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## **INTRODUCTION**

My name is Tlangelani I am 23 years old I stay in Soweto with my mom brothers cousins and aunt's. I've lived half of my life knowing and believing that I was suffering from schizophrenia...I see hear feel things that no one else does. Being the last and only girl from four brothers really is just not fun for staters I couldn't even date because my brothers were known in our Hood to be bad boys and very rough though they have never been rough with me. My mother a single mom who raised us 5 alone and she is a hardcore christian. I have been in and out of hospital drinking medication to make me "feel" better because everyone at home thinks am crazy. I don't know my dad and don't wish to know him and besides mom doesn't talk about him....join me on this journey of self discovery ...the ups and downs of it..

I am Tlangelani

1

"mama...mama.. mama..mama..." I scream at the top of my voice for mama to come and save me from drowning the water keeps rising...soon I don't see my surroundings am deep inside the water choking me because am screaming and fighting to get out. There he is making his way to me he is mumbling something to me but I can't make out what he is saying because am trying so hard to shut my eyes just then as he is supposed to reach me a force pulls me out of the water....

Voice:Tlangie..Tlangie...wake up dear.. shhhh it was just a bad dream

I wake up to see my brothers face am gasping for air am shivering..

Me: it happened again..I saw him he was deep inside the water he kept talking but I didn't hear what he was saying but I saw him...why why me Duncan what is going on with me" I say crying and pulling my brothers pj shirt

Duncan: shhhh it's okay am here..did you drink your pills?

Everytime I have such dreams my family forces me to drink my pills. I was diagnosed with schizophrenia at age 18 that's when everything started..I used to see dead people talking to me..I would feel other people pain just by sitting next to them and at times I would see through someone. I was doing my matric

when it happened and sometimes I would start screaming out of the blue saying things that made no sense that's when I was taken to hospital and diagnosed ever since then I've been on medication though at some point the seeing of things and feeling of things stopped but this year it starting again and this time it's just intense.

My brother walks out of the room I share with my 2 cousins I look at them sleeping peacefully. I cannot sleep anymore am scared to sleep so I take my phone and go through Facebook I read some diary's I find by the time my phone notify's me that it's low it's 6am and I know mama will be making her in anytime from now. I put my head on my pillow and drift to lala land just an hour or so into my sleep I start seeing him again he is standing at the bank of the river wearing his red white and black lion cloth over his shoulder and holding his stick...he is barefoot his legs have red blue and white beads his neck has an assortment of coloured beads. I move towards him though I should be scared but am not just as I reach the midpoint separating us the grass starts blazing with fire I cannot go through to where he is standing the only option I have is to go back. Just then as am about to turn he stands before me he touches my head and I feel this excruciating pain on my head I open my eyes am back inside the room my eyes red and I can literally see the veins on my head popping out the pain is too much to handle...

2

I've been in the Dr room for an hour now and still the Dr had not been able to find the source of the headache or my burning eyes. I stopped crying because it was making the headache worse and the eyes were burning like crazy why was this happening to me on Monday I'm supposed to be starting my new job as a bank teller at Capitec how the hell am I going to work like this. The injection is finally working as I lay my head on the pillow to sleep just then he appears again

Man on my dreams: you are a very stubborn child my great granddaughter how long must you suffer until you acknowledge us your ancestors..you have to answer your calling or else your headache and eyes will remain like that.we have been giving you signs but you still chose to be arrogant about everything so we have decided to see how you get out of this.....

I slowly lift my head up and my vision is now worsening it has become partly blind I see pictures in a blurry form my head is pounding soo much I keep balancing it as though it's going to fall off my body. What is this man talking about what signs did he give me I needed mama to help me get through this. I hear footsteps approaching and it's quite hard to tell who is it because I can't see them if only they would speak I would be able to know.

Me: whose there.. please answer me

Voice: relax it's me Dr zwane I just came to check up on you the nurse said you were sleeping earlier. How do you feel

Me: am blind my head feels like it's about to blow how do you think I'm feeling

Dr zwane: ok that's expected. Tlangelani I need you to explain to me what happened because I don't think one could wake up blind and with such a severe headache like yours. We have checked your blood work but you tested negative for everything please make me understand what happened

Me: I also don't know how many times must I say this I was sleeping then when I woke up I felt this excruciating pain on my head and my eyes were on fire. What more do you want

Dr zwane: ok ok settle down I didn't mean to upset you am sorry. Ok I can't administer any pain injections for you until 8 hours has passed so you going to just have to be strong ok while we try find out what is wrong with you okay.

