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01

5 Years Ago

Qiniso's POV:

Walking out of the door brings nothing but pain in my heart. I have lost her for good this time. This was my chance to love again but I ruined it once more. I gather up my strength and walk towards the elevator, once I get in I press the ground button. The wait in the elevator is done. Walking towards my car seems to be a mission since I feel such heavy pain in my heart. I just wish to go back to her and allow her to take the pain I have instilled in her out on me. How I wish to embrace her in my arms and tell her I'm here every step that she takes. I have denied her, . I'm such a failer dammit!

"Qiniso." she says snapping her index finger and thumb to get my attention.

I shift my rageful eyes towards her.

"Slindile." I say. She looks at me with so much pity and I hate that. She finally released her sigh.

"She just needs time to heal. She loves you khakhulu futhi." she reassures me.

"I don't think she will ever forgive me, I hurt her deeply." I say.

"Don't give up on her." she says.

"You both deserve a better chance to love." she adds.

"I'm going to fight for her, I need her." I say before being excused.

Nyaki's POV :

Seeing him walk out that door brings emotions of uncertainty I just wish I ran after him to tell him how much I love him and that I need him. As much as I may be upset at him he will always be the one to occupy my heart. I place my hands on the counter as I feel my knees are about to get weak. My abdomen seems to be in slight pain and nothing makes it better as I have to deal with all of this with a broken heart. My bottom lip starts to shiver and there goes my tear followed by a loud sob.

"Qiniso." I say in between my sob. Within a few seconds the door opens and it's Sli. She comes running to my direction to help me get up.

"Please don't do this to yourself." she says while wiping the tears off my face.

"I love him." I say.

"Hush now, I know you do and so does he." she says gently. While rocking me slowly. After a while I calm myself down and and stare at her.

"I'm going to miss you." I say while smiling through the pain.

"I'm just a phone call away." she says removing a tear from my face.

I place her hands on mine and stare at her till she looks away.

" Haibo mge why ngathi ufuning ncamaza?

I stare at her for a while and laugh while shaking my head. We head back to my room and continue with packing. Just then a wave of sadness takes over once I realize that this is my reality and the beginning of my tragic love story has come to an end. I heave out a sigh and continue placing in the last load of clothes in my suitcase. I look around the room Slindile is conversing with me meanwhile my mind is not present at the moment, I'm going to have to hire a truck to help transport my portraits back to North West but that's surely going to cost me an arm for a leg for traveling on road for more than 5 hours.

Finally we are done with packing. I have placed all my suitcases in the lounge, Slindile had to be excused to attend her son. I'm sitted on the couch crying my lungs out coming to the harsh reality that it's time to face my demons. I blame myself for everything! If I didn't go there maybe, well just maybe I wouldn't be unsure of this pregnancy, Qiniso and I would still be together. Well he came back to me and I ruined it. I ruined my chance to love again. It just amazes me how I have the courage to keep a baby I'm not even sure who the father is.

02

I just can't leave the province without leaving some memories behind, I'd rather leave with some positivity than bitter sweet memories. I'm standing in front of the mirror looking at myself. I curl up a weak smile just to affirm myself of how strong I am and to feel a little bit of light right now. My girls are coming in today and it will do me good to introduce them to each other. They have both played an important role in my life and as I have said I would rather leave the province with sweet memories.

" You've come a long way." I say to myself.

From being an independent woman to a mother, a woman without her man standing besides her. I release a tear that has been clinging on my eyelash and place my left hand on my tummy.

"It's just me and you baby." I say while rubbing my stomach.

Not after a while a knock on the door interrupts my thoughts.

Could it be him? I have a feeling it's him. I say to myself while hurrying to get the keys. I fiddle with the keys before opening the security gate but just before opening I exhale a deep breath trying to come up with a random speech as to how I want him to stay away from my baby and I but yet I need him in my life and so does this baby. I finally open the security gate.

"Ahhhh." she screams while holding up a bottle of red wine and juice . I look at her and scream too matching her energy and while at it I'm guessing the cranberry juice is meant for me, oh jeez how I actually crave the taste of wine just to release me from my Rollercoaster of emotions.

"Since it might be your last day here let's just drink all our problems away." she says after catching her breath. I open the burglar gate in a hurry with so much love in my heart right now.

We sitting on the couch talking about our problems. Well unfortunately I'm not even close to being sober since I'm drinking juice. Right now I am lending Sli my ear on what she is going through with her baby daddy.

"And the worst part is that I still love him,after all the cheating scandals I thought he would change his ways for me." she says with tears forming in her eyes.

I sit closer to her and hold her hand. Well

"He can't even support Sibonelo, everything is on me." she adds on and her tears are already mixed with her mucus.

"Inhliziyo yam ibhlungu." (My heart is painful.) she says. And already with that statement I'm a crying mess. A part of me does not wish to be in her position another part of me does not wish she had to endure all this pain but what bleeds out the

most is realizing that I'm going to end up like her, still in love with Qiniso but can't be together under circumstances. " I wipe my tears and so does she.

" Now enough with the self pity talk and let's have fun. " she says.

Before she could pour herself a drink of wine a knock erupts on the door. I prepare myself to get up but Sli stops me midway.

" I'll get that. " she says.

After a while of sitting on the couch curiosity fills in me. I hear footsteps coming my way and my head turns instantly wondering who it might be.

A few seconds ago sadness was plunged on our faces but here we are laughing away our problems. To add on to that I'm so glad she brought me some snacks too, these food cravings are taking a toll on me hey.

"I figured you would be craving some gummy bears, mommy to be." she says while sitting further away from me.

" You know me too well Amy." I say while overloading my mouth with a handful of gummy bears. The sweetness of the gummy bears just makes my heart feel at peace. I'm in my own world now.

"So aren't you going to introduce me?" she asks. I open my eyes and look at the two ladies shifting on the couch uncomfortable.

"Oh yeah." I say before clearing my throat.

"Well Amy this is Sli and Sli this is Amy." I say. They both look at me stunned. Well did I say something wrong. I shrug my shoulders and continue eating my gummy bears. I look up and find them sipping their wines uncomfortable.

"You surely do not know how to introduce your friends hey." says Sli. What does she expect me to say?

"She sure doesn't." replies Amy.

"Anyways hey girl I'm Slindile, nyaki's bad influence friend." she says. They exchange pleasantries as if they have known each other for a long time.

