he shouts as her tears fall uncontrollably

“Gatsha you’re hurting me” he is roughly holding her arms shaking her

“I said who is the fucken father”

She doesn’t answer but continue crying

Angrily he lets her go and pick up the pregnancy test and throws them at her.

“I’m no woman beater but I swear I’ll kill you with my bare hands”

He storms out.

Yobanathi lets out a breathe when she hears his car driving away.

She wakes up in the middle of the night when she feels a sharp pain in her abdomen.

“Ahhhhhh” she screams when the pain intensifies

She manages to stand up and go to the bathroom. Her pajama pants are drenched with blood.

“No no no no no not my baby” she runs to the bedroom and call Mondli to come take her to the hospital.

She quickly change her pants and put on a fresh pair of panties with a pad.

She’s silently praying that her baby is fine.

When Mondli arrives they rush to the hospital

Mondli calls Gatsha as the doctor checks on Yobanathi.

After series of test and check the doctor delivers sad news to Yobanathi.

“I’m sorry Mrs Buthelezi but you had mis carriage”

She knew what was happening when she saw all the blood but she somehow hoped that her baby survives.

Gatsha arrives as the doctor explains that most women do mis carry firing their first trimester.

“Yobanathi are you okay baby” he asks sitting close to her but she pushes him away instead.

“Get out, I don’t want to see you ever again. This is all your fault, I lost my child because of you. You killed our baby. Get out!”

She’s crying as she pushes him away.

He tries to hug her but she slaps him instead

“You killed our baby Gats ha, get out”

He only leaves when the doctor calls security for him.

[06/20, 18:46] Lynne: 99

Unedited

Four months later.

AMANDA

It feels good to be finally out, a breather of fresh air is what I needed. Prison was hard but I got to heal

and turn my life around.

Pule is waiting for me like he said he would. I'm carrying my belongings, ID document and my wedding ring and thank to Pule I'm wearing a new jean and t-shirt.

He opens the front passenger door to his car and I get in.

He such a perfect gentleman.

"you look beautiful"

I blush

When was the last time I heard those words?

"thank you"

He bought a few sweet treats

"why are you being so nice" I find myself asking

He glances at me once and back at the road.

"why wouldn't I be nice"

"after everything I did, I mean you out of all people know why I did bit you're still nice to me so I want to

know”

”Amanda you may not believe this but there are people who deserve second chances in life and one of those people is you. Yes you did a bad thing but you're remorseful and you paid your dues but now it's time for you to stop beating yourself about it. Your ex husband hates you, his brothers hate you but the world doesn't revolve around them. The world is such a big place and I'm sure you can exist without bumping into them”

He wouldn't be speaking like this if it were him in Buthelezi's brothers shoes.

I decide to keep my mouth shut until we get to mamBetty's place in Mlazi.

I've never stayed in the location before. Mvubukazi is a rural area and I was fine with that but this is another story.

There's people everywhere in the streets some still wearing night gowns and mind your it's midday.

He parks just outside the gate and we both go in.

There are about four teenage girls seating outside, three holding babies.

"hello"

"hello" the respond

"is mambetty here"

The one that's breast seeing shakes her head.

"shes not here. Are you the lady who was reaseled from jail today"

I nod because wow.

"she said you'd arrive, you can go in and wait for her"

Like follows behind.

We find two more teenage girl watching tv.

It's a small house, two bedroom house with a very small kitchen and tv room.

There's a boy who looks about ten cooking something on the above while a girl about three years is watching him.

"hello" I greet the two girl

"hello are you also coming to stay with us"

"yes"

"yoh uzolalaphi (where are you going to sleep) there's already too many of us here" she says with so much attitude.

I have no where to go so I suck it up and sit on the worn couches.

After an hour or so mambetty comes back.

"ah Amanda you're already here"

She has a few bags of groceries with her.

The other girl takes the bags and packs everything away.

"i see you've already meet all.my children. Lindo and Muzi went to play soccer but they will be back soon"

With a quick calculation in the back of my head I count fourteen people living in this house and i'll be mouth number fifteen.

”you all leave here” Pule ask a little horrified.

I'm petrified but what other choice do I have.

“Yes, I don't have kids of my own and all these kids you see here were either abandoned or their parents threw them out because of teenage pregnancy so I took them in”

“Wow” Pule whispers.

“That so generous of you and thank you for allowing me into your home”

Pule is in the rush.

“Please don't tell me you're going to stay here with all these people” that's the first thing he says when we are outside

“What choice do I have”

“Come stay with me. I have a two bedroom apartment in Pietermaritzburg. You can live with me while sorting yourself out”

Is he crazy?

“No Pule I can't, you've already done so much for

me I can't accept that"

"Come one Amanda. You heard that girl, you won't even have a place to sleep. Fifteen people in a two room house, Come on and did you see their attitude, those girls are going to make your life miserable"

"No Pule I can't"

"Okay fine but my door is always open, call me"

He gives me a hug then drive away.

The first week is horrible, I sleep on the floor in the kitchen because there's no enough space. There's just too many people living here, I thought I'd adjust but it gets worse when mambetty brings another child

I swallow my pride and call Pule.

"Hey sweet cheeks"

I blush as if he can see me

"Hey how are you" I admit I kinda miss him.

"I'm good, how are you surviving the tornado house"

"Barely, does your offer still stands"

“Of cause, you can move in any day”

“Can any day be next week”

He laughs out loud

“Of cause any day can even be today”

“Thank you so much.”

We both hang up.

I first have to talk to mambetty, I don't want to seem ungrateful after she has done for me.

I clean the house and cook supper for everyone.

That's what I've been doing for the whole week, all these girls are slobs and mambetty is hardly here to witness everything that's happening.

She comes back later in the evening.

“MamB” she looks at me

“I'd like you thank you very much for everything you've done for me. You've been there for me when no one was and for that I'll forever be grateful—“

“Let me guess you're leaving”

“Only if you don’t mind”

”where are you going”

”Pietermaritzburg, Pule said I can move on with him plus he's going to help me get a job so I think it would be best if I move out”

She nods looking at me questionably

”are you falling for Pule”

What?

No!!!

Okay maybe.

”no ma, he's just helping me out that's all”

”i hope so. You've come a long way, I don't want you falling apart again. Pule is a handsome young man who helped you in life but I'm afraid you'll start seeing him as your saviour and you'll confused that wit love. One other thing when you get to Maritzburg stay away from Nqaba, I don't want to find you in westville prison next time when I go there”

”it won't happen ma” she took my departure news better than I had hoped.

Two more days and I take a taxi to Pule’s flat. He's not home when I arrive, there's is a guy singing along to beyonce while cooking.

The door is open but the butler gate is locked.

He comes and opens after knocking

”hey you must be Amanda”

I'm not homophobic or anything but I don't really like gays.

”yes uhm Pule—“

“Yes he told me all about you. Go put you stuff in that other room and I'll show you around”

We spend the rest of the day walking around the neighborhood.

Nhlanhla says he wants me to familiarize myself with the area.

After six Pule comes back home looking tired.

Nhlahla: oh hey baby, you're back.

Baby?

Wait is Pule gay?

He smiles and walks further into the room and peck his lips.

“Hey Amanda I see you already meet my boyfriend nhlanhla” he gives a hug.

All those feeling I thought I have for him vanish same time.

“We spend the whole day together. I don’t live here but I visit very frequently, so it’s a good think you’ll be here to help him out just don’t cook for him”

He says the last part laughing.

I take it Pule told him about that poison saga.

I spend the rest of the two weeks chilling, I love that I have my own room and space but I won’t lie, I get bored everyday.

Pule walks in with his coat over his shoulders.

He throws his briefcase on the couch and loosen

his tie.

“Long day”

“Day from Hell. I’ve been up and doing doing court appearance. I can’t wait for this case to end”

He doesn’t discuss the nature of his cases with me not that I mind.