He left me laying there I needed mama to hold me though at times we fight but right now I needed her. I lay back and tried to relax but the headache was painful but I had to literally force myself to relax and I finally dozed off to dream land

3

It has been two weeks since I lost my eye sight and the headache hasn't stopped Dr's can't find anything wrong with me so they sent me home. Mama had to call my boss and explain the situation and they let me go so basically I was unemployed blind and stuck with a banging headache. The dream has not left me I still have it now it's become worse because now he shows me this other lady who is short chubby and has dread locks sitting inside a rondavel on a grass mat then we move outside where I sit on the red stoep of the lady's house the colour of the house is deep green and it has red and black roof tiles I always wake up when the lady dresses me in a white sleeveless shirt and red cloth on my waist. Though the dream happens every day but it always freaks me out to a point I don't sleep afterwards...I haven't as yet told mama about this because I don't know how to explain it to her without sounding crazy but today I decided to tell her because this was getting hard for me. I called out for her and she came in a couple of seconds later

Mama: tlangie what's wrong baby are you ok

Me: no mama we need to talk...\*crying\* mama I can't take this anymore the dreams are getting intense now and always they leave me spooked. Tell me am not crazy mama I've been drinking my medication all the time.

Mama: dreams...what dreams tlangie. What are you talking about.

Me: I keep seeing this old man wearing a lion cloth over his shoulders and he has a stick with him his legs have beads even his arms. The last dream I had of him i was swimming well more of drowning in a river then I was walking to him but the was a huge fire then he stood before me held my head and it was in pain then my eyes were burning. At the hospital he came to my dreams again and told me that I was stubborn so they closed my eyes and gave me this headache until I accepted my calling..what calling mama..

Mama:oh my God don't tell me they are back again...we will go to pastor Makhubele later today he will pray for you again ok don't worry

Me: it didn't help the last time he came here..

Mama: it will work remember we walk by faith and not by side...ok calm down and relax

Mama tlangie(Gladys)

As I went out leaving my daughter laying there my heart broke I thought these dreams have left her. The medication was supposed to suppress her dreams but now things have gone out of hand. Tlangie dad is a sangoma when I found out I told



my mom and she told me to stay away from him and that we should hide this from my daughter since she believed that him and his family were practising witchcraft...i had to run away from him in my pregnant state I didn't tell my daughter the truth about her identity because I was protecting her. But if she is seeing the old man then it means she has the CALLING...

4

## MAMA TLANGIE

I called my mother in Limpopo and explained everything that my daughter told me I needed her to tell me the way forward.

Mama: mhani sehi endlisa ku yini..\*mom what are supposed to do now\*

Mother: xava sweswiya swama furha inyika mfundhisi va swi khongelela ivi inwi tota kumbe mi vuya Kuna crusade haleni kumbe va fhundisi va ta nwi veka mavoko\*buy the annoiting oil then ask the pastor to pray for it or you can come back home we have a church crusade maybe the pastor's will pray for her\*

Mama: ka mhani Swati oil niendlile aswitirhangi..kumbe loko noya ka papa yena swinwani aswita hunguteka\*\*mom I tried the oil it did In't work maybe I should go to her father maybe somethings will be solved\*

Mother: Gladys ilava kuteka nwana ingu yisa ka valoyi...ni yingiseli ku hava nwana ayaku ka chauke ku hava. Mo vuya kunene\*Gladys you want to take the child to the witches listen to me no child is going to the chauke family. Just come back home with the child.\*

After saying that she hung up on me. I guess we will be making a trip to my hometown but what do I tell her brothers Duncan to be exact he is very fond and overly protective of her. I have

dug myself a huge grave I went back inside the house to check on her and she was still sleeping so I called my sister Meriam outside so we could talk because she knows the history...

Mama: Meriam she told me she is seeing the old man what am I going to do now

Meriam: but I warned you I told you a long time ago that she has a calling but no you had to listen to your mother. Look at her she has lost her sight what more do you want to happen to her until you do the right thing

Mama: wow so you saying I should let my daughter be a witch just like them.. Even if I wanted to help where do I even begin I don't even know where Hanyani lives now. Maybe they are bewitching my daughter to hurt me.

Meriam: don't be a fool. We need to go and consult so that we know what we are dealing with

Mama: consult...as in like a sangoma are you crazy. No we going home Friday God will solve this

Meriam: keep angering the ancestors you will see...