We back to our girl talk most specifically about Vusi, Slindile's baby daddy.

"Don't you think you need to tell him how you feel, after all he might still love you." says Amy.

"Nothing is going to change it's not like he will leave her for me after all I will always be his second best." she says then exhales deeply. And that's it. I just realized I was Qiniso's second best. I was not worthy for his love, his heart belonged to one person

only... His wife. I sigh then resume my attention back to my friend.

" He will come around friend. " I say.

"Amy how come you don't even talk about Jaden?" I say. She widens her eyes and stares at me dumbfolded.

"Yes I do know about that little crush you have on Jaden, I've been watching you." I say then giggly after. She gulps down her wine and pours herself another before answering.

"I'm waiting Missy." I say. She finally opens her mouth to talk.

"I don't think he even sees in that way, I'm just a receptionist and look at him, he is above me and I'm way out of his league." she says.

"No babe, look at you, you the hottest chick, if he won't even notice you then he surely does not deserve your love,its not a bad idea making the first move you know babe." I say. She nods her head and continues sipping on her wine.

"You know what, let's leave the boy talk alone since these boys can't even men up." I say trying to cheer them up.

"What we going to do instead is turn up by watching romantic movies and cuddle on the couch." I say with so much excitement. I just want to be babied hey.

"Uhm sure." they say awkwardly.

We laying down on the couch while watching a sad romantic movie, it's honestly sad. The girl died due to cancer an she only had a few months to live, so her and her boyfriend decided to get married but unfortunately a few hours after their wedding celebration she died on their wedding bed. I'm weeping my eyes off, I keep taking tissue after tissue to wipe my fallen tears.

"Do you mind." says Amy looking at me.

"But how... Why did she have to die and why aren't you guys crying." I ask.

"Well we not pregnant we just have fupa's. She replies with a laugh in between. I throw popcorn at her and she ducks quickly.

We continue the night off with movies and conversations in between.

03

I appreciate what these girls are doing for me after all the night is still young and yes I might be leaving but our friendship is not ending here anytime soon.

The sun rays disturb my sleep as it keeps shining on my eyes through my closed curtains. It takes time before I could open my eyes and once I do I'm met by my two ladies swept away by their sleep on the couch. I get up with the urge to pee. Once I'm done with my business, I wash my hands and head to the kitchen to look for something to eat. I woke up with quite an appetite. Since I haven't bought groceries. s I just have a few things in the fridge but I'm so not looking forward to what to do with them. I get out some teabags that are in the cardboard and make myself some tea. Once I'm done I head back to the couch and they still asleep. Seems like they will not be waking up anytime soon.

I head back to the kitchen boiling with anger once I've collected what I want I stand in front of Sli and Amy and bang the pots loud just so they can wake up.

While doing this it was quite funny seeing them not knowing what is going on. They are probably suffering from the after effects of alcohol.

"Yay uyarasa tuu!" (you making noise.) she says.

"Fuck, my head." says Amy.

After a while of them attacking me for what I did. I let out a sob.

"Haibo yini mgani." (what's wrong) asks Slindile.

"I'm hungry and there is nothing to eat." I say.

(this woman, you woke us up just because you hungry.) she says.

We are sitted in this restaurant, it's quite peaceful having breakfast close to the ocean view. Amy hooked us up to this restaurant. I'm drinking a latte while they are having cappuccino. As much as I've been having fun unfortunately this has to come to an end. I look around the restaurant in hope of maybe just maybe connecting my eyes with Qiniso. I keep roaming around the restaurant pleading with the Lord to make us find a way back to each other.

"You'd swear with the way you keep roaming your eyes around its like you are searching for someone." she says looking at me suspiciously. I giggle just to ease away my nerves.

"And that's definitely not it." I reply. After a while the waiter returns back to us to take our orders. Amy orders first. "I'll have

a sunnyside egg, bacon toast and two sausages on the side."
she says while handing back the order book.

"I'll have what she is having too." says Slindile. Now it's my turn to order I page through the book slowly deciding on what I will have and after a while of deciding I finally talk.

"I'll have a Greek salad, with two pieces of a quarter leg chicken lemon and herb,coleslaw, garlic bread and please bring me a diet coke too."i say. I hand back in the menu and look at them. Trust them to make you feel as if you a hippo. Amy reaches her hand to mine.

" You paying for your food right?" she asks.

" I thought you spoiling me. "I reply.

" Yeah uhm it was meant for breakfast not lunch. "she says while holding in her laughter.

Clearly they keep forgetting I'm eating for two.

Our food has arrived and I'm diving into my plate as if it's my last day eating food. This is exactly what I needed. And with the diet coke it will help just balance my weight a little. I feel myself getting full I order a bottle of water and ask for a doggy bag in the process. We continue to converse until we have reached a point to be on the road.

Slindile dropped my off at my apartment. Unfortunately they have to get busy with their lives too but I'm very grateful for them being with me every step of the way.

I'm staring outside my window listening to 90's rnb softly while watching kids roaming sound the streets, families being together and teenage couples kissing under trees. I chuckle lightly.

"Those were the days."i say to myself. This takes me back to the days I was still a teenager, when you fell in love with that one person and fantasized about spending the rest of your life with that person. I continue staring outside the window while taking in what the lyrics are saying.

"I lost a part of me

When you left, boy can't you see?

Boy, come back, baby, please

'Cause we belong together

Who am I gon' lean on when times get rough?

Who's gon' to talk to me 'til the sun comes up?

Who's gon' take your place, there ain't nobody there

Oh, baby, baby, we belong together"

I only think of you on two occasions

That's day and night (oh-oh)

I'd go for broke if I could be with you

Only you can make it right, make it right, make it right"

After a while of listening to the song I heave out a sigh and rub my stomach, the tears keep falling. I sit on my bed and look around, this is happening. I mean was this really love or lust? Was I meant to replace his wife or did he really want me?

It's time I accept that our journey ends here.

04

Hours have passed by, I've been searching for an affordable truck service that will help transport my items to North West and for sure this it won't be cheap travelling on road for more than 5 hours. I'm scrolling through different truck services and I am being observing of different truck rate services to see which is best to travel with and reliable. While living in South Africa anything can happen most especially to women whether they are traveling alone or not. It takes a while for me to figure which truck company I prefer heading to North West with. I toss my phone away from me and rethink my life once I get to North West. I have no problem going back home most especially I will need the help with this pregnancy and I will need to learn a lot from my parents but living there permanently is not what I need and my parents too. They too deserve time to themselves. After a while of evaluating my decisions from here on. I pick up my phone and decide right on the spot which truck service I'll be going with.

