

A Ray of Sunshine

°°PROLOGUE°°

"Funeka, Johannesburg is a big city. It is filled with different people with all kinds of attitudes, every single day you'll meet people who lives a life that is far different from yours. The life can be catchy, shinny that you'd also envy it but remember, you are there on your own mission. To make your dreams come true... "

Martha engulfs her only hope, her only daughter in a bone crushing hug and allow her self to cry.

" I won't disappoint you mama, I promise you"

In between sorbs and sniffings Funeka utters.

"Respect Betty as you respect me"

A sudden hoot of a taxi disturbs the emotional moment, it breaks apart a mother and a daughter, it shortens the goodbye hug, forcefully grabbing what should have been a longest goodbye into a shortest one..

"don't forget to pray. I love you Fuze. My very own social worker"

Funeka sat by the window on the second row of the taxi, diving deep in her thoughts, wondering if she made the right choice by leaving her mother behind, her whole life, her friends and the only place she called home.

If it was upto her she would stay but Martha insisted, she is a mother who wants what's best for her child.

She's lived her whole life in Mtubatuba, kwaMsane.

Being the only child, she grew up making as many friends more than anyone else, she did well in high school and moved to do Bachelor of Social work in a local university, the University of Zulu land.

Yes she has seen the bubbles of Varsity life, she has partied, drank, failed some modules and lived a little but who's never been scared of the unknown.

She closes her teary eyes and hope for the best, who knows maybe Johannesburg might just be a ray of sunshine, a beggining of something great.

Her dreams awaits her..

A RAY OF SUNSHINE

°°ONE °°

Bassonia, Johannesburg South.

The sun has set below the horizon.

"Traffic is a nightmare at this time of the day"
Complaints Betty, Martha younger sister

"I can tell," added Funeka, unsure of her response. She hasn't seen Betty in a while. Even a simple conversation with her seems like a whole mission.

"I'm not surprised though with countless people coming from work"

Funeka flashes a smile and looks outside the window allowing the strong manly fragrance looming inside the car to invade her nostrils even more, shifting a bit on the comfortable seats. She arrived around 4 O'clock here in Johannesburg, Betty came to get her at the Taxi

Rank.

"I wonder if Zamani is back from his business trip. If he is, you'll get to meet him. I must warn you though, he is kind of scary when quite but once he starts opening that hole below his cute, pointy nose, he becomes a cute bear " she utters, a sparkle flashes in her eyes accompanied with a blush, you can tell that she is still very much in love.

Betty doesn't mind talking from sunrise till sunset. It's her specialty and what drove her into Marketing, selling ideas to clients and making them as reliable as she could.

It is already dark as they reach the luxurious double storey house, in a quite yet beautiful neighbourhood, Bassonia.

The long black gate opens revealing an

outstanding huge green yard, a three tier fountain is inviting and a beautiful sight for sore eyes as it stands at the centre.

As Funeka jumps off the cosmos black, GLA 200 Mercedes she stands still looking like a new student in the middle of a class, carrying her small hand bag. Betty jumps off as well and heads to the boot

After taking out the suitcase she led her out of the Garage to the front door. There is a door inside the Garage connected with the kitchen but she prefers the front door...

Bettina lives here. She has been ever since she got married to Zamani, they have one child together, Ntsikayomzi.

However Zamani does have older sons who aren't Betty's.

Martha and Betty are siblings that don't have a tight relationship but they do have each other's backs when needed.

Hence she asked for help, to provide a place to stay for her daughter until she finds a job

"Hey, Funeka is that you. My God you've grown"

Nsika jumps on Funeka with a tight hug almost sending her to the ground. He is young than her but very taller

"Oh sis, I'm so glad you are finally here"

Again she smiles, blinking her big hazel eyes

"Let her breath already Nsika, you're choking the poor girl" Betty intervenes, sharing a soft laughter

The interior is to die for as they manoeuvre inside a magnificent sitting room.

She feels propelled to shoes off

The wall decorated with family pictures and from them she can tell that these people value family

"wait. Is that my photo?" She is in a graduation gown, while she was still in primary school.

She remembers this day like it was just yesterday

Her mother had promised that her father would come but he never did and she was sad an entire time

"Hey, are you okay" she quickly blinks tears and turns back smiling.

"I'm fine, where is the bathroom? "

Ntsika takes her hand leading her to a left corridor passing two bedrooms

He points the bathroom and she quickly rushes in and closes the door behind her.

It never heals! Why can't it just heal?

She holds onto her mouth as she silently cries, tears falling down her face. The little girl in her is still hurting, she still craves her father's love.

All the primary pictures were removed from the wall at her home because they were a trigger.

Her heart piercing sobs are becoming louder, Ntsika budes in and just stands next to her, he wants to hug her but end up brushing her

shoulders.

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°°FUNEKA°°

"I can't believe your father didn't come back as promised. I really miss him" Ncane says, she really looks heartbroken. We are seated in the dining room, I'm watching as they are devouring on a mouth watering supper.

"a day without that grumpy man of yours is joyous to me, mama bear" he says

Thier talks go on and on.

Both of them are so talkative and loud.

I'm just a spare wheel looking out of place. I can't even eat, been poking the food since it

was put before me.

"Funeka, aren't you hungry baby?" Ncane questions, now they are both staring at me with their big, clear eyes. Ncane is just so humble and looks like a sweet woman. I wonder why they aren't too close with her sister

" I'm just not feeling well. Might be the longest trip" I say

She smiles warmly, her caramel skin is just so fresh complimenting her smile. She doesn't look like she's above forty years.

"It's okay, you can eat your food in the morning then. Go to bed and take a bath"

I'm about to stand up when deep voices suddenly erupts, then I hear the door opening

"Bad timing as always, your children mama!

They will rob us one day and we will wake up in an empty house I tell you. " Ntsika utters.

The moment they appear I just know that this family is just strange.

The one with dreads is carrying a full laundry basket which I assume has unwashed clothes with the way they are unfolded and untidy.

The other one with a clean haircut is carrying about five dirty Tupperwares, all lined up from his hands up to his chin holding them still. He can't even stand properly

"struggles of being a mother. You cook for them even when they don't live with you anymore and you bare their dirty clothes and dirty dishes.

Funeka baby, meet my twin boys Mongezi and Mazisi" They are too good looking and identical, light skinned but very tense and

unapproachable

"Welcome home sis." They simultaneously say to me, weird.

"thank you"

"This is for you, I'll give you something nice tomorrow" the one with dreads says, putting a laundry basket next to me, grinning like a lunatic.

"And this is a welcome present sis! I love you dear sister" dishes are being put on top of the basket.

What? I mean we are meeting for the first time, they can't be doing this to me.

"No No! You are not doing this to my baby girl. Never! You will take these back with you when you done eating"

Ncane says, with a straight face

"Come on Mah!" again, they simultaneously shout, their deep voices too loud for my poor ears. No one seems to mind this, except me.

"She is our little sister and little sisters take care of their older brothers. Right Funei nei"

Okay, I already hate deadlocked men.

"Tskek wena rasta, where is Zabelo?"

Who is Zabelo?

"Don't know, don't care"

And just like that the diner table is even louder and full of laughs.

What a warm welcome!

A rumbling stomach wakes me from a deep slumber. I'm hungry, way too hungry and I can't sleep when I'm this empty.

I should have brought food in my bedroom, but

that would be strange because this house is squeaky neat. It doesn't look like they allow such. It will create cockroaches, I think.

I'm so used to taking food in my bedroom and eating during the night, this bad habit grew on me back in Varsity.

I should have forced food down my throat but I couldn't. My father's subject always does that to me.

The outside lights are giving a full insight of the interior as I manoeuvre my way to the kitchen.

Something catches my attention.

My heart skips as I come across a shadow in the middle of the kitchen

I'm slowly reversing out when it starts charging towards me

"Aaaaaaaahhh!" Out of my voice I scream, fear crippling me straight in my legs.

My fighting instinct are always awaiting so I quickly grab something near me and throw it as hard as I can.

A loud bang breaks

"Auch!"

A huskier voice exclaims in anger and pain. The shadow seems to be losing balance, sashaying around. Now I can't move

Is this side not supposed to be the safest neighbourhood? First day in Joburg I'm already fighting thieves... .

I can't stay here, I can't.

"Oh God! What's going on here?"

The lights quickly comes on, my eyes lock with an an eifel tower of human before me, a murderous stare is directed to me making me shrink, I feel my inside turning.

"Oh Zabelo. You are here again, attacking my kitchen at night. Jesus! Are you hurting? Funeka baby, did he scare you?"

His stern gaze remain on me, if I was a man I'd be picking up my fallen teeth.

Should I go to him and apologise or just... . I quickly turn and make a run for it..

A RAY OF SUNSHINE

°°Two°°

Funeka

I can not believe what conspired last night!

It's still hard to come to terms with.

I've texted in the whatsapp group with my
beasties that I just made the worst mistake

I hit someone with a vase, and it broke into
pieces.

They are having a great morning, busy laughing
at me. I wanted them to make me feel better
and not make a mockery out of me

Heck I'm afraid to even go out of this room
because what if I see him

"Rise and Shine beautiful sister!"

I hear his voice before he budes in, no
knocking!

Really?

"Hey, how was your first night in Joburg?" he asks, taking a seat on my already made bed

Its after 7 and I've taken a bath.

"Eventful" he laughs as I sigh

"Wow, I can't believe you actually wounded my brother like that"

Now I feel even more awful

"is it that bad?" He sees my worried face and stop laughing

"no, not at all. Come now, let's go have breakfast. Dont worry about Zabelo he is a big man and he doesn't hold last night against you"

Look at him trying to make me feel better

"did he say that?"

I ask him, he shrugs his shoulders

"well not in many words but maybe if you stopped and apologized. Mama told me that you ran out"

"I panicked. What If he thinks I'm a psychic or a narcissist or worse a thief?"

He shakes his head and drag me out with him
Relief washes over me when I find Ncane alone, thank God.

The breakfast is already screaming my name.
Reminding me that I actually spent a night hungry.

They make these hotel like breakfast here, you just fill up your plate and join in.

I've spotted scrambler eggs, beacon, mushroom and fish fingers.

Im definitely gaining weight this side, to hell with this skin and bones body

"Hey baby, how was your night?" she asks,
smiling warmly

"it was okay ma" I tell her

And Nsika started laughing, again.

Then both of them end up dying with a belly
aching laughter. Will I get the end of this. *sigh*

I hear the door opening and Dreadlock twin
enters, he is alone today. He is lookind dapper
and proper, a suit, formal shoes and tied
dreads to the back. He is panty dropper this one,
I feel for girls who works with him

"Mr CEO" Mama states

"Morning fam, what are we having for breakfast?
And what's so funny in this early morning"

He says, grabbing a fish finger tossing in his
mouth and taking a seat next to.

"Well, let's just say Zabelo left with a bleeding wound on his face" Ntsika responds happily

"OH, I heard. He told me this morning. Did you really think my brother was a thief Funei nei?" he is grinning as he says. Stealing a short glance and stuffing himself with a greasy breakfast

"Mazisi, you should have seen him. It's like he wanted to eat her alive"-Ncane.

This family has no secrets at all. Now I'm a morning joke?

"Anyway, when are you joining me Funeka?" He asks

"Join where?"

"At the company. You are looking for a job and there is an opening. Rather than sitting down

and doing nothing, why not join me?"

I never expected this, I'm in awe

"Don't give me an answer now, think about it"

He tells me

"A social work degree in a logistic company Mazisi? It doesn't mix" Ncane says. Not that I even knew that it was logistic company

"This is just a temporary thing, I'm sure she knows a thing or two about computers so she'll be my assistant. Mihlali is going to a maternity leave soon" his voice is gentler as he says

"Wait for your father to come back then so you can discuss this with him"

"I'm the CEO Mama, I make decisions with or without him"

Owky, awkwardness!

After breakfast I prepare to leave with Ntsika. He will help me prepare my documents and everything so I can start sending applications.

I've opted for a white mini dress with sneakers and fixed my braids then let them loose.

Ntsika gets in just as I fix my light make up and whistle.

I can't talk about hips and ass for days because I was totally denied that access.

I'm just a middle height petite woman with a brown skin that turn a gay into a strict man.. Okay maybe I'm exaggerating..

"Dzam! I'm definitely done paying for drinks when I have a hot sister like you" daaa!

"A sister with a tiny butt and zero meat on the sides.. I doubt" He is laughing

One thing I've gathered about Ntsika is that he is just a bubbly soul. But his brothers are just...tense and very unapproachable. You only feel free around them when they open their mouth and talk to you.

Let me send my mom a whatsapp before I take on this journey. She sends me a bible verse and reminds me to pray.

I would have gotten lost very quickly if it wasn't for Ntsika and his White polo. Typical hot player, and he is just 20 years but has already broken hearts more than anyone I know.

I'm learning this because he has been receiving calls all day long

"Now that we are done for these documents of yours, let's go have something to quench my thirst. I also have a meeting an Event Organiser

in about an hour"

He says as we drive back. That's news to me, but I'm still learning about their lives.

"Where exactly are you meeting that organiser?"

I ask him

"In Zabelo's Club"

"Does he have a club?" I quickly ask, I don't even know why I'm even surprised. I met him in just few hours ago and it wasn't a pleasant experience

"Yeah he does. Him and Mongezi are Co owning it" family of business owners. And I'm just here looking like a lost human in an alien planet.

"and you? What do you do exactly? Apart from driving women crazy" he laughs. He has a loud, deep laughter

"Dad wanted me to study business management and join the company. My mother wanted me to be a model because apparently I have the looks.. And the body height"

I laugh shortly. They are right though. He is a looker, his height is just a bonus

"And my brothers just wanted me to study anything that makes me happy as long as I pursue a certain degree. But I am tired of books. So I decided to take a gap year last year. It turned out pretty good because I focused on tiktok"

Wait.. I can't hold it in. I'm in stitches

"Aibo, who stops furthering their studies for tik tok? You are not serious about your life"

"actually I am. Because my followers increased and before I knew it I was being approached by event planners, advertising agencies to market their ideas"

Now I stop laughing. He is serious

"so, you are a content creator and an influencer"

He nods, a pride smile plastered on his face

"Okay, how come I don't know about you because I do spend my time on tiktok too. And by the way, that's a great thing you do hey. I'm sure you will be a successful person one day"

I tell him

"That's the idea. What about you? Ever thought of something else other than your social Work career?"

Okay, now I have to think

"I'm not really sure. I loved it while growing up but in my second year I realised that it became my dream because it was everyone's dream and it seemed like a better career at the time"

"I get you. I'm going to ask you a personal question. Why now? Why didn't you visit before and only come here now."

I never expected that

"because mother didn't want me to. Why did you stop visiting? Because you used to when you were young?"

"Mama didn't want me to visit anymore. She never said why"

Something is going on between these two sisters.

We are here, in this very beautiful place.

It is designed in a way that allows customers to mingle freely.

The ground floor has some sort of a pub and grill

There is a first floor which I assume might be a club.

Ntsika's client arrives just as our order does.

I indulge in my hot wings and juice.

It's a strict woman wearing a formal white shirt and black skirt with black heels.

She flashes a smile and they start talking business.

"So, our budget for now is a little tight hence we'd like to at least deposit R1000"

I choke on my drink

"Sorry, isn't that too low? You must be joking we Bawo!"

I say, feeling annoyed on behalf of Ntsika. The nerve of this woman

"and who are you again?" she's giving me a nasty look as if I'm some low class citizen

"Aibo, ngumunt ebantwini sis"

Ntsika is laughing

"And what's funny? Are you actually condoning her behaviour? Where did you even pick this one with such a cheap off the rack dress.."

Oh No she DIDN'T.

My hands are quick to throw the remaining juice on her shirt. A bit of colour would be good for that shirt

"OH MY.. YOU BITCH*"

She sends a slap on my face and I jump on her cheap wig on her head..

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"Be glad Zabelo isn't here for now. I can't believe you just stood there Ntsika and never stopped the fight" It's Mongezi, shooting daggers at us

"That woman deserved some fists and slaps. She was straight up rude. I'm glad Funeka rearranged her wardrobe because if I did that I would be on my way to jail as it is.."

She almost took off my few braids.. But I had the upper hand. I grew up in Mtubatuba, no Joburg girl will fight me and win

" And you, you are just going to keep quiet?"

I blink and gulp. He is angry, I hate angry people in general

"Leave her alone. We are leaving anyway"

Mongezi shakes his head in disappointment and leave us standing

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I wonder how loaded these people are because by the look of it, money says baba to them.

I never saw the backyard yesterday, I'm only seeing it now.

We are actually having a great time just sitting outside on the back patio. The huge pool is glistening under the sunlight and very inviting

That pool is going to become my studio from

today. I'm definitely posting the videos I'm going to make on tik tok. I will ask Ntsika to show me off to his followers.

I have 532 embarrassing followers, with no posts at all.

It's not that I didn't try, I did try those trending contents and posted but the response was discouraging and had me stare at myself in the mirror questioning my beauty. So one morning I woke up and shifted everything to private and Now I just laugh other people's videos and comment and like..

"Are you sure we are not going to get caught though?"

I question, taking a long sip on an expensive red wine with a sweet, dark flavour. I'm already on my third glass.

When we reached home he took out some of

his mother's wine and well, I can never say no to that! I love things mina. I can't wait to explore Johannesburg nightlife!

" We won't. Drink like a normal being phela nawe.uyamina tjo" Why is he giving me that look of judgement..

" Please, it's not everyday I get to sip on something fancy, cut me some slack"

He shakes his head. There is a sudden bell ringing. He vanishes inside the house to check the door.

Okay, the pool is calling my name and it doesn't look that deep.

Let me put the glass down and check it out..

Where I come from there is no pool.

I'm allowed to mingle in such beauty. Talk about nice life things

Reaching the pool I get in with one foot on the first step and I'm so surprised to find the water so cold, under such high temperature conditions.

Let me just take a swim. It's hot anyway.

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I'm going down instead of going up, I've seen people on TV using thier arms so I try that one too but.. Am I drowning?

I'm trying to keep my head and my nostrils on the surface but it like there is a force pulling me down...

It's becoming hard to breath and I'm losing my strength, I feel water filling up my lungs..

Is this the way I die? I haven't lived my life to the fulesst, haven't even drove my first car. Hell, I haven't graduated yet April is still two months

away.. God plea..

Strong hands encircles me and I feel a rough pull..

My mind is recovering when I feel strong hands on my tummy. A pull force to puke visit me and I cough as the water comes out of my mouth harshly.

I blink, trying to think

My eyes lock with these angry, red set of eyes glaring deep at me..

This shivering, stern glare will drown me straight to the grave.

Jesus, I'm glad you realised that I'm not good for heaven just yet..save my seat for when I'm 100 years old..

Anyway I need some more wine...

A RAY OF SUNSHINE

°°THREE°°

"You could have died Funeka and my sister would never have forgiven me. What if Zabelo didn't find you in time. That pool is deep and I'm surprised your partner in crime didn't tell you that. He was only interested in feeding you my wine" Ncane calmly states as I sit on the comfy sofa before her. Her voice is laced in hurt and a bit of anger but she is not screaming. Something my mother would be doing right now

"you are crazy, careless, stupid, irresponsible, irrational, the list is endless! As if that wasn't enough you go around beating up people, what if you got arrested for assault?" His deep husky voice rumbles in anger. I can feel his rage as he

stares at me as if he'll squash me to the size of an insect

"Come on Zabelo, that's a bit extreme don't you think" Ntsika defends me

He turns, his stern look burning Ntsika next to him

"And you, don't tell me shit because you are just like her. What were you thinking stealing mama's wine and drinking like people with no direction in life"

I'm here like a wet chicken, listening as they take turns scolding me. Now I see it, I was really stupid. I can't even swim. I don't even know why I was there to begin with. Well, to be honest, alcohol disturbs my brain cells when I'm drunk, I always feel like superwoman.

"I'm so disappointed in you Funeka. I really am"
Ncane says and leaves the room. I feel my heart
slicing into tiny pieces.

My hand is playing with the cloth of my dress
that I put on after that saga.

"You haven't even spent a week here but you are
already attracting trouble. If you wanna gallivant
and behave like a street mate I suggest you
pack your bags and go back to Mtubatuba
because in here I will not have a hooligan
stressing us. Behave like a well raised child
girly"

Wow, I feel tears stinging my eyes as he storms
out as well.

I blink them away and head to the room in a run.

Where are my bags?

Tears are totally blinding my vision as I start

packing again. I can't stay in a place where I'll be reminded with every mistake I make that I don't belong.

I was wrong I admit, I could blame alcohol but I can be a bit irrational too. But It doesn't mean I should be reminded that this is not my home.

"And then? What are you doing?" I hear Nstika'a voice but I don't even bother.

For a moment it was nice having some sibling relationship. I'll definitely miss Ntsika

"I'm going home. Zabelo made it clear that I'm not wanted here. I'd rather live my directionless life at home, where I'm safe and free"

My phone is ringing.

It's my mother. Great, she needs to know that I'm coming back home.

I don't care about unemployment. For as far as I know an entire country is facing that, moving to another province is no game changer. I agreed because it was what mama wanted, not me

"Hey Fuze ka mama" her voice is always calming to me. I feel the lump growing hard but I hold it "Hi mama, how are you" I ask

"Betty told me the news.."wow, already.

"mamiza I'm sorry.."

"I'm over the moon about the job Mazisi is offering you. I knew something great would happen there. Uziphathe kahle nana, uyakuthanda umama yezwa"

Oh.. But

"Is that all she said?" I probe

"Yes, was there anything else?"

She is too happy and I can't ruin that

"No, I love you to mamiza wam"

There goes my trip..

Ever been in a situation where you are half asleep and someone keeps talking to you non stop?

Yes, that's me right now.

Ntsika is sitting on my bed, telling me his countless stories.

It's already after Eight in the evening yet I haven't got the courage to go out and face Ncane after today. If it wasn't for Ntsika who gracefully sneaked food for me in here then I'd be as hungry as they come

"So I lied to her and said she was my cousin. Instead of believing me she straight up slapped me.. All of me, being slapped. I mean have you

seen me! My face? "

He is blabbering about his crazy love life.

"You are in a whole mood Ntsika but right now.. I'm so sleepy" I tell him, yawning and stretching my body.

Surprisingly he doesn't look hurt, instead he stands up from my bed

"don't mind Zabelo Funeka. And please don't ever want to leave just because someone said some awful things. Anyway have a good night "

He says. I know he means well but I think that man hates me.

He hated me the first time we met

"I grew up alone, with mom always working. When I got here I felt that sense of excitement and having someone to do crazy things with. But that doesn't mean I'm desperate Ntsika, so

trust me I don't mind going back home again"
he looks hurt. I couldn't leave, not after that
phone call. She sounded excited about me
getting a job.

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I'm peacefully sleeping when I feel a soft pat on
my shoulders. I want to scream and kick
whoever. I keep them closed and the pat
continues.

I open my eyes ready to rain terror on the
intruder but I quickly seat up amazed of this
man before me. He is seated on a chair.

"maFuze" he gently says.

"Sawbona" I say, more like a whisper.

"I'm sorry I wasn't here when you arrived. I'm the
boy's father and your mother's husband.

Zamani Ngcobo" He introduces himself, taking out his hand for a shake.

Another weird thing I never mentioned is that I'm a Ngcobo by blood too, the difference is my father was a douchebag that never loved me while this man is a present, good father.

My mom and Ncane really had a thing for Ngcobo men. Pity mom got the devil while Ncane got the real deal

"How are they treating you?"

Ncane said this man is scary but I don't see anything to be scared of. Instead I see a man who is gentle and just sweet

"They are good. Very good" He smiles

"I'm glad, If anyone gives you trouble don't hesitate to let me know. I heard that you are starting work at the company today.

Congratulations" He says, now smiling wider.
"No, I'm not. Mazisi said I should think about it first" This family and no secrets..

"Stand up, take a bath and let me take you to work. There is nothing to think about here maFuze. I'll be waiting for you"

What.. I still wanted my sleep

"Welcome home maFuze" there is comfort and warmth laced in his voice as he utters.

He then stands up and leaves.

My heart is beating in joy. That hit differently.
Lord, why can't my father be like that man?

My mind drifts off to my good for nothing father as I get out of the bed. Like dozens of children in Mzansi I also grew up fatherless. My father left when I was born, so I heard. His reason was

to look for employment in Durban but he never returned.

But letters, he wrote them on my every birthday, all accompanied with gifts. It was cute until it became more painful. I wanted him, not the letters.

With each letter I became more sad rather than happy.

One morning I woke up with my mother holding a letter with a smile. She said the man was coming back to town and he would grace me with his presence for the first time. But that day was a special day to me, it was the day for my farewell party.

So I was over the moon, waiting for him in my

school so he could take pictures with me wearing that ridiculously huge gown they use in primary school.

I didn't even eat a cake, or take a picture with my mother and my friends, not even with my favorite teacher Mrs Mthembu. I wanted him. My mother forced me to take at least one picture of me since I didn't want one with her. I only knew him from pictures, blurry black and white pictures that I could barely make out.

There's something about hope. It doesn't kill, it keeps you going so they say.

For those 13 years of my life without that man I had it, the hope of seeing him again.

No matter how many times I was mocked in my neighbourhood, the girl with no father and a prostitute of a mother. That's why I'm easily ticked because of that and many other things I

can not mention. I don't know and I don't even want to know why people saw it fit to call my mom a prostitute.

I just felt the need to defend us both. I know fighting is no solution but it keeps me strong. It gave me that protection my heart craved in my father but he wasn't there.

Did he come during that day? Nope

That day hope killed me, it took a part of me that i'll probably never get. And since that day everything stopped, the letters and the gift.

It all stopped.

I stopped asking, I stopped caring or so I thought.

...

I hold my breath taken back as we drive inside

the huge, magnificent building.

ZNM Logistics invites my eyes, written in bold letters.

"Welcome to ZNM Logistics, maFuze" he says and flashes a proud smile. I would be too, this is like a dream

He's been telling me about how he started small as a car wash, to a car mechanic hustler and now.. A successful company that is a dream to many.

This man is an inspiration.

We are welcomed by an amazing reception, even the receptionist is nice. On the inside it's just a whole different level.

Bab Ngcobo shows me around the building made of seven floors.

The place is really big, the backyard is filled with trucks, in different sizes and a huge warehouse I've never seen.

Mazisi arrives after a while and takes over.

Reaching the last floor he leads me to a dark skinned woman typing something on a huge iPad in her hands.

The moment she sees us she stands up in respect and greet us. She is very much pregnant and looking like a whale

"Funeka this is Mihlali Mpisane, Mihlali meet my sister. Funeka Ngcobo"

She smiles and shake my hand

"Nice to me you, Mr Ngcobo told me a lot about you hey. I hope you'll be able to hold the ropes perfectly in my absence"

I smile and nod my head.

These blue pyramid heeled pumps are killing me. I had to look like a professional and I don't have many of those with me.

That's why I opted for a waisted skinny Jean, white boobtube with a blue collar blazer. I tied my braids in a high ponytail and well, I tried to look the part.

During lunch Mhlai takes me to a cafeteria and introduces me to her two colleagues, Mandisa and Karabo. Both of them are sweet.

By the time we head back to the desk I'm sleepy but I don't have a choice. Mhlali might leave sooner so I have to learn as quick as I can.

"Okay, I'm tired now. I need the loo"

She says and disappear at the far end of the

building. Being pregnant is no joke, Lord knows how many times she's visited the loo.

I roam my eyes around and feel this tingle of warmth. This has to be a dream, all of me working on such a beautiful place. The third floor is quite, there is a boardroom and CEO's office then Mihlali's cubicle.

I never thought I'd be working with an iPad, setting up meetings and appointments but I know I can do this.

The lift pings, I quickly look up and I blink, watching the man taking long strides towards my direction. I'm attacked with a strong cologne before he reaches me

"Good day miss..?" Raising his left jaw he says.

What a polished, warm manly voice.

"What's your name?" oh flip, I'm drooling

"Funeka. The new Assistant"

"I'm Qhawe, Qhawe Ndlovu. I'm here to see Mazisi" I smile and stand up leaving the iPad behind

I'm about to knock when the door opens and Mazisi comes out

"Ai, Ndoda you are here. Let's grab a drink outside"

He says, patting his shoulders and they both leave.

Wow, now that was a sight for my sore eye. Okay, was I not supposed to check if he had an appointment or not?

.....

A RAY OF SUNSHINE

°°FOUR°°

There is something about morning sleep, it just hits differently. I'm holding onto the blanket diving deep into warm sleep when a hard knock comes through..

Argh! Can't I just get at least five minutes

"Funeka!" Baba's voice utters outside my door

I'm quick to out of bed and start making the bed

When the door opens he finds me busy with my bed

"Baba" He smiles, shaking his head

"one day I will badge in here gun blazing because clearly you need a whole gun to wake up"

He says as he moves forward

"but I'm already awake Mr Vandam"

Vandam? .. What the hell. Why didn't I keep my mouth shut. He does the unexpected and laugh I just made a man of the house laugh? Ring the bells father Christmas

When I'm satisfied with my look I head out for breakfast.

Everyone is seated around the table, The twins are also here but Zabelo is not. I'm glad. I would have lost the appetite around that man.

Today I drive with ncane, she is in a marketing team. I'll be signing my contract and by the end of the month I'll receive my very first payment.

"I'm sure your mother will be so happy to have someone spoil her for once. She deserves some soft life" Ncane says, a soft music is playing.

"I know, I'll build her a double story house that will stand out in our neighborhood and buy her a car. But we will have to find a driver for her to be moved wherever she would want to"

She smiles looking happy

"Ncane, what happened between you and mom?" I ask, I've been meaning to ask this since I arrived

"your mother just... Distanced her self from me" okay. That's weird

"But Nsika said that you stopped him from visiting"

"Because I didn't want to seem like I was too pushy" I don't believe her. She sees my doubtful expression and heave a sigh

"if you don't believe me than I'll show you my

call logs. You will tell me who has always been calling, trying to reach out for the past years. Martha stated talking to me when she needed my help. And since you arrived she's been actually answering my calls and even calling too. Though our conversations end with just you but at least we are talking now" I can sense sadness as she says.

Maybe she isn't telling me everything, my mom has a big, beautiful heart. I know her and this is not like her.

Arriving at work Mihlali introduced me to the HR manager, Mrs Ndlela and I signed a contract.

After that I called my mom and told her the news. She is happier than I am.

After everything is done we continue where we left off yesterday. Mihlali is such a warm person with a welcoming personality.

We are in the middle of something when Mazisi comes out of his office and heads to us both. I love how he just let his dreads loose this time. They look good on him

"I'm heading out. Funeka, please leave work early today. We are attending a charity event. Mihlali, schedule all my appointments for tomorrow "

Wait a minute..

"A charity event?"

He nods and starts heading to the lift, I quickly run after him.

"Why?" I ask as I reach him

He press the button and wait for the lift

"Because our attendance is mandatory little sister" he gets in as the lifts opens and I get in

right after him

"But why?"

He stares at me as if I'm the most dumbest person

"We are a company with a reputation to maintain, we have clients we must keep in our payroll no matter what and we are still expanding we still need more. These kinds of events are attended by big fishes, from all over South Africa and if we are lucky even those outside our country do attend. If we show our presence and contribute, that will also gain us more growth. Being part of these events means we are also being part of the community upliftment, we take part in our community matters.. "

That was a long conversation, even the lift has long opened and closed. We are heading up to

the fifth floor as it is.

Now I do feel like a fool, why didn't I think of that. I'm such a hopeless case sometimes

"Go home early and be ready before Six"

"Why didn't you say sooner?"

I ask too many questions sometimes

"Because uMah and her husband were going to attend but they've changed their minds and now I'm going with you"

My wardrobe doesn't have something for an event? Not even a party.

"I can't attend. I don't have anything to wear"

He frowns

"Don't get me involved. I need your attendance."
he sternly utters, leaving no room for discussion. But not with me.

"You can take Mihlali with you."

That look, the look of a CEO to a crazy employee is enough to make me obey.

My head has been all over the place since that bomb Mazisi dropped on me.

It didn't help that Mihlali confirmed my theory of expensive outfits and makeup done by famous people.

"Are you sure the red carpet will be there?" I asked her again.

"Of course. High profile business tycoons will be there. You must look the part girl. Not just for you, but for the company too"

Now I'm floating through space

"Okay, I'm definitely not working with a zombie. Come now, let's head out" Mihlaili tells me, picking her things

I'm about to follow her when the lift suddenly opens revealing my worst enemy.

I feel my inside turning.

"Funeka" oh. So he does know my name. For a moment I thought he didn't

"Zabelo" I say.

He says nothing and just stand before me looking gloomy as always

"it doesn't hurt you know" I tell him, does he ever blink? He is staring deep in my eyes

"What doesn't hurt?" He ask

"Smiling and showing that you are alive like everyone else.you look like a ghost, ready to strangle life out of me. Just show a little smile and decorate that dark face, it deserves some light"

He doesn't get it, I see the way his deep set of

red eyes are squinting

"Mazisi asked me to take you home"

Oh hell no.. I'm not spending the next minutes with a devil next to me

"I'll request an Uber. You can leave"

I pass him but he is quick to grab my arm gently bringing me before him.

and I'm frozen for a moment, my body is just acting a little weird. This man scares me

"I am taking you home."

He is telling me, not even nicely . In fact, he is forcing me.

"I said I will request"

"It either you walk out here willingly or by force"

Flies will get inside my mouth and probably steal my insides with the way my mouth is

widely open

I feel like strangling him with that little goatee
beard without moustache

"Lead the way" Bustard

A RAY OF SUNSHINE

°°Five°°

Funeka

I can't help but keep on stealing glances at him.
He has this unsettling presence that's so
strong and bold at the same time. It is difficult
to grasp and understand what his mind is
thinking with the same stone cold expression
plastered on his face.

Not that I want to know what he is thinking

about.

For all I know he might be thinking of thousand ways to kill, he does give those serial killer vibes, his rich dark skin is a perfect mix for a killer with deep red set of eyes that seems to lack sympathy. Why am I even analysing him?

"I can do it even better than you and it won't be nice" He suddenly says, giving me a short glance.

"Do what exactly?" I ask him.

"Staring" I feel my cheeks getting hot. I've been staring for far too long haven't I

"I'm.. Sorry" we reach a red robot and he stops.

Then he burries me with a hard look.

Our eyes are locked, I feel like I'm staring at a devil and it's becoming hard to keep up with my thundering heart.

Saved by the car hoots.. He starts driving again and I breath out.

oooo

"I'm almost done, just wait a little longer bhuti" I say putting the last touch ups on my face.

He huffs, glaring at me impatiently.

He is looking dapper in that black tailor made suit.

" It's approaching Seven as it is, we should be on our way right now. This event is starting in about 30 minutes from now"

I don't get why he is complaining because he is the one who hijacked me.

"had you told me earlier we'd be long gone. Okay, I'm not happy with this rag I'm wearing"

I say, staring at this black dress I'm wearing. There's nothing appealing about this outfit.

I feel awful and uncertain about this

"Come on, you look stunning" he is grinning as he says, an impatient grin to be precise. He just want us to leave

"Of course you'll say that. You will do anything to make me go with you. Sadly for you.. I'm not going. Not with this rag"

Im heading to my bed, taking off the heels

"You're joking"

As I get inside my covers and summoning all the angels of the dream world to take over

"Okay, we will pass somewhere. I'll ask someone to make you look like the way you want" is he begging me? How sweet

"Will that someone happen to have a killer dress lying around and waiting just for me?" I ask, holding my covers in my hands

He nods

"Are you sure?" he nods

"Okay then, let's go"

.

.

Imagine my surprise when I meet thee
'someone'. I'm a bit shocked and confused
"Mihlali" Mazisi says gently as we stare outside
the door of her apartment I think.

They share a look I can't make out. It's quick
though because she is now staring at me

"Hey Funeka" Her sweet voice utters

"Please make her ready for the event. I trust
you" with that I'm grabbed in what I assume is
her bedroom and she immediately starts
throwing out everything in her closet. She looks
funny with that huge tummy.. But let me be a
lady for once and stop analyzing people

Ever since we arrived, I've been feeling like

something is off. I've never met any of these people, yet I have this strong feeling as if someone is staring at me at a certain corner. I'm seated alone, not entirely since there are two guys before me in this table of four.

Mazisi is negotiating something with this pat belly white man at the corner. This hall is big, decorated beautifully and everyone seems to know their wardrobe.

It's my first time being in such events and I already know that it's my last. I'm wearing what I consider the only expensive dress that has ever draped my body. Thanks to Mihlali who happened to store one of the best designed dress in her closet.

It's a Black mock neck sleeveless high slit dress with six inch hills that makes me feel like I'm taller than everyone. My braids are tied in a neat ponytail and my make up is just on another level. Mihlali sure knows how to turn things

around. I'm pretty and I know it but boy am I bored to death.

"are we done?" I ask the moment he returns to the table; he just shakes his head and stand up again argh!

Let me check my besties. We are slowly moving on with our lives. This group used to be a buzz but now it's becoming a ghost town. I snap few pictures and update my whatap status.

In just a minute my phone is buzzing. Now I feel like a flower girl

"hi" I'm met with a very handsome guy grinning from ear to ear, I smile too

"hello" I say . He joins the table after saying

"may I" typical business man

"I'm Mbuso , Mbuso Ndebele, you are?" I like him already, he has manners

“Funeka Ngcobo” his grin widens and he start telling me about him and his well successful company. The man is gloating, and I’m turned off right now. I need someone to rescue me as in..

Theres an unexpected soft pat on my shoulders
Looking up my heart my heart skips, I’m frozen
“And I thought I was seeing things. What brings you here?” he deeply says.

“uhm.. I am.. With my brother ” I don’t get why I’m stuttering so much.

“can I steal you for a second?” he asks, more like commanding but in a polite manner.

I slowly nod and stand up

Someone clears a throat, aw its Mbuso

“the lady is with me?” wait.. what?

“and you are?” he asks, a bit bold

“Mbuso Ndebele, the CEO of Ndebele Holdings”

was that even necessary

“nice to meet you Mr CEO, lets go” he gently grabs my arm and lead me out of the hall with my rumbling heart, why did he asks his name if he wasn't going to do anything about it?

"I'm Qhawe Ndlovu, I hope you still remember me. You look stunning by the way"

Tingles instantly fills up my tummy.

.....

A RAY OF SUNSHINE

°°SIX°°

Funeka

I woke up early today and decided to be a

woman for once since I arrived here.

I'm busy preparing breakfast for everyone. Time is approaching Eight in the morning.

Thank God it's the weekend today. I don't have to go to work.

My phone beeps, I quickly wipe my hand and check the incoming message. It my mother wishing me a wonderful day, I call her and we talk for a while.

For a moment I thought it was Qhawe, he asked for my tens and I haven't received anything from him. He is good looking and I won't mind having him as my first Joburg boyfriend but.. Maybe it's too soon. Yeah it is..

The kitchen door suddenly opens as I'm engrossed in making breakfast

Ntsika walks in looking like a train walked over

him and he smells like brewery

"Sis wam" his voice is extremely low as he greets me heading to the fridge

"Damn, you are a hangover yourself" I tell him

"Tell me something I don't know" he grunts holding his head and drink water

"Where did you spend the night again?"

He takes a seat on the kitchen counter and gulp even more water

"I spent the night at Pretty's place. More like morning since we only left the club after 2 am"

Wrenched in pain and exhaustion he responds, even his eyes can't open properly

He keep on squinting them

"at least you slept in a bed, safe and sound"

He stands up again stretching his arms and body.

His clothes are a little wrinkled. And he smells like.. Sex

"ew, Ntsika did you have sex?" flaring my nose I ask him and he gives me a 'Duu' look.