TLANGIE

I sat there in the dark not moving I could try and move my hand around to get some water but why bother I will only be making

a lot of mess. I waited for mom to come back but Duncan came in and sat next to me...we spoke until I felt sleepy I asked him not to go until I fall asleep maybe if the old man sees am with someone he wouldn't come to my dreams...who was I fooling he came back again this time he had a warning to give me

"Keep running away and not acknowledging us we will punish you...if you dare board that bus you are going to die" I woke up sweating and scared what on Earth did that mean what bus am I going to board mama needs to get me help seriously. I woke Duncan up so that he could get me water so I could drink my meds. At around 5 I felt someone shuffling things around opening and closing the fridge I knew it was mama today she was going to work. She came and bathed me then fixed the blankets I slept on then took me to the bedroom then left for work....

5

## MAMA TLANGIE

I was supposed to be going home with Tlangie Friday but yesterday on Wednesday I got mugged all my months salary was taken from me moments after withdrawing it. This has never happened to me before as am always careful and to top it all up I ruined my madam white expensive dress and It cost 3 times my salary I'm always careful but I don't know what happened. When I got to the gate I heard a lot of noise coming from the house I ran inside only to find my daughter banging herself against the furniture she was screaming Lord she is blind what is happening. I spoke to her pleaded with her to stop it was after 10pm she started calming down she looked tired bruised and bloody. I went and carried her to my room outside laid her on my bed and made hot water for her so that I could soak her inside. As I was pouring the hot water on her body I felt her body temperature was very cold she didn't even flinch or tell me that the water was too hot...I got her out of the water and applied ointment on her body then wrapped her in a towel then covered her in a blanket so she could sleep. My sister came in an hour or so later she explained to me that my daughter has been like this since noon she kept mumbling things after she left I sat there looking at my baby...why was I

allowing my child to go through this...I knelt down and cried to God to help me.

## TLANGIE

I don't know what was happening to me today one minute I was fine talking to my elder aunt the next I feel like screaming my chest is on fire my body has goose bumps...the next thing I know am screaming talking in a language I don't know. My body hurt a lot after the whole thing at least I was going to sleep next to my mama today because I really needed her next to me I was scared tired but most of all I felt like I was losing my mind and I needed her to keep me sane I needed her to pray for me

TLANGIE

Mama didn't go to work today but she told me we had to go somewhere with aunt Meriam. She gave me a bath then made me breakfast my body was still sore and my throat burned but I forced myself to swallow after what seemed like forever we made our way to the car..my elder brother Ndzalo organized the transportation for us. After what seemed like forever we finally came to a stop and we got out of the car then went inside the house...as I was sitting there my body had goosebumps I was dizzy then my chest was on fire I felt like screaming...the next thing I feel myself touching the ground and shaking am screaming then I blackout..

## MAMA TLANGIE

We were at some sangoma house that my sister had suggested we go see she stayed in carltonville. When we got inside the yard my baby was ok but 2 minutes of us sitting she fell started shaking then she spoke in a male voice the sangoma lady knelt before her clapping her hands and speaking with her it's like she understood what she was saying then after she blacked out..I have never been freaked out in my life but I didn't want to potray my fear now..after when she woke up she could see and she was surprised as to why we were here so I let the lady do the talking and repeat what my baby had said outside

Sangoma: \*chanting and burping\* thokozani bogogo nabo mkhulu...ngiyanizwa indaba yenu iyazwakala...mtanami umkhulu ukhulumile cqa ngempela iskhathi si hambile...\*your great grandfather said it's time for you to know your roots your real identity so that you can know the real you. You have a calling and it's time now you learn to use your calling by being a prophetess and a sangoma my dear you have such beautiful ancestors who want to help you walk the right path but something is standing in the way...your identity\*<sup>ooo</sup>she burped and chanted<sup>ooo</sup>

Us: makhosi

Her:mama tell your daughter the truth before everything else gets ruined allow her to know her roots please or else more bad luck is coming your way do not anger the ancestors even more. Wena mtanami listen to mkhulu he is your guide take note of all your dreams they are important your journey has started it's time now...

TLANGIE

Am looking at mama and I can see she is not comfortable I don't know if it's what the sangoma is saying or that a Christian woman is in a sangoma hut... wait I can see I can see my head is still painful but not so bad Me: mama mama I can see I can see you Mama: wait you can...oh my baby

Sangoma: mkhulu is willing to give you a second chance provided that you do whats right



## TLANGIE

The car was filled with too much silence no one was talking my mind was just so far away...what does it mean to have a calling..so am I going to be a sangoma as well..must I wear beads and walk barefoot..mama and kokwani\*granny\* are christian's and what did the lady mean by mama telling me the truth. I had sooo many questions but where do I even begin I can see mama will not tell me what I need to know especially about my father ever since she has never told me the honest truth about my father. We got home and I went to the bedroom and went inside the covers once inside I bowled my eyes out. Mama came in after sometime and she didn't say anything but engulfed me into a tight hug and the tears fell more harder..