"Good evening, This is Ndumiso truck service, how may I help you?" she says on the other line.

"You are speaking to Nyakallo, I would like to use your service to transport my items to North West." I say.

"How many trucks would you like to make use of?" she asks. I look at my luggage and few portraits that I will be taking with me.

"One truck would be enough." I say.

"No problem mam, when should we bring the truck?"

"This coming Saturday." I respond.

"No problem mam, we will draft up a contract with the payment amount." she says.

We say our goodbyes before I hang up. Drafting an email would have been much better and I hope I won't be charged too much. I will pay a handsome amount due to the way they run their service so formal. I have one more day before leaving. I do not know what to do, I feel alone most especially with this pregnancy. I am not showing as yet funny enough I do not have quite severe symptoms. I get up from the couch and make my way to the kitchen to make myself a cup of tea. I avoid drinking too much that will lead my child coming out with a jaundice problem. Once I'm done I settle on the couch and read on a book. While doing so my mind keeps jogging off to Qiniso with an urge to reach out to him. I stop myself here and there and try to focus on the book which is quite interesting. It is more heartbreaking than romantic. A young woman had been molested by her step father from a young age and this

happened continuously what's more shocking is that her mother knew and encouraged the vicious act to happen all in the name of jewelry and lifestyle, she later on fell pregnant with her step father's child but nevertheless that child became her happiness, her light and peace. I stop reading midway and check on my phone. Well maybe just maybe I have a message from Qiniso, I scroll through my messages and land on our chats. I can see that he was online just a few minutes ago, I scroll up the chats from the beginning and read them, reminiscing of the little time we spend together and how we were so sure about each other but now here we are. A wave of emotions attack me. From the text messages we exchanged pouring out the depth of our love for each other. His active bar indicates that he is online, I got my hopes up into thinking that he will text me but it goes back offline and once more he is online but not for me. How my pride keeps getting in the way. I lock my phone and let my silent cries carry all my pain and heartbreak.

Qiniso's POV:

I'm back here again. This time around it feels different I long to be held. If only the time was different and she wasn't taken too soon. I wouldn't have been feeling like a failure, a failure of a

man and a father well possible father. I hold on to the bouquet of flowers and smile to myself. White roses were her favorite always were. Whenever I would arrive home late or land in carrying a bouquet of flowers was a tradition I instilled just to assure her that our love is endless and she is always in my mind, day and night. I walk over to the side of her grave removing each rose with a heart rending soul. With every rose down on her grave, I slowly place fresh roses singly. Heaven couldn't wait to take my love. I suspire before talking to her.

"Sthandwa saam, MaKhumalo." I say with a mile on my face. I surely was the luckiest man to marry her. Once I call onto her name I place another fresh rose on her grave.

" When times were rough, you held me high encountered with your love."I pause midway before finishing up my speech. I close my eyes to stop the tears from falling but instead I feel my heart closing up. I exhale once more before speaking.

" I can't do this life thing without you, I need you by my side, I need your love to keep me steady, I failed to love once more or was I just rushing?" I say with confusion.

"Why did you leave me in this world, what about ingan yam?" I say while placing my hand on my mouth to stop myself from sobbing.

"Through the darkness and through light there was only one person I could count on which was you, always was." I say taking out another rose from the bouquet placing it on her grave.

I stop to look at her angelic face engraved on her grave, she was once my love, with her love existed in my world. Maybe I don't know how to love again because she was all I needed in this life. Maybe I'm meant to be alone.

"You will always be in my heart, may heaven be your happiness and may your soul be filled with joy from the love that we shared, forever and always." I say taking out the last rose on the bouquet and placing it on her grave. Once I'm done I open the bottle filled with fresh water and pour it on her grave. Once I'm done I hop in my car and release it all. Sobbing to release the pain and hurt.

My heart hurts and bleeds out. We were and we are love. Maybe letting Nyaki go will bring peace in my heart, I don't need to hurt anyone anymore.

After a while of thinking I drive off the graveyard and head back home most specifically the one that does not feel like home at all.

05

Nyakii

Waking up in the wee hours of the morning is such hard work. Most especially having to drive a long route only to reach your destination in the evening. I switch off my alarm while glancing at the time. 04:50. I have little time to prepare for my journey on the road. I roll out of bed, prepare my outfit and head to the bathroom. Once I'm done taking my shower I pack all my toiletries back in my bag. I receive a call from the head of security informing me that the truck has arrived. I ask them to let them in, once they are in I open the burglar gate and head to their truck. Two men wearing their uniform are standing in front of me, I could easily recognize they work for ndumiso truck service, what a formal company even their employees have name tags attached to their uniform what an etiquette one's name is Lindo and the other is Muzi. I lead them to my apartment to put my luggage into the truck. Once they done taking the luggage off the room, I head back to my apartment just taking one last look before being on the road. I'll have to see what I do with some of my paintings in the truck. Once I'm done walking around the apartment I lock up and take the key to the security guy. Having to be pregnant and driving all the way to a different city is a risk that I'm willing to take since I do

not have enough money to hire somebody to deliver my car to North West.

We have been on the road for hours, having to stop here and there just to stretch. Honestly a part of me regrets being pregnant now I have to travel with a baby in me for hours with no rest till I reach my destination. I head out of the car to get some snacks at the garage and just stretch a little. Once I'm done paying for the snacks I sit in the car while having something to munch on. Less than 30 minutes I'm back on the road. My phone starts to ring via the Bluetooth connection, I press accept since it's from the men driving the truck.

" Mam we have a slight problem." once of the guy says on the other line.

"what seems to be the matter?" I ask.

"One of our wheel got punctured and we don't have a spare." he says

My breathing starts to escalate. I have no idea what is going to happen right now.

"Okay where are you?" I ask.

"We are 15 minutes away from entering Free state." he says.

"Okay I'll meet you there I'll be there shortly." I say.

Right now I'm stressed I don't know what to do, this car is not even big enough to carry all my luggage. Oh my, this is such a mess.