"That's a necessity. What's the point of going out if I'm not getting a cookie? It's is part of having fun and living in a moment"

He says, brushing his eyes and jumping back on the counter. He looks horrible

"anyway Let's forget about me. How was your evening yesterday?" my lips spread into a smile as I think about last night

Yesterday Qhawe took me to this magnificent restaurant where we had a late night dinner and he brought me back when Mazisi was

bombering my phone with calls.

"Let's just say next time you'll have to kill me first and drag my dead body if you want me to attend those events again. It was just not my thing and I was bored to death"

His eyes are coming to life, he is smiling widely like a kid given candy for the first time

"That smile and what you just said don't add up, so please sis wam spill the beans and leave no stone unturned. Did you meet prince charming with a killer smile that got your panties wet? "

I hit him with a swab and he laughs

"Ntsika!" That's so gross. I usually have these sexual talks with my female friends..

"Please, I know how you girls operate. So tell me, who made your boring night bearable?"

I shake my head smiling. Somehow this makes me so happy.

"Well, there is this guy I met on my first day at work. His name is Qhawe and yesterday he just happened to be at the event and I spent most of my evening with him. He even took me to a restaurant for a late night dinner.."

His screams suddenly burst out but in a nanosecond they are replaced with moaning, he is holding his head cursing and I can't help but laugh at him.

"Damn.. I'm never drinking again. If you see me holding any 'not for persons under the age of 18' beverage again, hit me with a four pound hammer and feed my dead body to pit bulls." same song everyone sings in the morning.

"I'll hold you to that"

"I need to get some sleep before Magwaza's son finds me in this state. I sort of had a fight and broke some things in his club yesterday.. "

He says, heaving an exhausted sigh

I frown, I'm confused

"Am I supposed to know who that is?" I ask him

"OH, I totally forgot that I didn't share this with you. Zabelo is a Magwaza, uNjinji wale phans eNatali kwankomo ziny ikiwi Polish"

Okay that's news to me

"How? Was he adopted or what?" I probe further

"No, it's a long story," he says, yawning. How I want that long story, the mamgobhozi in me is literally screaming and itching at the same time. Zabelo is not a Ngcobo? Who will sell this long story paper to me as of now..

"So.. The long story.." he shuts me with a hand. Bummer!

As he falls down the counter tiny screams suddenly burst out somewhere in the house annoying Nsika even more

"Oh Thixo. The little monsters are awake!" he grunts. Ntsika is something else. Who calls kids monsters

"Come on, that's a bit extreme" I tell him

"wait until you meet them, you will even wish to tape their mouth and make them watch opopayi just to have peace"

I give him a look

"You didn't.."

"I will be ready to lend you my red tape before the end of today. But make sure that you do not use it in front of the parents. I'm not ready to die yet" says the man who was ready to be fed to pitbulls

Three cute girls appear wearing matching dresses with flowers and jump at Ntsika

"Babo, where were you last night? We looked for you and you weren't there. Babo, I have a new teddy bear Gogo gave to me. Babo..."

Ntsika is close to fainting as they all chant in unison looking up at him. And they are shouting louder than their tiny voices, kids are just a whole different kind of species.

I smile as I watch them telling him stories unbothered that their listener isn't in a good space. Ncane comes through as well being followed by Baba. They greet and introduce the Kids. Two girls are Mazisi's children. They are also twins and they are Six years old, Simakahle and Asemahle. They are cute, light skinned like their father. They might have arrived yesterday

night I guess.

Then there is an Eight year old black pearl, she is a spitting image of Zabelo you don't even have to ask. Her name is Nkosazana. Such a beautiful unique name for a daddy's first princess.

I love children, growing up I always asked mom to bring me a little sister and she would always laugh at me.

That's why I've even forgotten about the breakfast I was making. I'm sandwiched between them on the three seater couch playing a bubble shooter game on this huge iPad.

These kids are living a soft life I tell you.

In such a short time I already know that

Nkosazana is a little bully that gives out orders, and Ase and Sima fight over petty things.

They are screaming at each other on who won better than who..

"But I was better the last time. Fifi, I got 123.."

Nkosazana says, flashing her long eyelashes at me. Fifi being me, I guess Funeka was too hard for their little tongues

"No! She's lying. She got 121.." - Sima

"No, you're lying. Fifi, she's lying"

"I am not!"

"Sima you failed today. You got 5!" Asemahle chirps in and even emphasises with her tiny fingers.

Maybe I might need Ntsika's red tape after all

"OKAY! how about we go outside and play something else." I say standing up

"Little ladies and a big lady. It's time for breakfast" Ncane's voice shouts. Phew! What a rescue

We all head to the table and begin breakfast

oooo

I can't even remember the last time I had such a good time. When Nstika woke up we headed to the pool and well, he had to play safeguard with not just me, but even the kids

. The embarrassing moment I faced was when I realised that I'm the only one who can't swim. These kids can swim perfectly, it's even harder to watch. I keep thinking they might sink. But they prove me wrong.

Ntsika said baba taught them. I applaud him for teaching his grandkids how to swim. Kids are sometimes unpredictable. Even if you tell them to never use the pool, one day they'll sneak out unnoticed and jump straight in the pool. Teaching them how to swim is a way of keeping them safe.

But they are still not allowed to swim alone.

I'm outside the pool with my feet dangling inside while cautiously taking pictures and videos.

I've updated countless statuses on my whatsapp. It's crazy.

My phone rings as I reply a text from one of my constant status viewer

It's an unsaved number. I hesitate before

answering

"Hi" I say reluctantly

"Beautiful lady. It's Qhawe here" I feel my heart jumping a bit. for a moment I thought he'd never call.

"Qhawe, HI" my tone is too loud. I'm sure he can tell I've been waiting for his call

"I hope I'm not disturbing" wow, gentleman.

"No, you are not disturbing" I say. Ntsika shoots me a look. I stand up and move away, these little kids are screaming anyway

"I'm sorry for calling this late, I didn't want to seem pushy" Hella, I like pushy

"It's fine" I tell him

"If it won't be a bother I'd like to take you out for dinner tomorrow If you don't mind"

My cheeks are getting warm

"No, I don't mind"

We talked for a while and when he hanged up I had already picked out my wedding dress in my head and named our children. I'm like that in every new relationship. I can't help myself. I need to buy some sexy lingerie and shave and..

Okay

I need some water to quench this little bitch taking over me

The kitchen is empty. Ncane and her husband are out, they are always busy with something.

I take out water in the fridge and gulp.

Let me make some snacks as well..

I'm looking for a bigger bowl so I can put everything inside. I search all the cupboards

until I spot it, at the top shelf. How do I even reach that? I'm not short but I'm not tall either, just average. I guess I'll have to jump.

I start jumping, come back empty handed. I jump once more and..

"Need help with that?"

"OH.. GOD!" holding my chest I utter.

I breathlessly turn and meet Zabelo in the middle of the doorway, one hand buried in a pocket of that short he is wearing revealing his long, hairy legs. He just gave me such a fright and he is not even apologising. Sometimes God creates hopeless beings.

"Ahem.. Why are you here?" I quickly add a question

I think he likes squinting his eyes now and then because he is doing that now.

Instead of giving me an answer he slowly walks in and stands before me. His eyes are so glued onto me, his look is always burning and stern. Now I feel extremely exposed. I should have covered my body, I'm just in my shorts jeans and a drenched white vest that has my pecky boobs all out.. Why am even..

“Tell me what you want me to do” his deep husky voice utters softly, an inch close to me. I literally smell his mint breath as I hopelessly stare up at him. The organ in between my lungs bounces, I feel my knees weakening

“I.. want. .. A bowl” I softly reply which seems to be a whole mission.

His body presses deeper as he raises his hand taking the bowl. I suck in my breath as an electrifying feeling suddenly attacks my body. I don't know what's happening but it's making my

whole body paralyzed. As he hands me the bowl our eyes meet. I've never noticed before, but the brush cut he has on is really suitable for his face.

"I apologise for giving you a fright maFuze" He gently utters. OH he did not! ...I open my mouth but nothing leaves my throat. He turns and walks out leaving my body in shock

The Zulu girl in me is ululating and dancing ingoma. My mind is trapped somewhere I don't know..

God Forbid!

A RAY OF SUNSHINE

°°SEVEN°°

FUNEKA

Sundays are very uplifting and full of energy in

this house. Ncane is singing out loud along with the Joyous celebration on blast, I also find myself singing along. It helps me wander away from my demons for a while and gives my wrecking brain a minute to breathe.

Ever been in a situation where you feel totally overwhelmed and caged in your own mind. That's how I've been since yesterday. I can't seem to shake away Zabelo's image, he just became a regular resident in my mind and it is just so irresistible and infuriating.

Baba is eating breakfast with Ntsika and the kids. The table is filled with too much screams and endless arguments. Baba is a whole different being when around those munchkins. He is even feeding them straight from his plate

"baby, help me move this," Ncane says. I move

towards her and we move a coffee table. Ncane woke up early to clean and I am helping her. Ntsika thinks she is too much, apparently there is a helper even though I haven't seen her since I arrived. I guess she loves to take charge in her own home, she's a superwoman.

When we are done we also eat breakfast and head to our designated rooms to shower for church. Yes, we are going to church. This won't be my first time in a house of the Lord but I can count the few times since I have been to church.

My mom and I never had any church we went to, I just tagged along with my friends. I'm even surprised she owns a Bible, a very old Bible that I even think she inherited from her mother, and her mother from hers.. I can bet my life that the Bible will also be passed down to me one day.

Other families have their own elums like Jewelry but in this family, we have an intergenerational Bible. Life!

I'm moving up and down in my room not knowing what to wear for church.

I ended up settling for a white Puff Sleeve Half Button top, paired with a Floral Print Pleated Skirt ending between my legs and Rhinestone Decor Toe Ring Thong Sandals. I'm not about to wear heels when I don't even know how long the service takes. I pull back my blonde knotless braids and add a tiny doek at the front and put my pearl earrings and watch. I bathe with my cheap INuka perfume and yes, I feel awesome.

Where is my white Minimalist Croc Embossed

Baguette Bag ? Got it.

Am I not a wife material? Arg! marry me Qhawe Ndlovu. I'm yours.

I snap a few pictures and throw some in my status and send my mother some.

Qhawe is quick to react, maybe I should approach SABC and pitch my own show called 'on my journey to becoming Mrs Ndlovu', pave a way for a Millionaire in making you centeniers. Happiness! Phew, I'm ready for today's service.

The church is full and I can literally feel the spirit of worship hovering all around. We are seated at the front, we were late but they actually put us here.

Ntsika is here next to me looking like he is about to faint. Ncane does not play when it comes to church, even baba is here. The only people who aren't here are the three prodigal

older sons.

After church we head straight home driving in a family car, a white hyundai h1. This home owns about Four cars excluding the twins and Zabelo's car. It's a GLA 200, Nstika's Polo, a Silicon Silver Range Rover Evoque and this one we are driving in.

As we drive inside the yard I spot Zabelo leaning against his car that is parked just in the middle of the yard. Something twitches in the depth of my heart, I feel nervous all of a sudden.

"Ntsika!" Ncane calls him out as the car stops inside the Garage. He is fast asleep next to me, even the kids are asleep. No longer screaming like they did on our way to church. If you want peace, take them to church and they will sleep an entire service, including the entire day.

"Funeka baby, please carry Nkosazana. I'll take Ase"

Baba takes Sima and we leave Ntsika in the car.

It's a mission to dive these stairs heading up, the kid is so heavy. My poorly sized 32 body can't manage for long.

I'm hyperventilating as I reach the end of the stairs.

After putting her to bed I head out and head down the stairs passing Ntsika looking gloomy.

"Tell mom headache is killing me. I'll snap a bit okay" He says and takes long strides.

I head back to the car to get my bag.

I'm taking slow steps as I return back to the

kitchen , my eyes glued on my phone. I am trending! I feel like screaming.

My Six friends have posted me on their whatsapp status. Ntsika did too. Am I not a celebrity?

Mom updated her DP with my makoti picture. Ncaw... what a way to..

A shallow scream instantly leaves my mouth as I bump into a hard surface dropping my phone in the process..

"MaFuze"

I can't stand the pace my heart is taking, it's faster and making me edgy

I'm frozen as he sinks a bit, taking my phone and inspecting it.

"Watch your steps, You'll get hurt next time," he says, handing me my phone and staring deeply

into my eyes. There's a strong scent attacking my nostrils. His stone cold presence gives me the heebie-jeebies.

"umuhle maFuze" Massive butterflies instantly engulf my tummy. I watch as he walks out feeling my heart dancing. Dear God, save me. Amen

Ncane enters the kitchen and we start preparing a seven colours kind of lunch.

This house is very homely, the aroma dancing around the house is mouth watering and just soul soothing. There is a warm and welcoming spirit in this house.

A while later A hearty meal is decorating this entire table. Everyone is here except for Mongezi. Baba is at his seat, mama next to her and Mazisi.

The crazy three mosquitoes are on their chairs just a bit far from us already eating and arguing about who sang which song at Church.

Zabelo is seated opposite me and it is becoming a mission to even hear anything around me with the way my heart is racing.

I don't understand these sudden feelings that his presence brings to me. I'm frustrated

Instead I check out the mouth watering meal. Lamb chops, wors, chakalaka with pap balls. Coleslaw is the ancestor of every meal, followed by a creamy spinach, green salad and beetroot.

Dessert is a cheesecake. It's gonna be a long meal for my tummy.

We are in the middle of chewing with light conversation here and there when Mongezi enters the door being followed by this brown skinned

boy.

"mfana ka gogo, it's been long since I've seen you baby boy. Uyaphila Nkazimulo"

He gives the boy a long tight hug. As she lets go he smiles shyly heading to baba.. Who is suddenly wearing a different expression. It's... hard and unwelcoming

"Mkhulu" The boy greets. I see his Jaws clenching as if he is fighting some anger in him

"Baba, you said you were ready. My son is innocent yet you can't even spare him a look! Just man up and deal with your demons without hurting my son because if you don't, I'll leave this house and I'll never return" Mongezi half shouted, his eyes twinkling in tears. The boy is now behind him. I've never seen Mongezi this hurt and angry. But then I've known this family for two minutes to even understand

anything.

"Stop daydreaming Mongezi. This man will never change" I'm dazed. Zabelo's voice is beyond cold, it's shivering and his face is deadly as he stares at baba unshaken. Baba looks like a world is on his shoulders..

And I'm sitting here failing to understand what's happening in this house . Not even once did I suspect that something was going on. I just saw this perfect family with no fights

"Mongezi I said I will try. I just didn't say bring him here" a bitter chuckle escape Zabelo's mouth followed by a click

"Can we have a quiet meal without bickering. I'm the one who called everyone here so please respect my efforts" Ncane says.

"Not until ubaba here accepts that my son is not him! " him who?

"This is our father, Show him some respect!"
Ntsika chirps in.

"RESPECT! respect to who? To the man hiding away from his hideous secrets..." - Zabelo

" ENOUGH!"

Baba suddenly bangs the table. A hard fist that has plates turning upside down and that's goodbye to what would have been my longest meal.

And a que to take the kids out in the backyard. Something is seriously going on here and I feel like I'm the only one who doesn't get the point

....

After that horrible lunch we spent the day outside with my newly found friends playing.

I've had to carry them in my back, my hands and my shoulders. I ran with them in my arms and threw them up and down in the air.

Right now exhaustion knows me by my name.

I'm so tired.

The backyard is very big, there is a garden at the far distance from the pool and some trees with fresh air. That's where we are, laying on the grass and looking up under the tree shade.

Nkosazana is a bully, my knees are up and she is seated on them, her feet just resting on my poor tummy

"Fifi, Nkosazana has a boyfriend" Ase whispers loud enough for all of us to hear.

"and she doesn't walk with us during break in school anymore " Adds Sima.

I'm still recovering air that has left my lungs.

Nkosazana is giggling.

This kid! At her age I didn't even know there were boyfriends to begin with. I remember that I used to scream out of my voice for any aeroplane up in the sky with the size of my finger to drop a baby. To think I was once that gullible and innocent to even believe that aeroplanes just drop babies to the world.. I was deceived

"Do you know what a boyfriend is Nkosazana?" I ask her

"A boyfriend is a friend who writes homework for me. He gives me his lunch and buys me a chocolate" Men aren't safe, already I'm seeing slay queen tendencies. And who defied her about this definition

"If I tell your father, what will he say?" she's quick to move and stand on her feet

"No. Don't tell my father. He said boyfriends are like vampires. They eat people"

I fail to hold in. I laugh, this is the worst thing I've ever heard. Now they are laughing with me, screaming actually.

I'm dying of laughter when I suddenly feel this heavy presence.

"We MaFuze, what are you doing to these princesses? I've never seen them laughing this hard"

Again, my heart is suddenly thundering.

He is hovering over me staring down at me.

He loves shorts because today he is wearing a Rolled Hem Ripped Denim Short with Contrast Binding Polo Tee that's hugging his biceps so

tight. There are Grey Nike sneakers on his feet

"Babo, Fifi is my best friend now. Can she go to my school so she can carry me during break?"

Nkosazana innocently says looking up at her father. He crouches on her level and starts chatting with these kids like they are old buddies.

For once.. I see something different replacing a stone cold look.

His eyes twinkles and his lips form a warm, contagious smile.

Something melts inside of me, my heart is racing hard in my chest and I can't help but smile as I watch him..

I quickly look away when our eyes lock.

Let me stand up and clean up. It's getting late

I see Ntsika approaching with my ringing phone in his hand. I haven't seen him since that quarrel. He looks down somehow as he hands me my phone.

Oh God. It's Qhawe. I totally forgot about him

"Qhawe, Hey"

"Please don't tell me you forgot our date"

He says. For a moment I feel guilty.

"No, of course not. How can I forget our date? It's the only thing I've been looking forward to today" one lie won't kill me.

I blink as I spot a look from Zabelo. Stone cold once again I see

"Great. I'll pick you up at six then.."

"No.. Don't pick me up. I will ask my brother

Ntsika to drive me.."

I tell him. I see the kids heading inside and I'm left with a devil..

"Just text me the name of the restaurant and I'll be there"

"If that's what you want then that's fine by me. Let me know if you need anything else, I'll send the details. I can't wait to see you Funeka"

I'm trying so hard to smile and enjoy the moment but Zabelo's burning stare is just straight up in my eyeballs.

I'm fidgety as I clutch the back of my neck.

"Me too. I'll see you"

I softly say and he hangs up leaving me in a rather sticky situation.

"So, A date?" he says it like, I don't know. But I don't like his tone.

"Yeah" That's all I can say.

He says nothing more and takes one step ending an inch close, our bodies almost touching and my body is heating up. There's something about the way his head hangs low staring down at me, My Breath hinges as his hand rises, our eyes glued and he takes something from my head and throws it down.

"Thanks.." I say, a bit soft and quickly walk away. My knees are wobbly..

A date? Yep.

It's after seven in the evening and Qhawe is not here. I'm getting worked up right now. I arrived around half six which means I've been here for more than thirty minutes!

I try his number for the fifth time and it's still

Voicemail! I feel bile rising in my throat. Qhawe wouldn't do me like this, would he?

"His sis, would you like to order something?"

Another thing that will kill me is this waiter staring at me

"Water is fine" I say. That's going to be the third glass of water by the way. She nods and flashes a sympathetic smile. Arg! I don't need sympathy

"We also have something special this evening .." bla bla bla! I feel like Vousteking this waiter

"I'm fine sis" I tell her

"Are you sure? Because we also have.."

"You heard the lady. Make yourself scarce. You'll be called when needed. " A deep husky voice reverberates behind me.

Oh hell no..

A RAY OF SUNSHINE

°°EIGHT°°

Ntsika Ngcobo

He gulps the third glass of wine and sink back on the chair wallowing in deep end.

He loves his parents, more than anything and seeing them fight is something he hates more than anything. He is about to add on that list of stress

A while later Betty appears wearing one of her best fake smile. Anyone can buy it but this is his mother and she can never fool him

"I hate it when you turn into alcohol Ntsika, I

hate it" she half yell snatching the half bottle away from him.

Ntsika has a very soft heart, he wants everyone he loves to be happy and when he is reminded that he can't control what goes on in this house he breaks

"and I hate it when you pretend with me.

Mamiza you are not okay. You're not" tears twinkles in his eyes as he says

"It's not your job to worry about me Ntsika. It's my job however to make sure that you don't ruin your health with alcohol. You are too young to have a liver failure my boy"

"Go to bed, I love you okay" she says

"I know, talk to your husband. This tension has to end. Or he will lose his children.."

Funeka

“The devil doesn’t always come in red and with horns, it comes with a Zabelo Magwaza these days. Must be nice in hell, they are a having a blast since their hell king is giving them a breather and in turn harassing me”

I retort, he smiles. A cunning smile that I feel bile rising up my throat. Can the angels of death take him already

“and I’m guessing the devil is me?” he ask, sipping a beer that’s on his hands.

Yes, he ordered a beer and made himself comfortable on a seat that was meant for a no

show Qhawe

“How else would you explain being here instead of Qhawe? ” The smile vanishes and he lean on his chair and stare at me.

“Do you know that calling someone devil is wrong? ” okay, I didn’t expect such.

I open my mouth to say something but get interrupted as the waiter put food in front of me, that he ordered of course.

Where is Qhawe? How can he do me like this?

I’ve been cracking my skull trying to understand why he decided to ghost me and isn’t even man enough to tell me

“Eat your food, it’s gonna get cold.” Ah God! Why me.

“I don’t remember ordering any food Zabelo”

I tell him.

“I know, but I still say eat your food” he firmly says. Habe, haven’t I suffered enough today. Why am I sensing a control freak tendencies
“and I said I didn’t order any.”

He leans close, placing his beer down and balancing on his knuckles.

“You are very beautiful MaFuze. Very beautiful”
His deep husky voice rumbles softly.
Goosebumps!

I blink and look away trying so hard to fight an urge to smile

“There is something about you maFuze.
Something innocent, warm and sweet”

He adds, Heavy breathing slowly visits me, my heart rate is beggining to change and I feel these emotions I can’t explain attacking my

thundering heart, my body and my unstable brain.

What am I even doing?

I clear my throat trying to get my head straight

I turn my eyes slowly and find his still on me.

“Why are you here Zabelo?” I ask

“What do you think?”

He asks. This time I don't shy away from his piercing gaze. There is something about his eyes it's as if there is a sad story behind, I want to know what lies behind those red eyes, behind the dark skinned man with bushy eyebrows and full kissable lips.. Okay.

I look down and start digging in. I'm losing it.

He move away from my face raising his hand.

I sigh a long relief. This can't be good, for

someone I hardly know to hold so much authority.

“Another one” OH wow, another beer

“too much alcohol is not good when you’re going to drive” I find myself saying

“don’t worry about me, I’m a big man. I won’t drive us to death” he says, emptying the beer in his mouth

“Us?”

I frown as I ask him

“Didn’t your buddy text you, I’m going to be your driver tonight”

What? I just lost my appetite.

Where is my phone.

It rings for a while, I’m even annoyed when he

picks up

“Nsika..”

“Has Zabelo arrived? I asked him to take you. Something came up so I can’t be your driver”

Wow, I chuckle in disbelief

“a heads-up would have been nice Ntsika, a simple text telling me that I’ll be spending horrible hours with a devil”

I’m angry, very angry that I feel air leaving my lungs

“It’s no big deal..”

“IT IS A BIG DEAL! “ I yell.

I’m too late to calm down, my voice is very bold and I’ve gained myself some audience. Nice

“Okay, balance me here sister. What’s wrong with Zabelo, do you prefer I just ghosted you

completely. Why don't want to ride with him?"

Why don't I? For one he is a stone cold man that gives me shivers.

And he is a heavy drinker. As it is he is on his second beer. What if we get killed

"It's nothing. Bye Ntsika "I hang up before he grills me even more. Everyone seems to be ditching me today. First it was Qhawe and now Nsika

I stand up requesting an Uber.

I'm standing outside when I feel his presence behind me but I don't even bother looking back

"My car is that way" He adds,

I ignore his sorry ass

He waits with me.

Few minutes later the Uber pulls up in front of me. I get in and he goes around to the driver and talk to him.

After a while the car start moving. What was that? I'm even surprised he didn't force me to ride with him like he did the last time at the office

Just as the Uber pulls outside my gate I head out only to be met with Zabelo's car. He was driving behind us all along.

He rolls down the window and tells me to get in. I have no strength to fight and I have no remote with me so I get in..

You know what.. Let me get this out of my chest

"Did you do something to Qhawe?" He says nothing and keep on driving inside

"Who am I kidding. Ofcourse you did something. Did you have him killed or slashed his tyres maybe. You are such a douche Zabelo Magwaza"

Still no response. The car stops as we reach the front yard

"Get out" he utters very low, almost didn't hear him. He unlocks the doors. Is he really giving me a cold, dead response? I'm fuming as I stare at him but he is just looking ahead and not at me

"What you did was lame and very low. I hope you rot in darkness and sorrow , others might think you are all that when in actual fact you are just a lonely, angry man sinking in his demons alone.." his head snaps and I quickly gulp as his eyes meets mine. They emit something else, sorrow or sadness but it cut deep to see him in

this state. even his face is just darker. The atmosphere quickly thickens and I'm quick to open the door.

I feel like hitting my face so hard. Why did I even say those awful things?

.....

Work!

I wish I can say it's going great but it's just going South.

Its after Lunch but I've already had two clients shouting and badging in Mazisi's office screaming. The second one actually stepped on my tiny toes when I tried stopping him and they hurt like hell.

Not to mention that I forgot to remind Mazisi about a 13:30 meeting and forgot to book a

boardroom as well for the meeting . Time is approaching Two and I left his office filled with about Six or Seven clients, angry clients to be precise

Right now I'm looking at the Admin Clerk shouting at me about this.

Her office is on the first floor facing the lift and everyone passing by is looking at me

“Just because this is your father's company doesn't mean that we'll bend the rules for Princess Ngcobo. Unlike you who got this job because you were born in a well off family, some of us worked our ass off for our position. I hate spoilt brats like you that disrespect their jobs because they know that daddy dearest will always be there to save the day.. “

She is literally yelling and the lump in my throat is becoming hard to press. One blink and one

tear fall off

“Aw! Would you look at that? She is crying just for making a stupid mistake. Get out of my sight” just as I turn I find Mazisi behind me. I hear a gulp

How long has he been standing here? I bet we didn't see him because of the heated moment.

He looks angry, deadly expression is shivering

“Bhuti I'm sor..”he raises his hand

“that was quite a movie Simone. How about you repeat what you just said to my sister again?”

I'm back at my table feeling like the world is on my shoulders. I admire what Mazisi did there, standing up for me but this made things worse. Now I'm even afraid to go out because everyone thinks I'm this spoiled princess that doesn't know a single struggle. They don't even know

that bab Ngcobo is not my biological father, we just happen to share the same surname. If I had the power I would change this surname, it brings nothing but heartache to me.

I grew up with a single mother, there is no silver spoon there. These people met me few days ago but they've already decided my fate. They know nothing about me, nothing.

I came here to look for work, I didn't know work will find me. It seems like I'm just a carrier of bad omen because this is too much. An unhealthy working environment is depressing and I'm not about to put my self through that. Only if Mihlali was here, maybe things would be a bit bearable. Even Mihlali's work friends have ditched me, to think that I thought they were nice. I guess I misjudged them

What throws me in the deep end is that image of Zabelo, looking so broken. I can't shake it off no matter how many tiktok videos I watch, he is like a bad dream that keep on showing up even if you pray more than ten times a day. I've been feeling like a whole elephant is seating on my chest since that stunt I pulled on Zabelo.

I hear someone clearing their throat and be met by one of reason why my stress level is this high

"Funeka" Qhawe must be losing his mind to even show his face here.

"go away Qhawe, I'm having a bad day as it is and I don't want you to make it even worse"

He doesn't move. His presence is suffocating me, even his cologne just make me wanna puke. I stand up trying to get away but he is quick to hold my hand and staring at me

“I am sorry about last night, something came up and I just didn’t want to be the bad company” is that all he is giving me. I deserve way more than that

“Were you mugged? Or someone slashed your tyres or something? “

I ask him. He frowns and shake his head

“Then what happened? Why did you stood me up when you are the one that asked me out Qhawe? Am I a fool to you?” these damn tears

He shakes his head and wipe the tears in my eyes

“I wasn’t mugged Baby. Stop crying okay, I’m sorry I stood you up”

I want to scream, for everything that I’m feeling inside

“I need more than that Qhawe. If you don’t give me a proper explanation than just get out of

here.” He sighs

“It’s a long story. It’s about my father. My mother never really talked about him until yesterday and I just lost it. I didn’t want to be a bad company “.

Wow.. Someone bury me alive because I deserve it. I can’t believe I suspected Zabelo when he was just helping me get home safe and sound

“Why didn’t you call me? “

“I sort of smashed my phone on the wall “

It might have been bad..

“I know I messed up my chance but can you please allow me to make it right. A date in my apartment, I’ll cook and we can watch some movies after “He gently ask, caressing my cheeks. "Please" He has a charming smile, why

am I even melting arg!.

“And?” he impatiently asks and I smile as I watch his face looking so out of place

“It’s good, very good “he smiles warmly and sigh.

“For a moment I thought you hated my food, God knows I would have fainted” I laugh. He cooked a creamy mushroom and chicken pasta, it tastes Devine. Not for a date night but is its something to take me away from my wrestling brain

“you are a great cook. I might learn a thing or two from you”

When we done eating we head to the kitchen and he wash the dishes and I wipe.

After that we head to the huge cauch and watch

some Romcom with light laughs, conversation and popcorn.

I'm glued on the TV when I feel his eyes on me

"It's a sin to stare at a woman like that young man, especially at night" I say, he leans close and wipe something on my mouth, slow and erotic. My heart is begging to change its normal rhythm

"its even a double sin when that woman looks so gorgeous even at night" he says. I stare in his eyes and make the first move. Our lips meet and he grabs my neck bringing me close. We are deeply kissing when I hear hands clapping

"Qhawelethu Ndlovu! I'm busy worrying about you while you are busy with hoes"

Okay, that's my que.

A RAY OF SUNSHINE

**unedited *

°°NINE°°

“Mom what the hell are you doing here?”

Oh Jesus!, it’s his mother

She’s glaring at me as if she’ll kill me with just a stare

“I have the keys remember” dangling the keys in the air she says and look at her son. How I wish the world to swallow me

I fix my dress and stand up

“This is my apartment, you can’t just badge in here without knocking”

He seethes

“is she the one influencing you to be disrespectful Qhawe, because my sweet boy never screams at me”

Let me take my bag and leave before I lose it

“I’ll see you Qhawe” I pass her but she quickly grabs me with my arm

“stay the hell away from my son”

I’m grabbed again, this time by strong hands and I land on Qhawe’s hard chest with my back. I must be a yoyo today

“You don’t have the right to touch her like that mom!, What’s wrong with you?!”

She laughs, not a good laugh

“get out of my house”

I look at him shocked

“No, Qhawe you can’t kick your mother out. I’m leaving” he holds me tight

“go to my bedroom and wait for me. “ I want to

protest but the tension is already too much so I head to where the bedroom is

After deafening screams I see him getting through the door. He looks exhausted emotionally and physically

“I am so sorry about what just happened. I didn’t want you to leave like that. Let me drive you home, my mom doesn’t want to leave”

I grab my things and follow him.

I’m so drained as I open my eyes slowly. The annoying alarm is bursting my ears, I quickly stop the alarm and throw the blanket away. I take the shower and prepare for work.

Monday was the worst day, to think I thought it’ll end better only to be dissapointed in the end.

I hope today will be better

I grab my things and find a woman preparing breakfast in the kitchen, she smiles as she see me

“You must be Funeka, I’m MaVezi. The house helper” I smile

“nice to meet you ma. Where is everyone? “

“I’m not sure, maybe they are still sleeping”

I grab the apple and request an Uber to work. I’m slowly running out of cash that mama gave me.

Reaching work it’s the usual annoying eyes and back to back meetings. By the time lunch comes I’m exhausted as they come. The office phone rings as I’m about to head out for lunch.

“Hi Funeka, this is Pearl. Someone is here to

see you, she said she is Qhawe's mother"

I'm shocked but I remain calm and tell her I'm on my way

I find the reception quite as always, the receptionist is seated with a cup of coffee on her hands

"Pearl, hi. You said someone is here for me"

"yes, there she is"

I turn and find her seating on a cauch just from me. She stands up, her expensive fragrance hits my nostrils. She's wearing heels and her walk is that of an 'I own the world' demeanor

"Fumile rights" she says as she reach me. Not even smiling

"it's Funeka" I tell her. She is intimidating, glaring at me from head to toe as if I bathed

with puke, my perfume might not be the best
but it smells great that I'm sure off

"can I help you ma?"

"I'm not your mother little girl, don't ever call me
that. What an insult" she's even frowning as she
says. im being tested today

"Which hole did you come from? What sango a
did you see because my Qhawe would never
stoop to this level" her bold voice is gaining
attention as she says, pointing at me with her
manicured hands

"with all due respect mah.."

"I Am Not your mother. Do me a favor and stay
away from my child"

Is this a joke?

Somebody punch me in the face because this
can't be real

"I think Qhawe is old enough to make his own decisions. If he doesn't want me he will tell me and only then will I stay away.."

A loud slap lands on my face, I'm bewildered as I stare at her. Did she just slap me?

"stay away from my son"

"women your age are busy enjoying middle age and here you are harassing me ma..."

I scream as a hot liquid make contact with my chest, drenching my top completely

"It won't be coffee next time, stay away"

Tears rolls down my face.

I'm frozen, I can't move or think where to from here

I feel hands grabbing me gently

"what happened?" I hear Mazisi's voice, he is leading my zombie self outside. I hate my life.

A RAY OF SUNSHINE

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RAY OF SUNSHINE

°°TEN°°

Martha Ndlela

It is after two in the afternoon.

Martha is busy cooking in a kitchen when a hard knock comes through. She drops everything and heads to the door.

She blinks, shock washing over her as she realize who is at the door

"Martha" The man says, his voice sounding bolder than before. He is darker than she remembers him, the bald head suits his older look "Thulani" her chest is heaving and falling, she's just glued in one spot, in the middle of the door way

"Are you going to let me in?" He asks, staring at her.

"come on in" he gets in and instantly she gets hypnotised with the manly fragrance.

He has always been a man that smells good

"Can I offer you something to drink? I was making some food"

He shakes his head as she leads him to the tiny kitchen with built in cupboards and a table with four chairs.

He settles in one of the chairs, his eyes start wandering around as if searching for something.

Silence visits them. The silence of two people who've spent years without seeing each other.

"I never thought I'd see you again" She breaks the ice, leaning against the fridge

"I never thought I'd get out" he says.

"You look, old. But not in a bad way"

Martha adds, he doesn't smile.

"So, how long have you been out?" Martha ask

again

"Just a few days, I had to be cleansed first before coming here."

It's silent again. Martha feels a pang of hurt and guilt in her heart. She didn't know he'd actually be released.

"Can I see her?" asks Thulani, in a softer tone. Martha heads out and returns with an album and hands it to him.

Tears start welling in his eyeballs as he pages the album, each picture giving him heartache and joy at once.

"Where is she? Visiting friends or? "

Martha looks away, a topic she's been trying so hard to avoid since he stepped inside her house

"Martha" the album is now on the table and his

stare is back at her.

He has scars on his face, some have replaced the others but it is evident that he is an ex convict.

"you have to understand Thulani that I had no choice"

She starts by explaining. Thulani stands up and she quickly take a step away from him.

He is not the Thulani she once knew

"Where is my daughter Martha?"

He firmly ask

"She lives with My sister in Gauteng.. and... Your brother"

Veins pop out of his face, his nose flaring causing her to gulp nervously

Martha is afraid but she tries to explain. This is not how she imagined things would turn out.

Had she waited a little longer, none of this would be happening.

"I didn't know that you were going to be released from prison and beside Funeka doesn't even know you so I had to give her a family that she can trust"

He sarcastically laughs, for the first time since he arrived here

"and my brother is the family she can trust, how hilarious"

"Thulani listen to me, I'm.."

"Martha there is nothing that I will listen to here. You decided to ship my daughter to the very same man that is the reason she grew up without a father and never even had the guts to

tell me" furiously he says.

He isn't yelling loudly but his voice is laced with utmost anger

"Tell you? Don't tell me that crap Thulani. You and I stopped talking many years ago, I didn't want to judge appear of nowhere and tell you how I plan to raise my child"

"And whose fault is that? Aren't you the one who just stopped visiting"

His voice is beginning to raise

"I had to move on, from you."

"What about my child, did you even tell her about me? Did you even give her the letters I wrote?"

"You were away for a long time Thulani and it was hurting my child.."

"OUR CHILD!"

She sighs

"that day when you promised to come and never did, that broke her. I didn't want to keep giving her false hope not knowing if you were ever going to be released"

She tells him

"You know it wasn't my fault that I was suddenly denied Parole. You know that very well Martha. I was away for 25 years, 25 years and the only thing that kept me going was the image of seeing my child. I want my daughter Martha and I want her now.."

"I'm afraid that's not going to happen. If you want to see Funeka you'll have to go to Gauteng."

"Why did you do that? Why did you ship her to him? Of all people you gave my child to that back stabbing mother fuckin shit!... "

"I'M DYING , OKAY . I'm dying"

"What do you mean you are dying?"

Her lips start quivering and tears instantly drop down..

FUNEKA

I say a little prayer before opening my eyes.

Its another day, I'm not even going to hope that

it will be better because I seem to attract nothing but trouble since I stepped on Johannesburg grounds.

If I was a believer in ancestors I'd ask mama to burn some incense and tell them to look after thier own. I mean, what in the name of trouble is this?

I get off the bed and head to take a shower.

When I return I hear a knock at the door.

"Coming"

I've decided to lock my door, I can't have everyone budging in here and find me naked.

After wearing comfortable clothes I unlock the door. Ntsika walks in and sit on my unmade bed.

"Sis, Mazisi told me about what happened. How are you feeling?" there are no secrets in this house.

Mazisi brought me home yesterday and I slept an entire afternoon. Sometimes I just take a nap when I'm too engrained in magnitude of emotions

"I'm okay, I guess" I sit next to him and blink tears away. I'm sensitive sometimes, especially when I'm too scared

He sighs and stare at me, he is feeling sorry for me I can tell

"what exactly happened? Why did that woman do that to you"

Where do I start

"To stay away from her son, Qhawe. She said it won't be coffee next time. I don't know what she meant but I got scared"

"nx, wicked woman! As if his son is made of gold. Has he called though? Does he know what

his mother did?"

He has been calling but I've been ignoring his calls

"I don't have the strength to talk to him"

He smiles sadly and side hug me

"We can visit her home if you want to, slash some tires or break windows just to teach her a lesson"

This one is crazy

"No no, I'm good. I'm famished anyway , can we go eat"

I'm not going to work today, I'm taking a break. Mazisi gave me three days off, maybe it is good to work for family sometimes

We find mam MaVezi preparing breakfast, I

make a cereal for myself just to pass time

"I am telling you, we woke up at 4 am to fetch water.." Mama says, she's telling us stories about how her life was and I can safely say that I wouldn't have survived in her time

"imagine carrying 20 litre bucket for over 20 minutes"

"I would have committed suicide. Tjoh"

We are busy laughing when a doorbell rings, the one leading to the lounge.

I stand up heading to the door, it might be Mazisi. That one is always having breakfast here. I wonder why he even moved out if he wasn't ready to make breakfast for himself

"Mama!" I scream and throw myself in her arms.

I didn't realise how much I've missed her until

now.

"What are you doing here? Why didn't you tell me you were coming"

"I'm here now aren't I"

We break the hug and my eyes land on this man behind her. His face is somehow familiar..