Me: mama what is going on with me...if I don't do what that lady said does it mean that am going to be blind again?

Mama: no my baby there is nothing wrong with you..you are a very special child of mine that I love too much to see get hurt over petty things. Now we have God on our side we are going to pray and everything will be fine okay. Trust me

Me: I trust you mama and I believe that God will make a way for us. I love you

Weeks went by and the dreams were very intense they felt real and I couldn't stop seeing the chubby dreadlock lady on my dreams. Mama and I decided to fast and just pray but things were just not working out mama lost her job Ndzalo and Eric my two brothers got arrested for assaulting a guy at the tavern. Strange things were happening at home and to me it started with a crap on my knee then it went to my feet getting swollen then now I couldn't walk..I had to be carried to the toilet I had to be bathed. For the first time in my life I began questioning God and his existence in my life why wasn't he answering my prayers wasn't he seeing the turmoil inside of me couldn't he just spare my mother of such pain. I felt like dying because I was in and out of the hospital but still nothing wrong was found. Each day it's like I was dying inside because nothing was going right. My mind went back to the sangoma lady words and I felt it was time mama and I had a talk.

Mama Tlangie

I was walking home from the prison...things were bad my two sons were locked up and from what I saw today it was evident they were being beaten in just a short space of two months soo many wrong and bad things have happened to my children and me. I lost my job and my mother is very ill I could see my

daughter dying inside everyday but is it worth losing my child over she cannot go and practice witchcraft I was going to hold on to my secret a little longer my God will answer my prayers he knows and understands my pain. When I got home I found her laying on her own poo there was no one at home I guess she must have tried to walk to the toilet by herself...I got her up cleaned her and made her some food but she refused to eat I could see she was angry at me but I wasn't going to entertain her little tantrum.

## TLANGIE

Today we were visiting the 10 prophet and all of them were saying one thing that I needed to find my father's family and I must be a sangoma/ prophetess..I was tired of drinking Isiwasho and all those stuff I needed mama to tell me the truth. When we got home aunty Meriam and Duncan carried me inside the house and placed me on the sofa...when mama entered the room I just asked her point blank who my father was she wasn't giving me the answer I needed but this time I wasn't backing down she eventually told me the truth about my father.. at least I had a surname and a name. These past couple of months have shown me flames to a point where a part of me was starting to believe that maybe just maybe I do have the calling but was I embracing it or even accepting of it...NO. The following day mama me and aunty Meriam travelled to Springs to look for my father apparently he was from the I wasn't speaking to mama as I was still mad at her. We asked around a couple of times and we were getting lost it was until aunty Meriam decided that we buy snuff and went to a near by open field and talk to the ancestors. We did as she said and we started looking for him again we finally made a stop at some busy joint we found a guy wearing white beads on his hands selling some traditional herbs mama asked him questions he

looked at us for a while then questioned mama after a while he came to my side of the door looked at me then took out his phone and called someone. 30 minutes later we outside this beautiful house the man parks his car behind us then gets out then indicates that we can come out of the car. My body feels strange at this moment and my chest is on fire I start screaming as soon as they place me down near the gate funny enough I can stand on my two feet it's like they have never locked. Im screaming like mad crazy now and I could see that a few people have gathered outside their gates to see what was going on. Finally two man I assume they are in their 50's and 2 ladies wearing those sangoma cloths come to the gate they kneel and spill their snuff and spoke then the one lady held my hand and we walked inside the yard...

## Mama Tlangie

Seeing David today brought back to many memories some were good and some were bad I wanted to cry but I had to be strong for my daughter. After what I saw today I finally believed that she Indeed had the calling. They made us sit outside since we had to wait for Tlangie to get better then the man who helped us get here spoke.

Man(1): Er my brothers I have visitors today with me I met them at the rank they were looking for David Chauke family. So

because I know a David and saw the condition of the child I brought them here so she can get healing. Am shocked when I see her doing what she did at the gate and from what they told me she couldn't walk but now she is walking. But I won't talk too much I will just let them tell us who they are.

Aunty Meriam: greetings my elders my name is Meriam Mashimbyi with me I have my younger sister Gladys and her daughter Tlangie. We are from Soweto we have a huge problem on our hands our child is sick she has been in and out of hospital she was blind then her legs couldn't walk in just a space of a few months. We consulted and we were told she has a calling and we need to find her father's family which is the reason why we are here today..

Man(2): Gladys we meet again after 23 years...I am David Chauke the man you are looking for. Here you are in the Chauke household and with my brother and my two students who are training to be traditional healers the man you came with is my brother as well...it's true Tlangelani has a calling and everything that has happened to her it's because my ancestors are angry they want her to do her job.