Qiniso

Being back at the office is refreshing, I have taken enough time to clear my head off my own personal situations. I take the file on my desk and page through it trying to understand our next project with Mrs Waltz. I could not even finish reading the rest of the file, it's not complete. What in the world do I pay Sharol for if she does not complete her work. A knock appears on the door, I raise my voice louder for the person to enter and oh well look at what the cat has dragged in. She is nearing me ranting about our expenses I stop her midway to interject my disappointment with the incompleteness of the file.

"Exactly what do I pay you for?" I ask. She looks at me dumbfounded.

"sir?" she says after a while of confusion.

I take the file off my desk as a sign to what I'm talking about.

"Here take this." I say.

She takes the file and reads through it.

"Does this file look complete to you?" I ask.

"Uhm sir that's all I could fill in regarding ways to fund them."
she says.

"And do you think they will allow us to fund their NGO, since we not showing how reliable we are?" she shakes her head.

"Excuse me am I taking to a robot perhaps." I say.

"no sir I'll figure it out." she says.

"You better, I'm not going to teach you how to do your job unless you feel as if you don't deserve this, do you understand."
I say.

"Understood sir." she says.

"Now leave." I say.

She leave my office in a hurry, I shake my head in disapproval.

Right after that another knock resurfaces. I look up and to my surprise it's Sfiso. A smile gets plastered on my face right after seeing my brother.

"Haibo bafo." I say getting up to give him a hug. We exchange pleasantries before I pour us a drink to sit down.

"It feels like I haven't seen you in a while." he says.

"Eish yeah it seems to be like that." I say after releasing a slight chuckle.

"How are you holding up?" he asks.

"Life goes on, It just feels so good to be back to work." I say.

"What about Nyaki?" he asks. The slight smile on my face disappears at the moment of her name. I exhale deeply deep in my thoughts. At times I do feel the urge to let my pride get out the way and be there for her. I don't want to end up like my father, being absent in my child's life. I take my whiskey and gulp it down in a second.

"Slow down now." he says.

"Angifuni khuluma naye." I say.

"You can't keep running away from this." he says.

"Are you here to interview me about my life?" I say.

He shakes his head. We stay in silence for a bit before I decide to break it off.

"You know sometimes I don't quite understand how you could be the opposite of what that scumbag of a father is" I say.

"Well unfortunately we can't choose who can and who can't be our family right?" he says

"Right, we can't." I say.

"You tend to hold a grudge on everyone just for one person's mistake yet you slowly becoming like him." he says.

"Trust me, if I was becoming like him I would have left many woman with my seeds to raise in them while being an absent father, im nothing like him."

"You are something else." he says, we chuckle at his statement.

"How is business going that side?" I ask.

"What can I say, it's the same as usual, just trying to score being the majority shareholder with regards to Diamondz" he says.

"And how's that going? Do you need more funds?" I ask.

"I have my own money and with Mr Talsman leaving his shares to his kid, I might need to get the damn company competing with a kid." he says which cracks me up.

"Don't undermine the damn kid., who knows you might work well in hand with him." I say. He raises his middle I finger at me. We continue conversing about random things just to bond a little.

Nyakii

The drive to where the truck service guys were was not that far, I park my car right behind their truck luckily we are not on the main road, both vehicles are parked on the side of a not used road well at that moment. I get out of my car and head to them. We check the wheel out a bit and not gonna lie I'm panicking slowly but surely, what is going to happen now since there is no spare and we can't return, that's a bit too far.

"Eish ringa nge boss mfethu." says Muzi

"Nguwe uzo khuluma Hai Mina." the other one responds well
Lindo.

Muzi takes out his phone and stands at a distance while talking to his boss on the phone. Once he is done he approaches us telling us that luckily Ndumiso is a few minutes away and might actually help us.

Fingers crossed that we will get the help we need.

What seemed to be minutes turned out to be a few hours but I'm not complaining now that he is here. Not exactly how I expected him to look but he has detailed facial features. Damn fortunate that he came with a bigger car although I'm not so sure if all my items will fit in his car.

"Oh Ms Maubeni." he says coming in for a handshake. We

exchange pleasantries while the guys offload everything into his car in a matter of minutes I'm surprised most things have fitted in, just a few bags will be stored in my boot. Just as I was about to get in my car he stops me.

"Excuse me you going to drive in your position?" he asks.

I look at him with the look stating that it's obvious.

"Yes I am." I respond

"That's quite a risk for a pregnant woman." I keep quiet.

"How about you drive with me while Lindo and Muzi drive your vehicle in that way you'll be safe and it will be much easier since the sun is about to set, you not behind the wheel." he says. I remain quiet still contemplating with what he is saying.

"After all if anything bad happens to you, the causes will be on me and I'll hate that to happen most especially to a pregnant woman." he adds on.

He has a point though hours were wasted due to this punctured wheel. I nod my head and walk behind him to his car we both get in his car and start the trip.

Qiniso

She walks in my office surely not confident with the document needed. Her shoulders are replaced, her walk is slow and her hands keep playing around the document. Once she is standing

in front of me I raise my hand for her to bring in the document. I hope everything goes well here. I open the document and to my surprise she finally got it right.

I nod my head in agreement with everyone.

"Get started with getting a meeting with her." I say.

"I will surely do that sir. " she says.

"While you at it draft a contract stating all that we cover and outline how this will help the NGO, make it seem like it's a donation." I say

"I'm on it sir." she says.

I nod my head as a form of acceptance and her leaving my office.

Establishing Africa's Legacy has been one of the greatest achievement ever, being there for the consumers just brings hope after all these kids need the right nutrients to maintain healthy lifestyles. With the exchange rate increasing on a daily we try to make our prices affordable although it's not easy our fruits are used for various options even world known businessman use them to produce wine make juices as well as alcohol. Africa's legacy is the future we all need and I'm proud as to where it is going.

Mbatha

I've been cooped up in my office trying to figure this out, I'm on my last living days and I can't get my head around. I was absent for most of his life, he did not deserve this at all. I hurriedly get to my cabinet open it and pour myself whiskey taking in the bitter taste of it, I pour another glass and head to the couch in my office.

Flashback

"Alright I'm sorry!! I've paid for my sins what more do you want from me?" I say.

"Hell no mbatha, I did everything for you, I left my family to be with you even with after all the things you put me through I stayed, and now this we haven't even dealt with the loss of our child yet you already had the damn nerve to impregnate another woman!" She says with tears leaving her eyes and with hiccups in between.

" Ufuna ngiyenzi sengimhlale wena isigebengu(I have abandoned the damn bastard for you!) I say.