"Funeka" he says, offering me a handshake

Ow, he knows my name

"Sawbona" I say and we shake hands.

He doesn't let go as I try to pull away.. Strange.

"THULANI, WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING IN MY HOUSE?"

I turn to see Bab Ngcobo shooting daggers at the man holding my hand...

A RAY OF SUNSHINE

°°ELEVEN°°

FUNEKA

These people spend so much time arguing about things that don't even make sense to me.

I left the lounge and headed to my bedroom.

The only thing that makes sense right now is tik tok videos.

Qhawe is calling again,

Might as well pick up

"Hi"

"Funeka, what's wrong? Did I do something. Why are you ignoring me like this?"

His voice is full of panic

"Qhawe, I don't think you and I will work. Maybe we should just stop.."

He chirps in

"Don't even think about it. Can I atleast see you? Please, I promise I won't disappoint you. I just need you to tell me what I did wrong the last time".

I sigh and keep my mouth closed.

I'm really confused, I don't want to fight useless battles like that one with Qhawe's mother.. I'm way too young for monster in law chronicles

"Qhawe, I don't mean to be insensitive or anything but just leave me alone. You and can't work. Not now, not ever"

I dropped the call. I'm tempted to block his number but let me just be human and leave things the way they are. Maybe he'll get the

memo.

There is a ping of hurt in my heart. Maybe because I was starting to like this guy. It's easy to like him because he is good looking, with a charming smile.

There is a knock at my door.

Mazisi walks in and stand by the door

"Are you okay?aren't you supposed to be going to work"

" There is something I want us to talk about"

Sounds serious

"what is it?" I ask him, putting my phone on the side

"Are you in a relationship with Qhawe, a client?"

Okay, I never expected this question

"Am I talking to a CEO, my boss or a brother?"

He laughs, shakes his head and completely moves in. My bed dips as he sit next to me

"Maybe both, if you are in a relationship with him you have to break things off with him, I'm saying as a boss. And as a brother, he is not good for you sisi. Break up with him"

Why is everyone telling me to leave this man..

During the day I'm with Ntsika in Zabelo's club. He is having one of his meetings. I take some selfies and upload some of my status and a location of where I am.

People must know that I drink expensive cocktails in elegant clubs... I have class now..

Okay I'm exaggerating but who cares..

The last time I was here I had a fight. I promise to behave today.

This Friday I'm painting Joburg red, it's high time I experience the night life of Ndonga ziyaduma

I see Mongezi approaching our table just as Nstika's client leaves the table.

Something clicks in my head, now I know why that man was so familiar this morning.

He looked exactly like that boy he brought home during that chaotic lunch. As old as he is but he looks exactly like Mongezi's child

"sis, I hope you'll come to me next time before choosing a boyfriend. I know every man in

Johannesburg and that one is a no no.." What's with this family and no secret, especially when it comes to me

"This morning it was your twin telling me to break up with Qhawe and now it's you"

I say.

"we know better"

"you guys are so controlling"

I tell him

I keep hoping that I might see Zabelo.

I haven't seen the guy since that fallout.

He hates me even more wherever he is I'm sure.

Since Mongezi kept on harassing me, I ended up with just one bottle of brutal. Just one.

I'm definitely not partying here next time, never.

I don't want to have a security guard while I'm

trying to have some fun.

Do people come here straight from work? I mean it's approaching four but this place is starting to be a buzz.. I might just not go back home tonight. Mama will have to forgive me. I have mother in law issues and I need to unwind.

We are seated at a table, having the craziest, loudest conversation with Ntsika when I see Qhawe approaching with flowers in his hands. How did he know.. Okay, he might have viewed my status.

.

"Funeka, can we talk?" he says just as he reaches me.

"I'm busy Qhawe"

Ntsika is now shooting daggers at him

"Hello to you too, man of Gold" he says, looking up at him. This one is drunk, nobody's guarding him like me.

"You should tell your mother to focus on finding herself a good sugar daddy instead of harassing my sister." he is talking too much. Now Qhawe is glaring at me putting the flowers on the table

"What is he talking about?"

"I'm in no mood for this thing. You and I are nothing Qhawe. I don't owe you any Explanation".

Where is the loo? I suddenly feel pressed so I stand up but I feel his hand grabbing my wrist.

"Can you give me a chance? Please Funeka. I beg you" OH Bawo. This is not what I signed up

for.

"Let go of me Qhawe."

"Not until you talk to me. Let's go to my car and we can talk" i try to wiggle my hand out of his but he is stronger..

"Let me go! You are hurting me Qhawe..."

"I'll let you go when you agree to talk to me.."

Aibo, is this a joke or?.

"Let her go" story of my life...

A RAY OF SUNSHINE

°°TWELVE °°

FUNEKA

Qhawe instantly let go of my hands.

I can literally feel his heavy presence behind me.

Qhawe seems a bit.. I don't know shaken or something.

"We were just talki.."

"I don't care. Touch her like that again, I'll cut those hands myself" he venomously spits.

My vessels are drying up, seriously.

Is he threatening him? My God your children aren't safe with this man behind me

"hadde Bro"

What's happening here?

"Get lost ninja"

Just like that Qhawe wabathu quickly walks out.

Shame, never thought I'd see a ninja this close.

Arh !

I turn.

There he is, looking dapper in shorts, golf t shirt and flops. Doe he ever wear something else other than shorts

"maFuze"

My tummy does this thing of flipping

"Zabelo"

I'm thinking he will walk away instead he draws close. I suck in my breath as his body presses against mine. He takes my hand slowly, the one Qhawe was holding and I feel this shocking feeling bursting my entire body as he slowly massages my wrist.

I feel some sense of warmth. His hands are warm and weirdly soft for a man

The Hypocritical organ in between my lungs is bulging.

Zabelo has this deep aura around him that's somehow intimidating but rigid.

"Are you in pain?" He asks in a rather scary tone, staring down at me. I literally feel his minty breath on me as he stands an inch close.

I shake my head. His eyebrows frowns

"MaFuze" He is staring deep in my eyes, while his hand remains massaging my wrist. I'm exploding in magnitude of emotions and he expects me to function normally. Somebody tells me how my weakened knees are still carrying me

"just a little" hhay, this soft voice can never be mine. I refuse

"Come with me"

My wrist is just in its brown state, if I was light skinned I'd probably be red. But as they say black doesn't crack.

We are in his car driving to Lord knows where.

I'm just seated like a good kid next to him biting my fingernails. I'm diving in nervousness and feeling kind of important at once.

"We are here" he says, stopping the engine.

He gets out and I do the same.

I feel his hand encircling my waist and we start walking. I don't even know why I'm allowing this to happen. But here I am, feeling like a queen in his arms.

I feel protected, content and at peace

"That wasn't necessary Zabelo" I tell him as we leave the pharmacy behind. Yes, he bought some cream to help with the pain.

"it was" yep, only him can bring just tiny responses while I'm waiting for a two pages kind of response

We are Inside the car when we find his phone ringing.

He looks at the screen, a Mandisa name pops up in bold. I feel some type of way

Is that his girlfriend? Why am I even bothering myself

He doesn't pick though, he just grabs my wrists and starts applying the cream he bought. It's cold, but his gentle rub has me wanting to go out and ask Qhawe to bruise my other wrist

When he is done he puts it down and starts the engine.

"Zab.." I don't know what to do, he is slowly taking my thong with his teeth. It's turning me on and erotic at the same time.

He tosses it aside and hovers over me, his hard face now an inch close to my mouth.

I cry out a faint cry as he plays with my slippery folds and in a nanosecond he thrust in and I let out a loud scream. My head is sinking deep in the pile of pillows as I moan...

I wake up sweating, my head buried deep in the covers and I'm embarrassingly wet and horny.

My clit is crying for help.

Somebody strike me pink because what in the name of witchcraft is this?

How can I have a wet dream about Zabelo? Of

all people.

I need some holy water and that pink powder to get rid of this bad spirit.. Jesus!

I'm on my way to the kitchen. I need something to keep me sane. If I knew where bab Ngcobo kept his wine, I'd be heading there but water will have to do for now..

I quickly stand still as I reach the kitchen door. It's him, it has to be!

My goodness, it wasn't enough to dream about him now he is here.

I slowly turn

"maFuze, I don't bite"

Flipp... damn it. The bastard with crazy instinct has sensed me. Is it because of my INuka perfume, I mean I spray myself after bathing.

Maybe it's high time I stop this silly habit

"Are you having a nightmare?" he asks, closing the fridge gently. There is a half bitten drumstick in his hands.

"ahem.. Something like that?" really, it was worse than something like that..

Oh God! My heart is sinking, he put the drumstick on the counter.

I want to run as he makes his way to me, slowly.

He stops before me and looks down at me looking all serious and dangerously salivating in a white vest that's revealing all his strong arms and black track pants.

"Tell me about it" he gently utters.

I gulp and summon all the courage bones in my body and hope to die

"I was running in the woods.." he chuckles. Now I'm glaring at him. What's funny about my lie, he doesn't know that I'm lying so what's funny?

"I'm sorry, continue" he says, stifling a laugh.

Let me just..

"so, I was running in the woods and I saw something like a vampire.."

He is laughing, it is not even funny.

"Really Zabelo?" I'm getting worked up, seriously

I turn and begin walking away but I'm instantly grabbed bumping on his hard chest.

Now my heart is literally jumping hard.

We've never been this close before, one wrong move our lips will collide..

Our eyes are glued, I can't shy away. I want to

look at him all day long, every day but..

"Where do you think you are going, young lady?
We are not done here" his husky voice
whispers..

A RAY OF SUNSHINE

*Unedited *

°°THIRTEEN °°

FUNEKA

Something tells me this is just another dream,
because there is no way in hell I'll allow this to
happen. To make matters worse, Zabelo is like
a brother.

We shouldn't be buried deep into this

situationship. Maybe I'm still dreaming as I stare closely at his dreamy face, his dark lips inviting me to do the worst.

My thundering heart in my chest is evident enough that I'm in no lalaland. This is happening

"Zabelo" I doubt he heard me, my voice was way too low. His eyes stare down my lips, my eyes close automatically as I feel his breath tickling my face.

I feel air leaving my lungs as I hold my breath waiting.. Waiting and..

"And then wena nightwalker? Are you sleepwalking now?" I half scream, holding my chest.

"Hhayini undertaker, what are you doing here in

the middle of the night? If I didn't know any better I'd say you are a witch"

Where is Zabelo? I can still smell his cologne.

My eyes wander around, was I dreaming?

oooooooo

I woke up to a ringing cell phone. Mazisi, he is calling me...

Just as I pick up the call stops.

Now that I'm awake let me check tik tok first, that's my home. Followed by whatsapp and Facebook. I used to have Instagram, until I realised that it wasn't my time yet. I'll grace those IG streets once I have my own money. For now, Marc zuckerback is my daily hero.

After exhausting my poor eyes I check text messages. Maybe I won a lottery, who knows.

I jump up, this can't be real.

Somebody just deposited R10 000 cash in my account and the reference is..

Damn you Qhawe Ndlovu.

I'm fuming. The message was received during the night, he wasn't sleeping but busy thinking of ways to trap me. He hasn't even apologised for manhandling me. Dauche!

I was angry when I realised that Zabelo left me stranded and now this?

God must really enjoy seeing me wrenched in terror. Qhawe isn't picking up as I call him.

Let me check his whatsapp..

What?

I'm his Display picture, he stole my recent

status and updated his DP. The nerve of this guy.

I'm still recovering from this anger when someone knocks on my door.

"Come in"

I quickly sit up as Bab Ngcobo gets in.

He smiles and grab a chair then seat in front of me

"MaNgcobo"

He greets

"yebo baba" I say, respectfully

"Are you okay? I heard someone harassed you at work the other day" sometimes I wonder if they ever keep secrets in this house

"I'm okay baba" he is looking at me

"Do you have a boyfriend?" the bomb!

It just busted in front of my eyes and I'm not sure how to handle this situation. I blink and shake my head

"these boys are too much trouble ndodakaz. Stay away from them if you know what's good for you" he says, in an unfriendly tone.

I nod my head.

He stand up

"If you need money don't be afraid to let me know. I don't want you receiving money from scumbags who will only hurt your feelings. Come with me, there is something I must give you" my.. Oh my..

I'm holding a bank card, baba just handed it to me just now. I'm on my way back to my room holding it in my hand.

I'm gobsmaeked.

"Nenezi, I've been looking for you" Mama says as I bump into her in the passage.

"Where is the man you came with yesterday?" I ask her

"he left. What's that?" she's staring at the card in my hand

"Baba gave me and said I should buy whatever I want, the pin is my birthday, how strange and amazing mama" I happily tell her. She just snatches the card away and climbs the stairs in anger.. And then?

After bathing I head to the kitchen and find it busy. MaVezi is preparing breakfast with a woman I've never seen before in my life.

I greet them and begin making myself a cereal.

"Ayibo, sis Mandisa. Is that you?" Ntsika yells, walking in and immediately the kitchen becomes loud.

They seem to get along with this woman.

I'm just minding my own business

"Where is Nkosazana?" Ncane asks, walking in as well.

"she's at school ma. I drove her to school and decided to pass by. It's been a while since we saw each other" the woman responds, her voice as sweet as those of radio presenters.

"I miss her, bring her here after school" she nods

"I see you've met Funeka, she's my sister's only daughter" Ncane introduces me.

She smiles, my God, she's gorgeous.

"Nice to meet you Funeka, I'm Zabelo's baby

mama"

I choke in my breath and quickly swallow nothingness.

"HI" I say and offer a hug.

What an awkward hug!

The breakfast table is draped in laughter and crazy conversation. Baba is just listening but sharing not even a single smile.

On the other hand, I'm buried in mixed emotions.

This is thee Mandisa, this girl is hot. She is blessed with the likes of Buhle Samuel's Body and here I am looking like I just survived kwashiorkor and hunger in Haiti.

"FUNEKA!" I look up, everyone is staring at me.

"What?" I ask, looking confused

"Mandisa is asking if you don't mind volunteering at a hospital she is working in" Nsika says.

"what are you talking about?"

I ask, I haven't been paying attention to this conversation

"I'm a doctor and I was wondering if you'd like to volunteer. Ntsika says you have a degree in Social work"

Aw.. Zero point for me. Again!

"No, I'm okay" I say, flashing the fakest smile ever.

"you can think about it, no need to turn me down now. I'm just trying to help. Social work has scarce opportunities so it is better to take anything that comes your way nana"

Who died and made her the deputy motivational

speaker, last I checked Zondo is still alive and kicking.

I'm saved by mama joining the table and it is instantly quiet. Thank God I can eat my breakfast in peace.

Where is Mazisi today, I wonder.

After breakfast Mandisa, the doctor offered to wash dishes and I just decided to solve this Qhawe issue once and for all

As of now I'm heading out to meet with him. He called and said he was outside.

I'm about to go out the gate when suddenly Mazisi drives in. I wave at him but he stops, rolling down the window

"bhuti" I say

"You do not listen do you?" his voice is stern as he says.

"What are you talking about?" I ask

"didn't I tell you to stay away from that scumbag Qhawe?"

Is he scolding me? At this age?

"but I did break things off. There was nothing going on between us" I say, he unlock the car and gets off

Oh bawo!

"Where are you going then?" his sharp eyes are glaring at me. Now I look guilty as I look at him dumbfounded

"What's this?" he hands me his phone.

I feel my heart sinking deep.

I'm all over Qhawe's status. Why didn't I notice this?

I just looked at the Display picture only and didn't bother to view his status updates. There are even old pictures from Facebook.

And a screenshot showing that he sent me the money.

"OH God" that's all I manage to say. This is just.. Strange and scary

"I swear Bhut I'm not dating Qhawe. I'm not."

He looks at me and takes his phone.

I'm left even more confused as he drives away from me.

I wait for Mazisi to get inside the house and walk out. The streets are empty, there is no Qhawe. Maybe Mazisi told him to get lost, I won't be surprised if he did.

The day goes too slow when you are stressed. The sun is scorching outside, I'm in nothing but a light doek covering just my upper body. I'm wearing a Drawstring Waist Short for security.

I've binge watched every thing that I love until I settled on Titanic.

I'm watching Titanic a zillion times today.

I'm at the scene where Rose is surrounded by dead people, in a coldest ocean on a darkest night.

She's waking Jack, I'm crying with her. I do that when I'm stressed sometimes so I can find a reason to release the suffocating tension in my heart.

I can't seem to shake away Zabelo's image. I'm

trying so hard to understand last night's
situation, headache is slowly getting worse.
Ntsika isn't here to keep my mind busy, mama
is sleeping and everyone else is at work. Dr
Mandisa left as well and maVezi too.

It's after Four when Titanic ends.

You know what, let me do this.

I quickly request an Uber to his club.

I'm back to fuming again, how dare he. He had
absolutely no right to do that to me.

I'm a woman and I'm vulnerable at night, he
used that opportunity to lue me and made me a
fool. Uthinte abangathintwa sgodo esimnyama!

I'm coming for you.

Just as the Uber drops me off at the club I quickly walk in and search for him. Right now I can even smell his blood, if I can just grab his balls and squeeze them, only then will he know my name, Rhaa! Where the hell is this dick head?

"Funeka, what are you doing here?"

Its Mongezi

"Great, you are here. Where is your useless partner? I want to squeeze his green balls dry" I say, he looks shocked.

"He is not here. He went back to his apartment just few minutes ago"

The bustard's underground gang works overtime. How can I miss him?

"but I can drive you" Aw, look at God. I'm definitely praying today.

Mongezi leaves me at the door. I knock and wait, tapping my foot impatiently.

He has to know that I'm not here to play. Will he tell me why he left me like that? For his own good I hope he does.

I'm a woman of high calibre and I deserve better.

I'm about to knock again when the door opens

His presence hit me in a way I never even imagined. I'm not sure what to say anymore. Why am I even here again?

He looks shocked to see me outside his door, his face is showing that he just woke up. Was he sleeping?

Heavy breathing slowly suffocates me, my heart rate is beginning to change and I feel these

intense emotions attacking my over beating heart. God, I'm losing my mind. I swear I am.

We are staring into each other's eyes, saying nothing. Just staring.

I feel drawn into this man, so drawn that it hurts a little.

"MaFuze"

After what feels like eternity he softly utters.

"Zabelo, how can you do this to me?" one blink and a single tear drops down my face.

He is quick to encircle his arms around my waist bringing me to his chest..

A RAY OF SUNSHINE

°°FOURTEEN°°

The lump in my throat is suffocating as he suddenly let me go.

He stares at me, as if caging me in his spell. Something in me is screaming and feeling more attached to the dark man before me. An unexplainable magnet evokes my heart, pulling me to him.

He slowly brings me inside and closes the door, locking it. I stand still, wiping stupid tears on my face. I can feel his supreme yet demanding presence behind me, I try to ignore him but he speaks

"MaFuze, I've never been a sangoma before. I suggest you tell me what is going on before I lose my mind. Who hurt you?" His melodic yet husky tone is soothing my heavy heart. This man is so dump, can't he tell that he is the one

responsible for my crazy emotions

My lips dance, tasting nothing instead of giving him an answer. Strong hands land on my shoulders and I'm turned slowly. But I look down at his very big toes. Very big toes with full nails, why can't he cut his nai..

"Look at me" he commands. Tingles flushes my tummy instantly.

"I can't," I whisper. How do I even stare at him after making a fool of myself. Seriously? What doll stopped dancing in my head for me to misbehave this way

"MaFuze" I know, I just know that he is getting impatient. A warm, index finger lands on my chin and slowly he raises my face until our eyes meet..

If it is me than I am signing myself in a psychiatric hospital because I feel it, I think he does too.

The burning, electrifying connection is too deep and hard to ignore, it is as loud as an empty can in the coldest, quiet night. I'm screwed, dead and buried in the name of Zabelo Magwaza

I'm drowning in a wave of emotions as he stares at me. His monolid dark eyes illuminate gentleness and something that I fail to read.

He begin caressing both my cheeks, I feel like I'm in Disneyland with colourful surroundings.

"Who hurt you?" he softly questions once more.

"You" a bit louder than before I responded.

His eyes narrow at my answer, a bit taken back.

"you hurt me Zabelo, you just appeared out of

nowhere and made me feel things I don't even understand and then you just left and never even bothered to check up on me. I'm not an idiot and I'm not a plaything okay! I have feelings and I hate it when my feelings are rejected! "

I've screamed, I see the way his face has suddenly reached a stone cold state. I don't know when he removed his hands from my face but he has, I can feel the coldness they left.

Its too late to turn back my words.

I sound like I'm begging for his love..

He does the unexpected and leaves me standing, again? And to make matters worse, the man locked me in..

I'm left in an impassive state, my heart feeling like somebody just punched it with a four pound hammer. Tears dingle in my eyes but I'm quick

to blink them and breathe out loudly..

Nothing is happening between us, but the way
he just left me stings so bad.

Aw God, I'm going off the deep end

ooooooo

Qhawe Ndlovu

He stares at her pictures for the umpteenth
time and each time he still feels the love for her
growing even deeper than before.

Time is approaching eight in the evening, he
has been inside Zabelo's club just wandering
around.

The Ngcobo boys really had it with him, first it

was Mazisi and now it seems like Zabelo is heading the same way.

This time he won't take it lying down, he will fight tooth and nail to have her.

His phone beeps, he closes the folder and opens the text with a number and a location.

He will pay this woman a visit, she will be the perfect ally.

xxxxxxxxxxxx

FUNEKA

I could lie and say I don't like this bachelor apartment but I really do. It is comfortable and cosy, combining the living room with one big sofa and a huge TV screen on the wall, the tiny kitchen is on the left side of the apartment and the sleeping area is at the far corner with a

huge, comfy bed adorned in Grey and white covers.

There is a door leading to what I assume is a balcony and another one that I think leads to a separate bathroom.

It's different from the luxurious double story that I live in but it's actually a beauty on its own.

My phone is ringing, mama's name flashes on the screen and I feel like slapping the foolishness out of me. How can I forget her so quickly?

"Where are you? Last I checked you were watching the TV Funeka" she is about to scream at me.

I can start by telling her how I stupidly looked for a man that is not even here with me anymore and that I'm here, at night and alone in his apartment patiently waiting for him to return.

It's so quiet and I'm just on my own like a wife waiting for her serial cheater husband to come home. I can't even bother with TV

"I'm with Mihlali. She is pregnant and she said she was having cramps so I wanted to be there for her." By the time I reach hell my gold made folk would be long done and just waiting for me

"Who is that ?" she ask

I've mastered the art of lying when it comes to this woman. I became an expert during my adolescence stage.

"I work with her. You can ask Bhut Mazisi, she knows her"

She believes me and tells me to pray for her and hangs up.

I feel bad for lying but what I feel for Zabelo

surpasses my little lie. Now, how do I make sure that my little lie remains intact?

I text Bhut Mazisi and ask for her numbers.

I send her a whatsapp asking her to back me up.

We aren't that close but she seems like a good woman.

In less than a minute she calls and laughs at me and tells me to shave..

Lucky for her I'm that chicken that's always ready for action, Zabelo won't know what..

okay..

Let me hit a brake because I'm going in a fast lane.

To shy away from my wrecking brain I decided to check the pots and start cooking since there

is no food in here. I'm sure he eats at the Club Grill during the day and at night he ambushes ncanne's kitchen.

I'm busy cooking the only thing I found in this house, beef and maize meal, so I made uphuthu. The nerve of Zabelo, his fridge has more beer than food. Yerr. There is a lot of work for me here.. Okay let me get this out of my head..

I'm almost done when I suddenly hear the door knob turning, he walks in.

My heart jumps, announcing that the man of my sanity is in the house.

"Come here" he says. I slowly catwalk towards him, his stare burning my every step. As I reach him the smell of mint and something else

suffocates my nostrils.

"You just left" I say, looking at him. The pain in my voice is loud.

"I was out, smoking," he tells me.

He moves closer to me, his body presses against mine and I hold my breath.

His breath is heating up my face, that's how close we are. The intense connection again, I feel it evoking the deepest part of me.

I briefly glance at his inviting lips and then stare at his eyes again. If I'm seeing clearly I'll say he just shared a sly smile for a second. He starts to lean in, my heart is literally threatening to leap out.

A burst of adrenaline rushes through my body like firecrackers when his lips pressed against mine and I shut my eyes completely. I feel his

hand hooking behind my neck and our lips start dancing in sync rebooting every emotion in me. He gently parts my lips, sliding his tongue and I let him take full control and allow the intense, deep and lingering kiss to overtake me.

A low, faint moan leaves my mouth as the kiss deepens, unholy juices are slowly forming in between my legs

Butterflies in my tummy are bursting like crazy as I hold on to his hard chest...

A RAY OF SUNSHINE

*unedited *

°°FIFTEEN°°

There is this unexplainable happiness at the deepest of my sentiment. I'm overjoyed and I

can't even put it in words.

After that knee weakling kiss we shared last night we ate and I fell asleep in his arms. The most amazing moment of my life.

I slowly open my eyes and be greeted by the sun rays illuminating the entire apartment but his side is empty. As if he can sense the questions starting to bomber my mind he walks in, from the balcony.

He is in just a vest and boxers, that alone just gives me heart palpitations.

His strong manly amrs are just out in the open

My eyes dart down to his hairy, long legs as he confidently walks toward me. His left leg is slightly curved and that add to his masculine, confident walk. I feel like everything about this man fascinates me in more ways then one.

God created him just for me to lose my sanity.

I'm just staring in awe, laying on the bed. Just as he reaches me he kisses me, slow and passionate awakening every emotion in me. If this is how it feels to be with indoda then I'm definitely choosing him over family.. Okay that's too early

"maFuze" he says as we stop kissing, his face an inch close and our breaths are attacking one another. My heart swirls in tingles and I can't help the blush spreading across my face.

His breath has something minty and ... weed if I'm correct. I feel his his touch on my cheeks, . he brushes my face staring deeply in my eyes.. I'm ashamed of my self for responding to his touch so effortlessly

"Why are you here MaFuze?" he asks in a whisper, keeping his gaze on me. His hand keep on caressing my face

He is hovering over me, his other balanced on my left side, I can literally feel his thing poking his boxer and in turn touching my lower body causing shivers.

"because I want to be here, with you" I tell him, surprising myself in the process

"ngiyatkthand mina maFuze" he hit me with a bomb as he confesses that he loves me and I'm just not even sure what to say. I'm bewildered but overjoyed. Because I think love him too, why else would I be here If I didn't have feelings for him.

"Your image has haunted me since my eyes landed on you that night, hitting me with a vase

and your lips pouting and your face terrified" he chuckles. I'm just amazed, taking in what he just said.

Then he stops and be stone cold again

"But you are young Funeka, you're supposed to be running after your age mates, not me"

Is he trying to hurt me? Because it is working. Did he just call me by my name? I hate it.

"I'm 24 years, I'm not a child Zabelo" I say, defending whatever it is that I'm feeling for him.

He moves from my face and seat beside me.

"I hate games maFuze, I'm too old to be running around you and telling you how to behave around me. I hate being shouted at because it makes me feel like I'm some mindless teenager with boyfriend issues, I hate being unable to get

hold of my woman because she has suddenly decided to ignore me over a silly argument. I hate not knowing where you are, with who. I hate lies, as little as they are I still prefer the truth. Maybe I'm possessive, or controlling but that's just me. Are you ready to take all that from me? "

.. That was a long chat.

I stare at him and just see this man that I want to be with so badly..

"How old are you? "I ask instead of giving him an answer

"35" he replies. Not bad.

"You are not that old" I say, he is looking at me straight in my eyes making me edgy

"as I said I hate lies. So I'm going to tell you straight. I love you and I will not tolerate any

silly behavior, do you want me just as I want you or maybe you are just confused"

Conf..

"Im not confused" I argue and get off the bed heading to nowhere really

I stand before the dressing table and watch myself in the huge mirror.

He is behind me in a second staring at me in the mirror.

"Are you ready to be with a hard headed man like me maFuze?" can't he just stop asking me questions.

"I want to be with you Zabelo, that's all I know right now. Can you please stop questioning me now." I say. He bows down my shoulder and press his body even more behind me.

As my body reacts strangely he start kissing my

right shoulder gently making his way to the nape of my neck.

But my senses are slowly flying out of the window as I move my head aside...

I'm getting chills and my heart is racing

He begins nipping, teasing me. His hands easily slide inside the doek I'm wearing and he begins massaging my nipples..

There is a sudden knock at the door

"Bafo! Open up" someone yells outside.

Mongezi and Mazisi walks in, Their eyes are on me.

"Hi" I'm so embarrassed right now. What are they doing here so early?

"What's going on here?" Mazisi asks

"my twin here can be slow, I can't believe I actually shared a womb with him..." that's Mongezi, looking at me with a sly smile.

Another knock erupt and

Mandisa walks in and rush to Zabelo hugging and kissing his face as if she is seeing him for the first time.

I quickly grab my phone and head out requesting an Uber..

Reaching the gate there is a car parked just a few meters away. It moves until it stops before me and the window rolls down revealing Qhawe.

"Hey love, going somewhere?" really?

Maybe I do need a ride. I mean I look like a hobo since I haven't even taken a bath.

I get inside Qhawe's car.

He start driving playing soft music.

"just so you know I don't want your money. Can you please delete my pics on your phone.you and I aren't dating Qhawe okay"

Guess what the dude does next, he smiles. why can't he just get it.

"I love you, I know you love me too. Take that money, it's yours.."

I'm dealing with a lot Today.

"if you love me that much, you will reverse this money Qhawe. I'm serious, or else I'll go to the police station and report harrasment."

He seems to be thinking, good. I don't need another stress right now.

I'm trying so hard to control my emotions. One wrong turn, I'll definitely explode.

I can't believe it is Friday today. I'm so glad.

Reaching home I found the house empty, with just MaVezi.

I call my mother as I sink my body inside the bath tub

"Someone decided to remember me" that's her pick up line

"Come on, I'll never forget you. You're my mother, my first and last love. My super human" she is softly laughing.

I love my mom, I can't imagine a life without her.

During the day I laze around the house until Ntsika return.

"Does your mother know that you sleep around now Funeka?" that's the First thing he said when he saw me. Ntsika can read me when I'm lying and I hate it

But I don't tell him that because I'm still hoping that he takes me with him to the groove today. I mean, it is Friday.

I'm in front of the TV when he comes and hand me the phone

"Who?" I ask

"Zabelo" my heart instantly sink.

I'm crazy, stupid and dump and naive and.. The list is endless.

When I saw Mandisa this morning my mind just clicked in a different direction.

I mean what if he was just playing when he said all those things. Mandisa isn't a teenager, she's

curvy and beautiful woman with a bright career.
What was I even thinking going to his
apartment! Arg

"Aibo, sis please take the phone" says Nsika
impatieny, slapping the back of my head.

I snap out of it and stand up heading to my
bedroom to preparer for the groove

"Funeka!"

He yells my name. Can't he get the message, I
don't want to talk to Zabelo.

You know that the groove was lit when you
come back after midnight, with heels on your
hands and seeing double things at once.

It was a great night indeed, Nsika took me to
this amazing club in Rosebank and i had the

best night ever

As the Uber drops us off we head inside,
holding each other's hands.

I'm not that wasted. But I feel like I'm on cloud
nine

We part ways in silence and I make my way to
my room hoping that I'll be able to wake up with
no hang over in the morning.

I walk in, drop my heels and sigh.. Phwe!

"MaFuze"... What.

Forgive me for errors, I'm kak tired I was
shopping for Christmas.

Anyway have a great weekend loviaes 

I'll see you on Monday

A RAY OF SUNSHINE

°°SIXTEEN°°

FUNEKA

Am I that wasted that I even hear his voice from the walls? Arg I'm losing my mind. The only thing I want is to close my eyes and let sleep take over.

I take off my dress and a bra. I'll sleep naked today, I feel hot.

Where is the switch anyway, it's too dark for my liking.

I stumble a bit as the lights come on.

I blink a couple of times and widen my eyes.

I'm gobsmacked

"MaFuze" my heart gladly accepts his unexpected presence as it beats for him. I feel air leaving my lungs, gawking at him slowly walking to me.

My head is literally spinning right now.

"Zabelo" what is he doing in my room

I'm staring at him from head to toe, failing to believe that he is actually here in front of me.

My breathing quickens as he brings me closer, his hands sliding around my bare skin.

He kisses me, gently parting my lips and I let his tongue enter my mouth.

As drunk as I am I feel him in this kiss, the gentleness, adoration, dominance and many unsaid words that I can not fathom.

I almost scream as I'm swiftly lifted up, my back balancing on the wall as he puts me on either of his shoulders with my feet dangling behind him.

My lacy thong is teared up with teeth in a second leaving me rather shocked.

For a moment he stares at my cookie displaying straight on his face, I whimper inwardly as my clit throbs and his head lean inside my cookie

I gasp, holding hard onto his head feeling the tip of his tongue teasing my entrance..

He stops, I feel like screaming as he stares up at me with a smug look

"You scream I stop, don't scream" he orders, his voice more huskier and deeper.

"I won't scr.. ah.. Zabe..ple" I'm whimpering softly as he gently nibbles my clit, grabbing his

head. It becomes a mission impossible to stifle the moans overtaking me.

And he eats me up senselessly as his tongue shudders over my cookie hitting the right spots until I feel my muscles tensing and an orgasm hits me hard..

He lays me in bed and plants a soft kiss on my cheek after tucking me in.

"Ngyakthanda maFuze" he whispers and I feel his steps fading away.

My knees are literally shaking as I close my eyes..

.....

A smile graces my lips before I even open my heavy eyes.

Sunrays have long invaded my space as I sit up, yawning and feeling a hangover attacking me.

Damn it, I should have woken up early to treat it.

My eyes land on my teared thong at the corner and last night's event instantly fills up my mind. My clip throb once and I feel my body being draped in goosebumps.

My oh my, what did I get myself into.

I search for my phone to check the time.

There are missed calls from an unsaved number. And a text message that reads

****Your moans are like a soft melody on a beautiful sunny day maFuze, you drive me crazy****

A blush quickly spread across my face.

I feel this happiness I can't even explain
overtaking my deepest heart.

I'm tempted to call him, the sudden knock at the
door reminds me that I was actually looking for
a time. It's after nine, Jawova!

And I'm still naked!

"don't enter.. I'm still busy" I quickly scream and
run to take my thong and my dress.

I search for my gown and put it on then order
whoever at the door to enter.

My mom walks in, looking beautiful like always

"My baby, maFuze ka mam wakhe" maFuze
suddenly seems like the only name I prefer,
because Zabelo says it better than anyone

After what feels like an eternity of
conversations, mama heads out. I hold my head

and moan in pain, sinking my heavy body on my bed. I was trying so hard to remain normal around her.

Just as I plan to take a shower the knock comes through again! Rha! Can't a girl have some peace

Mazisi walks in, I haven't even ordered him to.

"Bhuti, what If I was naked" I say, annoyed.

"you aren't naked, end of discussion. I need you to do something for me."

He seat on my bed and look at me.. Might as well join him

"what is it?" I ask

"well, Mihlali's sister is planning a surprise baby shower and they want you to be there because you are my sister."

I give him a blank stare

"so, you happen to have a relationship with every employee in the company and even get the liberty to invite your family members?"

He looks at me for long, squinting his eyes.

"God Mazisi, explain. Clearly there is something you're not telling me"

I snap at him, rising my hands on air

"She is carrying my child, or children"

What..

"Shut the front door! Hebana, you don't say. When did it happen, in your office, your chair or the table.. Aw.."

I cry out, holding my throbbing head after he smacked my forehead.

"you talk too much for your own good. Getrude will contact you about the details. I'm out" he says, standing up

"Who is that?"

"Her sister"

Mazisi is slow, Mongezi was right.

He just stops at the door as if he remembers something

"I hope you know what you are doing," he says sternly.

"Zabelo has been through a lot. He went crazy yesterday after you bailed out, if you are not ready to be in a committed relationship with him just let him go "

My mouth dries up instantly. He heads out leaving me in a taboo moment.

After taking a warm shower I wear comfortable clothes and take my phone saving Zabelo's number as Magwaza, with a heart emoji. I'm a gone girl bethuna.

My phone rings, it's an unsaved number.

"Hello" I say,

"Hi there sweaty, it's ma G here. I'm Mihlali's little sister" her loud voice speaks and in turn worsening my headache

"Getrude right?" that's what Mazisi said.

"that what the rents said, Call me maG. So I was thinking, you will buy a Lubbeez Baby Twin Pram, it's not that expensive. Around R5000 or so, look it up and well, bring it. We've all decided what we will buy, I guess you were the only one remaining"

Okay.. Let me breath..

"When is the baby shower again?"

I ask

"Tommorow at 9,in our backyard."

I'm seating here, inwardly scolding Mazisi for putting me through this. I mean, tomorrow ? How am I supposed to find a dress and a whole R5000 Pram?

"Is this supposed to be a joke because how will I get such an expensive present in such a short space of time. And aren't present supposed to be from the heart?"

I ask her

"Don't be a bore, you guys are loaded and swim in money. You can't be a monster in law this ealry."

Tjo...

"so, the event will take place in which backyard?"

"Backyard at home, in Orange farm. She's heavily pregnant and looks like a whale so she can't go anywhere now. Another thing, the theme is yellow and white, we will wear white mini dresses with heels okay.." typical African baby shower.

"Let me guess, she will wear yellow dress" I Say

"YES! Wow you are a genius. You and I will get along. Okay, tell sbari to send the cash for the dress. Anyway I'll keep in touch.."

" Wait.. How do I get that present? "

" Look it up dear, I'm sure you'll find something."

"aw..owkay..i guess"

"Brilliant! Bye Bish!"

I stare at my phone in awe.. Is this happening?

I charge my phone and head out.

My heart almost leap out as I come across a table full of people in the dining area, Zabelo being in the middle of them all.

"Finally awake!" Ntsika says and everyone smiles at me

"FIFI!!" Aw these cute pies are just sweet. They all come and hug my feet and start bombarding me with questions until baba orders them to sit down and eat. They might have arrived this morning maybe

"Sanibona" I greet, trying so hard to never look in his direction. There is mama, Ncane, bab Ngcobo. Both twins are here and Mongezi's

child is surprisingly here as well.

God has never liked the idea of me living a normal life, because why in the name of temptation is this . The only chair remaining is the one just next to Zabelo.

"seat down and eat" Zabelo suddenly speaks, I swallow nothingness

"No. I'm okay" I quickly say and everyone gives me a strange look

"Seat down and eat ndodakaz, like everyone else" baba orders.

"I just needed water first.."

"Here is water." - Zabelo says, pointing a jug full of water. When did he become so outspoken?

"I also wanted some juice too" I say, now looking straight in his eyes. He better let me be!

Is he smirking?

"We have juice on this side as well" he responds again. Wow. I could wipe that smirk with just a slap. A hard one at that

I join the table before I even make my self look stupid.

His presence next to me is loud and asking for attention but I'm a big girl. I can do this.

Just as I take a plate I feel his hands resting on my lap. I gulp and keep going..

Laughter erupts after every second in this table. It's a happy morning indeed.

I'm laughing too when his hand suddenly moves up my thigh, I quickly tighten my thighs together but he just pinches me hard.. The f! #ck

Everyone is engrossed in the moment, I give him a reprimanding stare but he doesn't budge.

I close my eyes, clenching my teeth as his hand reaches my core, teasing with my clit. Pleasure is shooting all over my body..

He suddenly press a bit hard

"Tjo.. Ah.. ! "

"Hey are you okay?" Mama question after my sudden stupid half scream.

"Yes, I'm just singing. Iskiba sa john.. sbhalu seven syangchazaaa. Skibha sajonaaweee" ..

I quickly stand up and stumble a bit.. I curse the day I met Zabelo Magwaza.

I head to my bedroom and take my phone.

He is calling!.