Aunty Meriam: ok sir I hear you but I feel before she can do that we need to discuss the matter regarding you as a father to perform a ceremony to introduce her to the ancestors but I will give her a chance to talk. Tlangie talk my dear

Me: \*my mouth went dry how do I say what was in my heart without offending him...I need to choose my words properly\* I don't know if I should call you dad or what I don't know you I have no relationship with you..am just here because life has shown me a lot of cruelty...I see things I feel things at some point I feel like I am a mad person. I dream of houses and people I have no clue of...why me why did this thing chose me...I mean you didn't raise me couldn't it go to your other children. How many do you have

David: I understand and I'm not angry at all..the ancestors work in a strange way they just chose who they want. I have 4 children making you the fifth of them my elder son your brother is a prophet the other two girls have not received any gifts just like my last born son. So it means you and your brother have gifts.

Me: you think this is a gift... David think again it's a curse

David: I see you are in denial of your calling. See my dear my grandmother was a prophet and my great grandfather was a traditional healer so you see we have it both from my dad's family and mother's family. It doesn't help you running away from it...it's your destiny. I knew you were coming today one of my students saw it months ago and I know that you are sick and that your mother has lost her job and her two son's are in prison...so we as a family prepared for this day I knew we had

to do a ceremony for you so we bought the goat and I called my wife and children and explained everything to them. He told one of his students to get the rest of the family...when his wife came out I thought she was going to act all bitchy on me but no instead she seemed annoyed but I wasn't here for her or her children I was here for my baby...



## TLANGIE

After the whole meet and greet we did the ceremony we were given food to eat then me and David spoke alone away from everyone. I was glad that he had accepted me and I have identity now I knew where I belonged. I could sense that my sisters weren't all happy about me being part of the family but I wasn't here to take their daddy dearest I grew up 23 years without him so I'm cool with him. we didn't leave that night but we slept at David's house the drum beating somehow soothed my soul it's like the more it was beating the more something inside of me wanted to burst out and dance. As I was sitting there I swear I saw my great great grandfather sitting next to my David he smiled at me and I swear I started singing a sangoma song believe me you I was so shocked I stood up sang it then David's students started dancing their soles hit the ground with too much power their bodies were just in another level after singing I excused myself and went to the room I was given to sleep. In the morning we bid goodbye to everyone and David gave me a cloth similar to the one great great grandfather had to keep under my pillow. That night when I slept at home in my dreams he gave me white beads and told me to wear them around my neck when I woke up in the morning I found the beads under my pillow I was shocked I

decided to let David know and he instructed on what to do before I wore them...I looked at myself in the mirror and the goat wrist band was just hard to miss it was white and big and very smelly. I showed mama and aunty the beads and told them what David had said aunty helped me with everything and I wore the beads on my neck.

A year later

After denying my calling for so long I finally agreed to go and get initiated that was after a series of things happened. Today I was traveling to Mpumalanga to go and get initiated... finally great grandfather showed me the lady who was going to be my charge and in December we had went there it was me aunty Meriam David my prophetic brother and Duncan...mom and everyone else at home distenced themselves from me kokwani went as far as calling me a small witch but I didn't care anymore as long as aunty and my favourite brother was here I was cool. When we went to Mpumalanga in December all of us didn't know the way and funny enough I had never traveled here but I was the one directing them on the routes we should take..we got to the lady house and then idlozi la vuka when I got to the gate one of her students came to welcome us and I was taken to indumba. She told me she had been expecting me since I was

18 years old but because of my stubbornness now I was here at age 23 she spoke to my dad and aunt explained what was needed to be done before I can officially be initiated then we went back home. We did a small ceremony at David's house since mama was against me now to let my ancestors know that I was going to be initiated and we bought all the things Gabela needed her ancestral name was mahlalaeplatini but her name was Nombuso so I was to address her as ubaba because she had a male ancestral guider just like me but because her's was older than mine in ancestral knowledge she in turn called me gogo. Two days before my trip today great grandfather gave me my ancestral name in my dreams Dabulamanzi... David was just overjoyed when I told him plus he was the one sponsoring my whole initiation process...I couldn't wait to get to Mpumalanga and begin my journey

10

## TLANGIE

2 hours later we finally here am nervous am excited am scared am just a mess what if I mess up what if I don't find whatever they want me to find a lot of things start creeping in on my mind what happens after the time am going to spend here ends where do I go back I don't see myself going to David's house no thank you but the rest of the family is against me so what now. My prophetic brother read my mind and he told me to relax and just trust my ancestors and myself and then everything else shall come to pass. When I got to the gate idlozi la vuka la vusela ubaba umahlalaehlatini and idlozi laka baba la vuka na lo la vusela noku amukela amadlozi wam kwakhe...i crawled all the way from the gate to the foot of the stoep of the ndumba.