“I cooked” for the first time in two weeks I decided to cook.

“You didn’t put poison right” it’s still a sore in my heart that him and Nhlanhla joke about that every chance they get.

“You have to eat to find out” I say laughing.

I dish out for is and we eat in front of the tv.

“I almost forgot, I got you a job at Macdonald, it’s a cleaning job I know it’s not much but it’s something”

“It’s a job, at least now I’ll no longer eat your food for free” I feel bad enough that I live here rent free.

“You don’t have to take it if you don’t want to”

He’ll no I’m taking the job.

A week later I'm at McDonald's shaving away.

I'm cleaning the toilets when I hear what sounds like Nqaba's voice and a little boys voice.

It's been so long, when I left Bandile could only say a few words but now he's having a full on conversation with his father.

I quickly lock myself in the toilet cubicle before they could see.

"Baba when are we going to see Sqalo, remember we have to play soccer" hearing his voice breaks my heart

"Yes finish so we can leave"

"Baba let's eat here pretty please"

I hear him sigh

"Okay but we have to be quick I have to go to work" he took time off just so he can take his son out for lunch.

I smile at the thought, I've always known he'd be a good father.

I breath out when I hear them walk out.

I'm cleaning the rest of the toilets when Phume, my manager walks in

“Amanda a little boy spilled his juice on the floor can you go wipe it, they are seating close to the window”

The word please doesn't exist in her vocabulary.

I take the mop and walk out.

My heart beat right out of my chest when I see that Phume was talking about Bandile.

I stand still looking at him.

He looks so much like Nqaba.

They are talking with Nqaba occasionally pressing his phone. I get an opportunity to go and wipe the floor when he greets some guy standing from the distance.

I change dramatically, my skin is no longer smooth and radiant as it was, I lost so much weight that I doubt he'd recognize me but I quickly mop the spilled juice

“Hey why do you look so much like my mom” I freeze at Bandile’s words.

My child knows me.

I try my best to hold my tears in.

“I don’t know nana where is your mom” he shrug nonchalantly

“I don’t know my daddy says he went faaaaar away but he always shows me her pictures and you look like her”

At least Nqaba doesn’t hate me that much, I seriously thought he told him in dead.

“I’m sorry she had to go away but I know she misses and love you very much” that’s the only few words I manage to say and leave.

I’d hate for Nqaba to see me.

ZANELE

I haven't seen Gcina in a very long time it doesn't help that he didn't come to Qhamu's restaurant opening.

He's been very distant lately and I won't lie it hurts me.

I send him a text asking where he is.

Im now teaching grade sevens.

They are not as entertaining as my grade one but I'm enjoy it.

My love life.

Sighs

I have to sigh because there's not any love interest. I haven't had sex in years that I longer even bother shaving.

I tried masturbation but it doesn't give me the orgasm I need or maybe it's because I can't do it right but damn I think it's time I start dating.

Nomcebo suggested dating sites but I'm skeptical

about it, not when woman are being killed left right and center.

I download it anyway and fill in the wrong info.

I'm not about to indulge all my personal information to all of those stranger.

Name: Cynthia

Age: 24

I'm 29 by the way but everyone tell me how young I look

Body type: bootylicious

There some truth to that.

Bio: mmh lebme think

'I was just about to call you, I'm on my way to you' a text from Gcina comes through.

I get excited instantly that I log off from badoo.

He walks in with his biker jacket, black jean and a pair of black Ankle-high buffed leather Chelsea boots.

He looks so handsome, I feel my clit throb inside my panty.

What is he doing to me?

Maybe I'm just horny.

He gives a hug and sits on top of my best.

"so how have you been"

"ive been good but you've become a stranger"

"eish yah hey. I told Velile about our past and it didn't sit well with her that we are still friends after all that we went through or I kept a distance"

Why does that hurt?

"oh come on, she doesn't have to feel insecure about anything. And the Gcina I know doesn't let a woman tell her who he can and can't be friends with"

"On the contrary, she's not insecure, in fact, she wants to meet you and you are right, no one tells me who can and can't be friends with but I just thought it would be unfair on her if I keep coming to you so I decide to step back a bit seeing you and I used to fu—I mean see to be friends with benefits"

“You’re seem serious with her”

He smiles.

He smile that reaches his eyes.

He doesn’t smile like this when talking with me, he fallen deeply in love with this Velile girl.

“I’m very serious”

He pulls out a black small box and hand it to me.

It’s a ring.

“A ring” I won’t lie I’m shocked.

“Yes I want to ask her to marry me. What do you think of the ring. It’s not too much is it” my heart literally breaks.

It’s a big ass engagement ring I’ve ever seen

“Wow how much was this”

“She’s worth every penny. Do you think she’ll like it”

“Yes sure, it’s beautiful”

Gcina is supposed to be mine not this Velile I don’t even know.

“I need your help, I need a romantic setup but you know me mos, I know nothing about that so I’m here to ask for your help”

He’s not serious.

“Sure”

“Are you free tonight, I want to introduce you guys.”

“Don’t you think your rushing into things, you two meet a couple of months ago and now you already want to marry her”

“Nope I knew i wanted to marry her the first time I meet her. Imagine she’s still a virgin, where can you find a twenty four year old virgin these days”

“You marrying her because she’s a virgin” he broke my virginity two week into the ‘relationship’ but it’s been months and he hasn’t done anything to her.

“Amongst other things. She’s the one for me I feel it so what do you say about tonight”

“I won’t be able to, it’s a Thursday and I promised aunty I’d go to church with her for women prayer” I lie.

He frowns

“Since when, phela the last time I checked you hate church”

It’s true but that would be better than smiling at his perfect little girlfriend all night.

“Yes but I promised aunty”

“Cool then we can do it tomorrow, are you leaving I can drop you off”

I politely decline his offer.

I don’t want to hear more about his girlfriend, maybe remaining as friends with him was a bad idea after all.

Once he’s gone I log back on badoo and update my bio

“Rose are red and have thorns, violets are blue but so is the sky. I’m not looking for love because it doesn’t exist”

Updated!

I take my bag and take a taxi home.

[06/20, 18:47] Lynne: 100

Unedited

Yobanathi is watching tv when she hears a knock, at first she ignores hoping the person will go away but the knock persist, annoyed she stand up and roughly opens the door

“Ma” she’s surprised to see her mother standing at her doorway carrying a paper bag.

“You could’ve told me you’re coming”

Her mother gives her a hug and gets in the house

“Awo my child why didn’t you tell me you have issues in your marriage”

Right there she knows Gatscha told the family about

their marital problems.

“I didn’t want to trouble you with my problems”

“Nonsense, I’m your mother. You should be able to talk to me about anything. Go make us rooibos tea, I baked last night”

She pulls out a Tupperware tin full of freshly baked scones and hands it to her.

“You should’ve have ma”

“I have nothing better to do since I’m on pension so baking is the only thing that keeps me busy. Don’t put any sugar in my tea, the nurse at the clinic said my diabetes was high the last so I don’t want to fight with her on my next appointment”

She goes to the kitchen and makes the tea and put a few scones on a plate and put everything on a tray

and walks back to the lounge.

The scorns taste as good as they smell she thinks to herself as she takes a bite and a sips from her tea.