"meet me in Five minutes, I'll be parked just outside the gate" he says and hangs up.. No,

this man is stupid.

I feel like each chapter of him is crazier than the last one

I quietly head out and indeed he is parked.

He gets out as he sees me

Just as we meet he attack my lips with a deep, lingering kiss that makes me forget all the troubles and evokes every single emotion in me

"I brought you something" he gently says, staring into my eyes. I suddenly feel so shy and Joyful at once.

He opens the car and return with a tiny gift bag

"a replacement for the other one.."

My heart swells up in excitement. Did he just buy me a new, red lace Thong? Never did I think my first present would be a thong. But I'm liking this somehow

"Zabelo" I softly sing his name like a sweet melody and smile widely.

"I love you, maFuze"

I look into his eyes and just melt, why do I feel so many tingles attacking my tummy

"Ngyabonga Magwaza" his eyes twinkles and he lean close again. As our lips meet my eyes shut down and I savour the glorious moment surrounding my arms in his neck bringing him close....

A RAY OF SUNSHINE. .

°°SEVENTEEN °°

FUNEKA

Zabelo just switched from smiling into being all serious and it's making me edgy.

I don't think I'll get used to this other stone cold side of him. I prefer the more lovey dovey Zabelo.

His hands are circled around my waist and my hands are rested on his waist.

"Did I do something wrong?" I ask, staring at him. Our faces are almost touching as we look at each other

"Why did you leave like that yesterday?"

He sternly asks, his piercing gaze is something that's going to take forever to get used to

"I'm sorry" after all this love he's been giving me I thought he let it slide

"I'm not looking for a sorry Funeka, explain to me why you just left without giving me a chance to explain "

Tjo. Zabelo is hard to predict, I'm jotting that down now

"because Mandisa was there" I tell him, now playing with my fingers

"Is that the only reason?"

Can't he just let this go.

I can't keep up with this hard, unapproachable him

"she hugged you and I thought I was intruding"

He doesn't flinch or blink, his intense gaze plastered on his face is just weakening my knees.

"Did I say that?" he ask me

I shake my head

"maFuze, Mandisa is the mother of my child.

Yes what she did was wrong, to just hug me like that but that doesn't mean when something like that happens you run. I would have handled it with you by my side so she can know that she has no place in my heart but you. I want you to trust me enough to let me love you, to believe that I can love you wholeheartedly without having doubts.

I need you to let me in MaFuze because I can not fully love you when you don't allow me in your heart"

I drop my gaze , feeling all these emotions attacking me.

And he plant a wet kiss on my forehead sending Tingles all over me

" Let me be your man. I promise to love and take care of you in every way I can, you are my peace and happiness I never knew existed until

I met you. I love you maFuze," I'm getting emotional as he allows me to rest my head in his hard chest listening to his loud heartbeat.

I close my eyes and be warm in his embrace as he tightly holds me. This feels like a home I never knew I needed

Until now...

During the day Zabelo takes me to Johannesburg and helps me shop for the twin pram and everything that I didn't think I wanted, until this very moment.

I love spending time with him, he is just this glue I can't seem to let go of. I just want to be around him more often.

After a day of bliss, we head to the salon. His

treat, not mine.

The lady responsible for my hair had to first unplait my braids and wash my hair.

After an eternity of loud noise, hot gossip and crazy laughs I look like a new person. This girl knows how to make someone feel good and beautiful.

I smile as I look at my new hair style in the mirror, a wrapped ponytail with in-front-of-the-ear braids

I had to force Zabelo for a new haircut.

At first he didn't budge but I'm persistent and he listened.

But he left after the haircut was done.

After paying the lady I call my man

It rings once

"maFuze" he is in so much noise

"Magwaza, I'm done" I tell him

"give me few minutes, I'll be there"

I looked at the purse inside my handbag, Zabelo just surprised me. He gave me cash and transferred some of it to my account.

I feel pampered.

It doesn't take long as he gets inside the salon, looking rather hot in his new haircut. It's a low fade buzz cut with line up. I quickly stand up and meet him halfway

The minute I reach him he hugs me and swings me around like a child, I'm giggling non stop.

I'm thinking he'll put me down but he just carries me bridal style out of the salon leaving the ladies screaming and gents whistling.

God, where was this man when I got played by a

neighbour's son promising me heaven, only to deliver nothing but heartbreak. It is true when they say you have to kiss frogs before finding your prince charming.

In my case I'm sure that I've kissed not only frogs, but lizards too.

I believe that Zabelo might be my prince charming, because with him everything just flows, it seems so right and so perfect at the same time. If this is a dream, I sure as hell don't wanna wake up.

"You are crazy Zabelo, you know that" I say, widely smiling as he puts me on the bonnet and stands in between my legs.

He lean in and whisper in my ear

"About you my love, yes I'm crazy" shivers attack my body.

And our eyes lock

"you look beautiful"

This has to be a dream! I can't even recall the last time I was this happy in a relationship.

It feels surreal

"You make me happy Zabelo Magwaza. I'm happy to be with you" I tell him, and his eyes twinkle, reflecting something warm that has my heart beating fast.

No, I love this man!

Reaching home I drag the stupid present inside the house first then lastly my four shopping bags. All thanks to Zabelo. He left me just outside, he has a club to run and he can't be with me all day. I'm just glad that he spent some of his busy time with me. I feel special and important.

I feel like every woman at some point deserves a man that can move mountains just to see a smile on her face, a man that knows how to take care of her. It doesn't have to be expensive holidays, expensive gifts.

Spending time with your woman, giving her what you can and reminding her every second of the day with phone calls, text messages that she is beautiful and loved is just enough. It is everything, it's a dream come true.

My phone beeps..

I love you too my love it's Zabelo. I didn't have to utter the exact words. He just know that I love him and that's enough to plant even more love in my heart.

After unpacking everything I head up to Ntsika's room. The house is just so quiet and that's not

normal considering that we have little rascals in this house.

Now I know why it is so quite.

I find these three kids laying down on the floor, with pensil, crayons scattered all over. Before each of them is an exercise book.

"Hey, what are you doing?" I ask and join them, grabbing a piece of paper and a pincil

"shh, quite. We are drawing Babo. He said we must draw him, just like that, on his bed with closed eyes" Nkosazana whispers.

Ntsika is fast asleep on the bed, he is even snoring sofly. My God! Just when I thought he can be saved.

The day of the baby shower is finally here.

Sadly I couldn't go with Zabelo, he had some business he had to take care of this morning.

I'm driving with Mazisi.

"So, how did you meet Mihlali?" I hate silence so I break the ice

"can't you keep quiet for another minute" he says.

"Not when you hijacked me and asked me to attend a baby shower in Orange Farm backyard with a Gertrude in this era that chose a present I must bring. So tell me brother, how did you shag your Personal assistant and even had the nerveto plant your seed in her womb"

He shakes his head and laughs..

"You talk too much Funei nei. I can't deal with

you sometimes"

He changes the radio station and another song comes on, I don't have time for a song, I want answers.

"So, how did you meet her. Was it an interview or.." I probe

He sighs

"He was a friend with Tholile." Mazisi and giving our short, incomplete statement

"and how am I supposed to guess who Tholile is"

I say

"She was the mother of my twin girls. She died"

Aw, that's rather unexpected and sad

"I'm sorry" I suck I know.

"Mihlali was there for me when that happened. She just understood the pain I was going through. At some point things got out of hand and we created something good. But, she had a boyfriend, actually a fiance and they broke up because of our mistake." wow.. That's a long story, I feel like I'm reading a novel

"so, are you together now?"

"No, we are not."

He is back to being slow.

"Why can't you be together then, I mean they broke up with the fiance so she is all yours now right"

He doesn't say anything for a while

His face is suddenly hard

"That would be a disgrace to Tholile's memory"

Tjo, let me keep my quiet.

Reaching the destination I send Zabelo my location and head inside with the heavy present.

I'm two hours late.

I can hear the loud screams as I enter the unlocked gate

The yard isn't that big, there is a huge double story house that stands out in this township.

Reaching the backyard they all scream in unison. I suddenly feel like a celebrity

"Wow,you are so beautiful. I love your dress, your hairstyle. Your makeup! Girl, I can't believe you actually brought the pram. Wow!"

I think this is Gertrude.

The setting is beautiful, Mihlali is looking happy and her make up is on point.

The friends around here are also just beautiful as well. But Gertrude and some few look like those fly by night models.. Let me stop judging

I don't regret coming here. These ladies are fire, they are full of life.

I've memorised some names, there is a crazy Khanya like Getty, there is a mother hen Phiwo and a praying warrior Mary.

I've also learned the shock of my life, Qhawe is actually the ex fiance. And from what I've gathered the parents still hate Mihlali for bringing shame on the family name.

After the baby shower we all head to the local

club, leaving a pregnant lady behind of course.

I thought I won't have fun here but it is so crowded and live, I can't help but just blend in.

My handbag is close to my chest as we are seated around the table feeling all sort of crazy. Never even thought a baby shower can also have an after what what.. I mean what do you even call this

My phone is vibrating for the umpteenth time in my bag as I head to the dance floor. Whoever they are, I'm sorry. Now Isn't a good time.

I dance my life away, sweat and step some people and even curse them.

It's been hours since we arrived in this buzzy club, I'm tipsy and exhausted just seated on the table. I'm holding a bottle of Savanna that maG

gave me when I suddenly feel uneasy.

"maFuze " someone whispers in my ear, I quickly stand up and turn, the savanna in my hand drops and crack. That's the least of my worries

I feel it, the heavy presence that he carries everywhere he goes.

"Zabelo" ... my heart is racing..

"in the flesh love" he says.

This man can't stop dropping like a bomb unexpectedly.

With that murderous stare I already know I'm in trouble

He is in front of me, his heavy presence is weighing down on me as he stares down at me.

I just flash a stupid smile.

.....

ooooo

xxx

The flats on this side are to die for. The day I find my dream job I'll live here.

It is still my dream to rent a beautiful place by myself and sip on expensive wines like the ones owned by baba and throw the mother of all parties.

My phone is ringing. I picked it up.

Zabelo is taking a shower.

"bitch how can you disappear like that!" it's Gertrude.

I can start by telling her how I was snatched

from the club, because Zabelo had to drag me out since in his words, it wasn't safe for me

"I left, sorry" I say. She is screaming my name and cursing me about losing a perfect dick for the night because she has been looking for me and she goes on and on cursing my sex life and that I should find a man with a tiny dick that I would take a cucumber and satisfy myself instead..

I knew there was a story with that cucumber joke they kept on sharing at the baby shower.

I hang up because she's too drunk.

And what's with the cucumber and women anyway?

It's not the real deal..

Its food! It supposed to go in a hole under the

nose, not that unholy one under my clit. Argh!

I sink my exhausted body on the bed.

It's so much better when you sleep on it. So comfy and just heaven.

I close my eyes and heave a sigh

"maFuze" my heart does that strange thing whenever he calls my name. I quickly sit up.

I gulp, my eyes threatening to fly out of their socket. He is in nothing but boxers on.

His strong torso greeted me ! I keep fighting the urge to stare at that..thing hanging between his legs..

"ahem... hmm." my voice has gotten lost just between my pipeline. Why is he putting me in such a bad space.. My racing heart is threatening to leap out of my mouth.

He stares, his eyes just opening a can of worms
in me

"Are you okay? How are your feets"

"They are sore. Very sore. I'm so exhausted "

"Let me take care of that" a shy smile takes
over my lips.

In a nanosecond my heels are taken off. Slowly
he started massaging my feets with his big, yet
soft hands. His touch is just lethal and opens a
tap down my coochie.

I'm stifling a moan, I'm so loose..

He should consider working at a spa as a side
job... I mean his hands are magical.

What is he doing? He is gently laying me on the
bed. I almost jump as his hands slowly move
up my exposed thighs leaving an electrifying

touch.

slowly he massages my thighs and I suck in my breath

"Zabelo" my voice comes out softer than intended as if I'm begging him to keep going.

This is torture. His hands slide under my dress on either of my thighs pushing the dress up slowly and I let him as he takes it out of my head leaving my perky boobs greeting and all pointed at him.

He gently laid me on my tummy.

It takes a short while and I feel something liquid dropping on my back. The minute his hands make contact with my skin, I feel shivers all over me.

I'm relaxed as I feel every touch massaging my shoulders, my back.

He is slowly running his hands and I feel hot

and needy, his hands are turning me on.

The way they gently press on my skin as if leaving a mark.

My clit is throbbing like crazy, I want something more.. I want to feel something and I'm losing my mind as I moan with each touch, my eyes tightly closed.

His hands make contact with my thong, slowly he takes it off down my legs. And he starts from my legs, massaging softly.

At this point my heart is beating so hard, my body is screaming for his touch and my clit is crying for a release. I'm sexually aroused and it is suffocating because he keeps on massaging my legs

I hold my breath as his hands travel up my

thighs, he part them slowly and I moan, feeling my cookie exposed to his mercy.

His hands makes contact with my cheek bums and he fully masseges them, a bit hard parting my thighs further and slowly brushing the inside of my bum

"ah.." a faint cry escape my mouth. I'm gaping for air, going insane as these feelings of pleasure shoots all over me..

I close my eyes as his finger reach my core, making Contact with my throbing clit..

I moan louder, jumping a bit but I'm stopped by a hard spank on my cheek bum.

"So, you just headed for the club, not even bothered to let me know" he rumbles. Does he expect me to reply because I can't..

He sticks one finger in me and I scream

grabbing the sheets

"Tell me, I'm talking to you maFuze" now I'm at the verge of crying,

"I'm.. We.. Ah.. Zabelo please" he is back on massaging my cheek bums, rough and fast this time giving me a hard time to breath.

I badly want his hand in my cookie but he is denying me and it cuts deep

"I'm.. Sorry.. Ooh.. " I'm choking in my voice as he suddenly massages my slippery folds very very slow..

I'm crying and singing gliberish right now.

This is torture..

This is torture..

He stops..

I'm expecting something...

Something until I open my eyes and I spot him going out the balcony with something in his hands...?

No.. Fresh tears burn my eyes..

is this happening to me? all of me

A RAY OF SUNSHINE

°°EIGHTEEN°°

I'm hurt, sexually frustrated and annoyed at Zabelo. My clit is throbbing hard, I wipe tears that left my eyes and take the bed cover, putting them around my naked body.

He is out, smoking I think. Why did I even

believe that he might be my prince charming, he is the devil. A devil with horns and green eyes.

I'm in deep sleep when I feel the covers being ripped off me, cold air invites itself in my naked body.

I groan, opening my eyes.

He is looking rather clean, he is wearing a greyish hood, black track pants and sneakers.

And he even smells good, way too good. .

"Wake up and cover yourself. I'm taking you back" Wh...

I sit up, frowning deeply.

"Are you serious right now?"

He is dead serious.

He takes the keys

"Have you forgotten that it's Monday tomorrow

you need to go to work".. Work! I totally forgot about work. My Goodness I don't feel like working tomorrow..

"I'll call Mazisi and ask for a day off, I'm gonna wake up with a mother of all headaches tomorrow and I doubt I'll even concentrate at work"

He looks at me, sternly and I feel edgy

"That's what you get for making irresponsible, stupid decisions" OH God, I'm being scolded like a child here. I fold my arms and look anywhere but him. I'm not leaving.

"I'll drag you out naked if you don't wear your clothes. I don't have time Funeka, just cover up"

He just slashed my heart into pieces.

I'm upset and I want to scream so loud until I lose my voice.

The drive is so tense, I can literally feel his anger in my bones. Why is he even angry, I was at the club, having fun like people my age and not killing anyone.

His phone rings.

He picks up

"I'll be there in 20 minutes" he says and hangs up.

He is now driving faster, he kicked me out so he can galavante the night. Wow, bravo Zabelo.

.. I'm thinking that maybe he will at least speak to me in the car, but nothing just a stone cold look. He keeps on clenching his jaws and holding a steering wheel so tight..

"Zabelo" I say, our eyes meet and I quickly look

away feeling my inside turning. I don't know how to deal with such an angry Zabelo, I'm in for a long dreadful night..

Just as he parks the car in the yard I quickly get out. I hear him driving out as I knock in the main door. Why is he so angry though, I don't get it. I just don't.

The door opens revealing my mother, a deadly look gracing her face. Oh no!

I should have called Nstika

"Where do you come from at this hour, Funeka? Do you realise that it is after Ten"

I drop my gaze shamefully

"I was at the baby shower nje mama, I told you before I left"

I mumble enough for her to hear me...

It is quick, I'm holding my burning cheek after she just slapped me unexpectedly.

"Mama!" tears are dropping down my face

"uyanghlaza Funeka! I brought you here to make a life for yourself and the only thing you good at is messing around with boys and alcohol. Utshwala pho Funeka!" She is screaming, waking everyone up. I can't take this, I pass her but she quickly grabs me furiously and I stumble, almost falling.

"So now you are a woman! You walk away while I'm still talking to you. Why am I even surprised, angit you've tasted amapipi wena, uyalalwa manje mtanami. Yin, ufun ukmitha!"

Her eyes emit fire, she is furious and I'm just looking at her with my shut mouth.

"ahem, Sis. What's wrong?" great, Ncane is here.
"I'm so so sorry sis for bringing such an unrulblle child under your roof, I just thought that she will behave because she knows that her future is at stake. I brought her here so she can find a better job and be a successful, independent woman. But Nooo! Not this one. She just want me to die of a heart attack.. " I dive another hard slap and move away

"Funeka, go to your room baby. I'll talk to my sister"

I stand still, contemplating whether to listen to ncane's soft voice or my mothers killer stare

"she is not going anywhere until she tells me where she come from, uphumaph wengane?"

I'm a crying mess right now, flurry of emotions are attacking my head

"I'm sorry ma. I won't do it again, I swear in the name of my father" my shaky voice comes out to mock me. she laughs, a lethal laugh and I gulp

"when you use your father I just know it is all lies. See what I have to put up with Betty, Funeka just can't grow up. She can't, all she is good at is wasting her life with boys that would do nothing but bring diseases and babies they won't even be able to provide for. I can't do this.."

She blinks and a tear drops in her eye. This is worse than what Zabelo did, it is killing me inside

" sis, come with me. " Ncane takes her hand walking away

"Please tell her that I won't be around forever sis, she has to know that I'm not going to be here forever. One day she will wish that she listened to me and I'll be gone by then" she is screaming as they walk away, that hit home.

....

I couldn't sleep a wink. I woke up early, treated my hangover and made breakfast for everyone.

When I'm done I put everything in the plate and head to my mom's bedroom.

I knock, she tells me to enter and I do so.

I find her carrying a Bible in her hands. She might have been praying.

"get in bed, let's eat together" she says as I'm about to head out. That's exactly what I was hoping for.

I join her bed and we start eating together.

I can't look in her eyes, I'm ashamed.

I've realized something, I really was irresponsible yesterday. I should have left after the baby shower but I didn't.

This isn't my mom's house, I'm not behaving right and I need to stop.

Maybe I should realize that I'm not like Ntsika or anyone else for that matter. I don't have a father with a successful company, my mom is just a domestic worker. I don't have siblings owning clubs, I just have my mom

Having fun isn't wrong, I just have to do it right.

"I'm really sorry about last night ma" I say, after what feels like forever

"I just want you to grow up nenezi, be responsible for your life because you are not getting younger."

I know

"I'll do better from now on, I promise"

She smiles and plant a kiss on my cheeks.

I love this woman, she's my rock

"I want you to be here forever, until I die first atleast" she laughs

"Go to work now, come back early because there is someone I'd like you to meet," she says.

ooooooooxxooooooooxxooooooooxxooooooooxxoooooooo

WORK!

I've been working like crazy, with so much work load. I found my table with one of the employees, she then filled me in on what I've

missed and left.

I haven't talked to Zabelo, I feel this pit in my tummy.

I miss him so badly

He sent me a text message this morning wishing me a wonderful day, he said he will be busy today.

It's after One when I take a breather, it's been back to back meetings and I've been attending with Mazisi, jotting important notes.

He is not nursing me today, he is not even smiling. I feel like an employee as everyone else today.

I sink my exhausted body on my desk and heave a long, heavy sigh while putting my staff on my table

"I need you to type everything and email me when done. I'll be in my office, if anyone need me make an appointment for Thursday. I'm swamped"

I nod respectfully

"and please, order something delicious for us"

The company is paying! Yep, I'm given the bank account details and everything I'll need for the order. I order at MCds, I'm in need of their burgers.

I've been trying Zabelo's phone but it isn't even going through. I'm starting to get angry. The only thing I received was just a text from him, is he still busy?

The office phone rings, I pick up.

It's the receptionist telling me someone is

looking for me. I tell her to allow them to come up here.

It has to be the lunch delivery.

The lift pings, I quickly upturn my eyes and I dart away from my chair and meet her halfway. She is looking ravishing in her outfit but I won't even dwell on that.

She gives me a hard glare as we meet

"Mandisa" I say, keeping a straight face

"I'm not going to waste your time since it is clear that you are busy. Stay away from the father of my child, because you will get burned dear, like the rest of the likes of low lives like you"

Breath in.. Out...

I'm going to mop the floors with this chick. She

doesn't know me. This isn't a hospital

"Tell me something Mandisa, are there not enough patients in the hospital that you had to come here and embarrass yourself. Girl, no woman fights for a man in this Era, are you sure you are okay upstairs?"

An unbelievable laugh escaped her mouth.

She flares her nose and look at me

"Let me tell you something about Zabelo Magwaza, the father of my child. He always comes back to me, we are inseparable. Don't even think for a second that you are special because you are not, in fact I've dealt with far worse bitches than you. They never win in the end, I do"

That doesn't sit well with me

"Maybe you should check yourself in one of the psychiatric wards, I'm not going to discuss a grown ass man here, not now and not ever. If you have an issue, sort it out with Zabelo and keep me out of it"

I'm trying so hard to control my self

"I'm only being considerate because you are Nkosazana's fifi that she can't stop talking about. Zabelo isn't as good as you think, there are sides of him that only I can handle. Stay away from him while you still can or you'll get burnt sis"

In that case I'm already burning in Zabelo' hell. And by the look of it, I can't even be saved. No amount of water can quench this fire of love that I'm feeling for that man

"Aw, one more thing, I'm sure in no time he will start with the endless night calls, the longest meetings and in the end bribing you with hot sex and nice gifts.. If it comes to that just know, it has started and you little girl can never handle that man. He will crush you, I wonder what your family will say when they realise that you've been screwing a man who can fit as your brother.... NC NC NC.. What a disgrace. "

She smiles, a proud smile then heads out. She's happy that she has got to my head.

I'm buried in thousands of emotions, many questions poking my mind and I'm just wondering if she was scaring me or telling the truth.

...

I don't know how the day ended with my wrecking brain. I've been trying Zabelo's number like crazy and it still drives me straight to

voicemail.

I take my handbag and head out, carrying heels in my hand. I'm too burned to even worry about what people will say syndrome.

Mazisi gave me money for Uber, he said something about going to Orange farm.

I'm standing, waiting for an Uber when I see someone I haven't seen in a while approaching me.

"Funeka" I have no time for the likes of him today

"Not today Qhawe, please." I say, tapping my foot on the pavement I'm standing on, just outside the company gate. I'm patiently waiting for an Uber to take me to Zabelo's club

"I'm not here to fight, I just want to say I'm here, I'll always be here when you need something or someone. I love you Funeka but I won't run after you, I will be waiting though, however long it takes." he says and I hear his footsteps fading.

The uber drops me outside Zabelo's club. I pass strange eyes staring at me if I'm an alien and head inside. I've even called Mongezi, voicemail even with him.

Right now I'm seeing red, I need to see Zabelo before I lose my mind. There is this stinging yet burning desire I can't ignore, I just want to see him.

"ID Please" the bouncer stops me from the door. Oh hell no..

"Just move away, I want to see my boyfriend" I scream, causing a scene in the process. Since

when do they ask for an ID, since when?

"I'm sorry miss but I can't allow you in"

Is this a dream?

"If you don't let me in here, you will be jobless by this time tomorrow. Zabelo is my man and he doesn't like anyone mistreating me. If I tell him that you kicked me out of his club, he will not take it slightly trust me"

I can not believe I'm doing this to someone old enough to be my father. But I need to see my man.

He lets me in after giving me a hard stern. I even have this stamp that he put on my wrist. Strange things are happening today. The lights are dimmed, soft music is playing. It was as if I just walked in a different place altogether.

The atmosphere is just tense and erotic.

I can spot a stripper doing the things, soft moans. I've never seen many people making out in a club before. It's so shivering

The waiters are totally naked, in nothing but skimpy thongs and bras.

Am I in the right place?

I turn and bump into a hard surface, a pot bellied man is in front of me, looking at me like a meat ready to dive deep in his big mouth

"Aw, new meat" indeed, I'm a meat.

This whole ordeal is making me uncomfortable, I feel shivers running around my body

I try to pass this man but he blocks my way

"What's your name baby girl? Can I have you for

the night? I'll pay a ransom for a fresh meat like you" licking his lips he says, his hands make contact with my face and I hit him disgusted.

I try to pass again but he grabs my waist and shoves his lips in my mouth.. I bite his tongue

"ah, fighting spirit. Even sexier " the hell?

His hold tightens around my waist, he is grabbing my bums.. Now I want to cry loud, I feel violated

I'm fighting a losing battle as I try to wiggle out of his hold until someone grabs him back.

It's that bouncer from the door, he is looking shaken, his eyes are staring behind me..

And the pot bellied suddenly looks scared too...

"Njinji, we were just talking" his shaky voice is loud, the man is crippled in fear and it is disgusting for a man who just violated me

And suddenly I feel it.

His piercing presence weighed on me.

I turn, stare up at him but he doesn't flinch, totally disregarding my presence.

His deadly gaze is directed to someone behind me.

I study his facial expression, unapproachable and scary, my heart skips.

"Zabelo" I whisper.

He ignores me, it's like he's just a robot ready to rain bullets and fire.

"Miles, Take her to my apartment and don't leave her sight until I tell you to" I gulp, shivers crippling my entire body.

This can't be the Zabelo I know

His voice is huskier and deeper than normal ,

scarier and shivering

I'm grabbed, screaming and kicking out of the club.

Just as the door closes I hear a loud bang going off. I scream even louder.

..

I thought I'd fall asleep in Zabelo's apartment but I can't. I am failing to comprehend what occurred earlier. I need him here, now.

The bouncer is still here, he introduced himself as Miles. He dragged me and put me in here. I feel like a cheap whore right now.

I've been pacing up and down, sitting and starting pacing again. I've gone from anger, to crying and just anger all over again.

I'm on a roller coaster of emotions and I don't

even know how to handle myself.

After what feels like forever he walks in through the door. I stand up and meet him halfway

Miles quietly leaves looking all shaken.

"Zabelo, why did you do that to me? I was worried about you and.."

"stop barking, I can hear you just fine Funeka"...

Goodness me! Did he just?

"Zabelo, I'm not a dog! You can't say that to me"

He looks at me, really look at me and I shrink at his intense gaze dropping my eyes

"What were you doing in my club?" his voice is just..cold and lack emotions

"I was looking for you, your phone was on

voicemail and I needed to see you" I say,
upturning my eyes again

"didn't I tell you that I'll be busy" he snaps. His
eyes emit fire, my poor knees are weakening
and my heart is thundering hard in my chest

"You did. But I missed you so I wanted to see
you. Mandisa came to see me at work and she
said that.."

"Damn it!" he snaps again,

"DON'T YOU DARE DAMN IT ME! ME ZABELO!
WHAT WAS HAPPENING IN THAT CLUB
ANYWAY?? WERE YOU SELLING PROSTITUTES
OR WHAT! TELL ME!"

I'm breathless, anger is choking me and I feel
like strangling him

"Look at me and repeat what you just said
Funeka, look at me"...

This is too intense and I can't handle this man.

I turn and walk away before I say something else.

I head to the bathroom, to the sink, open the tap and splash my face with water.

Is this even happening or am I imagining things..

"ah.. " I half yell as I feel him behind me, I didn't think he followed me. Our eyes meet in the mirror, I blink at the angry sight of him gracing my behind.

He leans in and buries his head in my neck and he starts sucking and nibbling.

I softly moan, feeling my body coming to life. I'm suddenly bent,

His hands start massaging my nipples, harder and a bit rough..

"Zabelo.." I whimper, as he easily removes my skirt down my feet and spreads my thighs with his knee..

I'm still thrown in a mental shock when he just stops, breathes hard in my neck and just leaves me there.. Standing and breathing hard..

What was that?

Was Mandisa right?

I sink down until I'm on the floor.

I'm literally shaking, overwhelmed in everything I've been through today.

Salty liquid gladly drops down my face, I'm not sure whether to scream or just cry silently.

The door opens a while later, I'm greeted by the

strong weed smell before he can reach me. I just watch as he opens up the shower.

He crouches to my level, slowly takes my clothes off and holds me up.

We get in the shower and just stand, saying nothing. He begin bathing me and I let him

The smoke inside the shower makes it hard to see his face.

When satisfied, he closes the shower and starts drying me up.

My poor new hairstyle..

Zabelo is just weird. He lotions my body and help me wear his big shirt and tuck me in

A while later he joins me, his hands hold me tight and he sighs..

I close my eyes and sleep.

I can't believe my honeymoon phase ended so quickly...

A RAY OF SUNSHINE

unedited *

°°NINETEEN°°

Funeka

Zabelo drove me home this morning and miraculously no one asked questions of my whereabouts. Mama must be so tired of me and my ways.

The moment I reach my work station I stop stalling and do what need to be done.

I have to be in check with my life and I can't

achieve that with Zabelo, I send the message saying we must stop whatever we are trying to do and then start working.

The man is creepy and... Strange.

I've been working my tooth and nail since I arrived at work, Mazisi does not play these days I swear. If I'm not in a meeting with him, I'm sending emails, typing previous minutes and setting up appointments for the days he won't be busy.

About last night's events, I've managed shove at the back of my mind as well, my heart is way too heavy but I try my best. Sometimes I'm too clingy, that's why I hate myself when I'm in love.

I can't think properly. It hurts because I tend to lose focus of my own life.

Office phone rings, I quickly pick up

"Come to my office" - Mazisi the strict CEO orders

I leave everything and head to his office.

I find him staring down at something on his laptop

His office isn't big, or small. Just average CEO office

"Sir, you asked for me" yep, Funeka the personal assistant. That's me

"Come here"

I head to his side and watch

He tells me about the mistakes I made, what to improve and then I'm told to order lunch.

God loves me, now I know.

"You may leave now"

He says.

I close Mazisi's office door after getting out and Just as I look up I get the shock of my life.

"maFuze"

My throat instantly dries up, my heart dances a bit. I hate how I respond to everything he does.

He is leaning against my table, I remain standing far from him.

"Zabelo, ahem why are you here?"

"to see my brother" he says, very calm for my liking. Aw..

I watch as he takes bouncy strides towards my direction, there is something captivating about this man. Just as he reaches me he lean in my

ear and whisper

"By the way, you look hot in this tiny dress. Can't wait to tear it off" I suck in my heart as he slowly bites my earlobe and leaves me breathless..

My knees are shaking somehow..

Didn't he get my message?

Mandisa Masondo

She's wide awake, walls staring at her. From a night shift she should be fast asleep but sleep has deserted her wrecking brain.

She gets out of bed and heads to the kitchen, gulps the remaining wine on the bottle and stands still, holding the bottle.

Zabelo is the man that just dropped while she was going through the most. Pursuing a Medical Career is no child's play.

Zabelo wasn't the best of the best but he was there, when she fell pregnant he never left.

Something that's hard to find in this Era.

She loves him, he loves her. That's what she knows and believes.

Like any woman she doesn't want another woman coming to Zabelo's life unannounced.

She can only hope that Funeka will also leave like the rest.

Her doorbell rings, she huffs and heads to it.

"Your plan has to work, have they broke up?"

Qhawe's first words says just as she opens the door

"ahm, hello to you Qhawe. I'm fine, thank you for asking" she says, flashing a mocking smile

"I don't have time for that Mandisa. Did your pla work, yes or no?"

She shakes her head and head inside, Qhawe following behind

"How the hell will I know Qhawe. I'm not a magician, am I"

Qhawe huffs and start pacing up and down

"She was there, I followed her and she saw what that man get down to. Funeka is an egg, she is fragile and I know that she can never handle the truth" he says

"maybe she didn't tell her the truth. One thing though, Zabelo doesn't like anyone following him around. It never ends well. Chances are

they had a fight, she fucked her brains out and maybe she is confused. I just need to up my game a little, something to involve guns and dead bodies. She can never handle such.. "

Funeka

The lift pings just as I finish up preparing for lunch. I frown at the sight of a man I once saw with my mother. Is he her boyfriend?

"ndodakaz" he says as he reaches me.

I smile and nod my head

"Can I take you out for lunch, there is something I need to tell you" he says.

Is this not weird, yes it is!

"I don't know you baba, why would I spend my lunch with a stranger" I tell him

"I'm no stranger, trust me. Call your mother and ask her yourself" okay, this is getting a little too much for me. It is her boyfriend..

"I can't. Please leave" the door opens suddenly and Zabelo appears with Mazisi laughing.

But their laughter quickly dies out as their eyes land on the man before me

"Wena, what are you doing here?" Mazisi spits.

"Get the hell out before I call the security"

Do they know him?

After my strangest day I find my mother cooking and humming a gospel song. I tell her about the strange man

"OH.. Dear can you please finish up here. I need to take care of something first" she says and quickly leaves.

It doesn't take long until loud, violent noises erupt somewhere in the house. Might as well open up my own channel of family feud, I mean what the hell?

Just as I start to check the pots, as exhausted as I am, my phone beeps indicating an incoming message.

It reads

***I'm outside** Zabelo is... my God!**

I'm now fuming as I reach him, I'm angry at him for pretending as if we are still together.

"stop what you're doing Zabelo. It's not cute" I say, pointing my finger at him.

He grabs my hand and brings me close

"what am I doing?" He asks, staring at me closely

"Let me go" he let's my hand go.

I sent you a message Zabelo" I tell him

"I know, I don't care about that message. You are my woman and you don't get to dump me over a text Funeka, not in hell I won't allow it"

I'm in deep shit here..

"Too bad because I don't want to be with you anymore"

I scream as he suddenly grabs me and make me lean on the car, completely caging me in with his legs and long arms.

"Look at me in my eyes and tell me you don't want me. I'll leave I promise" he whispers.

I can literally feel his breath on my face, that how close we are.

My heart is pumping as our eyes meet. Of course I want to be with him.. It just

"I don't.. I..." He stares at me straight in my Eyeballs and I don't like it because he will find the truth

"I'm waiting maFuze"

"Just let me go" I say, his hand rest on my cheeks and he begin caressing evoking emotions I'm trying so hard to ignore

"Is that what you want?"

How am I supposed to focus in this situation

I stare down at his lips..

I want to kiss him so bad.

. Hard breathings increase as he plants his lips

on mine, his hand sliding around my waist.

The kiss deepens as I hook my arms around his neck. I'm screwed.

A RAY OF SUNSHINE

°°TWENTY°°

As I cement my heart to break the news to Ntsika about Zabelo and I.

After that knee weakling kiss that reawakened every Fibre of love for him, he left and said something about an emergency. I'm glad I got a chance rethink my decision of leaving him.

I wouldn't have even survived a week with that decision anyway.

I love Zabelo and I'm willing to make us work

I knock after what feels like forever, my knees are getting weak as he opens the door with a rather annoyed look.

"Can't I have peace in this house, I also pay rent".. Okay..

"rent?"

I ask as I make my way in.

"Yes, I do make my own bed, my own breakfast sometimes. And I make my own washing. I wash every car in the garage and I make a garden. Isn't that enough to cover rent? "

This one can talk senseless things the whole day.

"I'm thinking of applying to study. Maybe I can still find a college because chances are university are already full" he says as we settle on top of his bed.

" I thought you are taking a gap year"

"I'd do anything to get away from this house. What brings you in my room anyway? I haven't spend time with you in a while. If you aren't at work, you are awol. For a moment I thought you and I were close, but I guess I was wrong" his voice carries some sadness as he says. I feel awful

"I was busy Ntsika" I say

"too busy to tell me what's going on with you. Funeka this is is Jorbug, a place that can swallow your innocence if you aren't careful. I can't believe that in such a short space of time you've managed to turn this house into a war zone" ..

"okay, that's a bit extreme Ntsika. I know I've been spending time away from home without telling anyone but I mean I didn't.. I didn't kill

anyone"

A dissapoint look rest on his face, he stared at me shaking his head

"spend a day in this house then you'll understand what's going on. "

"I didn't come here for this. I wanted to apologize for neglecting you. And I also wanted to share something with you. Can we go out for a late night dinner? Please"

He rises from the bed and head straight to the closet

"Now you are talking. I know a cosy place that have delicious food, with delicious wines" ..

I smile..

....

Zabelo Magwaza

Just as the lift pings open he get out and head straight to Mandisa'a door. He knocks, for a while until Mandisa opens the door.

She blinks, her face covered in shock and somehow fear

"Za.. Zabelo hi" as freaked out as she is she manage to utter these words

"Aren't you going to let me in?" asks Zabelo, his eyes staring deep in her eyes.

"No.. Why are you here. I was busy" she says, speaking faster than normal

Her shuddering breathing is hard to miss

Zabelo knows this woman, he knows she is hiding something

"With what?" he suddenly ask

Mandisa look down upon his piercing gaze and hold the door handle tighter

"Just say what you came here to say and leave"

She feels flurry of shivers overtaking her entire body at the deep stare she's being subjected to

"I'm taking Nkosazana with me this weekend. I'm going home for Siziwe's ceremony"

"talk to my mother. I'm sure she won't mind." she says and close the door on his face.

Leaning against the door she breath loudly, for a moment she forgot how firm Zabelo is.

running back to the living room she find Qhawe on his toes ready to leave

"Don't leave just yet.." she quickly stops him

"I've spent half of my afternoon here so it's time

for me to leave."

"No.. Zabelo is outside..."

.

Qhawe stand still, looking rather frozen

"Zabelo is here" he says, staring behind her.

"No, he is outside. He can't see you here because he wi.."

"Here, he is right behind you"

"What?"

His calm demeanor makes him far less predictable as he stand in the middle of the living room staring at Qhawe.

"I thought you left. You can't just badge into my room without my concern Zabelo."

Her shaky voice utters in anger

"I'm not going to ask what's going on between

the two of you because I do have a glimpse of it. Whatever is that you are planning, drop it before someone get hurt. That's a promise"

Intense silence visit them

His phone beeps, he takes it out and his face becomes a bit soft at the sight of Funeka's half naked pictures.

He is quick to get back to his emotionless expression, with a deadly stare

"rest assured, I don't break my promises"

With that he walks out.

"I need to start preparing for my shift.." she whispers and swallow nothingness.

Funeka

After taking a bath I just thought of taking some crazy pictures and sent some to Zabelo.

I'm busy with my make up when my phone rings.

My heart melt at the sight the caller ID

"Magwaza" I say

He breath and softly laughs

"you are making me loose my mind you know that" I'm blushing and I cant even stop thinking about his face

"That's the plan baby. I want you to lose your mind when you think about me. I miss you"

"I'm on my way"..

"No don't come now. I'm taking Ntsika out for Dinner. I haven't been spending time with him lately" I'm also dying to see him but not tonight

"Where are you going?"

"some restaurant. I'm not sure which one, he suggested the place" I say and start taking out some of my clothes for something to wear with one hand

"I hear you, can I see you afterwards?"

"if you promise to bring me back early than yes."

After the long, stupid and lovely chat with my man we hang up and I continue preparing for the night.

This place us to die for. It's life and just so comfortable.

We've ordered food and some wine.