"Nami angikubuzanga kodwa why mbatha why!" (I did not ask you, why mbatha) she says her lips begin to tremble with the

wetness of her tears landing on the side of them. I try to step closer but with each step bearing to her she moves back.

She sits down on the couch with her thoughts roaming around this seeing my wife hurt just brings guilt for the betrayal I have brought onto her.

"Ngiyaxolisa " I say after a long pause of just looking at her.

She looks at me and remains quiet for a while, she opens her mouth to speak but nothing comes out.

"Sekuyiminyaka ungangihloniphi uma kungezona izingubo zangaphansi ezisele ekamelweni lethu, nakanjani owesifazane uyaneliseka ehhovisi lakho, awungithandi futhi yilokho okwaziyo uma ubamba." For years you've disrespected me, if it's not underwears left in our bedroom it's definitely woman getting satisfied in your office, you don't love me and that's all you know when you caught... You sorry) she says wiping off her fallen tears leaving me speechless in the same spot. She leaves my office whilst I'm in thought for all the shit I've put her through.

***End of flashback. ***

I sit on the couch reminiscing about the times I've hurt my wife dearly and it's quite shocking that after all I've out her through she stayed, she still continues to look over my shit and love me. I got my whickey on my hand before I could bring it close to

my lips to take a sip my hands start to shake badly, oh shit it's happening again this time even more drastically bits of the liquid keep spilling. I bring my hand closer to my desk to get my pills it's such a hard task doing so I reach for my pills and open the sacket hurriedly some of the pills even fall from the palm of my hand. I put them in my mouth and gulp them down with the butter liquor. The shaking still happens but it seizes I lean back on the couch and catch my breath. I just can't keep living like this. I close my eyes for a few seconds while so a light knock interrupts my thoughts I open my eyes and see my wife nearing. She sits next to me and takes my hand in hers.

"Mbatha." she says softly.

"How long have you been asleep?" she asks.

"I was just resting my eyes." I say. We stay in complete silence until I decide to break it.

"Why didn't you leave me?" I ask.

She squeezes my hand a bit but not too much and takes long to reply she opens her mouth and releases a sugh after.

"I don't know." she says.

"I guess love is to blame." she adds on. I take her hand and kiss it then rub it with mine.

"I love you dearly so and I'm sorry once more." I say. She smiles lightly before resting her head on my chest.

Nyakii

We are sitted in the car in complete silence, I keep taking glances at him he has such strong facial features that I can't seem to ignore.

" Mind spilling what's on your mind?" he says.

"No thank you." I say.

He nods his head and we continue to drive in silence.

After a while he makes a stop at a garage.

"Would you like me to get you anything?" he asks.

Ive been craving coffee since this morning so why not.

" Coffee please. "I say.

He looks at me then at my belly.

" Pregnant woman aren't supposed to be drinking caffeine, it's quite harmful for the baby. " he says.

My pregnancy journey is not as smooth as its supposed to be, a mother to be that does not know much about pregnancy health is quite heartbreaking. I look down at my belly. I never thought thatdrinking coffee whilst pregnant would be a problem back when I was working at Africa's Legacy I would

drink coffee as it would be one of my cravings I guess I would have to stop on that.

"Should I get you anything?" he asks again I shake my head at his question.

"No thank you." I say.

"Alright." he says before getting out of the car. He comes back after a while carrying two muffins and two cups of warm drinks. He gets in the car and hands me the cup and gives me the two muffins to eat on.

"But I didn't ask for anything." I say.

"Eat up snack on something for a but." he says.

I express my gratitude and indulge on the muffins. For some reason it's like I've been craving muffins once they are in my mouth I just can't stop chewing them. I'm almost done on my first muffin right at that I take in the warm drink and open it to see what it is.

"Tea?" I say looking at him.

He says nothing still driving to our destination.

I take the two sachets and fill them up in the tea and I continue snacking on my remaining muffin.

Qiniso

I get in the car and drive off to the farm, it's quiet a secluded area from the city and it's far to mention at that. I drive through the long road that is filled with silence, my mind keeps revolving on everything that has happened these past few months. Living in a city like Durban can be very busy and fast more especially for those that are new in the city I chuckle at the thought of Nyaki easily adjusting to the life of Durban, a tswana woman living in the Zulu land wow. I switch off the radio at times peace and quiet is all that matters. To say I'm closer to reaching the farm would be an understatement. I drive quietly through the silent road till my phone decides to ring. I click on the answer button since it's connected to the car without looking who is calling on the other side.

"Qiniso." he says.

"Ufunani." I say. Once after recognizing his voice.

"Ngicela sihlangane." he says but whilst saying that he coughs here and there.

"Listen here and listen carefully you are nothing to me, yezwa there is no link between you and I, stop ruining my life (I'm not your son). I say

" Qiniso (listen) before he could finish his sentence I hang up the call and continue with my drive with my hands tightly holding the steering wheel, and my eyes fixed on the road.

I have arrived at the farm, this is the farm that build Africa's Legacy from the ground into the legacy it is now with the fresh fruits produced here it has been made easily for people to enjoy them without being injected by chemicals just to enlarge and multiply them we let them grow in their right full seasons then after that they are taken into the factory for the packaging then sold into stores.

"Tyler." I say once I get to him we share a handshake.

"Mr Khumalo." he says. Tyler has worked on the farms for a long time I'd say 2 decades, well unfortunately he has

emphasized that he does not want anybody else to work with him of course I had to persuade him into getting somebody to help since he is not getting any younger.

"It's been a while since you came down to the farm." he says.

"Yeah man being a business man has been hectic." I say.

"On that note, I want you to come have a look at these." we walk towards the fruits that are packed in baskets that are yet to be taken to the factory. The oranges and apples have grown so hugely and what surprises me is that they have grown a little bit faster. I pick up one of the apples and look at its proportion.

"Weirdly enough they grew quite fastly and this is not their season." I say.

"By this time they should have been small." he says.

"I like this this is good progress, for a minute there I thought you would have injected these fruits." I say.

He laughs at what I say.

"I'd never do that, trust me you have emphasize enough that you don't want these fruits to be injected with chemicals." he says. i trust Tyler he knows his job, he has been working for me for a really long time too.