“Your husband asked for a meeting between the two families and your father is ready to hear him out but I’m here to hear your side before that meeting happens, what’s going on my baby”

She sighs

“Ma a lot has happened, Gats ha cheated and when I confronted him he lied, he looked me straight in the eyes and lied. After all that I find him hiding in dark corners with his mistress at Qhamu’s opening. yaz ma what irritates me most is the fact that his mistress was there so kahle kahle she was laughing behind my back all night. Gats ha humiliated me. He betrayed me and left me heart broken. He doesn’t respect me period”

Her mother comforts her as she shed tears

“And because of his infidelity I had a miscarriage and for that I’ll never forgive him. He killed my child”

Her mother lets her cry out her pain before speaking

“Mmmm I’m sorry my child, I wish you had told me about all this but that doesn’t matter now, I’m here for you. He says he moved out”

“Yes ma I asked him to leave, how do I continue living in the same house with someone who broke my heart”

“Kodwa my baby I once told you that when you and your husband have problems you sit down and talk not—“

“Ma so are you saying I should live under the same

room with him kante whose side are you on, Gats ha cheated on me I had every right to kick him out after he treated me the way he did”

Her mother’s eyes widen thinking of the worst

“Did he hit you”

“No he didn’t but he almost did after I—ma Gats ha brings out the worst in me and for that I can’t live with him”

“What did you say to him”

“I said and did horrible things out of anger and it’s his fault”

A mother knows her kids and she knows how crazy her daughter is.

“Yobanathi you can’t say that, he’s not responsible for your actions but you are-“

“Hao ma, why are you taking his side. I didn’t ask for him to cheat on me”

“I never said I’m taking his side—“

“Then why does it like you are”

“Yobanathi two wrongs don’t make it right. I don’t want to know what you did or said but you should never let anger over cloud your judgement. I’m your mother Yobanathi and my job is to be honest with you and guide you to the right path. I don’t condone what he did but you acting out and throwing him out of the house will not solve anything. You are a married woman now and married people solve things by talking. I won’t tell you to leave to stay that’s your choice to make but him being away will not solve anything. Tell me how long has this been going on”

“five months”

“Five months Yobanathi and you didn’t come talk to us”

“I didn’t want to bother you with my problems. ma, This is his fault, I’m not to be blamed for anything”

“I don’t blame you this is not your fault, how are the kids taking all this. Bheki is old enough to understand what’s going on”

“we coparenting, during the week they are here and on weekend he has them”

“It’s been five months my baby, what happens now”

“I don’t know ma all that i know is I want him to be the husband he was before, how do I take him back when he’s going to do the same thing. Gats ha doesn’t lean ma, the last time I—this is not the first time and each time i forgave him hai I’m tired now”

“Yobanathi my baby, Rebuilding trust with your partner can prove to be a tremendously difficult and long process. No matter if you choose to work on the relationship or make the decision to break up, you need to make a decision so that you can move forward and remember, forgiveness is a central element of the healing process”

“Hai ma I can't forgive him, he cheated and I'm suppose to forgive so easily”

“I'm not saying take him back, forgiving does not necessarily mean that you approve of what happened. It simply means that you forgive for the sake of your own well-being so that you can finally move on with your life”

“Move on ma, how do I move on from all of this. You know sometimes I blame myself, maybe if I was prettier or more petite like that white girl then maybe he wo—“

“Nonsense, that’s pure nonsense. You are beautiful in you own skin and you certainly don’t owe him a slender figure. This was not you fault, you didn’t cheat he did and as much as I know how much you hate him and don’t want to see him right now, you have to. Five months is a very long time, you have to speak and find a way forward”

“Ma I don’t know what to do, please advice me to stay like how your parents did you. I’m so confused”

The mother: chuckling “I’m afraid I’m not like my mother, phela ngifundile mina and besides that times have changed, we are no longer living in the olden days where a woman was forced to stay in an unhappy marriages because they feared to be labeled a divorcee, or afraid of what people will say. If you choose to stay there’s lots to consider, unlike our times Kukhona izifo manje (there are diseases now) and what if you get sick, think about your children. I’m not here to tell you what to do but I’m here as a concerned mother. The meeting will be on Saturday at home and I hope by then you would’ve

made a decision, I know it won't be easy but you have to find a way forward. I'm here to support you"

Meanwhile at ZANELE place.

I've been ignoring Gcina like a plague. How can he expect me to meet his girlfriend after all we've been through, I know I said I'm not in love with him but I lied to myself. I love him so much and listening to him talk about Velile so fondly makes me angry and jealous.

He's supposed to be mine, I fixed him for me not some girl i don't even know.

I ignore his call when I see his name flashing on my screen. I'm not ready to get heart broken all over again.

He calls again.

I huff and put a pillow over my mouth to muffle my scream.

Why can't I just be honest to him.

I gather some strength and answer when he calls again

“Hey”

“Hey”

“Where are you, I've been calling hey”

“Eish sorry I've been busy, you know cleaning and stuff”

“Oh I went out and I wanted you to come with us”

Us?

Not this girl again.

“Sorry hey”

“Don't worry, I'm at the corner please come”

Eish

“I'm not at home right now”

“Don’t lie, you just said you’ve been busy cleaning. Come out” he says laughing.

Sighs.

I take my phone and wear my shoes.

He’s standing outside the car, leaning on the bonnet.

I give him faint smile, hug and get into the car.

It’s a chilly day.

”why are you ignoring me”

Chuckling Nervously “I’m not ignoring you, I’ve been busy tha—“ his ringing phone interrupts me.

He smiles as he answers

“My love” my love?

Not once did he call me that throughout our relationship

“Oh I didn’t know you were coming..... oh I’m on my way then.... okay then bye”

“Let guess you have to go” I say

“I’m sorry, she didn’t tell me she’s coming. why don’t we drive together so that you can see her”

“No Gcina, I don’t want to meet her” I lash out.

His ballooning eyes tells me he is as shocked as I am.

Ah let me just tell him

“Gcina I lied to myself thinking I don’t love you but I do I’m sorry I waited a whole three years to tell you that but I do”

“Wait what—you told me you not in love with me”

“Well I lied to the both of us”

“Oh—“ is that all he’s going to say

“I love you Gcina I can’t help it”

“But Ntombi you told me you not in love with me and only now that I’ve moved on you tell me this”

“I’m sorry I took so long to tell you”

He leans back on his seat and sighs

“Eish Ntombi why you telling me this now. I asked you if I can date and you said yes and now that I’ve fallen deep in love with Velile you tell me this. I love her and don’t get me wrong I love you too, as a friend. I’m with Velile now and I love her. I don’t want to hurt her the way I hurt you and I’m sorry for that but I’m afraid we can’t be together. I know I wanted to marry you but I guess I was scared to lose you back then I don’t want to lose the friendship we have but I’m in love with her”

“After everything you have done to me you tell me you love her, Gcina do you have any idea how that makes me feel. I hate you. God I can’t believe I’m in love with you. I gave you my virginity and now that you found another virgin you just going to dump me like a used condom wow Gcina”

“I’m sorry Zee, if I would, I could take all back all the

horrible things I did to you. I certainly don't deserve your forgive but I hope you do, not for me but for yourself too. I'm sorry Zee. I hope this won't end our friendship”

“Heee you can't be serious. I just poured my heart out to you, told you I love you but you basically told me you love Velile more than you could love me but you still want to be friends. How can one person be so selfish, Hell NO Gcina I'm done with you. I can't be friends with someone I'm in love with, it won't be fair on me so I'm done. I want you delete my numbers, from today going forward you're Qhamu's brother and I'm your sister friend and thats all that we are to each other. I can't keep hurting myself like this I don't want us to be friends, I can't be friends with you. No-“

How can he say all those things to me after I've done nothing but loves him. I mended him when he fell apart and now Velile is just going to endure my

hard, I fixed Gcina. I was there for him throughout but now he's dropping me like a hot potato for someone else and you know what hurts most, is that he loves her.

I hear it from his voice, I see it in his eyes and in as much as it hurt me I have to accept but I'd never be friends with him knowing I'm only hurting myself in the process.

“Zee—“

“No Gcina. I'm done. I'm done being your door mat. I didn't want to lose you for so long that I held on but in the process I lost me but that's enough now. I'm choosing myself, my sanity and peace and if not being friends with will give me just that then so be it. I don't want to feel this hate brewing in me anymore. I don't want to hurt like this, Gcina you hurt me so much and maybe I allowed it. I gave you more chances than you deserves but I'm done now”

“Ntombi I waited three years for you—“

“And I’ve been waiting since I was sixteen that’s a whole thirteen years of waiting for you to love me back”

I can’t hold my tears so they come down falling like a waterfall.