We are dining with crazy chat here and there. I'm still failing to drop the news to Ntsika

My phone beeps, just once and I'm met with a message of some money that's been deposited

into my savings account. Zabelo asked for my bank account details and I was quick to give him.

I'm being pampered here and I love it

"Who is this man that's making you feel like you are in your own universe?" he ask. I put down my phone and wear a serious face

"promise me you won't be angry" I say

"is he the one who's been making you sleep out?"

I nod my head, feeling nervous all of a sudden

"okay then, tell me." it's now or never

"Zabelo"

He put down the fork, gulp the wine and look at me. I can't tell what he is thinking

"I thought Mongezi was bluffing. I guess he

wasn't" This family and telling my business..

"Why are you with Zabelo? Out of all the man in Johannesburg. Why him?"

"I love him"

He sighs

"I hope you know what you are doing"

He is not happy. I can feel it

It stings but I remain calm and collected.

" okay. I'm no longer into this.. Goodbye" he suddenly says and take his things then walk out.

"Aibo Ntsika, wait.." I run after him but I'm too slow I guess because he just drove away as I reached the parking lot..

I turn defeated and bump into a hard surface.

"aksies mam, you didn't pay your bill" it's the waiter.

After paying I request an Uber, tears burning my eyes. It really hurt, I thought he'd at least understand that I'm in love with Zabelo.

I apologize for errors..

A RAY OF SUNSHINE

°°TWENTY ONE°°

FUNEKA

My phone rings just as I get inside the uber

I greet the driver and pick up

"My love" Zabelo gently says

"Zabelo" my heart is down and hurting right now.

"What time can I pick you up? I'm done at the club" I almost forgot that we were going to see each other after the supper with Ntsika

"You don't have to, I'm already on my way home."

"So soon?" I can tell him about my fallout with Ntsika but I'm in no mood to retell the story

"Yeah baby, we decided to cut the night short"

I say and end the conversation with a tiny laugh, just to seal the deal

"The Ntsika I know never cut the night short. Did something happen?" Oh God? Is he my boyfriend or a detective?

"Nothing happened. I'm working tomorrow remember"

It's silent for a while.

I can hear him breathing

"You are not okay MaFuze. What's wrong?"

My heart skips a beat, did he just read my mood over the phone. I don't know what to make out of this

"I'm okay Magwaza. I sure you"

I'm hoping he will believe me because I seriously can't do this right now

"maFuze" his tone is laced with a warning, as if caging me to tell the truth.

"Zabelo just.. Let it go"

I snap and drop the call.

I'm already dealing with Nsika's situation, I don't need him showing me pity. I mean what else can he do except for feeling sorry for me..

He is calling me again, and again and again.

The loud ringing of my tone has the Uber driver shooting daggers at me, he can mind his business which is to take me to my destination.

After about Four or Five calls he eventually gives up. Great, I can finally breathe in peace.

I close my eyes and mingle in my sad emotions

A loud male voice wakes me.

I might have dozed off along the way.

I pay the driver and get out of the car.

I stretch my muscles and start walking towards the gate, calling Ntsika. He must open up the gate..

He is not picking up.. Damn it..

I sent him a whatsapp text and waited..

Still nothing.. Arg!

As I call him again, blinding lights suddenly brighten around me and I turn in panic only to be met with Zabelo's car..

I can tell from the look he is giving me, he is mad.

He gets out, come to me and gently grab my wrist

"Let's go for a drive" he is telling me.

"I'm not sure I'm in the mood.." his piercing eyes has me shutting my mouth

Aren't night drives supposed to be filled with love, kisses, laughter and nice things? I feel like I'm on my way to bury a corpse.

It will take forever to get used to this intense Zabelo

In less than an hour we headed to his apartment. As always he leaves me and goes out to smoke.

I take off my heels, throw my heavy body on the bed and close my eyes...

I'm still fighting my demons in my head when I feel his strong presence. I open my eyes and am met with him, staring down at me.

I sit up and yawn

"When you look at me, what do you see?"

Oh Gaaad!

"I'm tired, Zabelo, my poor feets are burning. I don't need you asking me lame questions"

He frowns, wearing a serious, stone cold face

"Do you want me to repeat my question?" he asks deeply.

He moves closer, caging my legs in his and deeply staring at me.

I feel edgy and freaked.

I still don't get why he gets angry when I don't pick up his calls.

"I didn't want to talk about what happened, that's why I didn't answer your calls. You were pushing and I hated it"

I say and sigh

"Is that my answer or you've forgotten the question?"

My head is literally spinning

"okay, I'm sorry ke for not picking up your calls"

"maFuze" his eyes are narrowing as he warningly says. He is scaring me

I try to push him so I can get away from this but

he just grab both my hands and push me down
the bed with just his knee

"Zabelo.." I say, my breath quickens as I lay on
the bed, my hands tightly held up my head with
his one, very strong hand.

"You like acting tough MaFuze, why are you so
stubborn?"

Me, stubborn?

"I'm not st..."

I choke in my breath as his other hand slide
inside my short dress, drawing circles in my
upper thighs

"Are you saying I'm lying?"

His voice is far huskier than normal

I hold my breath feeling his hand pulling my
underwear aside, his other hand still holding my
hands

"maFuze.."

"No... aahh" I screamed as he suddenly inserted a finger deep inside, he slowly started moving in on me and I licked my lips, trying to suppress the pleasure shooting all of me.

Just as he is hitting the right spot he sticks out his finger and they land on my sensitive throbbing clit, I half scream moving my body.

He let go of my hands and stop..

Can he do me like he did the last time?

I'm about to whine when he takes off his clothes so fast, my dress also flies out of my head being followed by my underwear. I quickly wrap my legs around him and clutch my hands on his shoulders.

His shaft starts playing with my slippery folds, I'm moaning, feeling pleasure building in me..

My cellphone suddenly rings louder and louder..

He doesn't let me go, I don't want him to but my phone is so persistent, bursting my eardrums.

He clicks his tongue and hands it to me.

I feel my knees getting weak. It's Ncane.

"Ncane" I say, nervousness has me by my clit

"Where are you young lady?"

Shock quickly engulfs all of me.

Oh Jesus..It's baba

I quickly seat up, Zabelo moves away from me

"Funeka, ukuphi? " His voice is calm but sending me to the nearest hiding spot

"I'm with Ntsika" I lie through my teeth. I don't

even know why I'm using Ntsika, we aren't on good terms and he is home. I'm panicking and I can't think at all

"Is that so?" It sounds like a warning.

"Yebo baba" he is chuckling... This is not good

"Hold on, someone would like to say hi"

he says

"Where are you exactly? I opened the gate a while ago and you are still not here. " Nsika's voice says on the other line.

Oh no... oh God. Angel of jezebels, where are you?

"Let's try this again shall we, where are you?"

I'm screwed..

...

Again we are not talking. I don't know if he is angry or sexually frustrated. Either way that's the least of my worries, sex is the last thing on my mind right now. All I want is to disappear into thin air and just become invisible. I mean how will I face bab Ngcobo?

Reaching home I head straight to the kitchen and to my worst case I find Ntsika drinking something, standing in front of an opened fridge

I could lie and say I don't feel uncomfortable but I do. But I try to act tough and pass him heading to my bedroom. The living room is empty. I thought I'd find the family waiting for me.

I rush to my bedroom, take my shoes off and get in my bed and let sleep take over without even taking off my clothes. I'm too drained,

maybe tomorrow will be a bit better.

I've been trying to understand Nstika's cold shoulder but I come up with nothing. I know being in love with Zabelo is somehow shocking and maybe inappropriate but am I really the problem here? Seriously there must be something else in this.

Even at this breakfast table he is just so quiet and dull. Actually everyone is, no one dares to say something. The sound of cutlery is the only thing keeping us company.

I'm seated here feeling like I'm breathing on borrowed time.

I'm expecting yelling and all that after last night but nothing. This is torture

Both twins are here, with Mongezi's son sitting beside bab Ngcobo. My mother and Ncane are also just as quiet.

The moment of silence is disturbed by a door bell, someone is outside I guess.

Zabelo walks in, beside him is a man that is rather an older image of Nkazimulo.

"He refused to leave when I asked," says Zabelo.

Quickly bab Ngcobo stood up and headed to the man, he was the one who came to my workplace the other day. I'm starting to feel like there is more to this man, why does he keep on popping up every now and then

"Get out!" Spit Bab Ngcobo in anger

"Relax little brother, I'm here for my daughter

and not you.."

I scream at the sudden mean punch thrown at the man and the aggressive fight begins..

Taking Nkazimulo seems like a better idea so I grab him and run towards my room leaving a warzone behind me.

I open my phone after locking the door and hand it to Nkazimulo so he can play some games. He looked frightened, I would be too if I witnessed such at his age.

"so, which grade are you in?" I ask, trying to make a conversation

I can still hear screams from here but I remain calm

My bedroom is the only one closer to the dining room

"Grade Seven" he respond after what feels like forever

"Wow, you are a smart little man aren't you, I thought you were in grade four "

He smiles, this one will drop panties one day with that killer smile.

"I'm Eleven years this year, my teachers said I was too smart in grade three so I skipped two classes"

I clap my hand and start dancing on the bed

"That's amazing! And to think I repeated grade 11 is an insult to your image as an aunt. I can't believe it"

He put down my phone and started telling me about his dreams of becoming a pilot.

At his age the only thing I dreamt of was how to sew a dress for my doll, even now I'm still figuring out myself and at this age this kid

already knows who he is and what he wants. I'm impressed and overjoyed at the same time

"I'm proud of you little guy" I tell him, brushing his shoulders with mine. We are seated on my bed leaning against the headboard

"sometimes I wish Grandpa would be proud of me too" he suddenly utters, a bit slow. I'm sensing sadness

"What makes you say that?"

I ask, staring at him

"He doesn't like me much because I look like his brother that hurt him badly" Wh... what? I'm so confused right now

"who told you that?"

"My father told me. He said grandpa loves me, but he can not play video games or football with me because I look like the man that hurt him. I

remind him of that man. I hate that man for making my life a living hell"

I'm in awe.

The door handle starts to move in that sticky moment, I head to the door and open it.

Mongezi comes through, there is blood all over his shirt

"sis, is Nkazimulo okay?"

He asks, Nkazimulo is fast to run to the door as he hears his father's voice. He takes his hand and they leave me hanging. Wasn't he supposed to bathe first before seeing the child!

Nkazimulo looks like the observant type, you'd think he doesn't notice anything only to realise that he notices even the little details. That boy is dangerous..

I head out of my room and bump into Zabelo.

He also looks disarranged

"maFuze" he says and take my hand

"Where are we going, wait. You can't just..

ZABELO"

Loud screams twtw t in just a bit far from us.

"I'm getting you out of here, I'll bring you back when everything has settled"

I don't want to go but I let him lead me out using the kitchen door..

After a long, intense hour we drive inside a big, beautiful yard with nothing but green, perfectly cut grass and a two story glass house.

I'm tempted to ask where we are but I keep

quiet and head out following him.

He takes out the keys and opens, the door.

I'm in awe as I step on the cold, stunning floor. The house is just empty, with just a three seater couch, a fireplace, and the TV is on a perpendicular wall.

It looks like an open plan design because I can spot some built cupboards with a fridge on my far right.

"the interior designer is still busy with the furniture and all other necessities."

He suddenly says, I look around and smile at the chandelier hanging over in the middle.

The sun is scorching outside but here it's like a mini heaven. It's so calm, cool and soothing

I move around heading to the elegant looking

stairs and start climbing up.

I can feel his hard steps behind me

Reaching the next floor he takes the keys again and open the bedroom door and I'm met with a very big bedroom, the huge king sized bed in the middle is inviting me to take a nap.

I love huge balconies

I quickly head to the door leading outside and he is gentle to open the door.

I stare outside in awe, the balcony has just one chair, and a table with an ashtray ontop. It's big and refreshing. Down there I expected a pool but it is just a huge open space, it's somewhat soothing and soul captivating. This place has a bit of clean, fresh air from the trees surrounding the area.

"is this your house?" I ask, first thing I utter since I got into his car

"Our house. I bought the house six months ago. I had no strength to make it a home until I met you" his husky voice hit differently as he gently says.

My heart swims in tingles, my cheek are literally burning and I can't stop the smile that's spreading accross my lips.

His supreme presence next to me is impossible to ignore, I feel even more drawn into him as he gently pulls me until I'm facing him.

Zabelo Magwaza, a dark skinned, captivating man.

He stands before me and stare down at me, his

hand sliding around my waist bringing me closer.

Electrifying feelings attack my tummy as he grab my chin slowly brushing it

His face lowers and I close my eyes, feeling his breath on my skin.

He kisses me, like ice on fire I involuntarily melt in his arms. This heart palpitating, passionate kiss sucks the deepest part of my body and incapacitate every every moving muscle as our lips moves in sync

He moves us away and I lean on the cold wall, in between his legs and taking all of him as he freely plant himself even in my beating heart. This moment right here can last forever, it's one in a million.

I feel his hand sliding inside my shirt dress

My underwear is easily pushed aside and
I faintly moan as he suddenly start rubbing my
coochie gently

I hold onto his arms tightly taking in all the
pleasure. It hard to keep up as I throw my head
back feeling pleasure shooting all over me..

In a nanosecond he lift me up leading us back
in the bedroom and I'm thrown on the huge bed..

We are breathing hard as we both stare at each
other.

He is taking too long so I make the first move
and help him out of his vest and pants.

in turn he help me out of my dress and
underwear leaving me bare and needy
underneath him..

That look, it's a one look draped in thousand

words. I want him to look at me like this from today until our last breath.

"maFuze, you are beautiful. You are beautiful" whispering softly he says, brushing my face.

My heart is beating hard, threatening to leap out as his face lowers meeting my lips

His lips move from my mouth landing on my nape and he begins nipping, teasing me.

I'm dying in tingles and unexplainable pleasure as his hands rest on my nipples and he begins massaging

I feel his knee opening my legs wider

"Za.." I'm floating in utmost pleasure feeling his shaft playing with my slippery entrance.

I'm whimpering as he presses his shaft in my

depth so deep throwing me in this universe of
extreme pleasure

I'm not sure what to do as I hook my legs
around his waist bringing him even closer..

A deep, throaty moan escape my mouth as he
slowly thrust in. He is in too deep as I dig My
nails on his back. Why do I feel like my
intestines will be rearranged? Is he planting a
baby in the womb because it feels like it.

I literally feel my walls clenching allowing him
space, I'm just paralyzed and unable to move

My libido is skyrocketing

My voice is trapped as he slowly gives me deep,
hard thrust, I'm whimpering.

He is in too deep and driving me into pure
intimacy that has my mouth biting his shoulder

A RAY OF SUNSHINE

°°TWENTY TWO°°

My phone is ringing, I get the meanest look from Mazisi. We are in a serious meeting, I made a mental note to put it on silence but it slipped my mind I guess.

I switch the phone off and continue taking notes.

I'm starting to enjoy this job, to be honest I'm learning a lot about logistic business and how it operate.

I'm thinking of taking just a short business course and see where it takes me.

Bhut Mazisi promised to lend me one of the company cars, luckily I did my license while I was still in Varsity.

No more asking for lifts and requesting ubers,
I'll finally have my freedom

"I hate incompetence and stupid mistakes
Funeka, what happened today shouldn't happen
again. Ever" he curtly states as we leave the
restaurant where the meeting was held

"I apologize bhuti, it just slipped my mind"

I tell him

"One mistake can cost you million in the
business, no more silly mistakes like this one.
Are we clear?"

His Jaws are tainted as he utters strictly

"Yes sir"

"Good. When we reach work I'll contact the clerk
to show you the car you'll use. She will give you
the card for petrol and all the rules to follow. I
want no stories Funeka, I don't want to hear that

you were seen in ungodly places driving the company car because you will be held responsible if you do that"

He is so strict, sometimes I even forget that we share the same breakfast table

"I won't let you down sir"

After reaching the parking lot we drive out heading back to work.

Its Friday today, roads are very busy.

It take longer to reach work hence the only thing I did was to be shown the car that I'll be using and everything else will be finalized on Monday.

I'll start using the car on monday

I check my phone, Zabelo was the one calling . I last saw him on Wednesday when he broke my bones and drove me to esctacy , since then he

has been busy and so have I.

Beside that, I also wanted to be home a bit often.

THE NGCOBO HOUSEHOLD

Mandisa is busy running around the kitchen preparing the best supper for the family. Chaos draws the entire hallway, which is no surprise because nkosazana and the little twins are around.

Time is approaching Four in the afternoon, Betty enters the door looking exhausted. She had the busiest day and the only thing she wants is to lay in bed and let sleep take over.

The twins and nkosazana run to her, jumping and asking countless questions leaving Martha, Funeka's mother on the floor with their

countless toys.

After hugging and promising them sweet she heave a sigh and watch them running back to Martha happily.

The mouth watering aroma lead her exhausted body to the kitchen and she quickly remembers that Mandisa said something about family dinner.

"Mandisa" she greets, she turns and smile

"Mama, you are back. You look tired" she says meeting her halfway and they share a brief hug

"If I could, I'd fly myself up to my bedroom and take a long nap. How are the things here? I can tell by the smell that all will be well tonight"

Mandisa smiles proudly as she digests the words

"I want Zabelo to have something to eat on the way too since he is driving down to KZN tomorrow morning, with Nkosazana"

Betty draws a chair and sit.

Zabelo is somewhere in the house as well

"He did tell me. I'd go with him but he didn't want me to. How is he though, is he okay?"

Ask a concerned Betty, not knowing that Mandisa and Zabelo are ancient history

"he is who he is ma. There is a new girl causing a drift between us but she won't last. Zabelo loves me and her daughter, he always comes back to us" she confides in her

Betty shake her head asking her self why would Zabelo hurt such an amazing woman

"ayi, men and their never satisfied nature. Let me go shower and change, I hope there won't

be any drama today . Funeka's father can be too much sometimes and the short tempered Zamani always fight him forgetting that he is the older brother and more powerful than h.. Him.."

By the time she shut her mouth, it is too late.

Mandisa has concluded on her head that Funeka isn't Bab Ngcobo's biological daughter. But his brother's instead, unknowing that she just listened on a secret she's not meant to reveal

Betty quickly walks out hoping that Mandisa didn't notice anything.

Later in the afternoon Mazisi drops Funeka at the gate and go somewhere.

Funeka is also drawn in the kitchen due to the

killer aroma hitting her nostrils.

"I hope it taste as good as it sm...." her sentence is cut short as she come across an unexpected visitor.

"Funeka, Hey" smiling pricelessly she says

"and you don't have to worry, I'm good behind the stove."

"I see" she says, failing to hide the dissapointment in her voice

Heading to her bedroom she has already decided that she will not be available during tonight's supper. Her and Mandisa on the same table isn't something she looks forward too.

After taking her clothes off she head inside the ensuit bathroom and takes the long, warm shower cooling her self. Thousand thoughts

are attacking her mind, why is Mandisa going up and down as if she is the makoti of the house, it is unsettling and she can't help but feel a flurry of anger blowing out of her.

"nx" she clicks her tongue heading back to the bedroom covered in a towel

Just as she lifts her eyes she almost screams at the sight of someone seated so comfortably on her bed

"maFuze" he says, slowly stand up charging towards her

"Zabelo, you can't just badge in here during the day. You'll get me into trouble" on a serious tone she tells him

Instead of listening Zabelo brings her close and smashes his lips on her reviving every emotion.

Hard breathings increases as the kiss deepens, his hands roaming around her body.

"the...door" Funeka says in between the steamy kiss

"locked" he says.

She allows him to pats her lips allowing his tongue entrance to her mouth.

The kiss is filled with dominance, lust and burning desire as their heart pound faster and faster with each passing second

His clothes quickly flies out, Funeka long lost the towel as he hold onto the man before her. He steps on his clothes after taking them off and swiftly carry her against the cold wall

Funeka circles her legs around his waist for balance, putting her arms around his neck

kissing even deeper and now faster. just one touch, one touch of his fingers on her slippery fold has her caged in pleasure and crying a soft moan.

His heart dances, she is ready for him.

Knowing how loud she can get he takes full lead of the kiss just to absorb her moans

He rubs his shaft against her wet coochie driving her to the edge and she whimpers. There is something about her skin, it's softness has him craving her even more. Her vulnerable state is driving him to insanity

Slowly he position himself, entering her fully and she tighten her legs around him feeling pleasure consuming her entire being

FUNEKA

It's after seven when the stupid supper comes, I wouldn't have bothered but I did it because it might be suspicious if I don't avail myself.

I'm not yet ready to tell the entire family about Zabelo. With the way Ntsika reacted, I'm not about to crush my heart when they all start judging me

Today the table is filled with laughter and chatting. Bab Ngcobo is seated on his chair, Mandisa is opposite me next to Ncane. Then there is mama, Mazisi, Zabelo, Mongezi and a very pregnant Mihlali.

This must be a huge night, I give it to Mandisa.

She can cook.

The food is really delicious.

I'm buried in my own world until Mandisa says something annoying me

"I don't know why girls like snatching people's baby daddies. It irks me" she says

I don't know when the conversation switched to such

"I feel like it is so stupid to date a man with a child because in the end they always go back to the mother of the child" Ncane adds

"exactly, imagine warming up a bed for a man only for him to leave you dry like you never existed" Mandisa again

I'm starting to boil inside

"I just feel like people aren't the same. Child or no child, the man will always leave if he wants to" Mihlali for presidency.

I breath out and keep poking my food. I just lost appetie

"Funeka, what's your take on this matter?"

I shift and ignore her

"I mean you have experience in this so why.."

"Mandisa" Zabelo chirps in, his voice laced in nothing but authority

"Look at you defending your girlfriend, how cute"

The table instantly dies down..

My heart is pumping hard, my face is surely pale right now...

"Mandisa, just leave this alone" Zabelo again

"Please don't even try to stop me. You don't think it is hurting me that you are cheating on me with Funeka who is like a sister to you? How will bab Ngcobo's brother feel when he learns that you are sleeping with her daughter?.. "

* **

A RAY OF SUNSHINE

°°TWENTY THREE°°

FUNEKA

"Mandisa, just leave this alone" Zabelo again

"Please don't even try to stop me. You don't think it is hurting me that you are cheating on me with Funeka who is like a sister to you? How

will bab Ngcobo's brother feel when he learns that you are sleeping with her daughter?.. "

"SHUT UP!!" Roars Bab Ngcobo

It becomes instantly quite

Even the children are just quite

And I start thinking, what she just said is ringing in my head and I'm failing to form words..

My ears must be deceiving me!

They must be

"Mandisa, what did you say about my father?"

My heart is thundering painfully as I ask her, my voice is as low as if I just woke up

No one dares to say something

"SAY SOMETHING DAMN IT!"

I'm losing my mind..

My head is literally spinning

"Mama! What did she say? What is it that she just said? What does she mean, mama!"

Tears are blinding my vision

"Don't scream at me girly, I'm still your mother!"

I chuckle, and stand up

"Explain what she just said ma! I'm listening"

"EXPLAIN WHAT EXACTLY? THAT YOU ARE SLEEPING WITH A MAN OLD ENOUGH TO BE YOUR FATH..."

I laugh

"my father, who is my father ma? Who?"

"ahem.. I can see that.."

"See what Zabelo, this is all your fault. How dare you luring a child to satisfy your sexual needs"

Bab Ngcobo shouts, staring at Zabelo

"I didn't lure her, I love her.."

Faster than lightning he charges towards him and..

A LOUD SLAP.. land across Zabelo's face..

It becomes chaotic instantly. I can't even think...

I let my feet carry me out of the chaotic scene..

I don't know what to think anymore..

THE NGCOBO HOUSEHOLD

Mazisi and Mongezi finally succeeded in breaking Zabelo from Bab Ngcobo's hard fists.

His nose is bleeding, he spits blood.

Anger does not describe how he feels at the

moment, he feels rage creeping in every single bone in his body.

Betty and Martha are now quite, breathing loudly.

Mandisa is nowhere to be seen

Mihlali is holding her tummy, moaning softly

Ntsika took the kids and disappeared

"Baba, what's wrong with you?"

Mongezi seethes, pointing a finger at him

"why don't you ask that boy? I took him in!

Raised him into the bustard he is today and he has the nerve to lure a child..."

"Please, don't you dare tell me that crap. You did that just out of guilt for getting my father killed.."

-Zabelo.

And the arguments goes on and on until a loud, painful scream stop them

"my water just broke.."

whispers Mihlali and for a moment they all freeze.

"THE BABIES ARE COMING, YOU CAN'T JUST STARE AT ME DAMN IT! I NEED THE HOSPITAL!" her shouting has them running around again, some taking her, gently leading her outside while Mazisi reverse the car closer to the door.

Just as the car drives out Zabelo looks around, holding his throbbing face

"Funeka, where is Funeka?"

Time is approaching Nine in the evening.

The night is so quiet, the sound of cars moving at a distance can be heard, wind is slowly blowing in all directions yet no one seem to notice in the Ngcobo household

Martha is a crying mess, she has been since Funeka vanished

"They will find her Sis, just please stop crying" begs Betty, wiping her own tears

"it's been hours and they are still not back! What if something bad happened to her.. What if.."

"Okay stop.. I won't allow you to do this to yourself. They will find her trust me. They will"

She cries even more

The doors suddenly opens and they quickly rush to Bab Ngcobo who greets them with a

saddened face, Mongezi follow as well looking just the same and a loud wailing burst out as Martha falls down her knees.

Mazisi is at the hospital with Mihlali

Zabelo isn't back yet..

Zabelo Magwaza

He is scared. Very scared as he drives through the night searching for her.

His eyes are running around, he has called anyone he trust to help but they all come up with nothing. Nothing.

He sighs, smoking for the fifth time since the whole thing began.

His phone start ringing

"Tell me you found something" he quickly says

"hadde boza yam, no one has seen someone who matches that description"

He clicks his tongue, cursing.

He parks the car next to the road and begin walking by foot.

He'll never sleep without her, his heart won't let him. How can he even close his eyes not knowing if she is safe wherever she is..

The more he walks, is the more he feels rage growing against Mandisa. How dare she? Now might not be the time but he will surely deal with her..

xxxxxx

Qhawe Ndlovu

He smiles, a cunning smile as he stands before the bed.

Funeka is fast asleep on his bed. He pinch himself making sure that he is not breathing.

Everything just became so much more interesting

He never thought Mandisa can still pull this one.

When he saw Funeka walking down the road he wasted no time.

He gets out, lock the door and toss the keys in his pocket then come out with a cellphone.

He makes a phonecall

"Hello.." a deep, throaty voice says

"everything worked out.. Gatszeni"

"it's time to take back what's mine.. "

After the phonecall he send Mandisa a text message telling her that all is well, take out the simcard and chew it..

A RAY OF SUNSHINE

°°TWENTY FOUR°°

°°°THE PAST°°°

Twenty Five years Ealier..

It's been long hard thirty one years of his life,

The life of guns and dodging bullets isn't something he wanted but life had its own plans for him, from loosing his parents at the age of Nineteen, to trying so hard to make a living because the only brother and the only sibling you have doesn't seem to care about your education or your life for that matter.

"Buddy, penny for your thoughts?" Thulani, his 40 year old brother spare him a look as they lean on the car seats waiting for the go ahead from their inside guy

"it's nothing" a 31 year old Zamani responds to his brother, his heart angered with everything he has done to him..

From introducing him into this dangerous life, taking everything that he seems to take interest in. It started as simple as a cellphone , if Zamani wanted a cellphone Thulani would be

there to buy it first just to spite him. Even when their parents were still alive Thulani felt the need to outshine his little brother who seemed to be the spotlight of the family.

"you know how this one operate. He must be thinking about that slut, Sharon.."

He turns, directing a sharp stare at Themba Ndlovu, one of his brother's friend

Vumani Magwaza is one of the friends too.

"Leave her out of this, she's none of your business Bra T" he says, angry as he looks at Themba at the back of the light blue Cressida.

His heart feels heavy, sharp pain hitting his chest but he remains calm on the outside while he breaks things on the inside. How dare she do this to him, how dare Thulani for slashing his back like this..

"Bhekan lentwan, defending a slut"

"Ngithe iyeke bra!" he shouts

"One of these days you will kill yourself because of that slu.."

Zamani quickly turns and throws a punch at Themba who fights back.

Vumani stop the fight in a nonesend and stare at A forever talkative Themba

"Just shut the fuck up for one minute, just one"

Thulani is laughing.

He finds this whole thing funny and amusing.

Sharon.. A beautiful yellow bone of Alexander, Zamani saw her first and made a move on her. She fell in love with him and that.. That didn't seat well with Thulani

He made it his mission to prove his point and finally he got the girl and slept with her, in the end also falling in love with her behind Zamani's back.

Zamani never knew about the affair until until few weeks ago while they were still planning a heist.

He overheard the conversation between the three friends. Vumani, Themba and Thulan who was gloating for getting the girl

"This kiddo has no respect for me. Nx!" Themba seethe in anger. The heist is yet to happen as they wait in the car..

"respect is not for hooligans" Zamani says

"Come on, you know he is telling the truth don't you? That girl is a slut! A qualified one"

-Thulani

"Just drop this, you are too old Thulani so act like it!" that's Vumani, a man of few words.

As much as he hated what was happening between Thulani and Zamani, he didn't pay much attention. The only thing he focused on was his 10 year old son, he was everything and more to him. He was all he had after his mother ditched him on his doorstep..

A phone beeps

"fellas, it's time"

Themba says and they quickly get ready..

The heist was as quick as a blink, hijacking a cash van requires one to be faster and that's exactly what they did..

Laughter fills the car as they drive faster,

Thulani being the driver until bullets suddenly goes off..

Zamani is quick to hide down, his mind running a marathon asking himself if he did the right thing.

He knows it's the best decision for him and for the kids.. His Five year old boys that he loves dearly. They deserve a better life than the one he leads.. They deserve a home

As much as he loves his brother, he will have to forgive him. The thought of what Thulani did to the mother of his children also put his conscience to rest.

>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>

The Ngcobo Household

Just as the sun comes up, Martha is fast asleep on the couch with Betty next to her.

Mongezi is up and making countless calls

Zamani is staring into space, feeling his world coming to an end.

His phone starts ringing and he quickly jumps on it without checking the caller ID

"Hellow" he says

The person on the other hand keeps quiet

That frustrates him even more

"Hello.." a bit louder he says

Still nothing.

He clicks his tounge and drop the call.

It rings again much to his annoyance

"WHAT!" He shouts, raising the sleeping siblings

"Aw buddy buddy.. Still short tempted I see"

The deep throaty voice says, he checks the caller ID and sees the number he doesn't recognize..

The voice is a bit familiar

"Who are you?" he ask, impatiently

"auch, I'm hurt. You've even erased my voice in your head. Really ntwana"

He feels lightheaded instantly, air leaving his lungs.

He quickly run out of the lounge to his office

His heart drummed hard in his chest..

His body is shivering and he can't help but gulp

"Are you still there buddy?" asks an amused

Themba

"Bra T" loud claps fills up his ears

"I always knew you'd never forget me. You know, after what you did"

His veins pop out, replaying what happened that day. Vumani lost his life after they fought with the police not knowing that Zamani was behind everything.

"What do you want?" he ask, trying so hard to remain calm

"I like you, jumping straight to the point. Thing is I'll come see you in person so that we can have a chat you and I.. Expect the details.." the line goes dead before he can try to say more..

He runs out calling Mongezi..

"Where is Zabelo.. I want someone to run this

number and check its location" he tells him as he reach him on the hallway

"I'm not sure, he isn't back yet. I have a guy who can though. Let me call him"...

He stops..

Looks at his father

"Was she kidnapped?"

He shakes his head and tell him to do what he asked.

He prays, prays that maybe it is a coincidence. As much he refuses to believe the little voice in his head but deep down he knows that Funeka going missing and his sworn enemy resurfacing means something..

He let his guard down. After that detective he made a deal with died, he should have paid

more attention.

He knew that Qhawe is Themba's son. He knew, it's the reason why he kept him close as one of their clients. He just didn't see this one coming..

Another number different from the previous one shows on his screen with a location and time..

He screams, throwing the phone on the wall..

Martha appears in the hallway and look at him, her face swollen from all the crying

"Zamani.." she says softly.

When Thulani was arrested she was just months pregnant, with a child that Thulani believed was his..

"You have to find her.. You have to"...

Zamani looks at Martha and sees the innocent

girl she was once. Pity she fell for the wrong brother who cared about no one but himself..

After Thulani was arrested Martha returned back home and that meant Betty had to find work and so she headed to Gauteng too..

However what Martha did not anticipate was Betty falling in love with the same family she had a history with..

FUNEKA

Headache!.

I close my eyes and reopen them again as I feel pain hitting every corner of my head.

I seat up yawning

"Finally, for a moment I thought you'd never wake up. How are you feeling?"

I blink, staring at Qhawe who is smiling like a lunatic.

A sharp pain hits my heart and I hold my chest, events of last night hitting me hard.

I'm failing to understand why..

Why wasn't I told that my father is actually a brother to Mr Ngcobo..

Why? He must be alive somewhere.. He must be.

All the void, the questions I've buried deep inside of me comes crushing down every bone in my body.

I feel like there is this elephant just having a party on my chest, dancing and sipping on

cocktails while laughing at my situation.

I let the tears fall off, hands quickly grab me into a hard chest and I feel a gentle brush in my back and that gesture just releases waterfall on my face..

I wail.. Wail for that little girl in me who was robbed of the chance of knowing her father.

"Hey... hey look at me. Don't cry. All will be fine in time. I'll take good care of you. I'll never make you cry. You are my safe haven Funeka. I love you"...

Wh.. Is Qhawe okay upstairs?

I wipe my tears and push him away. They are probably looking for me at home. I better leave, I want answers from that woman who gave birth to me.. She owes me

"Seat down Funeka. You are not leaving" he says as I head to the door.

I'm still in my yesterday's clothes.

The door is locked..

"Qh..." damn my voice is horrible

"I want to go home, Qhawe. Please open this door"

I tell him

He comes to me, stand before me and smile

"You are not going anywhere sweatpie"..

Wait. Is this a joke?

Zabelo

He budes inside Mandisa's door and find her draped in a red, sexy lingerie. She is a sight for sore eyes, but Zabelo is not even paying attention

Her fresh body is out in the open but he is too enraged

"took long enough, I've been waiting Njinji" she says,standing up and meeting him halfway

Within a blink he attacks her neck, strangling the life out of her. Anger vein popping on his forehead

He sees red, Mandisa is hopelessly fighting off his strong hold, eyes popping out shedding tears with no voice coming out.

He let's her go, she succumbs to the ground coughing hard and blowing air with her hand.

"I will ask this once. What did you do? " enraged he seethe,clenching his teeth...

....

xxxxxxx

A RAY OF SUNSHINE

°°TWENTY FIVE°°

This is the second day since Funeka went missing.

Everyone is going through the roughest patch in the Ngcobo family.

Time reads Twelve during the day, Zamani and Thulani are seated in one of the restaurants in Johannesburg waiting for Themba.

In a nanosecond he enters the door surrounded

by goons.

After greeting he demand his share of the money..

R1. 5 million...

A stupid, crazy amount of money.

"My money or the girl dies" he says

"Here, this is a half a million. You'll get the rest when I see her. now where is my child" that's Thulani, handing him a huge brown case under the table

"Where is my full amount" he asks

"you'll get the rest when we do the exchange.."

"Thulani.. NC NC. I thought you had my back and now you've decided to take this imbecile's side. Don't you want your money?"

"I SAID WHERE IS MY DAUGHTER THEMBA?"

shouts Thulani banging a table.

In turn other customers looks at them strangely

"Give me my full amount or I make a phone call.
Which one is it gonna be?"

Tounge clicks

"We can't have that kind of money lying around.
You'll have to give us few days.." Says Zamani

"until then, our business here is done"

...

Funeka

Sometimes you just act impulsively and land
yourself a much bigger trouble.

Had I stayed and never went out, none of this
would be happening

The room is locked again, my tummy is in turmoil.

I've come to realize that there is more to this.

Qhawe makes phonecalls, comes to me and try to make a move on me. Every damn time I turn him down and he always gets furious.. I'm glad he hasn't made me a punching bag..

Unlike this other old man

He seems to be here more often, it looks like he is bargaining with my life. He takes pictures of me, hit me and now..

I'm tied on a metal chair, hands, feets and my taped mouth.

After I tried to escape on my yesterday evening this is what he did..

Qhawe is just.. Qhawe.

He promised to let me go if I agree to be his..

I'm exhausted, emotionally and physically.

Maybe today might be the day I get to play along so he can release me..

Maybe he can

The door swings open and I flinch, pain in my body and in my heart.

I want my family, I miss them.

My heart is wrenched in terror, Zabelo..

I can not bring myself to think about him because I'd be just killing myself.

It's enough that I'm worried about my mother

"My love" Qhawe says, slowly removing the tape and I breath. My nostrils burn at the Nando's aroma, my stomach grumbles

"I brought you something. Open up" he says, staring at me. I'm tempted to spit on him but..

My tummy speaks a different language

I slowly open my mouth and allow him to feed me

"I didn't want this to happen this way, forgive me when all of this is over okay. It just that, what that man did to my father was inhumane. He just want his share of money and all will be well"

He is speaking gliberish right now, I'm totally lost

Half way through the meal, a heartless old man

budges in and throw away what remained on
the Nando's paper bag

"We are leaving"

"Don't hurt her Gatsheni, you know I love her.
You promised not to hurt her" Qhawe says..

My feet are untied and I'm grabbed screaming
to God knows where..

I'm pushed inside a car.

Just as it start moving a loud bang suddenly
goes off...

...

Nkosi yam senghlezi ngyozela and uhamba
njalo uges lana with the network. I'm sorry for
posting this late...

Please do comment about the storyline..

Is it interesting or am I going astray?

A RAY OF SUNSHINE

°°TWENTY SIX°°

The ear cracking sound of scratching tyres burst out the entire yard, provoking terror to any nearby human.

"Damn it, I should have known" seethes Themba, his teeth clenched as the car swings around until it comes into a halt

Funeka is draped in melancholy, acidic yet salty sensation flying down her soft cheeks. Her trembling hands are quickly grabbed in a hard force, a loud wailing escape her quivering lips.

The sharp, heart wrenching sound of gunshots are too much to handle as she screams not knowing where she was headed

Themba stands in the middle of the lounge, a quivering, messy Funeka stands in front of him with a gun pointed at her head.

Knees are shaking violently, her wrecking brain has already picked a coffin, moaned her untimely death and envisioned her final resting place decorated deep soil, flowers and a freshly made cross.

It is a mystery that her feet are still strong enough to carry her heavy, violently trembling body through such a horrific scene she's never been subjected to before..

Within a blink Zamani and Thulani jumps inside the lounge and quickly stand still due to the deadly, heart attacking sight.

Their chest are heaving and falling, hands tightly grabbed in guns as they shoot hard, deadly stares at the man holding a gun against Funeka

"Long time, friend." Thulani rumbles..

"One wrong move.. I shoot, friend. Stay where you are and listen to me" Themba quickly says, his voice laced in terror. He acted impulsively, with no solid plan. All he wanted was his money to start his life after after being released.

Her shuddering breathing is loud in her chest as Funeka cries silently, her face is drained, tears slowly dampening her top and neck..

"baba.. help me" her rough, slow voice painfully begs and that set the wrong button in both

brothers, one bullet flies up the roof in an instant causing a faint wailing as Funeka cries a bit louder

"I'm not playing here, one wrong move the next one is on her head. Try me, just try me"

His eyes even bigger, runny and red he utters bitterly.

Eventually Thulani and Zamani put their guns down and their hands quickly go up their head..

Just after that Qhawe enters behind pointing guns at them

"Son my son..." proudly he utters. His lips suddenly spread into a smile, a tidal wave of relief washes over Themba upon seeing his son coming through for him

"we have all your money in the car, just give us

Funeka and we will be on our way.." Begs Thulani, his now shaking voice selling him out.