Nyakii

With every distance passed an hour goes down, it's going to be sunset soon. But the fun part of that is that we have arrived in North West, it definitely wasn't an easy ride with the stops at engine garage just to release my bladder and stretch my legs we have finally arrived. Right now I have to direct him to the city I live in. He has been quite in the car hasn't spoken a word, I guess he is not much of a talker.

We have finally arrived, I direct him to my house. I get out my phone and call my dad.

"Papa I'm outside please open the gate for me ." I say.

"Wirang montle hao sebetse?" (What are you doing outside aren't you working?) he asks

"Ke tla o hlalsetsa ko ntlong." (I'll explain everything inside.) I say.

"Ketla nou." (I'm coming now.) he says. I drop the call and wait for him to open the gate once he does we get in with the truck company behind us.

My father waits for us to get out and once we out I explain to him what happened right after that my mother gets out the house but as I explain worry surfaces on her face.

"You know it's not safe driving alone whilst pregnant that's a risk you took." she says.

"I know ma but I really needed to be home just to get away from anything." I say

They both look at the man standing right next to me.

"This is Ndumiso he is the owner of the truck company luckily he was on the road and we could travel with his car." I say.

"Maybe you should have a look at your trucks incase of faulty gears." says my father with a serious tone.

"I sure will sir I assure you this is the first and definitely the last time any event like this will ever occur." he says. My father assists the service providers out my luggage in the house, mother is standing right besides me.

"We are very grateful for bringing our daughter home safely." says my mother.

"It's no problem I wouldn't mind helping at all." he says.

He turns to look at me.

"Regarding the payment don't worry about that, I'll take care of it no need to pay." he says. I look at him dumbfounded because no company would say no to money.

"Really I don't mind paying half." I say.

"It's really no problem." he says his phone begins to ring.

"I have to take this call " he looks at my mother and I.

"Please do stay well and take care I have to get going now." he says placing his phone on his ear. I watch him get in his car and take off with the other two drivers riding behind him.

"Africa's Legacy has been doing so well for too long now. Seeing a black man build a business from the ground to where it is now needs to be celebrated at any given chance." he says. Arnold Shank one of South africa's richest entrepreneurs from the mining industry. Well it is quite obvious that the white is the most privileged in our country but I admire this man's dedication on making the mine industry a part for the black peoples lives. He lives his life on equility and fairness but those two words are hardly known in the business world, how we did it to be one of South africa's richest entrepreneur? We'll never know.

" I took it upon myself to cater healthy food to our consumers most especially when the inflation prices are going high and they are being chemically enhanced atleast we have good customer service for them to lean on and depend on." I say. He drinks his whiskey and looks at me.

" Now that's how it's done in the business world through the skills of persuasion and manipulation. "he says.Entering the business world has its darkness that only a few businesses can succeed if used the right way.

" So Cape Town this weekend. "he says. I heave out a sigh.

" Unfortunately I have work to get on with. "I say.

" It is needed to show the appreciation of your hard work and passion into making your company a success. "he says.

" Well they clash with my schedule."I say.

" That can always change. "he says getting up to leave.

" I'll see you at the award ceremony Mr Khumalo. "he says.

I shake my head and proceed with getting my work done.

Nyakii

Being at home has been therapeutic. Time away from the busy life was needed indeed. Knowing my mom she will prepare a several colour meal every day no matter what day it is and I missed my mother's cooking. I can't keep up with the pots and having her around has lessen my cooking problems. I'm done eating so I get to the kitchen to put my plate away. My parents are in the lounge. Growing up when the TV volume was low and my parents sitting in silence would mean I'm in trouble and this right here is the sign. I walk slowly towards the lounge. I walk slowly towards the lounge. Father begins to lean forward

placing his elbows on his thighs looking at me. I shift my eyes away from him giving mother side looks but I can see that her gaze is on me.

"Why did you come home?" he asks.

"It felt like it's been a while since I have seen you guys and I just missed being home." I say after a while.

"Don't lie." he says.

My palms have began to be sweaty and I keep on wiping them on my pants.

"I got fired." I admit.

"Why?" he asks.

I remain quiet not because of respect but because of the embarrassment of my actions. It hasn't even reached two years yet the job that I thought I was going to earn for a lifetime became my downfall.

"I asked you a question." he says.

I still remain quite but it feels like the tears has found the way out of my eyes.

"I messed up." I say looking at him. He looks at me then at my belly.

"I see." he says. Suddenly the room is in silence.

"Lerato laka speak to your daughter." he says before leaving the room.

My mom looks at me but I can't look at her for a long period and that's when I decide to break the eye contact.

"Where did it all go wrong." she says.

Where did it all go wrong? Indeed where did it? When did falling in love if I must say became the downfall of us. How did it become toxic for us to handle instead of trying to find a way forward.

"I don't know." I say.

"Is it his? The married man's child?" she asks.

"Yes it's his." I say holding my belly.

"How do you feel breaking another woman's marriage?" she asks. Her question contains disappointment in it.

"His wife died before I could know her, he was a widower." I say.

I sense some relief in her face.

"Why didn't it work out?" she asks.

The more tears I keep on wiping with my hands the more they keep fading from my eyes.

"It wasn't meant to be." I say finally admitting the hard truth.

"All will be well, you should go rest up now." she says. I get up from the couch and get to my room. The minute I close the door I'm on the floor mourning what could have been if it wasn't for my stupid mistake. If only if only things did not turn out the way they did. If only...

10

Qiniso

Our trip to Cape Town was short I didn't even realize that we arrived I've been busy with my emails ever since this morning. What caught my attention was the sceneric view of table mountain. That definitely caught my attention. The more I land in this city the more it feels like I've just arrived here for the first time.

"Mother land." says Arnold.

"The city of Hope... Good hope." I say. We both get our glasses and drink from them.

"Great minds open doors of opportunity." he says referral to the award ceremony.

"With the time used to be making speeches that will encourage the audience just for a mere 30 seconds could have helped a family out there, I still don't get the use of awards if we are doing what we are supposed to be doing." I say. People might look at this with a different eye from me but I will never understand the use of giving awards to entrepreneurs that know what they doing and know very well that behind the fasade exploitation and greediness exists in their soul.

" Take it as a reward for your hard work, now let's enjoy the scenery." he says.

I can't keep my eyes off the beautiful weather and beauty of the city. After a few minutes we land at the airport, we check out and head to the hotel we will be using. I make a mental note to drive around khayelitsha and offer a helping hand for the people there.