I push his hands away when he tries to hold me
“don’t touch me, please don’t touch me”

I don’t want him to comfort me just Incase I confuse that with love.

I open the door and get out.

“Ntombi”

He shouts running after me.

I don’t even look back. I run home and lock myself in my room and cry my pain away.

“I don’t want to lose you but it would also be selfish of me to ask you to be friends with me after everything. I’m sorry I hurt you. I know you don’t believe it but I am truly sorry. I’ve realized that I wanted to marry you—not because you were pregnant but because of guilt, I felt guilty for hurting that I confused that with love but now I know what real love feels like and what we had it’s not it. You’re right we can’t be friends anymore I hurt you too much to for you to continue being friends with me. I wish I could take all the pain I caused you away. I’m sorry Zee, please tell me what to do to prove how sorry I am”

“Be with me, leave her” I text back.

Typing.... five minutes later no text.

I cry more.

What’s taking him so long.

“We can be happy together. I know you love her but we can work of us loving each other and you’ll forget about her”

Typing...

after a few seconds my heart is left torn into pieces when I read his reply.

“I’m sorry Zee...”

I let’s out a loud wail.

I sacrificed the little dignity I had for nothing, now not only am I heart broken but I’m pathetic too.

I wanted him to tell me that he’ll leave her in a heart beat

“I’m not the man for you”

Mxm i block and delete his number.

How does one even begin to unlove someone, what do I do with all these feeling I have inside of me.

Gcina took so much from me and just when I thought he's finally mine he falls deeply in love with someone else.

This is it.

This is the end for us, he doesn't love me, never have and never will. Now I just have to pick up the pieces and learn to live my life without him.

I need to move on.

I cry till I've got no tears left in me.

AMANDA

“Are you still stalking her”

He peeps on my phone holding a glass of wine.

“I'm not stalking I'm just looking”

“Well I Call it stalking, you’ve been going through her profile for the whole week come on”

Nhlanhla won’t understand and I’m not stalking Qhamu. She’s the only one who post on Facebook and she posted a couple of pic last week of all the children. It looks like they were all at her house and they seem to be having fun.

The only reason I’m gawking at her pics like this is because Bandile is here and that’s the one reason only.

I log off and put my phone away.

Nhlanhla already think I’m a psycho so I shouldn’t give him more reason to prove that theory.

“Happy”

“Yes why don’t you just ask Pule to help you get him back, or at least get a few visit”

“Why are you talking about me” Pule says coming from his bedroom.

I still can’t believe he is gay.

“Ah Baby can you not help her get her kid back hey

phela she's been stalking that pregnant woman
Facebook for the whole week”

Pule gives me a disapproving look but says nothing
“I'm sure she wasn't stalking her”

That's the end of the conversation.

We spend the rest of the night chilling and drinking
wine.

A few days later Pule comes back from work finding
me cooking.

He leans on the fridge and watch me

”i thought you were done with Qhamu, Amanda I
don't want you to go back to jail”

Sighs

”i swear I'm not stalking her. I was just looking at
Bandile that's all. I know what's at stake and believe
me I can't go back there. I found a support group in
town which helps me deal with things I swear the
only reason I was on Qhamu's Facebook is because
of Bandile”

"i hear you. You could take this to family court, they might allow you get to have supervised visitations"

"no I don't want to take Nqaba to court, not only will he win but he'll make sure I end up in prison again."

"then what, are you going to stalk Qhamu forever because you hope that she post Bandile"

"no I'm done I swear, I'll deactivate my Facebook and Instagram accounts" I say already doing that.

This will resolve my temptation to view her profile.

I admit she looks beautiful, pregnancy looks good on her.

She's so big though that you'd swear she's carrying twins or something.

She has always been a family person, I knew she'd have more babies and my guess is she's not done.

Her and Mngobi just love a big family.

"mm I'm sorry babes but this is for the best" I agree with him.

I spend the next two days mopping around, feeling

sorry for myself but when Saturday comes I decide to spoil Pule and Nhlanhla with a lunch date.

Nhlanhla's words cut deep at times but I admire his honesty.

We chilling at cascades lifestyle center I can't risk bumping into anyone from either the Buthelezi and the Ngcobo family at liberty mall. Nhlanhla complained that liberty is closer but hey what can I do.

I order chicken and chips, Pule stake, and Nhlanhla some expensive salad that's going to leave me with nothing. I earn peanuts as it is... Lol

Who would have thought, one minute I'm rich the next I'm cleaning toilets for a living?

I didn't even bother following up on Chikoze's inheritance, it's blood money after all. I can survive without it.

I choke on my drink when my eyes meet with Nqaba's.

He is with a woman.

"Amanda" I see his lips move he is as shocked to see me. He walks slowly coming to our table.

Pule and Nhlanhla just staring at me as I cough.

"Amanda" I hear him clearly now that he's standing right next to me

"Nqaba"

I remember how he said he never wants to see me ever again the last time I saw him.

I feel my chest tightens.

I dreamt about this moment all those years I spend in prison but never have I imagined it being like this.

"You're out" I don't know if he's surprised or angry that in no longer in prison.

"I'm sorry" I abruptly stand and run for the hills.

God can he please not send me back to prison.

I'm standing next to Pule's car crying my eyes out when Nhlanhla comes to me.

"and that" I hate that he's never concerned about anything, he takes things so lightly that it's

annoying at times

”that's my ex-husband”

”and so why did you run away like that”

He doesn't understand, does he?

” I hurt him and he said he never wants to see me again. I'm afraid he'll send me back to prison”

He rolls his eyes and opens the car and we both get in.

”he's in there talking to Pule but babe KZN is a big place I'm sure you can both exist without having to see each other and besides you served your sentence why would he send you back there”

I won't bother explaining the magnitude of my actions.

I ruined Nqaba's life.

”and damn girl you know how to choose. He is hot as fire, how did you mess all that up. He looks like the type that knows how to make you come calling on all the God of this universe”

I ignore him deep in my thought, I'm trembling with fear.

I've just realized how much I love him but I know us getting back together is a wish that will never come true.

At Yobanathi's homestead

Her Uncles, father, mother and babThemba, Misuzulu from the Buthelezi family gather around the small lounge area to discuss the pending issues of their marriage.

Her father starts as the man of the house

“Son you asked for this meeting now here's your chance to tell us why we are all here”

Gatsha clears his throat, ashamed he looks down

“I had an affair”

None of them gasp, this was expected after all.

“And not only did I have an affair but I’m the reason my wife lost our child. I was angry—“

“Did you hit her”

The thought of Gatscha hitting a defenseless woman angers Misuzulu.

“Cha bafo (no brother) I could never hit a woman but my cheating ways caused her so much stress that she lost the child and for that I’m sorry my wife”

Yobanathi’ father: a man who admit to his faults is a true man but why call us here, you need to ask for forgiveness from your wife not us.

“That’s true baba, i moved out of the house five months ago and not only that but the last time I spoke to Yobanathi was when she was in the hospital. She hasn’t given me any chance to talk to her so asking for this meeting is not only needed but it’s my only option now.”

The father: so talk to her.

“Yobanathi I know I messed up and I’m sorry baby. If I could turn back time I would. I promise I’ll never cheat again I’m asking for is just one last chance to prove to you that I can be a good husband. It’s been five months and I miss you”

He stands up and sits next to her.

She wants to pull her hand away when he holds her but she doesn’t. She misses him as well, she cries as he continues

”I’m sorry my love. I promise I’ll never do it” his words sound genuine.

She’s been waiting to hear her husband say sorry in such a meaningful way the past five months.

Her heart feels heavy with pain and yet her heart still beats for her husband.

She sits quietly letting his words replay in her mind.