2am next day

As per my great grandfather instructions ubaba was to take me to the river at exactly 4am she was supposed to dip me inside the water to perform umsebenzi woku vusa/ukulanda amandawu namanguni emanzini..I was to get inside the water with a njeti and palu cloth and take off my white beads. We travelled to the river which was just 1:30 from us ubaba had invited her Gobela and pastor from her Zion Church to come

help her with the ceremony...namathwasa had come as well the ones who had just left training and those who were still in training David was also there but he was standing at the bank of the river. At exactly 4am I went inside the water with ubaba her Gobela the pastor and one of her old students the water was icy cold at first but it got hot I couldn't feel that I was outside they dipped me in 4 times idlozi la vuka and spoke to baba then left that's when I was taken out of the water baba applied red soil on my whole body then we left went back home

11

Mama Tlangie

My heart was torn between supporting my daughter on her journey and living by the moral values taught to me as a christian woman. According to the biblical way of living her having a calling was just demonic thinking about her drinking the blood of an animal and talking to dead spirits was just too hard for me. I decided to call my sister just to ask out of curiosity sake what was happening the phone rang unanswered like 6 times until she answered later and when she did answer we couldn't hear each other because there was a lot of noise at the background I heard drum beating people chanting like it was so annoying I hung up took a bath and decided to go and see my mother who was visiting my aunt she didn't want to be here as she felt Tlangie had left behind her bad spirits.

TLANGIE

My body was sore from all the dancing and uku vusa idlozi there was no stopping these people it's like more and more people were coming in...me ubaba Gobela ka baba and amathwasa ka baba went to her ndumba where I was given imithetho ye shoba. I didn't know that agreeing to answer my calling meant I was letting go of my old life..I was to start using

zinc plates and cups.. sleep on a grass mat..walk barefoot not eat fish.. dairy products...white bread...cakes like this was just too much for me. My feet and hands were adorned with beads..on my wrists I had red blue and white beads then on my feet I had white and red beads it felt too much though and on my neck I wore my white beads because my great grandfather was just specific he wanted a lion cloth on my head at all times. I wanted to sleep but the rules were we don't sleep until ubaba sleeps and we have to be up by 3 am..phahla then vusa idlozi..this was going to be too much for me. The dancing went on until 1am then ubaba went to sleep finally I could rest I was dead tired...that night great grandfather came to my dreams again but this time he was smiling at me then he waved goodbye and gave me this lion print bag but it was at some field hidden under a rock he said "Dabulamanzi this life is yours to keep you have made us proud listen open your ears and eyes always stay humble at all times".....I wanted to touch him but something shook me

Gogo vuka..it's time to phahla.....

## TLANGIE

I didn't want to wake up but I had to I was so sleepy that I didn't even hear Gogo lwandle when she was teaching me how to phahla..

Gogo lwandle: hai Gogo no you can't be sleeping while am teaching you how to phahla if baba finds out you didn't do this she will not only punish you but me as well

Me: am really tired Gogo lwandle my body is sore can't we go back to bed

Gogo lwandle: you want to play with fire neh gogo you are not here to get beauty sleep but to work. Finish up we have to be the first ones to open the taps here in the yard before Baba's children do that and bathe then si vuse idlozi

Me: so we going to make a fire or we using the kettle to make water to bath

Gogo lwandle: uya bona wena I can see you are full of jokes we bathe with cold water...come phahla. After we were done we had to bath in cold water outside then vusa idlozi yoh you see that was just hard now when I had to do it and baba wasn't impressed.....I hated bathing with cold water and uku vusa idlozi because it left my body very sore.



## 2MONTHS LATER

If I said I was enjoying being here I would be lying I hated being here I wanted to pick up the phone and call mom to come and get me but then again communication with my family was restricted it was only when I needed something from David that baba would allow me to contact him. Today I woke up late on purpose I didn't phahla or bathe or even apply the red soil on my body I wasn't feeling very well today..it was mom's birthday and realising that she hates me made my heart more painful...the pain just added more fuel to the already burning fire I didn't want to be here anymore baba didn't like me at all she always criticized the way ngi vusa idlozi nga khona..or the way ngi phahla nga khona it's like she found fault in everything I did even with my bead work she made sure to let me know that it was crappy. I went to my working station on baba farm and weeded the small portion I was given I didn't even tie my head today I wanted to break all the rules and get baba to throw me out of her initiation school I wanted to leave. As I was on the field working I felt this sharp headache it felt like something was tightening it I tried to cry out for help but I couldn't even make a sound then my feet started cramping I couldn't even move them the wind blew strongly