The ceremony will be happening tomorrow, I called Alex, the best designer in town to make my suit. But before that I still have enough time to check my emails on the good that have to be exported to Europe. I log into my emails and before I could click onto the emails sent from our local supermarkets, there stood an email of her resignation letter. These past few days my mind has been juggling the fact that what is done is done and all that happened remains in the past but I can't help it. I take out my phone and search her on facebook. I miss seeing her smile light up when we lick eyes and when her sweet melodic voice does wonders to my ears. Her touch on me and her soft skin that makes me want to feel her. My mind jolts down to the day I saw her heavily pregnant, her eyes will always be a scarful reminder of the hurt I put her through. A knock interrupts me from my thinking process I head to the

door and open it finding Alex walking in my room with outfits he has.

"Khumalo when last did I see you." he says.

"Looking handsome as always." he adds. Alex is gay but through my working experience with him he has never given me a reason to feel uncomfortable around him. Matter of fact I care deeply about him

"Alex it's been a while." I say nearing to the clothes.

"Where have you been hiding, I mean look at that dangling face of yours that could be eaten anytime." he says. I laugh at him while shaking my head at the nonsense he says.

"Still haven't changed I see." I say.

"Never will and definitely will not for you boo." he says.

"So what do you need?" he asks.

"Thought you'd never ask." I say. He rolls his eyes and folds his hands.

"Make it snappy." he says.

"I have to attend an award show this Saturday, I just need something that'll look good on me and that will bring the attention to me." I say.

"Definitely make all the ladies want to have a taste of you, let's get busy darling." he says.

We get busy with my measurement sizes and he let's me fits a few outfits. Some are over the top but what can I say this is Alex we talking about.

Mbatha

"Mbatha you need to go to the hospital this is becoming serious now." she says with concern filled in her eyes.

" I'll... Be... Okay." I say trying to say a full sentence while coughing in between.I remove my handkerchief from my mouth and I see drips of blood on it. I look up to her face and tears have began to fall like a waterfall.

" Woza la." I say.

She comes closer to me in a hurry.I take a deep breathe in and out.

"What is happening to me is karma for all the trouble I caused to his mother, death is coming my way." I say.

"Mbatha don't say that, we will hire the best doctors to help you sthandwa saam you will heal." she says holding my chest.

"I will be healed when he has finally forgiven me."

"Look at you, you can't keep punishing yourself for the past."
she says.

"MakaSifiso nothing you say will change my mind." I say
change my mind." I say.

"I need you, your son needs you." she says.

"Even in death I'll look after you but right now I all I need is
forgiveness." I say while sipong her tears.

She holds my hand tightly looking at me deeply.

11

Qiniso

The award show will be this Saturday basically tomorrow. I've found the perfect suit just exactly how I wanted it to be done. Off black with a bit of silk black on the collar which goes with the sides of the pants that have silk on it too.

"All thanks to me that you look this good I mean look at the works of my hands." he says.

"This is impressive I love it." I say.

" That's why I'm the best designer in this country." he says

"There is no lie in that." I say.

"Honey I have to get going, I am demanded by everyone." he says rolling his eyes.

"Better make sure I look much more impressive than them." I say

"Sure will." he says giving me a hug before leaving the room. I ring the bell to order some room service for myself, a cup of coffee will do haven't had some in a while. Once my order has been taken in, I receive a call from Arnold, what is it this time.

I've taken his offer of attending this event he surely wants something else.

"Arnold." I say heading to the balcony. What I appreciate about my team is that they managed to book me into one of the most scenic places in Cape Town a bit further from the beach yet when taken a picture the sunset and the reflection of the waves gel together beautifully.

"Khumalo I might have something in mind." he says. I heave out a sigh.

"Do you mind getting out with it?" I say.

"Let's hit the club." he says. I let out a laugh.

"Nice one Arnold you got me there." I say

"For a businessman you should tell the difference between a joke and a statement." he says.

"And as a businessman you should know the difference between play time and work time." I say.

"Well I surely do we can't be in Cape Town just for an important night, we need to celebrate your achievement." he says.

"You suite certain that I am going to win this award." I say.

"I quite am... So what do you say maybe we can get some chocolate that will ease out the toughness in you." he says.

"You gotta be kidding me, don't include me in your business of mixing chocolate and vanilla together." I say.

"It has a way o f working out."he says. I'm not up for it, hags the proposal to someone else. "I say.

" Oh well if you say so. "he says. We get off the topic and focus much more on work related stuff.

Nyakii

Excuse me for stalking my baby daddy but I just couldn't help it. I keep asking myself over and over again if I will ever heal from this. My heart seems to be torn into a million pieces yet none of them will have a further direction for me. Knowing Qiniso he is not a big fan of social media but I keep finding myself on his business websites and business accounts seeing his pictures smiling and his eyes glowing with the slide pictures when giving a helping hand to those in need just melts my heart. I wish I could be by his side through it all. While looking through his page a call comes through. It's an unknown number and I don't usually answer unknown numbers. I let my phone ring yet the person on the other line keeps calling. I answer the call on the second ring.

"Hello." I say. The person on the other line remains quiet.

"Hello?" I say again hoping that this person will hear me and answer me.

"Qiniso" I finally say, I have a gut feeling that it's him or maybe it's not. I hear breathing on the other line and right after that the person hangs up. Could that be Qiniso I have a gut feeling that it was him well I wish it was him. I wouldn't mind being on the call with him yet all that I hear is our breathing as we both sigh deeply.

12

Qiniso

I couldn't do it. I just could not bring myself to answer to her. I tried to be distant from her but another part of me does not want to repeat the generational curses that have been taken place. I don't want to be like Mbatha. I want to be right next to her. I should be next to her helping her every step of the way throughout her pregnancy. I want to be a present father for my child. I don't want what I went through to allow my children to go through the same thing.

I get away from the balcony and open up my bottle of water. The MacBook on my table vibrates, I head to the dining table to see what it is. I've been nominated as one of the best export growth and best customer focus along with other successful entrepreneurs. To say that I stick in my own land and this shows that my company is doing well is all that matters to me.

I have six hours to go before the ceremony could begin I'm not in a hurry at all but first as I said it's time I drive around khayelitsha and offer a helping hand.

It's really sad that the majority in Cape Town live in poverty. What angers me the most is that the middle and high class is just a few roads away From Khayelitsha. The government has failed its people young kids have to walk on rocks to reach the other side to collect water, water that is mixed with sand which is the same water used for cooking and bathing. I turn my head around ready to leave but a little kid approaches me.