About fifty questions going through my mind, along with rage and humiliation.

She didn’t know that she can feel so much and at such intensity in ten seconds.

Before anything else, she needs to understand why did he do it.

”why, why did you do it”

”because I was stupid. I wasn't thinking”

”what were you doing with her at the opening”

” I wanted to tell her to leave me”

”how long did this affair go on for”

”can we discuss that when we are alone”

”no Gatscha you're the one that wanted to do this in front of the elders so tell them, how long did this affair go on for”

He doesn't even look her in her eyes when he finally admits

”it went for about a month after I moved out but I swear I don't love her. I ended it because I want us to work on our marriage. I love you baby”

She goes completely silent for about 10 long seconds processing what he just said, so she was home mending her broken heart and going through

a loss of a child alone while he was busy whoring around with his mistress.

"Gatsha was I not enough for you" she finally talks crying.

"no you're more than enough. I'm the stupid one, I'm the one that messed up not you my love. Please think about the boys they deserve to have both parents please I'm asking for the last chance"

Her father speaks when she doesn't

"yobanathi I don't condone what your husband did but he was a man enough to call us all here and admit his faults. I know it's not easy but I'm asking you to find it in your very to forgive him. There's no perfect marriage and its clear that he loves you. I'm not here to break up your home but we are all here to mend it"

She expected her father to say that

Her: baba Gatsha broke my heart and it won't be easy for me just to forgive him so easily but I'm willing to work on our marriage if he agrees to marriage counseling"

Gatsha: hai I'm not going to discuss my problems with a stranger.

Her: then you can forget about us.

him: fine then.

Once the elders finish saying the few once they all leave.

Gatsha drives with her to take his clothes and they all go home.

The kids are happy that their parents are finally living under the same room

“So does this mean we won't have to go to Mohulu's house”

“No mfana wam we are all going to stay here”

“Yeeeeeees” Asa is more excited.

She smiles at her family and dish out for them.

“I'm sorry” he says helping her dish out.

“And I'm sorry too” she loves him so much that she doesn't see herself without him.

And he also loves her just as much, he messed up but he's willing to put in the work to fix his marriage.

AMANDA

I've been in a depressive state since I saw Nqaba last week. I don't know why but I feel like the police will come knocking at my door any day to take me back to prison.

I try by all means to keep my mall movements very stringent, I don't want to bump into him by any chance.

I change my work uniform and rush to the taxis.

The taxi is almost full, thank god.

My phone rings, I don't know the number

"Hello" I answer anyway

“Hallo Amanda, it’s Nqaba” I feel my blood stop circulating, my heart stop pounding and I feel all air leave my lungs.

I literally feel like my whole world has come to a complete stop.

Breathe Mokgadi breathe I remind myself.

That’s the name I was given by my biological father.

“I got your number from your lawyer”

I’m still shock so words fail me.

“Hello are you there” I only jolt out of my trance when the lady behind me tap my my shoulder so I can pass the taxi fee to the next seat.

“Y..yes.. I..I’m he..re.. sorry”

“I hope you don’t mind I asked for your number”

“Uhm...it’s... okay”

“Okay. Listen Bandile is the reason why I’m calling”

“What’s wrong with him, is he fine” the mention of his name makes my heart melt but right now I’m a little panicked. I hope he’s not hurt.

“Yes, sure he’s fine. He’s been asking a lot about you. I don’t want to be a bitter parents that denies him his mother. I might hate you but you’re his mother and I’d like for you to see him”

Now everyone is looking at me like I’m crazy because I can’t help my tears.

“I was thinking that maybe we meet on Saturday so you can see him”

“Of cause. Thank you very much”

“I’m not doing this for you but him” he hangs up.

I spend the rest of the week neurotic and coming with possible scenarios that might happen.

One, he might hate me. Two, he might be so excited to see me, but no he doesn’t even remember me.

Nqaba might show him my pictures but that’s just it, pictures.

My palms are sweating and it doesn’t help that Pule and Nhlanhla are not here. They said they want to give me space.

Nqaba said he first want to see where I live before

he can bring his child here.

A knock comes through as I pace around.

I wipe my sweaty palms on my dress on open for him.

“Hi”

“Hi, please come in”

He inspect everything as he walks further into the flat.

“How do you afford all of this”

“Oh I stay with a friend, he’s the one that’s paying for everything”

“He” he asks with his eyebrow raised.

I know he’s not asking this because he is jealous

“Im not asking cause I’m jealous but because I don’t want my son near your boyfriends. I’m risking a lot as it is by allowing him to see you” I won’t lie that hurts and I told you he’s not jealous.

He no longer loves me, I see it in the way he looks at me and from the sound of his voice too.

“Umh no I stay here with Pule”

“Your lawyer”

“Yes”

“Mm better him than me—“

He declines when I offer him a sit.

“So Bandile.... He has been asking a lot about you so I’m here cause I want him to meet you but there’s going to be rules, you break one and I’ll break you. You’re only going to spend 30 min on Sundays with him. Not in my house and definitely not here, it will have to be a public place like a park or something. You’re not allowed to feed him anything or I swear I’ll kill you.”

“I’d never hurt my child”

“That’s a chance I’m not willing to take—if I’m not around to supervise your visit then one of my brothers will be there. I hope the rules are clear”

I nod countless times.

I don’t care about his stupid rules what matter is that he’s allowing me to see my baby even if it’s

only for 30 minutes.

“Amanda don’t make me regret this”

“I swear you won’t, I promise. And thank you very much Nqaba for this it means a lot to me”

“Amanda I don’t care about you, quite frankly it would’ve been better if you were dead, then I wouldn’t be here right now. Let’s get one thing clear i’m not thrilled to be here, I wish Bandile can just forget about you and move on like I have but we don’t always get what we want, right. I don’t hate you, I don’t feel anything in fact, I just don’t care anymore and that will never change but I love my son more and his happiness is my number one priority so I’ll suck up seeing your face once a week if I have to, just so he can be happy—He’s downstairs waiting with Mondli, I’m bringing him in but no tears, I don’t want my son to see your crocodile tears”

I don’t know what to say to that but my tears comes down falling when he walks down.

I thought he hates me and I think that better than

him feeling nothing at all. Hearing him say out loud how he doesn't care hurts so much more.

I quickly wipe my tears and smile when he walks back in holding Bandile's hand.

I don't want to risk my chances of seeing his again, I'll allow myself to cry when he leaves.

I don't know what to say or do so I remain clued to where I'm standing.

Bandile hides behind Nqaba's legs when he sees me.

"Bandile remember I told you that mommy came back"

I see part of his head move so I'm guess he is nodding

"Well this is mommy"

He peeps in between Nqaba legs and looks at me.

"Where was she" I hear his little voice.

"She was away but now she's back"

"Is she going to go away again"

“I don’t know son, why don’t you ask her” he shows half of his face and smiles faintly

“Are you going to leave again” I shake my head because I don’t trust my voice.

“Okay—“ he pulls Nqaba pants “Baba let’s go now babaMondli is waiting for me he promised to make me Cheerios”

I guess Nkosenye’s love for Cheerios rub off on him like it did Asa.

He hasn’t been here for five minutes and already he wants to leave.

I let the tears I’ve been holding fall, I can’t help it. I thought he’d run into me and hug me but he wants to leave.

“Why are you crying” worry in his little voice.

Nqaba faces changes immediately, he warned me. I quickly wipe them and smile.

“I’m not crying I have something in my eyes that’s all”

“We have to go. I’ll call you when he wants to see

you again”

“Thank you very much Nqaba and I’m sorry for everything”

He just nods once and pick up Bandile.

I can imagine everything going through his head right now but he won’t voice it out because Bandile is here.

I wave my hand at Bandile as Nqaba walks out.

Why doesn’t it hurt so much, He doesn’t even turn his head to look at me. I hate myself for everything I did, I’ll never be a mother that I have always envisioned to be for my son. 30 minutes a week is all I’ll get now.