"Now you want to beg for mercy? After attacking me in my home. Come on fellas, you don't deserve that. I'm doubling the amount. I want R3 million now.."

Hard gasp escape the brother's mouths.

They are glued in one spot

"Now you are loosing it. How will we find such an amount in a second.."

"I don't care. Just get it done. I have all day here.

You have kids, they are well off. Just think of something. And let me warn you, whatever you do, don't even think of trying something because one wrong move, she's dead." pressing a gun on her temple he says. Funeka feels her

vessels drying up

Themba takes out his phone, throw it at Zamani

" Now, start worki..."

A loud bang suddenly roars...

Funeka wails painfully...

Her knees fail her and she succumbs to the cold floor, her head hitting the floor hard.

Everything suddenly becomes blank...

.. Qhawe realize what's in front of him, he quickly run inside vanishing in one of the rooms..

Zabelo enters the door, carrying a gun while breathing fire..

He rushes to her and throw her in his arms..

Hitting and trying to wake her..

"FUNKEA!! STHANDWA SAM PLEASE OPEN YOUR EYES..FUNKEA!!"

Themba's lifeless body lies on the floor, Qhawe is nowhere in sight.

°°DAYS LATER°°

FUNKEA

The birds are joyfully chirping, wind slowly blowing in all directions. It's the beginning of yet another day and I'm still buried in terror

I still see my life flashing right in front of my eyes

I still hear the loud banging sound of gunshots
I still feel that cold metal on my head and that..
That just crushed me back to square one.

"Funeka.."

I scream, feelings all kinds of panic attacking
me

"I'm sorry. I didn't mean to scare you.."

the nerve she has for showing up on my face.

"I know you hate me and I understand but you
have to believe me, I didn't know that Qhawe
was going to put your life in such danger. I had
no idea.."

"Mandisa, you are not the one who doesn't
sleep at night, who wakes up sweaty and
screaming, unable to breathe. It's not you who
suffers from anxiety now and again.. It isn't you.
So please, just leave " "A tear drops in my left

eye,

I feel my heavy heart Wrenched in pain, my chest is tightening and I hate how I've been lately but I can't help myself.

These emotions just overtake me in a way that I fail to control

"I just want to apologise for.."

"Mandisa, why are you here?" ..,

He is here.. A sense of relief attacks me.

He is always resurfacing around where I am. It is like he is guarding me in the shadows and when he feels I'm not safe he emerges.

"ahem.. I was here to speak to Funeka. To apologise for what I did" her voice is laced in panic as she speak.

"didn't you sell her to your best friend?" firmly
Zabelo asks, his eyes emit anger

"Ahem. I said I'm sorry"

"If she died who will you be apologising to?"

There's no response

"I'm talking to you"his teeth pressed he says

"no one" whispers Mandisa

"The reason you still have that voice to utter nonsense is because I allowed it. It is because you are good to my child, otherwise you'd be history Mandisa and I would have been the one who gladly read your obituary and held the last spate standing just above your grave.

Do me a favour and stay the hell away from
Funeka, are we clear "

She nods quickly

"I said are we clear, yes or no"

I feel my skin giving goosebumps as I watch silently..

Zabelo is that kind of man who can do anything to get what he wants.. That scares me to death.

He can kill, any day. Anytime.

When Mandisa is out of sight he stands before me. Gently takes my hand in his and plants a long perk on them breathing loudly, wave of tingles itches my entire body.

His hands are warm, soft as he begin caressing my face and I want him to touch me all day, every day

Eyes locked, his buried in warmth and gentleness

I feel his thumb wiping my teary eyes

I stare deep in his eyes and my heart is engulfed in utmost peace and strange feelings of longing for him even when he is right in front of my eyes

"MaFuze" my heart still recognizes his presence, his voice..

"How are you feeling today?" his voice is softer, ever since that day I've been like this.

I spend my days in this porch, watching at whatever my eyes land on and fight the battles in my head

"I'm afraid.. Very afraid when you are not around"

My voice is low as I tell him truthfully

"I'm always around sthandwa sam. Always"

"I love you MaFuze"

My heart jerks as he tells me. I lay my head on

his big, strong chest..

His strong arms circles me and he hold me tight as I shut my eyes, breathing him and taking all of him. I always feel safe when he is around..

His ames are my safe heaven, my safe home.

"I love you Zabelo" his hold tightens even harder.

"I'm the one that loves you more and more.."

He is crazy sometimes

"and I love you more and more and more and more.." he softly chuckles and plant a wet kiss on my neck awakening sleeping juices

I hear someone clearing their throat.

Zabelo let me go and baba appears in front of me..

Yes, the man who gave birth to me.

Bab Ngcobo is with him, my mom, Ncane and

Ntsika.

Their eyes sell them away as they are glued on him, they hate him.

They hate Zabelo but they tolerate him because of me... Zabelo makes me feel safe. He makes me feel protected...

"I'll be around maFuze" he says, pecks my cheeks and then leave.. I feel my heart getting lighter.

They find somewhere to seat and just watch me like an egg that might break any second..

I hate pity

A RAY OF SUNSHINE

°°TWENTY SEVEN °°

Qhawe Ndlovu

His eyes are glued on nothing specific. Hands gripping on the fork, the spaghetti and meat balls at the receiving end of his misery as he keep on poking the food before him.

"We Qhawe, eat that food before I make you. Don't get me mad boy boy, you hate me when I'm mad. Hell I hate myself too" that's his mother uttering firmly seated opposite him

"Why did you introduce me to my father at this age mama? This is all your fault"

He says, slowly put the fork down and shoot daggers at his mother who doesn't seem fazed at all

"That man was a good for nothing thug, he was a useless bhantinti that would have done

nothing but mess you up as he did in his last days. even behind bars he still was obsessed with the Ngcobo brothers and in the end they succeeded in killing him.."

"no.. Zabelo is the one who killed him. I had just found him, I used the girl I love because I wanted to help him. And now he is gone.. If only you told me about him a while back.."

Its been weeks since the incident occurred.

Qhawe has been swimming in the darkness of sorrow. Like any boy child, he also was keen to have a relationship with his father. He never cared about anything of his past, or his present.

He wanted him in his life..

"Anything that hurt this so called Funeka girl is music to my ears. She's a good for nothing, low

class bee."

Qhawe chuckles

"Why do you hate her so much?" he asks

"I don't.. I just don't like her either. Eat that food before it gets cold"

"I'll be cold in one of these days when Zabelo finds me."

"He won't.." Says his mom

"Look at me hiding behind my mother's skirt instead of fighting him like a man"

"Listen to me Qhawe. I'd rather have you hiding behind my skirt instead of burying you. You are my son, my only son. So I don't care how you feel, as long as you are safe and alive, I'm okay"

It's silence for a while

"And here you are blaming me for not

introducing the man in your life. Look at the damage he has caused in the last few weeks he was in your life. He messed you up, you can't even show your face in public. You can't run your business, you are just here hiding. Tell me something Qhawe, if Themba was in your life since you were born, do you really think you would have turned out good? "

Hearing such words from his mother has his heart in shambles..

Funeka***

After talking to a therapist, I feel somewhat better.

Ntsika is outside the door waiting for me, I smile as he stands coming towards me

" How was it? "he ask as I reach him

He takes out his hand and I hold it then we begin walking away

"better than the last time"

I tell him.

Three weeks have passed since the whole ordeal.

I stared therapy last week.

Zabelo actually forced it down my throat, my mother and everyone supported the idea.

"I'm glad. For a moment I thought I'd lose you"

He can be sweet, too sweet sometimes

"well, you won't lose me. Not now atleast"

We pass by Mihlali's ward and see the new added members of the Ngcobo clan.

The babies are so tiny, I'm even afraid to hold them. Infact, I'm never holding a baby that's so tiny. I can't..

After the hospital visit we pass by the shopping center and I shop a few clothes.

Stress is one weired thing.

Instead of losing weight I just gained.. My tiny, favorite dresses don't fit me no more.

When we reach home it's after Four in the afternoon

I find my mother cooking, something I haven't seen since I got here. Atkeats her and Ncane are no longer a car and dog. I think what caused the drift was this issue of my father.

I hug her behind and peak my head, she's checking out the mouth watering beef stew

MaOledi" Nstika half yells and stand just next to mama

"who are you calling maOledi wena ngane?"

I'm left standing as mama pinch Nsika's left ear

"Tjonawe.. I'm sorry MaMzo"

I laugh and peak through the pot, where is the spoon?

I take the spoon. I'm about to dig up my piece of meet when I feel pain im my right ear

"And wena! What do you think you are doing?"

Oh No.. This is so painful

"Mama! I'm sorry.. I was just checking if the meat is ready"

It's Nsika's turn to laugh now..

"Leave my child alone Martha" For a moment I freeze. It's still hard to come adjust to these new changes.

Mam let's me go and I brush my ear feeling pain all over again.

"Do you have any idea what she was doing. She's been stealing my stew.."

"Hawu mah! I didn't take anything njena"

I chirp in

"Of course she did baba, she took almost half of that stew and didn't even hand me a piece. Selfish little sister" Aw.. Ntsika is pure lying

"No, you are lying Nstika.."

"He is not" my God.. My mother and Nstika are

ganging up on me

"even if she ate the whole stew I wouldn't mind.
No one is supposed to go hungry while there is
food in the house.."

I squeel in happiness..

"DID YOU HEAR THAT??" I Scream at these two
Hypocrites

"You aren't getting any g

Food tonight" thats my mom.

"I think I want some pizza, I don't want your
food any more.." I add

"Let's go get some pizza then, Ndodakaz yami"

Why am I melting off a sudden...

"Don't leave me oo! I'm coming with you." Nstika
can be too much sometimes

I'm outside, seated in the front porch as I watch sunrise. I'm feeling a bit of peace, I slept like a baby, something I haven't felt in a long time.

My phone beeps, Zabelo wishing me a wonderful day and reminding me that I'm loved.

My heart dances, I can't help the smile spreading across my lips

During the day Nstika takes me to Zabelo's club
And we have some good time together.

I miss my friends back home.

I haven't been lucky in finding friends this side 7

"It's been weeks of being sexually starved.

Zabelo has been denying me my right
since, Since the day I almost lost my life. He

treats me like an egg that might break with just one touch" I tell Nstika as we dive deep into this low conversion, with a red wine to spice up the moment.

We are gracing the VIP section for a change.

Savouring on hot wings, steak and cold, mouth salivating wine.

"You need to make a move. I can't believe you've survived with so much salt in your system. I'd die if I were to stay that long without sex, I'll be buried and the cause of death would be.. Lack of kuku. Even hell won't accept my soul, I'd come back here and hunt you"

My stomach twitches as I release a belly aching laughter.

We are back to being the crazy, annoying

siblings.

One morning he just came into my room and asked if I'm happy with Zabelo, I said yes. He sat down and explained why he was being offish, he didn't want to find himself in between our battles when Zabelo and I fight because he loves us both..

I assured him not to get him in involved ..

"God, I missed that laugh. It is so real and so beautiful. I almost believe that you are not being sexually starved.." jeez. this man.

"I'm not really sexually starved. He does give me some oral loving but.. It's not enough you know. Though I love him more when he sucks my cl.."

"Voustek! Do you want me to puke out all this wine. The dude is still my brother and I can't imagine him doing all that! Don't give me full details Funei nei. I don't wanna die of trauma

mina, I'm too handsome to die"

He is a dramatic dude

"okay, I withdraw my case. Can we dance, I feel like dancing"

"Say no more" he grabs my arm and we start dancing to the music softly playing.

Ntsika can dance.

While on the other hand I'm just a story of another lifetime.

We are breathless as we take a seat

"I need to do something with that lack of dancing, can I book you into a dancing class? Your bones are so stiff yet you move like a professional dancer underneath my brother"

I laugh and hit him at the back of his head

"Don't mock me, I can do better than many

other people out there. Wena give me something stronger, I'll show you flames"

Anyone can dance under the influence of alcohol I tell you.

"Nstika. Never thought you'd move on so fast" looking up I'm met with a slay queen. She's a young beauty, Nsika's age

"Pretty, meet my sister.."

Before I even anticipate she attacks me, grabbing hard. This kid doesn't know me

I'm quick to kick her sorry, slay queen ass until bouncers stop the fight.

"Ngzokubamba bitch.." she screams as they take her out.

Where is Ntsika. I'm breathless, my chest is heaving and falling as I search around until I

spot him at the corner, with a phone on his hand..

"Ntsika! You were recording!" I scream angry as I charge towards him. I had to fight on my big day, it's his fault.

"I'd do anything to see that fight again. Thank you sis wam for bringing her down her knees. She's been bullying me too much"

Amen!

It doesn't take long for Zabelo to grace us with his cold presence.

I jump on him before he can say anything and plant kisses all over his face.

He put me down gently and cup my face, staring deep into my eyes

"maFuze" he says.. It's coming

"can't you behave like a normal person for

once?" his deep, husky voice utters

I put my hands on his mouth and spread his lips

"Can't you behave like a normal boyfriend and smile" he smiles involuntarily and take my hands then plant a kiss on my cheeks

"See, it doesn't cost even a cent to decorate your stone cold face with a smile baby" I say

"You make me feel like a high-school kid maFuze"

His hands slide behind my waist and our bodies touch

I run my hand on his chest, looking up at him

"is that a bad thing Magwaza?" I softly ask

"I don't know. You tell me"

"well, I love you more when you let loose a little. Hhay njalo nje, We Funeka what's wrong with

you, why are you so stubborn Funeka" I say mimicking his angry voice.

He release a deep laugh, his eyes brightening and I'm in love even more

"I don't speak like that maFuze"

"OH yes you do." he laughs even more

"Ngyakthanda Kodak, even though you are too strict sometimes"

He leans in and kisses me

A sensual kiss awakening emotions in me..

"Okay! Sesyabonga we Shaka Zulu and his wife for the show.. Enough now!" Nstik, grabbing Zabelo away from me. The nerve!.

...

What an eventful, crazy yet funny day.

I'm as exhausted as they come when we reach Zabelo's apartment

The first thing I do is to visit the bathtub and start bathing. I take my time hoping that he might get in and thing can lead to me screaming his name in pleasure.....

Bummer, he doesn't pitch and the water is getting cold.

I hear a gasp as I return to the bathroom, butt naked. I get in bed just in my birthday suit and snuggle on his skin feeling shivers awakening.

He is in just boxer shorts.

His body suddenly goes hard.. Great..

"baby" I softly say

"Yes" he sighs as if fighting something

"Don't you miss me? Don't you miss burying your cock deep in my cookie"

He doesn't respond.

"I need you inside me. I miss you Njinji" I tell him, with my low horny voice as I brush his hairy, hard chest.

"You're still not yourself, Funeka. You are drunk" his breath is changing. I'm glad I still have this effect on him. I hook my leg in his

"that's not true Magwaza. I had just two glasses of wine. Two.. I want you badly, please" I beg, pushing my knee in his shaft and I hear him grunt softly. I push deeper and he instantly turn my body and take my full lips in his

The kiss is sloppy, affectionate and ignites a can of worms in me. Now I want him badly.. I

swear I'd rape him if he doesn't give it to me
tonight

I'm lying on my back with him on top of me,
still kissing me strongly.

We stop, catching our breaths.

Looking up at him I see him, his eyes a bit
darker than normal, lust gracing his expression.

My trembling hands swiftly grabs his neck once
more, bringing his face back to me.

His hot, minty breath heat up my hungry face

"maFuze" his voice is draped in gentleness,
deeper than normal, he wants me badly,
however his caring side wants to be sure if I'm
ready

I land my lips in his, bite his bottom lip slowly
and moan his name already imagining his shaft

delivering deep yet sensual strokes.

And that awakens the beast in him as he breathes out and in.. He takes full control of the kiss and I let him lead me

Upon catching my erratic breathing his lips land on my neck, lighting fire in me

I whimper as he nibble and suck my weakest spot, my eyes shutting close

His hands are roaming around my body, burning my skin with firecracking pleasure that has my mouth slightly opened,

I feel his hand taking full control of my breast,

My heart rumbles

Gripped in sheets his sensual lips moves down my breasts

"aa.. H.." a faint, lifeless cry escapes me as his mouth takes full control of my nipples, sending me to ecstasy

I'm left needy and in furry of emotions.

A hand grabs my thighs, his head dissappear down my cookie

I half scream, feeling all the bursting yet consuming pleasure at his tounge dancing like a professional on my coochie..

He takes his slow time driving me to the never land until my muscles twitch and an orgasm attack me

His skin on my body is like a magnet pulling me deeper than his body, I feel drawn into his soul and I want to be like this, always.

My walls welcome his organ in me and I bite my

lower lip..

Explosive, uncontrollable pleasure cracking my bones..

Deep, slow strokes begin torturing me and at this point I fail to form words.

I allow him to lead me to our world of pure intimacy as I hook my legs around his waist.

The blabbing sound of our organs strongly uniting is heard, his grunts are louder than my whimpering screams

I hold onto his bold shoulders when he begins moving in circles hitting the right spot. I'm singing non existing songs as he does that.

An unexpected loud scream leaves my mouth as I feel strong fingers pressing hard on my clit, still doing the sensual, erotic moving circles.

and he.. brings me closer and closer...

Something suddenly squeezes my entire being, from my toes, my tummy, my back firmly, an unexplainable urge to pee suddenly attacks me..

This can't be good, it can't.. Not now..

Yes now.. I'm failing to hold it in.

My mouth opens, closes again..

I'm like a fish gaping for air

"aa.. I..need... to pee.." I finally manage to utter, he doesn't stop.

Instead his strokes increase a pace and they are faster, deeper and full.

A lifeless cry escapes me as the urge to pee arises extremely...

I feel fresh tears burning my iris..

"Zab.. Pl.. I can't hold It" I cry out..

My trembling, sweaty hands try to push his hard body, I need to release myself

.He is a hard rock. Not moving..

I try to move up using my strengthless, wobbly feet but he is fast to put me to place, grab my both hands putting them up my head.

I'm at his mercy , he knows it too.

"ah.. Please! "..

"Let it go.. Mashiyamahle. Fuzelihle. " he whispers in my ear...

A loud, throaty scream escapes me as I'm attacked with an explosive orgasm I've ever had..

Something is different today.. Did I just pee...

How do I face him after this..?

As I regain my composure he has already pulled out. I lie on my side, back facing him.

"No no no my love. We aren't done yet"what..

One grab has me lying on my stomach, something is pushed underneath me and my legs are widely spread out.

His weight is on top of me, I feel his hands sandwiching my body.

I whimper, grabbing the sheets again as his shaft presses firmly on my clit, I feel my body coming to life

A a deep yet exhausted cry leaves my gaping mouth as he fully positions his shaft inside me. This time it hit differently, as if he is pushing all of him.. He is in too deep as I cringe on the sheets, unable to move.

"Njinji.. I'm.. Sorry"

He is faster, not having mercy on me as he grunts, thrusting in and out of me.. ..

somebody theatre this cookie out of me.. I don't need it anymore.

I'll never initiate sex, ever again

A RAY OF SUNSHINE

°°TWENTY EIGHT °°

FUNEKA

Zabelo's ringing phone dig me up from a deep slumber. I'm entangled in his arms, my heart swims in joy and warmth.

The phone stops ringing. I hear him shuffling and taking the phone I guess.

After a while he snuggles back to me

"maFuze, kusile mama wabantwana bam"

his husky voice rumbles in my ear and he bites my earlobe gently and slowly..

My heart skips, I feel my heavy, exhausted body regaining strength.

He is nibbling my neck.

I'm lying on my side butt naked, back facing him. I can literally feel his hard shaft pressing on my back.

Zabelo's touch is lethal to not just my body, it's like he marks himself deeper than my body. I can feel him at the deepest part of me.

I can't explain the feelings I have of him, they seem to pile up with each day and I'm afraid to even envision a life without him..

I'm so deeply in love with the man that I can't even bring myself to admit it loudly, his feelings cut deep that it even hurt a little. I'm in too deep, diving in a fast lane with no plan of backing down a little..

His trounce is like an addiction I can't fight, effortlessly my body responds to his mere touch. He doesn't have to do much.

My organ is on fire due to last night but as always a mere touch from him has my clit throbbing and my body crying for him inside me..

His hands start caressing my body

I'm trying to ignore him so I keep still, my eyes tightly closed

I'm holding my breath at the direction his hands are taking..

"Zab.. elo.." my sleepy voice moaned his name as his hand found my clit and started rubbing gently.

One knee is inserted in between my legs, spreading them apart a little.

and slowly he pushes himself in

"Njinj...aah " I cry out

Is he trying to kill me?

I lay my head on his shoulders and sigh, feeling the warm water comforting all the right spots.

My cookie feels a bit better, the fire down there is slowly dying down..

"OH Njinji.. Please.. I need to pee" '

his voice is suddenly squeaky as he says.

Wait a minute?

Is he mimicking my voice?

I turn swiftly and look up at him

We are both naked in the bathtub

I'm hoping my firm eyes will do the talking

"Oh Njinj.. I want to pee" he continued. Clearly amused..

I hit his hard chest and a bit of pain struck my poor fingers , I pinched his beard instead .

He released a deep, belly aching laugh.

His eyes narrow, he holds his stomach still dying of laughter..

"I hate you Zabelo"

This is upsetting and embarrassing..

During sex I'm in a different planet that doesn't even exist in the real world and I don't wanna

be reminded how crazy I get when aroused

"You didn't hate me when you recited all my clan names. Who needs Google when I have you baby, for a moment I looked at you and wondered why you are sitting on such a talent. Imbongi yam, my very best personal poet..."

This is it.. I'm done

Where is the towel

I get up as drenched as I am

And take the towel

" We MaFuze, you should attend those poetry sessions, you are good baby"

I look at him laughing stupidly. If only I could wipe that smile with this wet towel

"I'm never having sex with you. Ever again"

I tell him, furiously wiping my body

He gets up and encircle his arms around me

"Zabelo, just stop touching me, you're making me wet" ..

He plants a soft kiss on my shoulder,
awakening my sleeping hoe.

His wet skin on me is doing the things that I
hate to love

This man is so annoying! I wiggle myself out of
him, my towel drops and I bend down picking it
up. He grunts softly

Serves him right!

"what are you trying to do maFuze? "

"nothing,.. Just grabbing my towel. It's not my
fault that your mind is always dirty ."

His knee push inside my legs spreading them apart

"Is that so?" he firmly asks, his voice changing. I try to stand up but he hold me down with his hard hand on my back

"Bend down" he commands.

I'm about to protest but he is quick to push my legs apart with his knee.

"Zabelo Wh.. Aaa" he slowly plays with my slippery opening..

Will I ever get peace in this house?

"I'm.. Still sore Magwaza" I manage to utter. My body is already aroused

Long press on my clit has me crying in gibberish "Should I stop?" slowly, very slowly positioning himself he asks.. I feel my senses packing the bags and leaving me senseless as I hold onto the sink for dear life..

"Baby" I feel a soft touch on my face. A faint voice is speaking from afar.

Where am I?

"Sthandwa sam, wake up" a wet kiss wakes me up from the deepest sleep ever.

I open my heavy eyes and blink..

"MaFuze" Zabelo's deep husky voice brings me back to reality and to what conspired earlier, I feel my cheeks getting hot.

My poor cookie..

"your father wants to see you. He has been calling non stop" I quickly remove the throw blanket and stretch my arms yawning...

He hugs me and kisses my neck. This one loves neck kisses.

He smells good though

"What's the time?" I ask, brushing his arms

"After lunch.." what..

I jump out of bed and straight to the shower.

I slept that long, what did this man do to me?

Who would even blame me..

I put lotion on my body after the shower. Zabelo can't keep his hands to himself. Why is he even touching me.. Tjo

" stop touching me I'm busy Zabelo"

"Let me help you with that.. "

"no!" I quickly say, he laughs moving away from me. Nx bloody moron.

I don't want him to touch me. It all started with his touch, look at me now. my legs are wobbly, my cookie is on fire and I feel like a thousand

needles were poking me

Zabelo takes me home when I'm done and I change some clothes. I find my mother asleep, the TV watching her.

There are pills before her, on the coffee table.

I'm about to wake her when she opens her eyes

"I almost sent a search party to look for you!"

"I was with Zabelo" I tell her. She doesn't say more after that. I prefer the truth than to lie

"Thulani has been calling. He want to see you".

"I'm on my way to see him"

Ntsika enters the lounge area and look at me, I mean studying me

"What?" I ask him

"Is that a hickey!" my God, I've never felt so

embarrassed in my entire existence, the
bustard put a hickey on me. I breath out and
rush to the kitchen leaving my mom behind.

Just as he reached the kitchen I quickly put my
hand on my neck

"don't hide it babe, jeez your walk is even worse,
you walk like a penguin" I'm leaving his sight,

"Tjo.. Sis wam don't you need some painkillers
or something?" I need a new brother..

I'm dropped off just outside this big house in
some township I never even bothered to
remember.

Baba spoke to Zabelo and he drove me here

"Hey.. Where do you think you are going without
kissing me young lady?" he asks firmly as I try
to unlock the car.

I peck his lips but he holds me tightly and end up giving me a full deep kiss.

I knocked on the single story house. It looks like a five or six bedroom house

There is noise inside, loud piano music and some loud laughter..

A younger version of... Thulani appears at the door with a wide smile on her face. She looks Twenty or so..

"Pholoba, she's here!" she happily screams.

I'm just not sure how to behave

She has his face, his voice even.

"MaNgcobo, you are finally home" he says, opening his wide arms.

To avoid awkwardness I hug him.

He introduces me to the girl, Nangamso.

The woman who is petite comes as well

So ubaba has another family too. He has two children with this woman. They've told me about Nangamso and a son who apparently is in boarding school.

Nangamso and him have a lot in common, I feel like an intruder.

We are having what I assume is delicious food because lunch has long passed..

"So Funeka, your father says you are a graduate. That's great." she says, Pretty is her name.

I smile, not a genuine smile.

While I was craving for his presence he had another family. I'm hurting.

"Ahem. If you don't mind me asking, how old is Nangamso?" I ask

"20 years. The next question is how did I have a child while in jail, I know. Pretty is or was a warder who happened to fall in love with a jailbird" baba says.. wow..

That's all I can say..

Why was I denied a chance of knowing him because it is so clear to me that he kept in touch with his other family..

A RAY OF SUNSHINE

°°TWENTY NINE°°

FUNEKA

Laughter fills up the entire table.

Here and there Baba just throws the prison jokes.

My tummy betrayed me and I ended up laughing like the rest.

I never thought he was this free, funny and loving.

Once in a minute his eyes looks at Pretty and twinkle. He loves her, it is so obvious

She loves him too because we are laughing and she is just blushing like hell

"Let's face time Ndalo, he has always wanted to see sis Funeka" Nangamso announces in the middle of the ear cracking noise.

"That's a good idea actually, let's do it"

I'm still clueless and misunderstanding whatever they are saying as Nangamso takes her phone and does a video call.

A light skinned, young boy appears on the screen with a grin..

He looks like Pretty, just looks like her.

Unlike Nangamso who is a dark skinned girl like daddy, this one is like mommy

"It's her" he says, wow.. His voice is way too deep for a young boy.

He smiles, amused and looking rather speechless.

We are all squashed in front of this tiny screen

And I look confused.

"sis Funeka, this is our brother Ndalo. He is doing matric in a boarding school"

That's the loud Nangamso doing the introduction

"Hi there" I say and flash a smile.

"Baba, she's so pretty, wow I'm so gonna update my Facebook display Pic with her. Can I have your pictures mtaka baba"

I nod, feeling some sort of tingles and all the nice feelings.

I've never had siblings, been just me and me alone. The conversation is cut short with my bursting phone.

It is Zabelo

"Can I please take this privately.."

I'm dazed as I'm quickly grabbed by my hand heading to one of the rooms..

She opens the door and the room has bright colours and two single beds with the same pink linen with flowers and cute pillows, teddy bears and wow..

There Is a strawberry fragrance roaming around

"Welcome to our room.."

She says and smiles. She looks so happy right now..

My phone rings again bringing me back.

"Magwaza " I say and take a seat. The bed is actually comfy

"are you good Sthandwa sam? " ..

I was a bit down the entire drive. I guess he just wanted to check on me.

The man that put a hickey on me..

"I'm good.. why did you put a hi.." I quickly stop

in the mid-sentence as it hit me that I'm not alone.

Nangamso, all her eyes on me.

Smakade sezulu.

“Why did I? ”

“nothing, just missing you” she smiles, resting her hands on her cheeks.

“ I missed you the moment you left the car, how is little MaFuze down there..”

Oh Jesus..

“she is soo fine thank you” does this man know that I’m not alone

“are you sure she isn’t sore? ” no sane person ask such a stupid question I swear

“well she is”

“I’m sorry maFuze, why don’t I kiss her better then, I might come even now”

My cheeks are spreading without my concern

right now

“Zabelo I’m not alone” I tell him and take a brief glance at Nangamso.

The girl is still staring at me amused
“so? ”

“you are crazy , I need to go”

"Will I see you tonight or will your father drive you back?"

He doesn't get enough.

This time he wants to paralyse me

"No, bye Zabelo.."

"Ngyakthanda yezwa... "

Oh This man!

My heart is on a fast lane, speeding

"Thank you.."

He doesn't hang up.

"I said I love you Funeka Ngcobo"

I almost forgot that he has a loose screw on his head

"Love you too"

I say, faster than I could take my next breath

"that's better"

He says and hangs up.. Tjo..

"okay! out with it" she claps her hands once.
yeah she is still here looking so stupid smiling like a baby..

"I don't kiss and tell sisi"

"oh come on just tell me.. Oh God. Is that a hickey!"

God why me!

"How long have you known about me?"

I ask, changing the topic.

"for as long as I can remember. When we visit Pholoba he'd always tell us about his other daughter and that one day we will meet her.."

Wow.. I'm touched..

"Okay, back to the main topic. Who is he? Did you have sex the whole night coz I can tell with your walk that it was all Christian Greying down there.."

My mouth is dry..

"shem the man might have been sexually frustrated, jeez did you starve him sexually? , Yoh hhay uyangdumaza sis" that's what she add as she clap her hands once more,

" I'm not telling you my bedroom affairs if that's what you are expecting Nangamoso" I just met her.. I mean I'm not that comfortable and I'm still adjusting

"but you aren't being fair, I don't mind sharing mine"

"aw come on jeez man! You can't be having sex at this age" She laughs..

"Aw sis, you really need to spend the night here so I can tell you everything. Wait, will you spend the night?"

Hhayikhona..

"Not tonight. Maybe next time"

Her face fell. She stands up leaving

"Let's go"

After a while I head back home. My father is driving me back. His life looks content for an ex con. I keep on glancing at him

"Say what you want to say" he gently speaks

"You stopped writing letters. Why?"

I ask him

"I did not stop writing letters Funeka.."

"You did! You stopped after that day. I waited and waited hoping you'd show but..."

My chest is tightening. I sigh and look outside, that day replaying in my head

"I am sorry, my child. But you have to believe me. I never stopped writing to you, every birthday I sent letters to your mother.."

Mother...

Reaching home my first stop is my mother's bedroom.

I knock once and enter. I find her reading a Bible

She looks up and smile

"You are back early. I thought you'd spend the night with your sister...?"

Wait...

"Mama! You knew I had siblings?"

"No. He just mentioned it a few days ago. Stop shouting naw Funeka I'm not a child.."

"Why didn't you tell me about him, mah? Why didn't you tell me where he was? I could have visited him too, you know.."

The lump in my throat is growing as I ask her, standing next to her bed

"Hhay Funeka. Thulani was in jail. I didn't want to confuse you. His case was a tight one and the chances of him getting out were thin. I was just protecting you.."

Tears instantly burn my iris

"mah! That wasn't your decision to make. You robbed me of a chance to know my father. And now I feel like an intruder. He has a family, he is a good man, mah. Only if you have me a chance "

My heart bleeds

"Funeka baby, you have to understand that what I did was for you."

"HOW! Mah you saw how broken I was when he didn't show up for my farewell party in Grade 7. You should have told me the truth.. All this while I thought he hated me, he didn't want me."

"Tjo mtanami, just stop shouting!"

The hell...

"the letters" I tell her, wipe the single tear that just dropped on my left eye

"What letters?"

"The letters that my father wrote to me and you had no guts to hand them to me. So where are they?"

She stand up, putting the bible aside

"Is this what he taught you? To be rude and disrespectful Funeka?"

I'm going to explode I swear

"You did not need that man in your life. I was doing what's best for you. You turned out fine

without him don't you see"

She adds

"Mah you saw how broken I was that day. Who said I was fine? It wasn't nice having a void I could not understand, having to stare at every male that walked in our gate hoping it was him.

Just because I never talked about him doesn't mean I was fine, hell I cried some nights wondering what I did wrong. Maybe I was too dark or too skinny, or he just didn't want me because I was a girl.. I had so many questions.. So many.. "

I choke, tears streaming down my face..

My hands are trembling as an intense grief slashes deep in my spirit.

I'm drowning, feeling all these darker emotions and I just want her to make me understand..

" Funeka I did it for you.. He was a criminal and... "

That's it..

I quickly head to my bedroom and let the tears wet my pillow.. She just doesn't understand and it cuts deep..

Waking up in the morning I feel heaviness both in my spirit and my body.

I drag myself out of bed, with the mother of all headaches and drink a lot of water in the kitchen.

I start by cleaning the kitchen and the lounge then my bedroom.

When I'm done I make breakfast for everyone.

By the time I finish everyone is awake.

I'm keeping busy because if I spend one more second to think, I'll burst..

My mom is looking like her usual self. No an ounce of regret and that infuriates me even more.

"Baba, can I please get the tools to fix the garden"

I say as they are seat around breakfast table

"ah.. In the garage"

He looks at me with confusion.

"You don't have to do the garden, Ntsika is responsible for that.."

I head out to the garage and take the spade.

The soil is to thick and hard but I keep going

The scorching sun on my body is worse but I still keep going..

My hands tightens on the spade

How could she..

All these years I thought I was abandoned. I thought the man left is both and she knew. She knew all along.

She knew.. She did not tell me.

She's not even sorry!

What's wrong with this woman?

I craved his presence so much that when I started dating I couldn't last in any relationship because I was looking for a father, in a boyfriend..

As I push one more time a sharp, stabbing pain suddenly hit me. I try to ignore like I've been doing all these years but instead the pain

worsens. I deeply breathe in and...

Something heavy is seating on my chest

Salty liquid wet my face, faster

My mouth gasps...

"Aibo, MaFuze"

Strong hands grab me as I lose balance, my
knees weakening...

A RAY OF SUNSHINE

THIRTY

The warm water cascading down my body is
giving me an amazing physical relief while
freeing me from exhaustion and unstable,
wrecking brain.

His soft hands lingering around my body are

exactly what I need. His presence alone is soothing and calming.

Zabelo found me outside deranged and out of place. He never asked for anyone's permission to come with me.

I just remember him shouting at mom as to why she allowed me to be outside in such a scorching weather.

When we reached his apartment the first stop was the shower. He has been bathing me gently making me feel like a baby.

When he is satisfied he wipes me dry, carries me out of the shower and starts lotioning my body.

After wearing his big t-shirt I laid on the bed.

There Is a knock at the door.

I just watch him heading to the door and return with a McDonald paper bag.

I feel my mouth watering instantly as the aroma hits my nostrils..

The moment he hands it to me I devour it for dear life and lay down closing my eyes..

I'm woken up by something soothing my scalp.

Opening my eyes I'm lying in between his legs, my head on his chest.

"Magwaza" my voice sounds horrible as I say

"How are you feeling?" he ask, still brushing my hair

"I'm not sure. What are you doing with my hair?"

I ask

"I'm unplaiting your hair. You my love need a new hairstyle"

I laugh, did he just say that to me

"Wow.. You are strange Zabelo"

"and you love me as strange as I am"

Yeah. I do..

"Thank you" I genuinely appreciate what he did for me. For a moment I thought I was losing my mind.

I would have probably fainted if he never showed.

"What happened?"

"I don't wanna talk about it Zabelo"

I hope he understands

His phone rings and he picks up , it sounds an emergency hence he just stand up and prepare to leave

I'm not surprised. It is Saturday after all, the busiest time in the club.

"Will you be fine here, alone or shall I call Ntsika?"

His voice is laced in concern as he asks me

"Call Ntsika, and tell him to bring my phone with"

He nods, pecks my lips and leaves

A sigh escapes my lips as I rethink the recent events of my life.

Maybe I should just focus on something good, like my payday nearing.

My first salary, Mongezi said I'll get paid even though I've been on leave ever since that ordeal occurred..

I'm just glad that I'm going back to work on Monday

The sudden knock at the door disrupt my unstable brain. That was quick, Ntsika might have been close by then.

I make my way to the door after fixing the shirt and covered my lower body with a towel

Opening the door my knees instantly weakens, My blood vessels are drying up as I stand, frozen and unable to move.

"Funeka, I came to say I'm sorry. I'm so sorry for what I did, I swear I didn't know he was going to hurt you...."

My heart rate escalates to another level, I hold my chest feeling lightheaded

He quickly turns and walks away faster

I'm still on the same spot when Ntsika appears in front of me screaming my name...

**

" Okay, slow down already sista"

He interjects snatching away my second bottle of

Bernin and I shoot him a hard glare

"Just let me drink in peace Ntsika tu. I'm here to drink and have fun, just let me be"

I grab my cider and swallow the remain.

My mind is in turmoil..

I've been going to Therapy, I've been talking and Qhawe's sudden visit instantly brought back the memories I'm trying so hard to forget

"kant what has you so stressed out?"

I haven't told him, don't want to talk about this..

I stand up and head to the bar, trying so hard to never step on anyone's toes in this crowded place.

I order something else and let the alcohol take away my mind a little bit.

It's after midnight when Ntsika literally drags me out of the certain club in Sandton. He brought us here just to cheer me up. I couldn't even enjoy my first time in Sandton..

I'm lingering under a dark cloud and it's all because of that dick head Qhawe..

The moment we get inside the house I feel something rising up my throat faster than I could reach the bathroom..

Before I utter a word I've already spilled the

disgusting vomit all over the floor..

"Ah No !!!! Jeez Funeka"

He is disgusted I can tell..

I feel like my inside are coming out.. Am I gonna hold my lungs on my hand?

It feels like it

Just as I finish, I feel lighter and I drop on the floor, closing my eyes..

"Don't even think about that.. FU.."

A RAY OF SUNSHINE

THIRTY ONE

Sweat drips from my brows, down to my

gasping mouth as a harsh, smelly vomit leaves my mouth.

My weakened knees on the cold floor feel even more uncomfortable as I hold onto the toilet seat purging continuously

After What feels like eternity of misery I rise up from the cold ground, striding back to my room leaving the horrid body waste flushing down the drain.

Only if I could flush down the splitting headache, nausea and this runny stomach..

My trembling hands tugs my ringing phone, glances at it until the noise stop tormenting my poor eardrums.

Zabelo must just wait..

Who calls at 02:41 am anyway..

I blink my heavy, stinging iris lying on top of my bed. I've drank alcohol since I was in Grade 11, not once did I face what I'm facing today.

What was put in my drink?

What If I was poisoned?

Mom is fast asleep next to me. After I vomited she cleaned me up and decided to spend the night with me.. To look after me..

What a joke, I'm now looking after her as she snores deeply.

My mind is slowly resting when the tiny cries break off..

Dear God! Can I have a minute of sleep?

I woke up at One feeling nauseous and since then I've been running an unending marathon to the toilet..

I've deposited my body waste through the hole on my behind and the one under my nose..

I can safely say that I'm done drinking..

It feels like a whole mission to fight to get back to sleep again..