13

TLANGIE

I didn't know what was happening to me I tried calling out for help but my voice was gone... after a while the wind stopped and the headache stopped but my feet were still unable to move...I screamed for help I called gogo lwandle after what seemed like forever she came to me with gogo ntuzama

Gogo ntuzama: gogo what happened to you

Me: I can't move...I was working here on the field when I felt this sharp pain on my head then my feet started cramping I don't know what happened

Gogo lwandle: this is what you get for being disobedient to your ancestors.. gogo we are all here to fulfil our purposes set out by our ancestors. Do you think we all wanted to be here no..I have kids that I left behind gogo.

Me: why me gogo...I can't do this I can't

Gogo lwandle: you can and you will...gogo you need to accept this path with it's good side and it's bad side. Learn to listen to your ancestors..look at yourself you haven't tied your head awuka vusa idlozi...hai gogo yeka inkani. As we were going back and forth baba came to where we were and she helped me then we went back to the main house when we got to her ndumba idlozi laka baba la vuka...it was very angry that I defied

baba's orders and I went to the sacred field without my lion headwrap as if that wasn't enough mine also woke up it apologised to baba then told baba what happened in the field it warned me about not obeying the laws. The whole day baba didn't say anything to me she spoke with the other's. It was 12am midnight I woke up lit a white candle then prayed at least today I prayed for 30 minutes what a progress I mainly focused on God giving me strength to face this journey then at 3 am I went and got my broken calabash then lit impepho took out my snuff then I spoke to my ancestors I apologized to them and asked them to lead me to the right part...then I went nga vusa idlozi then took a bath with cold water then applied red soil on my feet arms and face then wrapped my lion headwrap on my head. Then nga yo vusela ubaba then did my chores around the house. Days went by and I was doing the same thing everyday but still baba was cold towards me but I took it and still continued with my daily routine. It was a Thursday afternoon and I was left with baba in the house the others had went to town to get more beads and other items that baba had sent them to get for umgidi on Saturday that we were invited to. As always I did my chores around the house then worked on the field...I came back to the main house when I saw ubaba with this old lady sitting on the stoep of the house. Immediately my head hurt and my back was on fire just looking at her direction my body was in a lot of pain at that instant I saw an aloe plant

root and some red small flowers I didn't understand what it meant but I went to the hut we stay in got my snuff then went to the field I got the aloe plant and the red flowers then went to the kitchen and boiled everything together when I was done I mixed the aloe water with cold water so it could be cool then went out to baba's ndumba...I got there knelt then spoke then got inside and asked baba to join me outside...

Me: thokoza baba..the lady you are sitting with she has a headache and a sore back...

Baba: thokoza gogo..I know and I've seen what they have shown you. Come give her the mixture..

Me: thokoza baba...I will go and get it..thokoza baba..

All this while when I spoke to her I was looking down I didn't dare look her in the eyes I went to the kitchen and got the jug then headed back. After she drank the water she was better she left a R100 note on the grass mat then left. I felt a bit proud of myself that at least I had done something good and listened to my ancestors while I was still in my bubble baba called me and we sat down

Baba: gogo am proud of what you did today..you didn't consult the lady but you knew what she was suffering from. You allowed yourself to obey what the ancestors had shown you and did it..

Me: thokoza baba. Thank you your words bring about relief to me.

Baba: gogo this journey is not easy..the are days when you have to do something that you see it's very impossible but at the end you will need to do it. See it's the 3 of you here and each of you has their own dlozi to follow...you may all have the calling but you don't have the same gift vested in you. Do you know why I told you to wake up and pray at midnight everyday

Me: thokoza baba...no you didn't

Baba: it's because you not only have the calling of a sangoma but a prophetess. You are a praying warrior you are going to heal people with prayer and water and sometimes with your traditional herbs. Gogo ntuzama and lwandle are just sangoma's only. You need to pull your weight and stop playing around it's time to be serious but keep one thing in mind I won't force you to do anything and remember that they are your ancestors and not mine listen to them. You can go and start preparing supper.

Me: thokoza baba..I stood up and left and went to the kitchen and prepared supper.