I know there no hope between Nqaba and I, i felt it in his cold words not that I expected anything to happen.

Okay maybe part of me had hoped that he still loves me at least.

As much as I sad I won’t throw a pity party.

Out with the negative thoughts and In with the

positives. Close your eyes and go to a happy place. That's trick I leant when i was in pris on to help me with my depression.

Happy thought. Positive thoughts. There's always something to be happy about.

I open my eyes and smile.

I got to see my son again, it might've not been like how I imagined it to be but I saw him.

Baby steps, next time I'll get to touch him. I'm ecstatic about what the future holds.

The past matters not, what matters now is that I'm fixing my wrongs even if it takes me a life time, I will be the best version of me.

This is the beginning of a good and healthy life.

MNQOBI (to be continued)

[06/20, 18:48] Lynne: MNQOBI

Unedited

Three months later...

In love with the enemy. I've said that line to many times to count and each time I'm reminded how deep I fell in love with Qhamu. Had I stayed away then I wouldn't have known how it feels like to love and be loved wholeheartedly. Our families were enemies but now we are inseparable, we are a unity, we are one family and I couldn't have it any other way. I look at us all gathered around the hospital, this place has become home away from home. I don't even remember how many times have I sat in these steel benches. Once again we are here because of Qhamu, but this time not because someone tried to kill her, she's here to bring life into this world. She's giving birth to my two babies, I don't know their genders but I'm happy she had a healthy and uncomplicated pregnancy. After witnessing Sqalo's birth I promised myself never to

go through that trauma ever again, Qhamu said she understand so I'm in the waiting room with everyone else.

Wow!

It's been hell of a journey.

Fights... blood shed... death... pain... happiness... love... laughter... we've been through it all but we still standing tall.

All the pain and suffering was worth it.

It would've been better if life had a manual to tell us how to go through pain and how to mourn a loved one but that's just it, there's no manual. We learn as we live and I admit it was easy but we made it.

I smile and watch Makhosini clinging on to sis Lindi's hands, she keeps crying especially when she sees Makhosini holding a Lwazi, Mncedisi's son.

Maybe Makhosini not wanting a baby affects her more than she lets on.

Langa who is seating next to Mncedisi is in a

serious relationship, or so he says. He wants a child soon and by the look of things he wants to marry this one. He didn't say that in so many words but I'm hoping.

I shift my eyes and look at MaNgidi, my mother. she is old now, her head is full of grey hairs but that doesn't stop her from shouting at all of us. It's unfortunate MaTwala can't be here, she's sick, very sick MaNgidi got someone to look after her.

Sma walks in rushing, wet from the rain, it's been cloudy for the past two weeks without rain and the day Qhamu gives birth it rains cats and dogs.

"Is it boys" I'm secretly hoping for girls.

"We still waiting" I say standing up.

I think my nerves are starting to kick in now. I'm about to be a father for the third time but just like the past two births I'm nervous about being a good father to my kids.

I can't help it.

"It can't be boys again, we need at least one girl.

Nomfundo needs a play mate when she visits”
Misuzulu says.

He was hoping for a girl as well but he got a boy.
Nandi gave birth to Bayanda three months ago.
What a joyous day it was.

“Let’s make a bet 5grand each, winners takes all”
Zwelethu has always been crazy.

“Sure I put my 5grand on boys, I doubt we will ever
get girls in this family” Gatsha joins in on the
madness.

Yoh after his cheating I thought Yobanathi was
going to divorce him and you know during my
gossip with Qhamu, she mentioned the marriage
counseling wasn’t working because Gatsha would
sometimes show up late, or not show up at all for
their seasons. I know I too wouldn’t feel
comfortable talking about my problems with a
stranger but it looks like everything worked out.
They are seating next to each other happily.

They all agree on the bet, madness if you ask me.

Misuzulu, Zwelethu, Ngaba, and Gatsha bet on boys.

Makhosini, Mncedisi, Gcina, Mondli and Langa bet on a boy and a girl. I'm not participating on this craziness especially after we thought Sqalo was a girl but only to be born with a penis so no thank you and it looks like MaNgidi and the wives are not participating either.

Speaking of wives, heeeee can you believe Gcina is married, yes you heard me I said married. Qhamu told me, okay I'm not proud to say this but her and I gossip a lot, especially about our family anyway Gcina and Velile only dated for about six months before he asked her to marry him. She said yes, a month later he was paying dowry and now they are traditionally married.

Don't worry I'm still shocked myself.

"Bhuti can I borrow 5grand" I frown at him.

"Sma how are you going to pay me back, you just started your internship and let's not forget that you don't even earn 5grand a month"

"Please Bhuti you're not in the game right so please and I'll pay you when I win" I laugh out loud.

“I swear I want my money back when you loose”

“Thanks—“ he turns his eyes to look at everyone else

“I bet on girls.”

“Oho you’re going to lose. It’s boys I can feel it in my balls” I say.

“Hey wena What balls, just because you having sex doesn’t mean you can talk freely about your balls in front of your elders” I told you MaNgidi is still the same old MaNgidi.

“Sorry ma”

Sma chuckles “your instincts are lying to you Bhuti. I can feel it in my—“ he stops and look at Ma.

“—in my heart. It’s girls so I bet on girls”

all the brothers laugh, I don’t think Sma understands how ‘feeling it on my balls’ phrase work or maybe he said that to piss ma off.

They all shake on the bet.

Okay.. my babies are not even born yet and already

their uncles are making money out of them.

The doctor walks in just as the crazies shake their hands

“Mr Ngcobo she gave both to two beautiful girls, you can come in now”

Happiness erupts, everyone makes happy noise.

I smile and watch them all.

“Finally girls” I shout.

My hearts swelling with joy.

I see Sis Lindiwe walking out unnoticed and Makhosini follows her.

“I’ll take eft, cash and ewallets” I hear Sma says as I follow the doctor into the ward.

My calls are wrapped in pink blankets and Qhamu is staring at them.

“Girls huh”

She smiles with teary eyes

“Yes, finally”

I pick up the first one

“That one is the oldest”

“You know baby, the farm has been doing well because of draught, this whole month I’ve been praying and hoping for rain. Ayize. Her name is Ayize, meaning I hope it comes. And now it’s finally here—“

I kiss her small lips, hand her to Qhamu and pick up the second baby

My baby, this none has so much her like her mother.

No wonder she always had heartburn, lol MaNgidi said hair could be the cause. Did you seriously think I know these things.

Smiling “she’s going to be Liyana, Liyana Izulu. After a whole months of hoping it finally rains and with rains comes blessing my love, we are blessed abundantly and more babies are coming”

She scoffs

“I’m done. No more babies for me”

I kiss Liyana smile at her mother

“Wanna bet” I grew up from a big family so wanting one of my own is no crime.

“I’m not betting with you but no more kids please”

I smile at her.

Soon everyone walks into the ward.

Smaller happier, the boy just won himself forty thousand I too would be happy if I was him.

You now know the drill.

Everyone wants to hold them, they fighting about whose hogging them.

I step outside and find Misuzulu seating on the bench with head bowed

“Bhuti” I sit next to him.

“What’s wrong, I saw sis Lindi walking out crying. Is she alright”

“Yes she just got emotional she’ll be fine”

“Bhuti don’t you think it’s time you consider not having kids, I saw the look on her face she wants kids”

She shakes his head

“Come one Bhuti, just think about it. I know you want kids and much as she does besides relationships are about compromises”

“You don’t understand—“ he raises his head and looks at me

“Lindiwe can’t have kid”

“What—“

“Yes, she can’t fall pregnant. We tried for a very long time until we went to doctors, she has something called endometriosis”

With endometriosis, the tissue lining the uterus starts to grow in other places like behind the uterus, in the fallopian tubes, in the abdomen, in the pelvis or the ovaries. That causes irritation and scar tissue development. Some women with endometriosis have no symptoms. Others have painful intercourse or periods, heavy bleeding or unusual spotting and general pelvic pain. Endometriosis can make it difficult to get pregnant because the condition can cause blocked fallopian tubes, disrupt implantation,

cause inflammation in the pelvis and perhaps impact egg quality but there's treatment for this.