Sunday mornings are always loud and full of energy in this house. Today Sipho Makhabane's exuberant singing woke me up from a deep end.

I'm still feeling awful but at least I napped a little.

After taking a bath I drag my heavy body to the dining table and greet everyone.. Looks like I'm the only one who was missing.. Mazisi'w face is

beaming as he keep on talking about his twin girls.. Samkele and Samkelisiwe..

The kids are here as well except for Nkosazana, screaming and telling me about babies, apparently Mihlali is here with her twin girls..

Mazisi and having twin girls..

Explain the tiny cries I heard, they might have arrived while I was at the club.

I brave the excitement out of my deepest sentiment just for the little ones and listen to their crazy stories.

My ringing phone doesn't seem to matter to them, they've grabbed their little chairs and put them next to me..

It stops ringing as I take it.

A message comes through ..

*I'm outside, come out now or I'll budge in there and drag you out. You know I can do that**

I can feel the anger straight from the message..

I've drank only water since I joined this table, I don't have the guts to eat..

My stomach still feels awful

I find him leaning against the car, parked on the side of the road.

An icy glare burying my whole and making my skin prickle

His eyes are gleam, I can't make out what his head is at.

But I know one thing, these puckered brows are that of an angry Zabelo

"Funeka" his deep husky voice rumbles as I

stand before him, I feel goosebumps flashing on my skin.

He is glaring deep in my eyes.

I dart them from one place to another

"You love testing my patience don't you? Everything must be a mission to you, everything! What is so hard about picking up a phone Funeka? I should be a fool and wonder how you are feeling and if you are okay. "

"I was sleeping Zabelo, that's why I didn't pick up"

I snap,

His gaze deepens, head shaking slowly

"Is there something else you'd like to tell me?" he strikes a question. I shake my head

"You aren't planning to tell me about Qhawe, are you?"

My eyes fire back up instantly

How did he know?

"MaFuze, that man took something in you that you'll probably never get back and instead of telling me what happened you decided to keep quiet about it"

The scorching sun on my skin is becoming hard to ignore. I suddenly feel lighter and I stumble only for him to grab me as quick

His eyes are now tender and loving as I love them

"You are not fine." he tells me, reading my expression thoroughly

"I'm okay"

I'm not about to tell him something else..

After seeing the cold, icy Zabelo I get back to bed and take a long nap.

I wake up drenched in sweat, even my underwear feels drenched. My back and my tummy are on fire, the worst, squeezing pain shooting at my back is as if I'm approaching my periods..

I haven't had them in a while, I was too depressed to even notice..

I'm feeling weak and my entire body is trembling..

Something is wrong!

I send a text message asking Ntsika to come to my room. He replies in a second that he is in church with everyone. I'm alone I guess.

I try to get out of bed but I quickly fall back

seeing everything upside down, my head spinning..

This can't be a hangover, it's something else.

A frail wail suddenly leaves my mouth as I'm attacked by a sharp pain on my lower abdomen..

My vision becomes blurry as tears burn my eyes

I'm now kneeling, holding my burning tummy when I spot bright red blood draped in my pink sheets..

My trembling hands quickly take my phone and I call mama..

My heaving chest is loud, I'm sniffing and sneezing all at once..

It rings unanswered..

Oh mama!

I try to get up but this time I fall off the bed and

land on my tummy,pain escalates to a deep level and this time I fail to hold it in..

Mandisa

She just woke up from a deep sleep after a busy night shift.

Nkosazana is playing with her cellphone while wide awake next to her.

Mandisa kisses Nkosazana and tickles her. Her loud giggles are music to her ears..

After playing with her child she leaves her in bed and finds Niniza watching Dumisa in the lounge. Niniza is Nkosazana's nanny. She lives with her parents who insisted on raising Nkosazana. Mandisa didn't want to burden

them, hence she hired a nanny.

Whenever Nkosazana visit her mother, Niniza tags along so she can babysit while she is at work

"mah, how are you doing?"

She ask, kissing her cheeks

"ah, I'm doing fine ngane yam. I cooked some food, feed that tummy and come back here so we can talk about your baby daddy"

Mandisa shakes her head and walks away laughing

Nkosazana might have mentioned something about her Fifi to Niniza.

Before she reaches the kitchen a knock stops her.

Her breathing escalates as she looks at the man in front of the door

"You've got some nerves showing up here after what you did Qhawe"

She sneers, hot flushes rushing through her veins

"Why didn't you tell me you'll kidnap her. That's not what I signed up for.."

" Tell your baby daddy to leave me alone if he doesn't want to bury one of his own.."

Cold sweat breaks on her skin

"Are you threatening to kill my child?"

Her lip trembling she asks

"Maybe I am.. Maybe I'm not. Just tell your baby daddy to stop trying to find me.."

The only reason I haven't retaliated is because I love Funeka and I still need her to forgive me and see that snake of a man she chose for who he really is.. A scumbag full of stinking skeletons in his closet" he spits out in anger

"If you dare lay even a single finger on my child Qhawe.just a little.. You will curse the day you walked through my door and.."

"Qhawe Ndlovu.. "

Zabelo's voice suddenly sneers from behind as he ascend the last stairs and join the hallway

Qhawe is quick to grab his gun on the waist pointing at Zabelo while moving away from the door slowly.

Behind Zabelo Mongezi shows up, with a gun pointed at Qhawe, another man also appears with Monhezi also with a gun..

"Drop it now.." sneers Zabelo

Eyes blink countlessly, fear slowly gripping him on his last nerve.

Mandisa is immobile, unable to take a single step..

"Zabelo... Nkosazana is inside the house please just.."

It takes a second, a second for Nkosazana to rush in the middle of a war zone and that triggers a panicking Qhawe..

One loud noise burst out

One bullet

A frail cry breaks off..

A RAY OF SUNSHINE

THIRTY TWO

FUNEKA NGCOBO

Helplessly laying on this floor, wailing and submitting to pain will only give me nothing but more and more pain..

Cramps have multiplied, my rembling hands manage to hold onto the bed and grab my phone

His phone is ringing...

Each ring dissipated every inch of hope I had.

Salty sensation drenched on my face is evident enough to any Sane person that I am a complete mess.

Zabelo has never ignored my call, But God decided that today is going to be the one day, one day where I need him the most and won't

reach him.

I'm about to call an ambulance when I hear
someone screaming my name...

ZABELO MAGWAZA

Within a blink he flies towards Qhawe who out
of panic fires one more

His hard fist land on Qhawe in a nanosecond
and he rains fist on his face, kicking, punching..

Red..

That's all he is seeing.

Nobody dares to stop him, nobody.

All he sees is blood

Mandisa's heart wrenching cries she holds as she a bleeding Nkosazana, coughing blood..

"hold on baby.. Please..."

Her shuddering, saddened voice breaks out

Tears running as fast as heavy rain on her drenched face..

At the Hospital

"I feel like I'm losing my mind mama"

As she blinks, more tears drops.

"she will pull through nana, I promise" Niniza says softly , assuring Mandisa while hugging her tightly

"Can we pray?" she asks

Niniza quickly nods and they join hands and begin praying.

Praying for her daughter to survive the thorns of life as she fight for survival in theatre

Nkosazana got shot on her left lower abdomen area.

Currently she is in theatre and they are still waiting for feedback from the doctor

Zabelo rush in after a while later, a sling covering his left arm after receiving a shot on his shoulder from Qhawe..

"How is she?" he ask as he reaches them

No answer from Mandisa as she sniffs

"We are still waiting, ndodana" responds Niniza.

...

A RAY OF SUNSHINE

THIRTY THREE

FUNEKA

It must be a whale taking an hour rest, or a weighty man having a mother of all dances on top of my body.

I'm depleted of energy, it feels impossible to wake up. Fingers on my hands begin moving, at least I am still in charge of this strength drained, heavy body

It takes one blink as my iris comes to a brightest room, involuntarily they shut down again.

A minute later I presume, they reopen.

My mind begin wrestling for answers, unaware of my surroundings

A familiar, unsettling smell hit my nostrils..

I'm in a hospital, connected in a drip and still in my clothes..

It doesn't take long, Ntsika is here. He looks awful and deranged, his eyes are red and smaller than usual, swollen even..

He is staring at me, worry adorned his facials

"You scared me" he softly says

"Wh...."

My dry throat has me feeling thirsty and just awful..

I'm in severe pain, especially my burning abdomen

Ntsika helped me drink water with a straw.

I've tried a few times to get up on my butt, however my heavy body is too much to handle

"an hour ago I found you just passed out ...on the floor in a pool of blood. I thought something happened maybe there was a break in and some thugs raped and killed you.. I panicked and called an ambulance.. What happened?"

By the time he stops talking I feel even worse than the last time

A young, spicy white man wearing a doctor's coat, with a stethoscope hanging around his neck walks in, he is wearing casual underneath.

He begins the mumbo jumbo duties, I keep on breathing in, out and confirming that I'm alive and kicking.

I asked Ntsika to stay, I don't want to be alone

"Do you remember the last encounter in your life? Before you passed out"

His English accent has me dusting up my UNizulu English specifically used for Mrs Miller's unending presentations

"I was alone. I was bleeding excessively" I tell him, my voice so low, slow. My throat is burning, my bones feeling like I just survived a plane crash

"I think I drank too much" I add

"When was the last time your menstrual cycle occurred?"

He has such a polite voice, as if polishing all the lancinating pain in my body

"Last month, I think"

Do I even remember

"Your brother here says he found you passed out, what happened?"

"I had the worst abdominal pain, I was getting my period a little late. I think that's why I had such severe cramps.. And alcohol too. I drank too much and didn't sleep because I was having a runny stomach and vomited almost the whole night " I say

"How are you feeling now?"

"I'm in serious pain, my abdominal area is burning and in pain"

"In the last 7 to 21 days, have you been involved in an unprotected sex Miss Ngcobo?"

My heart is beating faster in my chest as he asks the question, staring deep in my eyes as if searching for the truth

"What's that got to do with me bleeding ..?"

"Yes, or no?" he interjects

I nod as a yes. It is always embarrassing to admit such, doesn't matter how many times

they ask. It gives me this shame I can't quite describe in words.

Yet I'm a qualified social worker, now I know why memorising instead of studying is so wrong. I can't even practise what I studied. How will I convince my clients to be free to speak about such delicate, sensitive and personal matters when I myself still believe that it's shameful.

"There is a possibility that you were pregnant Miss Ngcobo and suffered a miscarriage. However we are still awaiting the blood test results. For now please...."

.....

Pain..

Am I insane for feeling such great pain for

someone I never knew existed?

After those words I prayed, prayed for the results to come back wrong but.. It is the sad truth.

The one I must live my whole life regretting.

I breath, trying so hard to swallow the bitter pills after the nurse handed me.

I fail to ignore the weighty lump seating in my chest..

My heart feels like it is pumping blood, in a near death situation.

The pain has lowered in my abdominal area as I curl into a foetal position unable to breath

How I wish it can give my inner self a break, a breather..

Staring into nothingness I feel salty, warm liquid cascading down my face..

A long, shaky breath takes over being followed
by a loud sob taking over all of me..

I'm crippled in intense, deep sorrow that it feels
so hard to breathe.

I was supposed to know, I should have known,
felt something. Suspected something.

I keep replaying every single movement,
everyday encounter. Where did I go wrong?

A part of me is ripped off, mercilessly against
my will

I'm swallowed in a deep hole, with no hope of
ever coming out.

>>>>>

Days goes by, nights just follow the day and in
my mind it is all the same.

The day and the night

Darkness of sorrow has no day or night

I can count each and every spoon I've allowed inside my mouth, Lord bless my mother for being such a caring parent.

Always in my room, reading a Bible. Feeding me. Even bathing me when I don't feel like getting out of bed..

Not that I've gotten out of bed since I was discharged.

I never counted how many days or nights have passed.. They never help with anything

Pain never subside, it does not heal yet my mom has recited this verse that time heal..

What time?

Because the one I'm living under seems to have battery issues, it is not moving. I guess it takes

pleasure in seeing me being the slave of
sadness

There is that feeling in your heart, in your mind
that never goes wrong.

Your heart being emotionally drained, your mind
listening to whatever words are being said to
you to make you feel better, to make you
stronger, to remind you that you are not alone..

Bitter truth is none of what they say will dig me
out.

My hands grab my chest as if trying so hard to
pull out the pain my heart is subjected too.

I lean on the corner of my bed for the
umpteenth time listening to nothing

I am bleeding, internally.

If I had a chance, I would make it all stop

because it is all too much now.

The endless tears never get exhausted, the piercing, crippling pain.

Countless, uncontrollable thoughts attacking my wrecking brain.

My forever awake conscious, constantly crucifying me for being careless and stupid

Nothing hurts than watching your life vanishing in the deep end. Lord knows I would do anything to wake up from this bed and bless my body with sunshine..

The strength left me the day I was told I lost my first child I never knew I had.

All I had to do was to focus, I would have known.

I would have if I was given a chance.. Just a chance..

"she's going to be fine, just give her time.."

My mother, always full of hope. If she knew the depth of the pit I'm in.

"Fifi, please say something. Anything. "

It's not that I don't hear Ntsika speaking, I do.

But my mind is a prisoner of pain.

I can't even fathom words

ZABELO

"Mr Magwaza, you need to let her go" the middle aged, black doctor delivers bitter news to a father of a child he loves dearly and would do anything to save

His hands forms a fist, slipping into rage in a nanosecond

"Shut the fuck up if you've got nothing good to say. Damn it, can you even imagine what she is asking of me Sizwe.. Can you!" venomously he spits, Jaws clenching

Hot flushes attacks him

How dare her

Sizwe instantly hold his hands, trying to stop him from skinning the woman alive.

She shakes her head, sympathy written all over her face

" It's been Six days Mr Magwaza. You are only hurting yourself for this. She is just a child, just.."

"MY CHILD, SHE IS NOT JUST ANY CHILD. SHE IS MINE!"

his outbursts is no surprise, he is a man in pain. Battling between letting go and fighting for her only sweet, innocent Nkosazana.

"Foza, let's head out a bit" Says Sizwe, but he stand still and charge towards the doctor who doesn't even flinch. She has seen worse

"I know this might be another patient to you, but she is my child. Just do your best, save her. For me. Please" from anger to sadness, he switches in seconds as he begs the doctor, slowly kneeling before her.

Eyes red, tears threatening to leap out

It is a heart breaking sight indeed

A RAY OF SUNSHINE

THIRTY FOUR

FUNEKA

I wish I can say today is better than yesterday.
That it isn't gloomy, darker and consuming but
it is.

Paging through my phone I come across a
message that I received four days ago.

Its my first payment, ever.

I've always imagined how I'll spend my first
payment with my mother, I thought we'd go out,
have some fun, visit the salon, make our hair
and nails..

Visit the spa and have our bodies pampered

The date on my phone indicates that it is the

fifth of March

January was approaching the end when I came here..

But in such a short space of time I've been subjected to utmost pain I never would have imagined even in my wildest dream

I never thought there would be a time where I'll watch my life flashing right before my eyes

I never thought that I would lose an innocent soul I never knew I had until it was too late

My mom gets in and seat on my bed next to me.

There is no Bible with her today, nor there is a tray of foot. She's just alone

"At some point you will have to get up from that

bed and face the world ngane yam" she starts,
heaves a sigh and glares at me deeply

"I know what you are going through is the worst
pain that maybe none of us understands. I know
that you feel like there is no reason to go on

But there is.. You might have lost your first child
but you did not lose you, you did not lose your
life. You still have you, you owe yourself a life, a
life full of light even in the middle of the
darkness. It's been days Funeka, if you continue
like this we will wake up to your dead body, is
that what you want? Are you tired of living baby?
"

Her voice is laced in softness yet it carries the
loudest message

I sniff, wiping the tears on my face as I curl up,
folding my legs and my hands brushing my

arms

I do want to live, I really do

"Funeka, do you want to live, to smile again and be happy or do you want you to be swallowed in the darkness until there is nothing but a shadow of you left?"

Her words cuts deep, they manoeuvre their way inside my darkest corner

I slowly shake my head

"In this life we fight, we fight to be alive, to be happy, to be better. If you want to live again you must fight, fight for that little baby you never got to meet. Fight for you"

It's silent

Sound of my sniffing is too loud for this moment

"I never told you before Funeka, I never told you how sorry I am to hide the truth of your father. I thought I was protecting you but I know I was wrong. I am sorry my child"

With that she heads out living me in my own sorrows

The only thing that keeps me occupied is checking social worker post online

I'm not sure what to do so I keep on applying for jobs that require years of experience while I'm just a fresh meat from Varsity.

I need a bath, a long, hot bubble bath..

Ntsika literally forced me out of bed during the day. I'm seated outside the garden, under a tree shade.

The cool breeze brushing my body is enough for now..

I've been typing, deleting and retyping again

I don't know what to say to Zabelo.

I haven't received any messages or calls from him in the past days and that's not him.

It's actually strange

"Where is Zabelo, when did you see him?"

I ask Nsika who is seated beside me

"He is at the hospital, he is always there "

That's news to me

I blink, feeling shocked and surprised all at once

"It's not him. It's Nkosazana, she is in ICU after being shot"

That's all it takes for me to get up and try calling him

He doesn't pick up

Ntsika offers to take me to him. We pass by his apartment first, he is not in.

We head to the hospital,

Ntsika has been here before because he keep on leading the way.

As we reach a closed door he tells me to get in and moves away

I haven't seen him since forever..

How will I face him

What will I say

What if he hates me for what happened..

I make a decision now, I'm not telling him anything. Not when he is still fighting something like this...

I hear sniffs as I open the door

Only to be met with Mandisa in Zabelo's arms crying..

I stand still, watching the stinging moment

"Funeka" Says Zabelo as the hug breaks

"Hi, I came to see you and nkosazana"

I say

"Go home Funeka, there's nothing you can do to change the situation.." he coldly states..

His words bleeds like a stab wound in my heart

I quickly turn before the damn tears make their entrance..

"You need to stop crying sisi" his voice is saddened as he comforts me.

I haven't been able to stop the growing lump in my throat since we got back from the hospital.

I don't understand why he treated me that way

I'm back in my bed again, I don't want to get out. Not today..

I hear some voices outside my door and baba walks in, with his family. This time there is a little brother too, Nangamso instantly cry as our eyes meet..

Thunder is beginning to get serious this side, I couldn't finish the insert.

I'm sorry for that 🙏

A RAY OF SUNSHINE

THIRTY FIVE

Funeka Ngcobo

I wake up drenched in moisture, my chest on a comrade marathon that it takes a while to breathe normal. I have been having nightmares, ever since the gun saga but they got worse the day I lost my baby. I would have loved a baby girl, maybe it was a boy. I would have named....

My chest tightens as the imagination grows in my head..

“Sisi, are you okay?” I almost forgot that she is here, Nangamso’s voice is soft as she asks. A hard lump is having a rest on my chest, I fail to form words..

Instead I feel her hands encircling my body. I'm entangled in a warm embrace, I cannot even reminisce the last time I was held so delicate. That thought alone brings his image in my mind. I miss him, I miss him very much that it even hurt.

There is this void inside of me, I can't shake it nor can I ignore it. If only he bothered about me as he did days ago.. Maybe he has realized that I'm too much of a baggage..

“Can I make you something? Anything. A tea, warm milk?” She ask, getting off the bed and the lights comes on. I wipe my face and ask for a warm milk. She nods, giving me a heartfelt look adorned with pity and melancholy..

I can spot few tears from her eyes.

She heads out, I've gathered that Nangamso is just so sensitive, she even insisted on sharing the bed with me to make sure that I'm comfortable and don't feel like I'm alone. When they came to see me, she literally broke down. Baba was hurting too, that's why I did not even protest when they asked to take me with them

Ndalo is here as well, I can't believe he bunked school to see me. He is actually tall for his age, bold voice too. A handsome young man. I'm glad to have a little, loving and caring brother. You'd swear we met a long time ago, while we just met just last afternoon.

I hear shuffling before the door opens, Nangamso walks in carrying a warm milk on a white mug with love on the side..

"My ex-boyfriend gave me this cup on our first

valentine together, I bunked his sorry ass the next day. I wanted a trip to CapeTown, Not a stupid mug "she says handing me the cup. While chuckling.

"Yet you still kept his gift, you are a hypocrite Nangamso" This time she laughs..

To think I've never had a man big enough to buy me a gift on valentines. It's a disgrace. There is a soft knock at the door just as she seat next to me, I look at her strangely.

"Please don't get mad, I called them" she quickly says

And just like that the bed becomes way too small as the whole family squats before me. Mam Pretty, Ndalo and baba

"Nangamso said you were crying. Are you in pain?" that's baba's tender voice, his stare is directed to me

“I can call an ambulance if you aren’t feeling okay mtaka baba” Ndalo adds

“I’m okay. I was just having one of those breakdown” I say

This family is worse, really. Who wakes up during the night just because I’m crying? Am I crying blood?

“Don’t mind us Nana, we are just worried about you okay” an awkward smile rest on my face..

What a bizarre family..

In the morning Ndalo woke me with a full English breakfast that he made. He wants to be a chef, a qualified, famous chef owning strings of restaurants. God doing it again, reminding me that I’m actually dreaming small, why can’t I just have bigger dreams like other people? I’m so proud of him though.

He left, an hour ago and I started preparing to leave. Nangamso left just now, heading to a certain library, I guess she uses weekends to write. She is in her second year, doing accounting at UJ, the subject still gives me shivers and heart palpitations. I'm still not sure if she lives here in Thembisa or at res.

During the day baba drive me back home. I find everyone in the lounge, Bab Ngcobo, Mongezi and Mazisi, ncane and mama. Only Nstika isn't around. Shouldn't they be in church since it is Sunday?

I greet them and walk away..

I need to see Zabelo today. Maybe he will talk to me, I also need to see Nkosazana. I'm praying so hard that she recovers..

After spending most of my time sending applications to various NGO's and few clinics and hospitals , I finally get the nerve to call him. He doesn't pick up. I'm hurting but it's okay. Maybe he is busy. This is how I usually keep my mind occupied, by applying until my fingers hurt.. I've never focused on applying until now.. It the only thing that I seem to focus on

Mama gets in , looking rather spooked

"Is everything okay mah?" she shakes her head

"MaZungu just called me"MaZungu being our noisy neighbor back home

"she said some thieves got into our house ..I left her the key so she could keep an eye on my house but it looks like those thugs have finally realised that we are away"

Oh Bawo!

“Then lets go back home, its not like I’m busy here” I suggest..

I've made the decision, I'm going back home.

Maybe a change of scenery would do me some good. I need a break from this place

But first, I need to talk to Zabelo

It's after Three in the afternoon as the Uber drops me outside his apartment building.

Reaching his door, I find it slightly opened..
Strange. This door is always, I mean always closed..

A sudden rush of shivers suddenly hit me, my heart skip a beat.

I swallow nothingness and push the door open only to have my heart shattered into pieces.

They are kissing.. He pushes her away so hard that she almost fall. Warm drops flood down my face as a sharp feeling stab my heart completely

"The hell..! " he screams, turning to walk away I assume because he suddenly freeze as he seems me..

ZABELO MAGWAZA

Time reads 12:30 in the middle of the night, Zabelo is seated on the chair, deep in thoughts when the life support machine start going crazy, bursting , making noise while flashing and in a nanosecond he is on his feet screaming

Nkosazana's name. That wakes Mandisa who was lying on top of a throw on the cold floor..

Even after being warned, shouted to move they never do until..

"Time of death: 12:33.."

A RAY OF SUNSHINE

THIRTY SIX

TWO MONTHS LATER

My head is buzzing as I shout "after robot"

I get off and head to taxis leading to Musgrave.

I'm drained, the last time I attended an interview was just a few weeks ago and bad doesn't even describe it..

I literally went blank, I asked for water and

ended up spilling them on the table and drenching the interviewer's personal belongings, not to forget phones..

I blamed them for putting such a huge jug on the table and not water containers..

That day Khanyisa cooked for me and gave me her last cider. She is my best friend who is also a social worker like me. I'm crashing at her place for now, job hunting. It's not nice, trust me.

Khanyisa was lucky because she is currently working at a certain private hospital as a receptionist. It's close because if there is a vacancy she will be the first to be considered. And not to forget that she is also an outspoken, courageous person who isn't afraid to make connections..

I'm an official graduate, I graduated at the

beginning of April, I thought I'd be one of the few lucky stars and get a job..

My underground gang really let me down, to think I thought they'd come through. Not that I ever even focused on anything relating ancestors

I don't want to be Mazisi's PA, anything relating to Joburg is just a sad story for me..

I left Joburg that day, I never looked back ever since. I'm still in contact with my family, but I don't live there any more.

In the last months I also found out that my mother is sick, she has been for a while.

Breast cancer, I never even wanted to know how long she has, I'm glad she got to see me in a graduation gown..

It was the happiest day of my life.

This time baba came, not just him but an entire Ngcobo clan. We had a party, a glamorous grad party that everyone still talks about even now..

A hard bump has me cursing the phara looking man as he passes me..

I click my tongue in annoyance. This was my fifth interview, I tried but there was a time where my English decided to round off to the nearest nonsense, I even said aibo sis Koda because...

Tjo

Everyone is paying and I'm sweating, searching for my purse furiously. I'm not sure if I misplaced it or what but it was here..

"Yey Yashoda lenyuku! Who didn't pay?" Drivers

assistant, or scabha and whatever name they are usually called has announced for the whole taxi to hear.

Now I wish I had the power to vanish into thin air..

"Here" a loud voice speaks just next to me

Is he paying for me?

I don't even know what to say

He looks at me and smile

"Thank you, I think I misplaced my purse. Must be the post interview trauma"

He is quite for a while

Then he start blebering worst stories about interviews and everyone joins in and laugh

By the time I get off, so does he. His name is

Jacky, yes. I've gathered with the way he speaks, he laughs and his clothing style that he is gay..

As it turns out we live on the same building, same floor. Our doors are opposite, then I haven't been lucky here to even bother myself with making friends..

I thank Jacky and unlock the door.

I start taking everything out on my handbag..

Nothing

My armpits are burning up..

I'm losing my head and I hate it..

My purse, my cell phone. Gone!

How? When?

I call my mother every now and then making sure that she is okay. She is in Mtuba, I hired someone look after her. I can't bear the thought of leaving her just alone..

I don't pay, Baba and my brothers give me enough to pay..

Mazisi is the most caring compared to the rest..

Jacky will regret the second he decided to pay for me, I knock on his door and he opens.

He is in nothing but a skinky short. He has an Angel tattoo on his chest..

"Girl, are you okay?"

I blink a couple of times wondering if she is not a devil worshiper.. Okay I'm being stupid.

Tattoos scare me

"Can I please use your phone I need to call my

mom. I'm sorry to bother you" what an untidy room, is he a fashion designer because why am I seeing lot of cloths on the floor

"Come in, make your way and jump up if you want too. It's messy here, I'm having a deadline. Some client decided to give me the last minute pressure.. I hate sewing like a woman who snatched my man but love it like someone's son dick.. Okay. Here"

So many things in one sentence!

After calling mama I'm feeling better. I never mentioned my bad luck of losing my things, I lied and said my interview went great.. Sigh*

I want to go home and be with her but the thought of bringing bad news will only make things worse and she will force me to go back to Johannesburg and I can't..

Not after what happened..

I've never received anything after that day from him..

Not even a lame text apology..

We were doing great, or so I thought.

I still don't know if he knows about the miscarriage.. I'm not planning on digging up that saddening part of my life.. Not even with him

It is a past and I am willing to forget.. And move on from him as well.. I deserve to be happy.

But for now, my focus is with my mom and my life..

A RAY OF SUNSHINE

°°THIRTY SEVEN °°

"Stop pausing like your grandmother who lost her virginity in the early 60's Funi.. Jeez! Let loose a little. And give me that smile!" Teekay screams at me and I'm no longer scared really. He doesn't scare me any more. Once he holds that camera, he loses focus of the real world that has hopeless people like me who are turned into models in just a day.. How hilarious

Sometimes I just aim too high, tempting the man above in the process. Since when did I become a plus sized model, yes I gained and never got my petite body ever again. From a normal, size 32 to 34 in just two months.. Stress does add some fats in my body..

Here I am, pausing for a photo shoot.

I'm adorned in a contrast floral chain strap Lingerie..

My body is all out for these two, forward gay men.

I feel uncomfortable.. But incredibly beautiful
"OH yes!" I guess I'm giving the pots..

I can already see myself on billboards making waves on social media with more than 20 reactions, I'll change my Facebook name into Funeka F. The model of the universe .. Maybe I can even score a deal with Pep Store or Ackermans for their summer advertisement and.. Okay I'm aiming for hills again while I can't even climb a gentle slope

By the time Teekay finishes my body screams shower and a warm blanket.

I wear my tracksuit back and my socks with morning shoes

It is a chilly weather out there today I even feel

sorry for Khanya, it'd make anyone look for the long lost blanket and ditch work just to feel warm..

I would be in my bed, binge watching Netflix with Mazisi's account.. But God decided to send that Phara to steal my million dollar cellphone only to resell it wit R2, my life can end already. I've seen it all

" Teekay please give me Savanna, I need to finish this suit otherwise this client will have my intestines for breakfast. Funeka, Are you sure you are ready to have all your body displayed for every one to see" that's Jacky. Khanyisa is at work, I was bored alone so I came here and to my surprise Teekay, Jacky' s friend was in need of someone to help with his photography dream

He has an event coming up, something about

photography and staff..

"He said my face won't show, I'm only helping because of that. Wait, is he going to show off my face?" I quickly ask, there goes my dream of slaying on billboards. I seriously am not comfortable with being naked while my face is on display

"No, I won't break our agreement. My show is in three days and here I am wasting my time. I need to get these artistic pieces of you ready for the show. I'll see myself out"

He hands Jacky the Savanna and kick his leg than leave him cursing..

What a strange relationship

"Thank you for helping him. It has always been his dream to showcase his talent in a big city.

Finally it is happening"

I smile and stand up as well

Let me dash, before I leave I ask to call my mother. She promise me that she is fine. I'm not too convinced, I want to see her.

I don't know when, maybe tomorrow I'm going back. I'll only come back here if I happen to get another interview or something better.. A call offering me a job..

But judging from my past interviews.. I won't get any calls.. Even if I do get calls, how will they reach me?

Okay I don't know if I'm slow or what..

But I need to buy a new cell phone and make simswap asap..

I have the money, baba and my brothers make

sure that I never lack in any way. Even bab Ngcobo..

Time is approaching four in the afternoon as I begin cooking.. I wanted something to go with this weather and that is usu for me and streamed bread

I'm in the middle of my cooking when a knock suddenly comes through. Khanyisa has her own key..

I sigh and wipe my hands clean then head to the door

"Hi mam, I'm looking for Funeka Ngcobo" He politely utters.

"that would be me"

"someone is here for you."

A frown rest on my face, it's the security guard.
The uniform sells him away

"Me? Who is that person"

I'm confused because no one knows me here..
No one. Except Jacky that I also met yesterday

"You can come and see for yourself. If you are
uncomfortable I'll go with you"

Durban! They've started with kidnapping young
girls like me.. Have they gathered that I'm farm
Julia from Mtuba..

I follow him simply because I'm way too curious
and.. Well I'm not sure who is looking for me

It's raining hard.. Chilly air attacks my body the
moment we step out of the elevator in the
ground floor

We reside on the Fifth floor. If I were to take the
stairs every day I'm sure I'll even do better than

those known it all Virgin Active members..

I look around the reception and see no one..
What the hell

My heart rate has increased. How dare this security guard for disturbing my cooking. He is not even around anymore. Arg!

I turn heading back when I suddenly feel some type of way..

Heaviness I can't explain and my heart just skips

"MaFuze"

My feet suddenly get crippled, I stop walking.

I dream too much. I've been on my feet for too long dreaming about billboards that I even lose my senses.

I am not turning my head.

Let me keep going bec..

"MaFuze"

My throat is suddenly drier than Kalahari
dessert my hands are trembling, my heart is
winning a marathon that I don't even know of

My legs on the other hand have decided to take
a step back and mock me, I'm unable to move..

Just frozen without looking behind me..

But I feel it

I feel him..

As if he never left for two months and forgot
about me

As if I never cried, for days, cursing the day I
met him

As if I never prayed for his calls, his text messages.. Anything from him..

My heart is heavy, all the feelings I fought so hard to forget just hit me..

His cologne evokes my nostrils before I raise my eyes to see ...

Him

The man I never thought still remembers me, let alone my name

My hands forms a fist as I stare at him

I feel hot flushes overtaking my blood vessels

"I'm not sure where to start.."

I clench my teeth..

My mind is telling me to wipe the floor with the damn suit he is wearing. Who knows, maybe

the owner might be impressed and hire me as the supervisor of all the cleaners..

"Ahem.. I cam here prepared.. But"

Nervous!

He is nervous..

He looks stupid, the desire to grab his stupid grown beard grows in me. Those hair on his head will make it easier to drag him out..

I thought I'd cry.. When I see him.

I've imagined this scene many times in my head. I'd run to him and cry in his amrs telling him how much he hurts me but...

Someone passes carrying a kettle, I'm too enraged to stop. Before I know it I'm standing in front of a terrified drenched man, a woman swearing at me and furiously taking her kettle

from me..

I just grabbed a stranger's kettle and throw the water at him ..

He isn't burnt.. Otherwise he'd be running to the hospital yet he is still here, frozen and begging me with his eyes

Nx! God knows how to make them

Where are the stairs?

My chest is so tight and heaving as I reach the room.

I get in,

"MaFuze.. Please here me out..,"

Devil is testing me.. And he has succeeded.

I believe that I will find my seat waiting for me next to the devil

That vase can knock some sense into him

I grab and he is quick to dive as I watch the vase falling into pieces..

I grab any near thing I find and throw at him..

I fail to see clearly..

I'm hyperventilating...

Tears are blurring my vision..

"WHAT'S GOING ON HERE! DAMN IT! FUNEKA"

Even in war there are casualties..

I feel soft, tiny hands hugging me and she shouts "Just leave!" Khanyisa will catch bullet one day, why did she tell him to leave. I wanted y

to see him bleed..

Is that blood?

Oh God!

"JUST SIT DOWN, YOU'RE MAKING ME DIZZY!"
Screams Khanyisa. This is one friend that
screams and tell you she loves you in one
sentence

"is he still there?" I ask for the.. I don't know
many times..

Its been a long while since that quarell with
Zabelo.

I'm infuriated.. But the blood is making my heart
worse

"I don't know we sisi, go out and check."

She's watching TV.

In the middle of a messy, tiny lounge she just
paged her way and sat. I'm left with a huge job,
to clean this mess.. I hate Zabelo. Why did he
come

"Did I hurt him?" she doesn't respond. Not that I care..

I head down stairs..

He is seated on one of the chairs, facing down looking depressed..

"Yewena, runaway baby daddy" I say, loud enough for him to hear.

In a second he is on his feet, looking spooked.

This is interesting..

Imagine scaring such an old, tall human

I'm in for woman empowerment.. Maybe I should run for women's league chair

He looks disoriented

"Are you cold?" I ask

"Yes"

"Good, may you be colder than a corpse in mortuary. If you want a place to sleep, say the word. I can organize a mortuary that can give a man who failed me a place to sleep. Maybe I can even call the cops and let them know that there is an intruder.. Cold jail cells are actually better, hand me your phone"

If I didn't know, I'd say he is suffering from amarabi. But that's dogs disease.. Actually he is a dog

He hands me his phone hesitantly and I dial a number I've been singing since I was able to count

"There is a man in my house. He has a gun... I'm.. I'm afraid please hurry.. I'm in the bathroom.. "... I say my address with a wobbly, whispering voice and walaaa.. Police are on thier way..

I wonder if they will make it in time, or show up at all.

To think I wasted my time studying Social work. I should have gone for Drama, look at the acting I just did. I'm the next Thuso Mbedu, a star

Let me leave him shaking like a leaf.. Oh..

"hand me your suit"

He wants to hesistate but I stare at him. He gives me and be left with a shirt..

"I hope amarabi kills you, and pneumonia.."

When the police siren start wailing outside my mind start functioning again..

Khanya is now sleeping..

I head out in a robe and long pygamas and find

him speaking to the police. They seem to get along.. The fuck!

When I wake up this morning I feel different..

Khanya's side of the bed is empty. She might be gone already.

The time on the wall indicates that it's after eight.

I stretch my body..

She suddenly enters in a rush and take her charger

"He is still at the reception, you know"

She screams as she heads out.

Khanya knows about my situation. I told her everything.

That man can rot in that reception for all I care. I wanted him to spend a night in jail, a night would never make up for what I went through, for what he put me through.

He goes mute for an entire two months and just emerges as if everything is normal.

I should have hit him with an entire coffee table so that some of his bones may break..

I hate him..

Let me start packing, I'm going home today

ZABELO MAGWAZA

Ever since he lost his father, his mother's longing grew on him. Even when Martha came into the picture at a later stage to raise him, Mongezi and Mazisi she never filled that void..

The loss..

He is afraid of death.. Not when it comes to him but to his loved ones..

After years of dealing with the loss of a father and a mother that never wanted him, he finally grew the courage of going back to Graytown and meeting her..

She has other children she never ditched on a doorstep. She loves and take good care of them but not him..

When Mandisa came into the picture he was just a shell. Giving him a daughter made his shell bearable, warm and comfortable.

He opened up to her precious daughter , loved and protected her like his life is meaningless without her.. But he failed her.. In her last days he failed..

Again, God did it. He snatched away the most amazing thing in his life. Loss always hits him differently, he just close off and stay away until he is ready to face.

After Nkosazana's funeral he wanted to see her, but when he heard the knews from Mazisi that he lost yet another soul.

He swallowed on a deep pit

It was too late as he realize that he need her, she also need him..

Its been a while, gathering strength to reconnect and see her again. Fix what's broken and move on.. Funeka dropped like a bombshell and destroyed the shell he was in, made him love fully without any fear. Made him a little good and happy..

He was happy, at peace..

He is afraid, still. The thought of losing her.. It seems like everything he holds dear is always taken away from him..

He had a plan, to move on and forget but a heart has a mind of its own..

And he find himself today, wallowing in the cold winter morning, freezing and bearing the strange stares..

He looks horrible..

His face has fresh cuts, dried blood.

He will take it all..

The beatings, calls to the police

The waiting on stone cold benches..

In the end he will walk out here knowing that all
will be well..

A RAY OF SUNSHINE

THIRTY EIGHT

Phwee!

I'm done packing . I'll sleep with my mother
tonight, I can not wait.

My eyes land on his suit blazer that I threw on
my way in yesterday..

I lost my mind.. Now that I think about it I did

Some of the things I did don't even make sense..

I even remember asking for his cell phone to call the cops! Yeap I was crazy. Who even does that?

My spirit drops to zero the moment I reach the lounge, I jump the broken glasses and head for the water to the kitchen

I was cooking!

Damn it!

Khanya might have switched the stove, she was too exhausted to wait for usu and steamed bread to get ready..

Checking the pots it's all just looking gloomy..

I'm forced to throw ujeqe wam away,

Usu can still recover, I just don't have the strength anymore so I pack it up and straight to the fridge..

Now back to the worst mess

By the time I finish cleaning I've killed Zabelo thousand times, attended his funeral and even saw his useless self being forked and roasted in hell..

I'm about to take a bath when a knock comes through..

I'm starting to loath these annoying knocks..

I'm sweaty and I haven't even taken a bath yet, or brushed my teeth for that matter

God must be crazy to bring this man on my doorstep.. Again

"maFu..."

I scream!

A deafening scream that has his eyes all out like a dead goat. Seriously, why is he back?

"If you call me MaFuze one more time I swear I'll do more than calling the police. I'll call an antire FBI on you, or CIA so they can throw you in a blacksite and torture you until you can't even remember your own name, do you understand me dick head?"