"Are you that big man that gives people food." he says. Judging by his height I think he might be eight or nine years old. I bend a little to reach his level.

"Yes boy that's me." I say

"Are you going to give us food too?" he asks. I can't help but melt inside by his eyes reaching for hope.

"Would you like that?" I ask. He nods repeatedly.

"Yes my sister does not have much but we try." he says.

He is a smart little child but what can I say growing up in bad conditions and environments forced you to grow faster.

"I am here to help." I say.

"What is your name?" I ask.

"Mondli." he says.

"That's a nice name. I say.

" Let's see what I have for Mondli." I say. I dig in my pocket to get a few notes out.

" This may not be enough but this might help you with what you need best belief that I will do more than this. "I say ready to give him the notes but instead he is pushed away from me by a young woman.

" What did I tell you about talking to strangers? "she says looking at Mondli.

Mondli sulks while looking down.

" He was just trying to help sisi. "he says.

" Go back home now Mondli. "she yells at him. He walks at from us.

" Ngiyaxolisa mama I was just offering a hand. "I say.

" We don't need your help just because we live differently from how you live does not mean you must pity us. "she says with her arms folded and her eyebrows furrowed. I nod my head. She has beautiful eyes though. I'd probably get lost in them the more look any further.

" I understand unfortunately those were not my intentions. "I say.

" I don't care. "she says.

" Qiniso "I say offering my hand to her for a handshake.

She looks at my hand then up to my face then she proceeds to walk away clicking her tongue. I catch a few words from her saying that they are not garbage or whatever she said.

I get back to my car, I take out my cell phone and call to order some men to have a food give away every week at Khayelitsha. The cost and time consumption will be delt on later.

13

Nyakii

My parents have both left for work, I'm all alone. Mom was fussing about me if I will be able to cope alone while she is at work but I assured her that I'll be fine. I got most things done, I've done my chores and I am still satisfying my cravings by eating everything my baby craves for. I'm actually grateful for my friends for constantly checking up on me and making sure that I am okay. I can hear my baby kicking here and there but today he seems to be the most active, I rub my tummy and smile a little. A part of me knows that I am carrying a boy, well indeed I am. That's what I am hoping for. I get the remote and turn on the television after pressing the information button seeing the date reminded me that today is the business award celebration day. It will be on national television at around eight o'clock. My mind takes me back to Qiniso and knowing how much of a hardworker he was I do know that he will win this award, he puts his pride in for Africa as a whole and I love that about him. I carry on with what I am doing but before that I book a reminder for tonight's show. I am quite interested on what will happen tonight.

All I've been doing today is cleaning and keeping myself busy while reading books. I hear a knock on the door I get up to open the door.

" Hao MaMolepe." I say shocked to her being here.

"Nyakallo kgale ke Sao bone. Bona fela o godile byang. (It's been a while since I've seen you, look at you all grown.) she says.

" Aowa Mma ke niti. (That's true.) I say. I make way for her to enter and when she does I give her a hug careful not to be tight.

"Your mother said I'd find you here." she says.

"Oh thank you for the check up." I say.

"I'm not only here to check up on you." she says.

I interrupt her a bit before she could talk.

"Should I prepare you some tea and biscuits, it does sound serious." I say.

"I'd love that my child." she says. I head to the kitchen to prepare some tea and biscuits. I light the kettle and get a bowl, I put in some biscuits get out a tray and put the sugar on the tray as well at the cup containing the hot liquid and lastly I warm up the milk before I head back to the lounge. Warming up milk reminds me of the days when I was still a teenager when my mother told me that it makes the warmth of the tea last longer and it's much more nicer in winter. She thanks me

for the offer. I sit opposite her hesitantly on what she has to say.

"Your mother has spoken to me about your return back here and that you have faced some challenges." she says. I nod my head while drawing small circles on my thigh to calm myself.

"She has asked me to help you." she says.

"Help me?" I ask.

"Yes I have known you since you were a child to be an active person and you staying at home is not something that you like doing." she says. All that she has mentioned is true. I grew up with MaMolepe and she knows me from all angles, she is not just our neighbor but she is our family too. I have so much respect for her. Most times when I was sick, she would offer to look after me while my parents went to work.

"I remember how I was when I was a child." I say.

"That's true ngwanaka." she says. I look at her and her cup while she takes it to her lips to take a sip of the hot liquid.

"There is a position at the supermarket for you." she says. I shoot my eyes at her. It came off as a surprise.

"I know your in no condition to be cleaning the floors and I would hate for you to do that." she says.

" Luckily a few weeks ago someone resigned and the position is still on the line to work at the till, I know it's not mu-" she says but I interrupt her.

"No it's more than enough ma, I would appreciate anything and I am grateful." I say.

She looks at me and smiles.

"My child you may start next week for this week I want you to settle in at home." she says.

"I am more than okay ma, I would actually like to start as soon as possible whether that be tomorrow." I say.

She looks at me before she could say something.

"Okay but just know that everything will fall into place trust in the Lord." she says. I look at her and give her a faint smile.

"Tswanetse ke tsamaye (I have to get going) For now rest up I don't want you injuring my grandchild." she says.

I walk her out of the door with hope instilled in me. That's what I have been looking for... Hope.

Sandiswa

"Sibulelo hurry up, we are about to be late for school." I yell. He has been in the bathroom combing his hair for the past 20

minutes and by the looks of it, seems like we will be arriving to school late yet again.

"Boy if you don't get down here right now I am going to drag you down." i say. I make my way to the bathroom and knock on the door, after a few knocks he opens and as I was ready to burst into anger he melts my heart with his smile as always. I smile back at him and shake my head.

" You need to stop doing that, I don't want you getting detention at school do you hear me?" I say.

He nods his head.

"Yes mom I will prepare myself earlier." he says.

"And this is the last time Sibulelo i always have to wait for you wasting 20 minutes of my times to be at work." I say.

"I'm really sorry mom." he says omce more. I can only think to myself how he is such a respectful boy and when the times comes it will come crumbling done on me when he will want his father involved in his life.

I fetch the keys on the counter and my handbag locking the door before i can get in the car no matter what I will always try to make ends meet when it comes to Sibulelo because I will forever play both roles of being his mother and his father.

.....**The End**.....