If you're wondering how I know all this is because I used to research a lot these past few months I didn't want to take any chances with the twins so I came across a page that explained why other woman have difficulties falling pregnant. I wouldn't have known this had I stopped with google like Qhamu said.

“There's treatment for endometriosis Bhuti. Surgically removing the scar tissue or opening the blocked fallopian tube may improve your chances of getting pregnant”

“Believe me we tried everything. I don't know how many pills has she taken, I even lost count of all the operations when went through. I've accepted I wish she could too”

“Is this why you told us that you didn't want to have kids”

“Yes, I didn't want you all to look at her and see a barren woman. I know for a fact Langa was going to

suggest I have kids with someone else but I can't do that to Lindiwe. I love her and the fact that she can't have kids doesn't change that I just wish she could stop feeling sorry for me. I have kids and I just got two more now and I'm happy with that"

I'd be laying if I said I knew how he's feeling right now.

I can't do anything to change her fertility situation but the least I can do is be there for both of them.

"This should stay between us"

I nod and stand up.

"Let's go see your girls, they look like us just don't say that in front of the Buthelezi's, you know how they are"

He stands up laughing too

"Yeh—when will they ever accept that we have strong genes. Sqalo looks like Langa but mention that and you'll hear Nqaba defends that he looks like him and happy birthday by the way"

We both laugh and go in the wards.

I stand on the door and look at how happy everyone is.

Zwelethu had a little practice with girl babies. Nomfundo visits but not as regularly as he wants but hey at least he sees her.

He now has a girlfriend, I won't say he's ready to marry her but I can be hopeful right.

As you've seen the Ngcobo men are afraid of commitments.

My name is Mngobiwesizwe Ngcobo and this has been my journey in life.

I cried, I felt pain, I hated but not only that but I laugh and I love and this is my not so perfect family.

QHAMUKILE

Three years later...

I used my hand to pop up my head, balancing my elbow on the pillow. For once I woke up first. I'm staring at his brows, I love how they curve on the corner of his eye and how full they are. I want to run my finger on the bridge of his nose or his luscious lips but I also don't want to wake him up. I know I've said this before but my husband is handsome people. He ages, no he matures like good wine.

He's not the young eighteen years Mngqobi I meet when I was just sixteen but he is an older version of himself now. Forty years old and still as handsome as he was back then, if not more. Yes you heard me. He is turning forty today.

He smiles still closing his eyes.

"Mrs Ngcobo, you do know staring is rude, right"

I kiss his lips.

"And you love it" he lazily opens his eyes and pecks my lips again.

"I sure do"

He pins me underneath him and stare at me.

“You’re so beautiful” he kisses me deeply.

I’m so used to his morning breathe and it doesn’t bother me at all.

He smells a hint of Camel double switch cigarette.

I open my mouth and let his tongue in.

He sucks, pulls and nibble on my lower lip. I run my hand on his rigid back and cup his butt cheeks. His buttocks are even much firmer now, please don’t mind me I’m just horny.

Him: (Grunts) “Baby, I want you”

Well I want you too dear husband. I’m already naked and not only naked but my slit is wet so I open my legs wider and let him direct his penis in its hole.

“Mmmmmmm” I moan when he enters.

He stills for a minute allowing my vulva walls to constrict him.

“Mmm I love you” he whispers softly in my ear before he starts moving.

As you know, ladies don't kiss and tell, I've already said too much as it is, just know I'm tired and swollen when he gets off of me.

"Happy birthday dear husband" I'm panting trying to catch my breath

"Well its a happy day indeed"

"For a forty year old man you sure still know how to lay down the pipe"

He pops his head and look at me.

"Are you saying I'm old"

Shaking my head laughing "no I meant you still make me cum"

He shakes his head and lay his head back on his pillow

"I'm going to show you whose old" I so badly want to roll my eyes.

We both remain silence catching our breathe until a faint knock comes trough the door.

I know it's Ayize, she's always the first one to wake

up.

“Baba please open for me” I smile at her her sweet little voice.

Mnqobi groans “I was just taking a breathe I still want round two send her away please”

Laughing “you know she won’t leave. Go take your daughter before she wakes up my sweet Liyana with her cries”

He groans and wear his shorts and open the door.

She raises her hand up when she sees Mnqobi smiling.

“Where is your sister”

“Sleeping, baba is it my party today”

“Yes baby, mommy baked a big cake for us”

I leave them there and step into the bathroom.

Mnqobi is back in bed when I walk out. I’m wearing a pink long summer dress. Ayize is sleeping on his chest, Liyana and Sqalo joined too.

“Mama we are going to wear the same dress right” I

smile at Liyana

“Yes baby” now you see why a grown woman like me has to wear a pink dress.

Sqalo is playing games on Mnqobi’s phone.

They all look so relaxed.

“Mapholoba ain’t you going to be late for the cemetery”

He brushes Sqalo’s head and kiss Liyana’s hair before turning his eyes on me.

“I was hoping we would all go as a family this year”

I stop what I’m doing and look at him

“Are you sure”

He nods “yes. I know I always go alone but this year I want my family to be there with me. Manqoba is part of me and so are you”

He always goes to Manqoba’s grave every morning alone on his birthday so I’m surprised he wants us to come today.

“Okay—Sqalo got ask sis Mavis to get you and your

sister ready”

Sqalo and Liyana goes out while I wake Ayize.

My daughters look beautiful wearing matching pink dresses and pink ballerina shoes. Liyana has bigger hair than Ayize so I tied her hair up in a single ponytail while Ayize has two.

When Mnqobi finishes we all walk downstairs.

Mondli and Zwelethu are sleeping on my couches snoring. I still can't believe of all my brothers Mondli is the only bachelor and with the way him and Zwelethu parties I doubt he'll be settling down anytime soon.

They were so drunk last night.

I wake them up “get ready, everyone will be here soon”

They both groan complaining

“Where are you all off too anyway”

“Cemetery”

“Oh how can I forget, wish my brother a happy

birthday. Tell him I'll drink on his behalf" I shake my head at Zwelethu and follow my family out.

Ayize and Liyana are singing irritating Sqalo as we take the short drive to the Ngcobo cemetery.

We are forced to park down hill and climb a small mountain going to the cemetery, Mngobi is carrying Liyana, she's lazy and miss Ayize is walking by herself next to me. She's the diva.

I sit on the grass carefully not to dirty myself and listen to Mngobi as he speaks to his brother

"We are finally 40 huh. Happy birthday photocopy, I miss you everyday but at least I get a little bit of solace in knowing that you live through me.

Mncedidi finally has a child, Lwazi. He still doesn't want to get married like you said he wouldn't anyway I'm not here to bore you I just came to wish you a happy birthday"

he pulls a small bottle of Jameson "they say life begins at forty, so, to us" he pours half the bottle on the grave and drink the rest.

Okay.. I didn't know this is what he does every year.

“To us” his daughters mimic him.

How can I forget it's their birthdays as well.

I pull out the few grass stands on Sizi's grave. I won't lie being here always gets me a little emotional.

I feel Mngqobi hands around me.

“Well... that's our A... he's resting”

laughing “look at B...” Sqalo is still glued to Mngqobi's phone.

“And here is are our C's” Ayize and Liyana are playing around throwing grass at each other.

My little A,B and C's....

“remember how adamant I was about not having your kids” he kisses my hair laughing

“And look at you, you ended up giving me four”

“Well....make that 5 cause D is on the way” he stops laughing and looks at me shocked

“Wait... what...”