## TLANGIE

It's been exactly 5 months that I have been here..5 months of endless learning curves ups and downs but I wouldn't trade it for anything in this world. I have been very strong in prayer and serious about listening to my ancestors. Two months back as I was praying inside the hut I was shown a white doek and a green isipika draped on my shoulders then the following day I was shown a blue yellow green white and red candle burning then I dreamt yellow beads on my neck then two lines of black beads on both of my legs. I told baba the dreams and she had told me that I needed to get those made for me so today I was going to town to get the money from shopright money market which was deposited by David since he is the only one helping me financially. Since being here I've never spoken to my mom or brothers the only person who checks up on me is my aunt and my prophetic brother whom was very delighted when I told him about the upgrade I got of the doek and isipika. I did my chores then went to work on the sacred field then went to change into a clean red cloth and White vest today I was walking barefooted and it was very hot but great grandfather wanted it that way then I tied my lion cloth on my head then went to tell baba that I was leaving. I walked a long distance to get the taxi that was going to town and when it finally came I

was so glad because the heat wasn't having mercy on me. When I got inside the taxi my whole body was very sore it felt like I was carrying the world on my shoulders the burping became too much that the lady who was sitting next to me got very uncomfortable I swear if she could she could have just gotten off. I didn't know what was going on with me...my back started aching and the ladies at the back seat were talking so loud I felt myself zoning out a bit

## TLANGIE

I was very glad when the taxi arrived in town I couldn't take it anymore being in the taxi listening to those ladies speaking ill of sangomas. See this journey chose us and not the other way round it's not all fun and games for us the chosen ones we go through trials that we never thought existed we lose families friends and even ourselves. Everything that I enjoyed or loved goes out of the window but then again i was never going to trade this for anything. I went to shoprite money market got the money and went around the traditional shops looking for beads and other things I needed as per my dream. As I was walking around the shop I felt some type of way I felt my nose was blocked air couldn't come in or out for a minute I saw a young child's face the child had difficulty breathing due to something blocking the air passage...I looked around to see who it could be but still I didn't see the child at that instant I had a nose bleed I paid for my things and left the store still the nose bleed didn't stop I now had to find public toilets to wash my nose. I rinsed my nose in the small white basin inside the toilets then left on my way I passed by KFC for some odd reason I knew I shouldn't but I felt like having ice cream since it was hot...I bought myself a soft swirl and boy it was very nice I went to board the taxi back home. This time at least no one was



offending me but this old lady was busy trying to make small talk with me you know wanting to know who my Gobela was and how far I was with my training. Then out of the blue she tells me my Gobela is a witch and I shouldn't trust her I wanted to answer her but something told me to keep quiet. I arrived late in the afternoon at home I was really tired soon as I got to the gate idlozi la vuka it told baba that I had eaten ice cream so it was going to punish me when I came back to my senses I had the most horrible tummy ache I've ever had in my life. That night I swore to never again disobey the rules or cheat.

16

TLANGIE

THE BIG DAY PART 1

To say am nervous would be an understatement today was the big day for me because today I was going to show baba and my family what I learned during my initiation. Today beng'khalela ikani straight. Baba gobela had come together with some gobela from around to see if I could find the items hidden from me I was so nervous I couldn't even keep water down today. David was here with my prophetic brother and his students my aunt was here and my Duncan how I have missed him. The ceremony started and I first found what baba had hidden from me...I went to find what baba gobela had hidden from me...I found what David hid from me...what my aunt and Duncan had hidden from me boy what a long day this has been I was glad it was over now for the big day part 2 of finding my goat...that I cannot wait to do. I wish next week would be here already. We enjoyed the ceremony with dancing and drum beats though I could see Duncan was very sad his heart was bleeding seeing me in my state. See I grew up a bit chubby but being here I was now thin and more darker than my usual self and I had my hair twisted into locks since I had cut my relaxed hair then. I can't believe that I've been here a year now time definitely flew for me.

## BIG DAY PART TWO

I guess David was not joking when he had told me that he built a hut for me to use as per my dreams. Am thankful for him because he came through for me and made my ceremony a success. Today was the biggest day of them all but baba wasn't shaken she was so confident in me that I would find my goat...we were now back at home in joburg to finish my initiation process..

"In broad daylight I went running and screaming for my bile...my goat... barefooted I heeded the calling of my ancestors for they made me for they chose me..I found my goat I drank the blood of my goat and vomited it again in front of everyone...my journey as an initiate was complete... but again my new journey as a trained traditional healer begins....my forefathers are with me they guide me...thokozani bogogo nabo mkhulu thokozani...."..."I've never been so proud of myself just like today. After drinking the blood of the goat baba adorned my head with the bile of the goat and took off my lion cloth I've never seen baba this proud of me. Im happy to have completed my journey but am sad to be leaving my new family behind. I don't know what life holds for me but I know my ancestors are with me...

This was my journey as TLANGIE... thokozani

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