“I’m pregnant... again”

He picks me up and spins me around happily.

“I am one lucky bastard” he’s kissing me all over my face.

“Dad why are you so happy” at least Sqalo is no longer gawking at his father’s phone

“Yes daddy why you picking up mommy she’s a big girl and I’m small” Liyana is a little jealous of Mnqobi.

Mnqobi is my husband not theirs, I’m sharing him they needs to grateful.

He picks up Liyana and Ayize both in his strong arms and I put my arms around my son.

“Well kids, you’re about to have a sibling”

“Really, you not joking right dad” Sqalo is excited, his sisters not so much.

“Yes that’s why I’m so happy. Mommy is pregnant so soon there will be a baby”

“Yes” Sqalo air punches “can it be a boy this time”

I'm secretly hoping this one is a boy too.

"We will know soon" I'm 7 weeks pregnant.

"After this one, no more kids. I'm getting a vasectomy" thank God for that.

Contraceptive have proven not to be so loyal over the years. All my pregnancies were unplanned.

Lol...

Mnqobi and I are such bad parents, like none of our kids are planned, not even one?

Basically all our kids are a 'mistake' lol my beautiful 'mistakes'.

"So we will no longer be babies" I did say the girls are not as thrilled about these news

"You will always be my babies" Mnqobi kisses both of them.

Well it's time to go home and enjoy the party.

*

“Oh my God, you look so beautiful. China must’ve been good to you” I hug Zanele. She’s been gone for so long.

“Yes it was. I’ve got so many stories to tell you.” She was in that teaching English as a foreign language program so she’s been gone for the past three years teaching in Vietnam, and China.

I won’t lie I was sad when she left but it did her some good.

Her skin is glowing, she gained weight plus her hair is longer. My girl looks hella fine.

“Heeeeyyyyy” that can only be Nomcebo.

I don’t know what’s been happening in her life but I’m about to find out. It’s a pity Nomthandazo was unable to make it.

“They girls look happy”

“Believe me I hear how they share the same birthday with dad everyday, they are so happy”

It’s Mngqobi’s and the twins birthday party.

Everything looks pink and beautiful.

Gcina and his wife walks in, she's looks so beautiful pregnancy look so good in her.

"I hope you don't mind" I whisper just so Zanele hears

"No, of cause not. She's beautiful hey" I squeezed her hand and take the presents from Velile.

"Baby this is Zanele" Gcina introduces.

"Finally I get to meet you, I didn't think you existed"

"Oh I do. It's good to meet you" it's a little awkward.

"Velile, please help me with these" I take the rest of the presents and put them inside the girls room.

"I hope she doesn't think I'm rude or anything" she says

"Of cause not, Gcina was in her life for such a long time but it's cool. She doesn't think you rude" at least that out of the way.

Nqaba walks in with a lady....

oh Kay...

“Bhuti...” I’m sure you’ve noticed I’m a liter of news
“Hey Qhamu, meet my girlfriend Nobantu, and love
this is my sister” wow.

Shes beautiful, a total opposite of Amanda. She’s
more natural and dark.

“It’s nice to meet you” well spoken too.

I wink at Nqaba.

He shakes his head, takes her hand and go join
everyone else in the tent.

I know Amanda will have that special place in his
heart, she is Bandile’s mother after all but I’m happy
he moved on.

I’m in the kitchen making sure that everything is on
order when Mngqobi comes to me

“Baby I need your help” he pulls me upstairs before
I can say anything.

He locks the door once we in our bedroom

“What’s goi—“

He shits me up with a kiss.

“I told you I’ll show you whose old” he lifts my dress and shift my panties to the side and starts rubbing my clit.

Ladies don’t kiss and tell I said but right now I’m about to tell.

“Mngobi” I’m already breathing hard, moaning his name.

He turns me around and presses me against the door.

I don’t know when did he unbuckles his belt but I get wet instantly when I feel his penis parting my folds.

“Mmmmbaby” I arch my back to make my vulva more reachable.

“Damn...” he’s inside.

His thrust starts slow and they build up and he groans in my ear.

“Shit....” I don’t hear the rest because I’m in my own little world.

He holds on to my waist and plunge harder. He digs

deeper and deeper.

“Mmmmm” I hold his hand on my waist.

That an indication that he needs to faster his pace.

“Shit” he starts moving quicker.

I can feel it, I’m close.

“Shit” he turns me around, pick me up and I wrap my leg around him as he pins me against the door and starts thrusting hard.

“I’m coming—I’m coming—I’m coming” I shout as a shattering orgasm hits me, leaving me panting and satisfied

He thrust a few more coming before following pursuit.

I drop my shaky legs on the floor and balance myself with Mngobi’s strong frame.

“And that”

“I missed you” he brings out a warm towel and wipe the both of us.

“Let’s go, the sooner the part starts the sooner

everyone leaves. I'm not done with you. I'm going to fuck till you can't walk”

The look on his face is deadly.

“I didn't say you're old”

He kisses me one last time and walks out.

Well... guess it will be a night full of orgasms for me.

I pull myself together and go to the backyard.

“Where have you been, the party is about to start”

MaNgidi.

I shyly look away fixing my dress.

“Is that sex I smell—“ Mhlaba vuleka ngingene...

She's even sniffing me.

What wrong with this woman?

And I don't smile like sex!

“Yaz wena no Mngobi couldn't even wait until we leave—wash those dirty hands and follow me”

She claps once and take the cake out to the backyard.

I follow shamefully behind her.

Sis Nandi has Bayanda strapped on her back and she's helping with the kids.

Yobanathi and Gats ha looks cozy in the corner.

Gcina keeps brushing Velile's protruding belly.

Nomcebo and Zanele are not in the tent but wherever they are, they are doing some serious catching up.

The guys are chilling and drinking, I hate how my older brother is starting to grow grey hairs but what did I expect. We are all grown, married with kids now.

Amanda comes through holding Bandile's hand. She has done terrible things but she's a good mother. I found that thirty minutes visit ridiculous but as time went by it changed to an hour, two, half a day t a full day and now we are on weekends.

Rome was not built in a day right, I know one day Bandile will visit her more.

She smiles at me.

“Wow it’s so beautiful”

Smiling “thank. The girls wanted everything pink, never mind it’s their fathers party too”

“I’m sure he didn’t oppose to anything and how do you tell them apart, they look so much alike”

whatever his girls wants they get and I know exactly what she means. Mnqobi himself can’t tell them apart at times.

“Liyana one ponytail and Ayize two”

I try by all means to style them differently so people know whose who.

“Mmm you have a beautiful family—“ her compliments isn’t laced with jealousy like before

“—Let me get going, I gave the presents to Sma, he has grown so much”

“Yes he is”

“Alright, I’ll see you then”

I watch as she walks away.

Part of me is sad. Healing takes a life time and I’m

glad she found herself.

“And why you crying” Eish I didn’t realize I am crying.

I quickly wipe my tears and look at Mnqobi.

“You want her to stay don’t you”

“No, I’m just being silly I don’t even know why I’m crying” he nods and kiss my lips.

“I don’t hate her. I just don’t want her close to you”

I know for a fact Mnqobi will never forgive that she tried to kill me and I won’t ruin his day by asking Amanda to stay.

“I know babe”

Lucas and his husband are late.

Oh I forgot to tell you. MamTwala passed away, her relationship with his kids never changed. They forgave her for what she did but they didn’t have any bond with her.

At least she’s resting knowing her kids forgave her.

All kids are sitting in their chairs and everyone is

just happy.

“Happy birthday to you, happy birthday to you” we all start singing.

I’m teary when the song ends.

My daughters are happy, my son is happy with his brothers too.

“I love you baby” I whisper to Mngqobi and peck his lips.

“I know baby, I know” he too whispers and holds me tightly.

My name is Qhamukile Buthelezi Ngcobo, this is my story of how I feel in love with my enemy.

THE END!!!