Eyes blinking countlessly

Hands brushing together.. Is he gaining confidence or what... If blessings were thrown at me like such temptations then I'd be driving my dream car, sipping cocktails in Paris.

Sometimes I also ask myself, why does God keep on tempting me with this devil worshipper.

"ahem, I just want..."

"Want What? Can't you get it. I don't want you bhuti wabantu. Just get lost!"

Even I also flinch at the bursting sound of a door after I shut it harshly on his stinking face..

Where to from here?

I've packed my bags, I'm ready to go back home.

First thing first, the toilet. I don't want to be pressed along the way

I need to also pass by pep for a new cell phone

The soft knock...

Again..

Maybe it is someone else

I laugh as I come across him..

There is a stubborn human being, then there is Zabelo on top.

Heavy breathing slowly visits me, my heart rate is beginning to change and I feel the utmost anger closing all the senses in my head..

I shouldn't be blamed if someone dies today. It self defence, I'm defending my mental health from vultures who left me while I needed them the most. Vultures who kiss their baby mama's and throw you out like a used tissue..

I'll never forgive that..

"Before you scream, your friend sent me. She wants to talk to you" wait..

Does that even make sense..

The phone rings and he hands it to me

"Funeka, it's me"

It's Khanya..

"You have his number? Khanya how did..."

"Just stop losing your mind for once and listen to me. It's important"

Really, I'm not going to stop my mind from assuming the worst. Is he here for her? Are they dating and I'm the fo...

"Where did you get his number Khanya?"

Red is what I'm seeing

"Relax, I got a call from your sexy brother. The CEO. He also gave me his number because apparently you will not receive the news from him so he asked me to tell you. He was your reference right?"

I'm still waiting for the right answer I'm looking for.. Not this crap

" FUNEKA! "

" I'M LISTENING BACK STABBING BITCH!"

She sighs, dissapointed..

"Funeka, you are the one who gave your brother my number. He is the one who called and gave me your ex's... He"

What was I supposed to do when Mazisi wanted to know the person I currently live with

"He would have passed the message through him because he knows he is in Durban since you can't be reached. But clearly you don't trust me enough as your friend if you have the nerve to think of the worst.. Anyway he said I should tell you that he got a call from Liana Larson Private Practice about your interview with them.

They want to see you again today, at 10.."

The call drops. I'm frozen..

My heart is racing

.

I'm gobsmacked

.

Zabelo had to drive me to my destination.. The Practice is in Glenwood. I would have requested an Uber but that time of waiting would have cost me.

Time was already approaching Quarter to ten when I received the call. Lord, I did not bathe..

. For the first time in my life I left the house with yesterday's sweat. Zabelo kept on assuring me that I wasn't bad.. I literally used my hands to brush my face...

I've never been a true fan of weaves and wigs but I ran to Khanya's weaves and took one. I have short, steel wool natural hair but to comb it would have needed more time.. My hair is the worst and very painful.

I kept on staring at myself in the rear view mirror. Luckily the dress I was going to wear didn't need ironing.

Nerves were killing me but I managed to arrive just 2 minutes early.. It counts..

I can't believe it is actually happening..

This is the same interview that had me blacking out..

I was given a second chance, next Monday. It is still Thursday so I still stand the chance to prepare and do better this time..

Getting out I find Zabelo still waiting for me outside..

I slide in the passenger seat and he starts driving..

"How did it go?" he asks, staring at me briefly ..
"I got another chance for an interview"

I'm telling him because he helped me today..
And that's it! "I'm happy for you, you deserve this"

He gently says, with a proud smile resting on his face.. Something in me moves..

Then I remember

"just like you deserved Mandisa's kiss. Did you sleep with her?" I say, feeling my heart slicing all over again

His bloodstained face stares at me sadly and briefly,

He is puffy, swollen and adorned in grief.

I don't have to ask twice to know that he is going through something..

He has hair, a beard. My heart twitches.

For a moment I feel sympathy slowly creeping in

He looks absent-minded as we drive through the busy road until he hits the speed bump so hard and we move up like sacks...

"Flip! I'm sorry.. Are you okay? I'm sorry MaFuze. I'm really sorry.. I'm.."

He is stuttering, what's wrong with him?

Last I checked was a professional driver..

The moment we reach the apartment I take a long deserved bath. I allowed him in, because

he helped me.

He is sleeping! On the couch looking so sad.

I stand before him

There is something upsetting my inner peace about this man. He is not the man I once knew..

He wasn't a smiley Joe but he had life in him..

Right now it is like looking at a near death version of him.

I think he feels my presence because he opens his eyes and for a moment I get lost..

Staring deep in his, and him in mine

There is no spark of life in him.. Nothing

Just a blank look

"Are you hungry?" I quickly ask, moving away from his eyes..

"You should take a bath. And change"

He nods and stands up. He comes to me but I turn back, away from him.

Something flashes in his eyes, it is hurting me to see him this way but.. I can't..

He furiously covers his face with hands and sighs.. A trembling sigh

"I will see you" he says, removing his hands after a while

"No, you won't" I tell him truthfully. What we had died the day he kissed Mandisa..

I'm thinking he will leave but he moves closer and quickly takes my hand

A burst of shock intensifies, attacking my whole body

I say nothing, looking at him taking my hand in his mouth and kissing it gently sending shivers

"I know I broke us, but promise I will restore us,

I will get you back MaFuze" he whispers then
look at me

I drop my gaze. He let go of me and headed out..

I'm caught in between...

Instead of wallowing in my messy life I headed
to pep and bought myself a reasonable cell
phone and started the process of sim swap.

By this time tomorrow I'll be ready to roll..

God is good!

I'm grateful for the second chance interview,
may I nail it this time.

I decided to spoil myself so I visited Roca
Mammas in Florida.

After that I just went shopping around Durban

until my feet couldn't take it.

I first buy pizza and the head back.

I'm carrying my new clothes and pizza.. It's a mess

When I reach the door, today's events quickly flood my mind. I remember what I said to Khanya.. Embarrassed and ashamed I knock. She opens and leaves me at the door. I grab my shopping bags with a tale between my legs

I have the key, I don't even know why I knocked

I sit on the kitchen counter and put the pizza next to me .. She is cooking

"Your new friend Jacky was here. He wanted to see you and it sounded agent"

I will talk to him in the morning.. For now

"Best friend, I'm sorry about this morning. I overreacted and acted impulsively."

She turns.. I feel like Kak

"I hate what you did Funeka, I won't lie. But I get it, you are still confused and overwhelmed over this whole Zabe thing." She shortened his name to Zabe. It's like she is referring to a different person

"still, I should never have assumed such. I'm the worst friend ever. I'm really sorry ma Zulu"

She smiles

"Okay, what am I getting for being bashed?"

Right!

I need to use her phone and lert mama know of the recent developments. She's going to be happy,

I'm glad I didn't announce my visit because she would have been expecting me.

A RAY OF SUNSHINE

°°THIRTY NINE°°

"Okay, tell us more about yourself. Behind the naked eye, who are you?"

What the hell?

"Okay. Well I'm Ngcobo, my surname is my name.. No, I mean my name is Funeka and I'm surna.. I'm Ngcobo .." sigh*

My God!

Khanya is rolling with laughter, hitting my back as she holds the draft paper.

"Nawe nabo Behind the naked eye Khanya, really?"

I'm not sure why she even included that. It's her fault I'm stuttering this much

"Just tell us more about yourself and stop whining! You don't know what words they will use. Be glad I used naked eye, one Indian lady once asked me to advertise myself, to tell them what's inside my box of intelligence.. I mean the fuck"

I can tell with her dull facial expression that she still hate the lady. I'd pack my bags and leave if they ask me something I don't know

"Now you're stressing me"

I stand up, pushing down my short night dress then head to the kitchen for a drink..

She follows me behind. This fridge is forever full, Khanya is from a well of family, I'm sure

they are the ones paying the rent.

I take the milk and pour some on the glass and sip..

My head is buzzing. We have been doing this every night before bed. It's Friday today, normal teenagers are gallivanting and savouring the night life of Durban and here we are.. Looking like a woman who just buried her husband

"Let us know who Funeka Ngcobo is! Behind the naked eye miss Ngcobo!"

she yells mockingly entering the kitchen.

"Tseg!" she's giggling as I swear at her.

I want to scream as she join me, grabbing my glass of milk and drinking in one go..

"That's mine, tall ass bully!"

I hit her tiny ass, she laughs and hit the back of my head

Khanya is tall, slim and caramel skinned.

I sometimes scold her for wasting such a modelling talent. She's the most easiest person to blend with, you always know what she thinks because she never hide anything in her chest.

"Says someone who let a depressed man stay outside all night, in a cold winter while it was raining. The poor man was freezing . I'm even surprised he made it out alive "

That hit home

"Was it that cold?" I know it's a stupid question but I ask anyway

A sonorous laugh suddenly burst out as she laughs hard. God I'm getting a headache as she keep on hitting my back while laughing

One thing I hate about Khanya, her voice is deeper than normal girls. And when she is

laughing she has this annoying tendency of hitting you just as she laughs.

I move away grumping, her hands are painful
She follows me..

"Stop hitting me! Your laugh is ugly Khanya,
stop it before you embarrass yourself even
more"

It's like I'm tickling her.. Jesus!

Seriously, I'm getting annoyed with each second
"tjo.. Jewova."

She's breathless as she rest her head on my
poor shoulder. I'm a duck, yet I'm carrying a pole

"I know it's been long since you did Geography
but come on, we are in the middle of May, winter
is forever cold Funeka"

My head is buzzing, when this one laughs at

you she makes sure you feel every blow

"I tend to forget that you are a weather expert sometimes.. Mxm!"

I leave her alone.. That was not necessary.

"okay, wait ke."

I rest on the couch and she catch up with me, seating next to me catching her breath

"Nothing is funny here. I need a new friend,you are abusive Khanya Zulu"

She smiles, she still want to laugh more but she hold it in and lies on my thighs

"I'm definitely not working up tomorrow, such a heavy sack on my poor body"

I say, that all it takes for her to regain her stupid laughter..

I pinch her nose until she stops and I let go

She looks so funny with her now red nose and her older than three weeks cornrows on her head. Weaves hide so much, they deserve some counselling for hiding such hideous hairstyles.

"Are you trying to kill me? This is your talent. But this is nothing my friend compared to what you did to poor Zabe, he looked horrible as a plane crash survivor"

A heavy sigh leaves my lips.

I don't know..

I am angry.. Very angry at Zabelo

I have been but I was too heartbroken to focus on anger and now that he resurfaced everything just dropped on my face

The excruciating pain I dealt with when I lost my pregnancy..

No support from him

The last straw was when I saw him with
Mandisa.. Kissing

I can't help the lump tightening in my throat
But I've cried too much for the last couple of
months so I swallow as hard as it is

I feel soft hands brushing my cheeks

"You need to talk to him so that you can move
on sis" it's Khanya's soft voice.

She's looking up at me sympathetically

"He hurt me you know, he loved me too much.
Took care of me and made me fall in love with
him and then stabbed my heart completely. I
hate him" now I fail to hold it in, a single tear
drop my left eye. Khanya wipes it

"The only way you will get to heal completely is
if you talk to him.." I interject

"So he can lie and say it was a mistake. I don't need him or his useless apologies. I'm better off without him"

I can feel anger slowly replacing the pain I'm feeling

"I'm not saying you need him, or get back with him but look at your sisi. You are not fine. You need to hear him out, listen to his lame apologies maybe they might clear your heart."

I hear her but I don't..

She seat up

" You might not cry every night like before, or long for his embrace like before but you haven't healed. I see it in your eyes whenever his name is mentioned, whenever you see a baby close to you, you zone one. Just because you don't talk about him doesn't mean you have healed. You are ignoring the pain, the betrayal he left you

with and that my friend is a recipe for disaster
..."

I'm mantled in malicious emotions, my head
and my mind are in a zone of war.

Of course my heart just longs for him..

But my mind is a different story

"I get it. He wasn't here before, but now he is
here and he owes you some explanation. It
might not wash away what he put you through
but I'm certain that it will make a difference."

I hate feeling this way.. I feel like I'm slowly
crawling back to that dark, cold corner I was
once in

" He doesn't deserve that. He doesn't deserve
that chance"

My trembling voice utters as I wipe the tears
away. They don't stop, they just keep pouring!

My feet are still strong to carry my to nowhere really.. I just feel like yelling so loud until the pain stop..

There's this heavy feeling just seating in my chest.. No matter how hard I cry it always find a way to get back

I feel hands hugging me from behind.

"I'm so sorry you are going through such pain sis. I really am"

I thought I was healing

I was.. Until he emerged out of nowhere and dragged me back to square one

I'm drained as I sink down the floor curling into a foetal position..

I feel Khanya's hands letting go of me...

However I'm too consumed in heartache that it even hard to make sense of my surroundings

°°ZABELO MAGWAZA °°

He knocks, waiting for the worst.

Instead of seeing Funeka, he sees someone else.

"Zabe, this isn't a good time. Please leave"

He frowns as she speaks quickly yet quietly

A trembling, heart wrenching sob breaks out..

Picking through the door he sees her.. In a heartbreaking position

A door is slammed on his face just as he is still draped in shock

The evoking smoke of weed is dancing around the apartment he is in. He has lost count of how

many blunts he has consumed yet the pain is immobile, just stuck on his chest like a heavy elephant.

An empty bottle of Harrier Whiskey lies beside him as he seats on the floor..

Wasted..

Time reads 11:28PM

It's been more than three hours since he returned from Musgrave.

His heart is swollen, injured in a way he probably can never put in words..

He is lost, dangling in pain and suffering.

From losing his princess to a child he never got to meet. It is a mystery as to how he survived the past couple of months without dropping dead.

His spirit is crushed as he lies on his back, on the floor awake staring up the ceiling

Seeing Funeka so broken and wallowing just put him in a horrific place that's worse than the one he is in..

With no doubt he knows that he is the reason, he is to blame for every single pain she is going through

His mind is all over the place. If Funeka never accepts his apology then has no idea where to go, how to even start living again.

She is the only thing that makes sense..

He never meant to push her away, he prays that she gives him a chance..

To rewrite and correct his mistakes.

FUNEKA NGCOBO

The loud ringing of my cell phone wakes me up from a deep slumber.

A headache is the first thing I feel as I sit up. I feel like I'm carrying a heavy object on my head

My mother is calling

I have no idea when or how I fell asleep yesterday.. My voice is horrible as I pick up her call.

We talk for a while and then end the call.

I didn't call her yesterday, I'm not surprised because my night ended on a sour note

Khanya is nowhere in bed, I'm about to go look for her when she enters carrying a tray. A

mouth watering aroma hit me

And my mouth waters

"Hey, sleepy beauty . How are you feeling?"

She ask, putting the tray on the pedestal then
join me in bed

"Perfect. I'm feeling very good today"

Confusion rest on her face

I'm done crying over spilled milk!

Yesterday was the last time I cried over a past
that I can not change.

"Funeka, you can't be good after yesterday's
breakdown. It is alarming and crazy"

I grab the toast and an egg then shove it down
my throat

"I'm fine. Stop worrying. Thank you for the
breakfast"

She sighs

"If you say so. How is headache though? I'm sure you are dying after.."

"Yeah yeah.. I'll be fine"

I hate being reminded of this..

Seriously I don't want to talk about this

We eat breakfast in a light conversation until we reach taxi drivers annoying attitude

"They are not that bad." she defends them

Hebana

"Since when?"

Is she blushing? The Khanya I know hated taxi drivers. We used to bash them together

"Well, we just misunderstood them, you know. They are good people if you listen and respect them. It is just that the environment they are

under compel them to be rude. You know how people are mngani.."

I would have laughed but my throat is still sore

"Khanya, do you have a new taxi boyfriend?

Where is Ndumiso?"

"Let me dash to work. I'm already late as it is.

Wena just wake up and prepare for the Art Show, you need a lively suroudnng before you kill yourself. I'm taking you out when I return okay"

She kiss my cheeks then rush to the bathroom

"The art Show start at 12, I'm ealry. I just need juicy news for my mental well being"

I say, she laughs..

My phone is ringing again.

Its a videa call, Nangamso

I answer and be met with an entire family, including Ndalo

"morning Family" I greet happily and they do the same. Nangamso and Ndalo keep on arguing, baba and Pretty just don't even bother with thier arguing

"Are you sure you are fine there? We miss you this side" baba says.

I can't help but fee warm inside

"I miss you too. I'm doing fine, I promise"

"You should visit, atleast for a weekend sis, maybe you might still find me you know."

Thats Ndalo, pushing Nangamso away.. She screams I think she just fell..

"Damn it Ndalo"

She hisses and appear again on the screen cursing at Ndalo who apparently was expelled because of a fight...

During the Jacky came to take me and we

attended an outdoor Art Show in Botanic Gardens.

I never realised how rich African art is. Never even bothered to look closely actually.. It's my first time being exposed to such variety of beauty

It's soul soothing to watch. It's as if we are all bleeding from the same wound, blending in the same circle while finding comfort in each other.

There's that unity and some spirit of belonging.

Everyone is draped in a warm, loving smile.

The sun is all out and about making this day even more beautiful..

The amazing smell of flowers just makes this day even better..

I'm wearing a black gathered sleeve fold pleated

front shirt dress, black stiletto healed ankle strap and carrying a minimalist square Bag

The dress end above my knees, showing off my brown skinned legs and thighs..

One thing about me, I love short dresses..

I love showing off my skin, that's where my confidence lies.

I'm not doing it for people or attention, I'm doing it for me. It makes me feel good about my body.

I thought I'd be a little off since I've gained but damn, I'm in love with my new added flash.

Jacky excelled with my make up, thanks to Khanya's 26 Inches Peruvian Straight weave, I'm in some Bonang Matheba beauty today..

I'm a bevy of beauty..

Teekay has been blabbering in these countless people passing by, showing of his work.

He is good, he can paint too. I had no idea, I just thought he was into photography only..

My eyes land on my very own art.. The picture of me looking so artistic.. I'm glad my face isn't recognizable. I'm facing down but my heart is thundering as the number of people salivate over my black and white picture

"You are damn hot! By sun down your pictures will be gone" Teekay whispers in my ear...

" Pictures?" I've only seen one

" Look Around" There are four in total..

They are all just different and adorned in range of beauty

"thank you for this Funeka. It really means a lot to me. After this event you and I will have a real

talk" He says, staring at his work with a proud smile

I'd be proud too, he is way too good.

I'm back to the same question, what is my talent exactly? Beside my love for money..

"As long as that talk include some finances then I'm game" he laughs

Jacky is lost somewhere around.

I stare at myself thinking how far I've come.

I'm just realising how ungrateful I have been. As shitty as my life has been, I still have one undeniable blessing..

Life!

I'm still breathing, I'm trying so hard to reach my dreams. I have a very supportive family that love me. I have an educational qualification, I'm smart, I'm beautiful. I'm my very own inspiration

Maybe Khanya was right about something, I do need to see Zabelo and clear my heart. For real, I deserve inner peace.

"ahem, MaFuze"

One day this voice will make my heart stop beating. Damn it, I feel my knees weakening..

I swear he just goes out and sniff the air and realize where I am. He can't just resurface everywhere I am.

"HI" I say, clutching my bag and trying so hard to control the anger.. Zabelo is just... A ball of confusion for me..

He makes me angry, sad, taken, sympathetic with the whole of other crappy feelings I can't explain

His presence is so loud yet he is just so quiet. I

can literally feel his stare digging a hole on my skin

I fix my necklace then hold my pearls in my ear with my left hand.

I can't help these mixed feelings worsening with each passing second.

"I never thought I'd see you in such events. I didn't know you were into arts" I break the ice, without sparing him a glare. I actually wanted to ask why he is following me but..

"There is a lot you don't know about me MaFuze"

Behind the statement I sense sadness

I look at him finally, he cleaned up pretty good even though his eyes are darker than normal. There are fresh cuts on his face..

He combed his hair and a beard

He is into black neck blazer and tailored pants with white tee underneath hugging his upper body delicately. Jonathan D White Scout Loafer rest so perfectly on his feet

The man is a panty dropper and I hate to admit it

I snap it out of my embarrassing moment and meet his gaze. He looks at me in a rather warm way and smile

I know Zabelo, that smile is completely different than the one I know. He would actually be showing me that cunning smile of his

"You are gorgeous MaFuze"

My heart shift its normal rhythm..

"Let me leave, my date is waiting for me" I say and leave him with a hanging mouth. I grab the first male I see and move away...

may he burn like I did..

My feet are sore as the sun is swallowed deep in the horizon. I've taken and posted many pictures..

I'm slaying and people must know!

Zabelo vanished into thin air, after our encounter I never saw him again..

Not that I was searching for him.

My pictures were all sold! Am I not lucky..

Just as I arrive Khanya is on the coach, channel hoping.

"Finally, for a moment I thought you've thrown yourself in front of a moving car. I'm searching for news headlines as it is.."

I laugh and join her, throwing my exhausted

body

And sigh

"I'm guessing we no longer going out..."

Oh! There was that?

"I'm sleepy" my eyelids are so heavy as I shut my eyes..

"How was the Art Show? I would have been there too if I wasn't working."

I mumble a tiny response..

My mind takes me back to Zabelo's image..

I wonder how he is doing.

A RAY OF SUNSHINE

°°FORTY°°

The weekend flew quicker than any other weekends I've ever had. Maybe because I had nerves crippling my mind and soul.

I couldn't even spend a minute without thinking about my interview.

I practised until my mind just couldn't take it

But I'm hoping it was worth it as I head out of the Liana Larson Private Practice after my second chance interview..

I had nerves when the interview started but as it went on I regained my composure. This is the First interview I'm proud of. Even if I don't get the job, I know that I did my best.

They said they will give me a call after five days, I guess there are others as well who were also given second chances.. I'm not sure

I'm about to request when a car stops before me, a window rolls down and his face greets me.

This man is popping up everywhere I am

"Zabelo, are you following me?"

I ask, a bit annoyed. He seems to know my every move..

"Yes and I won't stop following you until you give me a chance to talk to you"

I roll my eyes and get in the car

Might as well deal with this once and for all

The moment I walk inside his apartment my chest suffocates..there is a very strong smell of weed. The lounge is untidy, I can spot a kitchen from where I am.

His phone rings as I still look around in awe

"Zabelo Magwaza speaking.. Yes.. Now? I can't..

Oh okay then I'll be there.. It's okay I can make it" I'm just standing before him as he speaks

When the call drops he looks at me sadly..

"You can go.." I quickly say

"I'm sorry Mama. I promise I'll be back in less than an hour"

I nod and watch him as he walks out in a rush.

Sigh! I can't spend a minute in a beautiful dengion. I drop my bag and start cleaning

By the time I finish I've encountered at least Five empty bottles of whiskey. I've opened up the windows and let the fresh air loam around

He knows how to pick spacious and beautiful apartments. This one has a modern open plan

kitchen, leading into the lounge with a private balcony.

When I'm sure that everything is in order I charge for the bedroom.

The first one is just neat, with just a bed only.. Then an ensuite bathroom.

There is no much to be done hence I just get out

My feet freeze as I walk in the second, huge bedroom. There is no headboard, above what should be a headboard are my pictures..

They are beautifully gracing the walls, as if there were made to be there..

Some warmth visits my tummy.. This is art

..

An hour later Zabelo is still a no show.

I keep myself busy by arranging his laundry.

Something drops in one of the trousers. It's a picture of Nkosazana..

My heart bleeds for what happened, I heard but I was going through a lot myself at that time. She was just a bubble child with a contagious smile.

Pity the world snatched her before we could see her blossoming into something beautiful

I hear the door opening, in a second he walks inside the bedroom.

Its like we are strangers, I don't know how to put it. But we are not the same as before. I can feel it

"I'm sorry for taking too long" he says, moving towards me slowly, his gaze piercing through

me.

My heart is suddenly beating hysterically on my chest , my insides are turning due to all these emotions engulfing me all at once..

He takes these things in my hands and put them to bed then comes to me again..

Now I'm just a robot

"I've miss you MaFuze" he gently utters..

"I'm not here for you to tell me that. Let's talk" I protest as wobbly as I am

His body pressed against mine and I feel his hand encircling my waist bringing me close and the hold tightens ..

My head is telling me to push him, kick his balls and all that but.. My heart is pumping hard and melted

His chest is as warm as I remember. I involuntarily lay my head, my eyes shutting. His

mouth is on my neck, Tingles ripped my body,
my blood rushing harder than normal...

His embrace feels like a safe sanctuary

A RAY OF SUNSHINE

°°FORTY ONE°°

Like that, we stay.

Savouring each other's embrace as I hook my
arms around him.

"Envisioning a future without you is like praying
for perennial river in a desert of time Funeka
Ngcobo..."

His husky deep tone whispers as we hold each
other..

"Ngyakthanda MaFuze, I need you. My life is
just.. meaningless without you" the voice is

changing, becoming shaky

His entire body suddenly stiffens

"Zabelo"

My skin prickles as something drops on my back sailing down my spine.. Something warm and watery..

I'm still clueless of what's going on when his breath quickens, a trembling breath leaves his mouth..

I'm drenching a little fast on my back and that alone has my heart completely thundering .

"Magwaza. What's going on?" Now he is squeezing the life out of me

I hear his soft hiccups

His trembling breath

Zabelo is silently crying and I have no idea what to do..

I try to push him so I can look in his eyes but he doesn't let go..

"Zabelo, you are scaring me. What's going on?" my lowered tone asks, nearly in tears myself.

After what feels like eternity he let me go and is quick to sit on the bed, his feet on the ground.

His head hangs low, his hands covering his face. I can not see his face.

I'm still on the same spot, just immobile

This man has been strong and undefeatable since I met him. Not even once did I see him break down.. That alone scares me

New energy dances in the air as we sink into the piercing silence. His breathing is back to normal yet he is still facing the ground.

Hands move from the face and he looks up

His eyes red, his face saddened

"I'm so sorry for everything I have done. To you, to our unborn child. I'm sincerely sorry I wasn't there when you needed me the most. I wasn't there to hold your hand and rest your head in my chest, brush the pain away. I'm sorry It took this long to apologise.."

I sigh and just sink on the fluffy carpet.

I'm okay here

"You hurt me, Zabelo and I don't know if I'll ever recover from that pain."

"You kissed your ex."

I say, absent-minded

"I'd love to explain that she kissed me and you just happened to walk in on that. However it is also my fault. I was hurting, so was she but I should have drawn a line. I should have come to you, cried on your shoulder and you on mine. At the time I had no idea of what happened to you. I just didn't want to consume you in my pain. I was wrong MaFuze ngcel uxolo"

Silence

"I cried for our child, I still do, you know. I'm angry at you for ditching me at my worst. You made me fall for you, rely on you and when I needed you the most you bailed"

"No amount of sorries will ever be enough I know. All I ask is a second chance to rewrite my wrongs. To shower you with love that you deserve"

He rises from the bed and comes to me.

I stand up too

"I know it is too soon or maybe I may come off as pushy but I'm not. I just need you to answer one question for me. Will you forgive me?"

I stare at him and he glares at me too

"When someone apologises deep in your heart you always know that you will forgive or not. I just need you to dig up that part and let me know so that I can start living my lonely life knowing that I've lost my reason for being"

His eyes hold that hope

I have no words for him. None whatsoever

My skin give birth to goosebumps as the gap
closes between us

I look down

His diplomatic presence too much for me

I feel his fingers stroking my chin and he makes
me look at him

my heart is lurking in mixed emotions

"Tell me to stop if you don't want us. I will listen
and go away if you want me to. I just need you
to tell me"

He whimpers, his breath tickling my nose

"I also need you to know that I want to kiss
you, and I'm going to kiss you now. If you don't

stop me then it means I'm still living in your heart, it means you and I still stand a chance. Please MaFuze, stop me if you don't want us anymore..."

A knee jerk reaction attacks me at his lips resting on mine, my heart beat is drumming.

My brain and heart seems to lose the battle as he slowly parts my lips giving me a deep, lingering kiss...

It's monday afternoon

I just spoke to my mom. She is back to Johannesburg, Ncane came to see her apparently yesterday and took her.

She is only telling me now..

This woman!

An hour later Khanya walks in.

I'm just going through a crazy marathon of thoughts

I'm just... Confused..

My heart can be clouded by anger

But that kiss changed everything.

I don't know if I'm doing the right thing..

I just told him to take me back after that kiss and he did..

There is still a long way to go..

I'm not sure if either of us is ready..

A mini skirt for the weekend..

I'll try for a bonus-nyana at least tomorrow

Ey I'm sleepy mina 😭

A RAY OF SUNSHINE

°°FORTY TWO°°

Funeka

The food I cooked smells nice, Khanya is on her second plate but I am not even close to finishing my first one.

She's blabbering about Taxi drivers who are good and can even make good husbands too.

I'm listening but my mind is far away, I haven't even opened my mouth to throw in my million dollar opinion. I don't comment even when she

talks about Taxi Driver's mental health. She's saying something about creating her own organisation that can work with the Taxi Associations to provide mental awareness..

"It can work right?" she asks, I don't get the sudden fuss of her with the taxi drivers.. For all I know those people are rude, cold hearted killers with a stinking attitude.

My cell phone beeps. He just deposited some money into my account.

I know he loves me but...Mandisa is in Joburg, if he goes back to Johannesburg then they restart the relationship. What will become of me..

"FUNKEKA!!"

I quickly shut my ears with my hands..

"Jesus, are you trying to destroy my sense of hearing?"

She looks at me, bored

"I'm talking to you and you are in your own world. What's wrong with you today? You've been so out of it since I came back from work"

Where do I begin

"Zabelo and I talked" I say

She smiles and hit my shoulder playfully

"I'm glad you've finally decided to close that chapter of your life. I'm proud of you, now you can focus on healing and finding a new dick to ride.. I can hook you up with someone"

She thinks I broke things off

"erh.. Khanya we.."

"I know you love him. I know that's why you are so down. Did you get the closure you needed

though, after the talk. Were you fine?"

She's looking at me as she asks, she's a concerned friend. Her face says it all

"I guess I did. I feel a bit better"

"Great! It's a start. You won't feel completely fine in a day but as time goes by you will be fine. So you need to move on now and forget about his cheating ass..."

"WE KISSED!"

I blurt out

She blinks, frown and says nothing

"I knew it! I knew it was too soon. I should have waited. I should have never forgiven him.. Oh God, what have I done?"

I'm now pacing up and down, I'm just so confused and it is so annoying

"Seat down Funeka you are making me dizzy!"
she sternly says.

I take a seat and hold my head in distress

"Is this what you want? To get back with him?"

She asks calmly. I thought she's going to judge
me

Hell I'm judging myself for this

"Not so long ago I wanted to kill him. I wanted
to pour boiling water on him, I wanted to have
him arrested. I threw things at him, I WAS
ANGRY. MAYBE I STILL AM!"

I'm breathless, feeling mixed emotions I can't
even describe.. What's wrong with me

She brushes my chin, calming me down and it is
working.

" calm down Funeka. Being angry is normal and understandable. Zabelo hurt you and you had to act out"

She doesn't get it

"I'm confused. He confuses me. He looked into my eyes, touched me and kissed me. He told me to stop him and he would leave but I stood there like a chicken and kissed him back.. My heart felt so alive and.."

A heavy sigh escapes me

"You love him."she says

"I'm not sure forgiving him is what I should have done. Let alone getting back with him. I don't trust him anymore.."

I confess

"yet everything in your body screams his name. The way I see it you are already in too deep.

Even if I say let him go you won't.. So work on the trust issue with him. The man drove from Johannesburg, received all the blows you threw at him and damn he looked miserable. I doubt he would want to destroy you again... "

"I lose myself when I'm with him"

I softly say, the kiss we had just playing in my head like a movie

"I know he loses himself too when he is with you and that's okay because you will find yourselves in each other's amrs.

Let go of the past if you want him or else just let him be. This time it will be you who will destroy the relationship. So don't go in if you are confused.."

Tjo..

"He bought all my pictures at that Art event."

I say

"He was there and he bought them all. Instead of a headboard, he decided to install them. All four of them. I don't know when or how he did that so quickly but he did.."

"Okay, that's.. scary and maybe sweet.."

God, please intervene

I couldn't sleep well, wrecking my brain about my situation with Zabelo.

Khanya has left for work. I need to meet with Jacky and Teekay as well today.

I take off my pyjamas and get ready to bath

I'm about to shower when the knock at the door disrupts me.

I put the towel around me and head to the door

"MaFuze"

He is back to wearing his shots

He looks at me with that one look that only he
can pull off

"Zabelo. Hi"

He slowly moves in, I move back and he doesn't
stop instead he grabs me by my waists and I
bump on his chest and I gasp

His hands caress my cheeks gently awakening
every inch of feelings I thought I buried

I'm breathing heavily as he stares at me so
closely..

There is something about him, something that
draws me in..

"Are you running away from me MaFuze?" he
asks in a whisper, his knee weakling gaze
drilling me up

My heart is racing. I can literally feel his breath on me

"I.. I'm not" I didn't expect to see him at the door so early in the morning. I know we kind of patched things up but I'm still.. Confused I guess

his other hand start drawing circles on my bare back sending me nothing but goosebumps

"I love you" he says and kisses me

butterflies instantly overtake my tummy as he drives me in a deep, slow kiss.

His hand slides down to my thighs and moves up to my sacred place. I'm about to protest when he gently starts rubbing my clit, a soft moan escapes me as I quiver in pleasure until I reach a happy place gapping.

I gasp, feeling my clit jumping as he licks his

wet fingers.. God!

My towel is taken off

I'm now totally naked...

"Spread your legs"... What..

"Ahem.. Zab.."

"I'm not doing anything. Just spread your legs"
he boldly says.

I spread them apart and he start wiping me
slowly... an

He hands me the towel without trying anything
funny.. The Zabelo I knew would have thrown
me on the floor and made love to me.. Maybe
Mandisa slept with him and I'm not attractive
any more

"cover up. I got you something" he says as If he
didn't just do something so erotic..

I head back and wear comfortable clothes

He holds my hand and we head out. Zabelo is just so irresistible.. I can't resist his touch no matter how angry I am

We reach the parking lot and he hands me a black bag.

"its a laptop bag" I say, confused

"Yes, inside is a laptop."

Wait..

"You are giving me a laptop?"

"You are going to need it when you start working my love. You won't be sure if you'll be using a desktop, it's better to have your own PC so you'll be able to work even after hours if you feel like it"

Wow... I never saw this coming.

"But I'm not hired yet"

I tell him

He cups both my cheeks and look in my eyes

"They will be unlucky if they don't hire you.

Either way, the world is big. There are still many opportunities coming your way. You will make a great Social worker in one of the biggest organisations because you are amazing, beautiful and smart and I'm lucky to have you in my life. I promise not to destroy us again. I am deeply sorry for every single pain I caused you MaFuze. I truly am"

My heart dances

"You don't have to apologise every time we together Zabelo"

I say

"Yes I have to. And I will do so until that spark I always saw in your eyes returns, until the doubt in your heart vanishes. For as long as I breath I owe you an apology MaFuze"

Tears stings my eyes...it's like he can read my doubts

He plants a long wet kiss in my forehead

"You are still the most beautiful woman I've ever laid my eyes on.

"Now go back, take a bath and wear something sexy. I'm taking you out on a date."

He is on a mission to make me lose my mind and it is working. We've never been on a date with this guy

I'm trying so hard to stop the blush spreading across my lips

A RAY OF SUNSHINE

FORTY THREE

I've never really wondered how it's like to go on a date with the man you love. Yes it's general knowledge that couples take each other on beautiful dates but it never worried me that I never took part in that.

Zabelo loved me too much to even focus on things he didn't do for me. He still loves me now
His eyes say it all.

We are seated opposite each other, however his eyes are just glued onto me.

I can't stop smiling

His hands keep on brushing mine.

"I'm not a magician Zabelo. I'm not going to

vanish into thin air"

I tell him, he smiles shortly and plants a soft wet kiss on my hand.

My bloody heart warms up

This is a cosy restaurant, it's not a busy one. Our table is at the corner, the lights are dimmed and the soft music is playing.

Butterflies keep on attacking my tummy as I look around my surroundings.

He combed his hair, he looks handsome but I love him more with a neat haircut.

"You are the light in this dark room, you are beautiful"

I've lost count of the compliments he's been showering me with.

As always my lips spread across my face

"It's dimmed light, not dark. Outside its very much sunny Zabelo"

My voice is so soft as if it isn't even mine

"I love you"

Just as I'm still thrown in my world the waiter arrives with our mouth watering food

And I waste no time to dig in

Zabelo is happy, he is happy that I'm with him but there is something else going on with him.

While we were busy with our date a couple walked in with a baby girl, maybe 4 or 5 years of age. His face changed completely I could feel the solemn from him.

I asked for take aways and I told him it was time for us to go. He didn't protest,

A sad song that I don't even know is playing as we navigate through the Durban Traffic.

He is driving, but after every second he glances at me. His other hand is glued on mine, his hold keeps on tightening and I can't even say anything. I just let him hold me. Maybe he will realise that I am here.

We were really having a great time until that couple walked in. For a moment I thought I'd seal a date with a kiss but not today I guess

"What's wrong Zabolo?"

I end up asking him

"What makes you think something is going on?"

So he is just going to be like this.

"You changed since we saw that couple with a child, Zabelo. Why is that?"

Jaws are clenching but he remain quite

"Is it because you miss Nkosazana? "

"Let's not talk about this now."

I want to ask more but it is what he wants.

Reaching his apartment I put the takeaways on the fridge and get inside the shower. When I come out he is nowhere in sight. The doors are locked..

I don't like how he just locked me in, what if I wanted to leave

I take my phone and watch the sad multifandom on YouTube..

When I feel tired I head to the bed and take a nap

It's dark outside and inside the room as I wake up. Not completely dark because there outside lights illuminating inside.

I take my phone and find it is after Eight, I've slept that long!

I stretch my body and get off the bed.

I find him seated on the ground, in the lounge.

The lights are off.

"When did you get....

**This is the incomplete chapter I was typing..

My cable the one I just bought a month ago has broken, again. I'm at the verge of crying rn.. I was ready to type a full long chapter. But I guess it is not happening. I'll have to buy

another one again tomorrow...

Where can I buy a cable that won't give me issues, I've been buying at pep but they always disappoint...

I'm so so sorry for this.

I love you guys and I thought I'd deliver today but I guess I was wrong..

I'm gonna make some changes when I've charged tomorrow

A RAY OF SUNSHINE

FORTY THREE CONTINUATION

"When did you get back?"

I stand next to him, glaring down.

Alcohol hit my nostrils

"I'm not sure, I love you swiladi. My heart"

He is drunk!

His voice says it all.

I'm thrown in shock for a second, I've never seen him drunk.

I switch the light on and..

He is still drinking.

His face looks up and he stares at me walking back to him. His eyes are just dull

I grab the coffee table and seat on it before him

"My heart will go on and on. Tututuuuu...."

He is singing!

Is this even real?

Yeah it is

"Zabelo give me that bottle. You can't be drinking at this time of the night"

He burps and kiss the bottle

"In 35 years of my long life I've never seen such a faithful friend. You are so faithful, you give me comfort when no one else can. You don't judge me or betray me, you love me as wounded as I am. You never abandon me like my own mother.."

He burps and laughs softly..

I have a bad feeling about this whole ordeal.

He is talking to a bottle of scotch.. It is in half.

"Sometimes I even wonder who created me because it can't be God. Maybe.. Maybe.. It's Satan.. Thee Devil with horns"

He loudly says, brushing the bottle.

"Zabelo.."

I don't even know what to say

I hope he won't protest, so I gently take the bottle I half scream when he swiftly grabs me and I land on him and we both fall on the ground.. I hear the bottle shattering on the ground..

Great!

I try to get up but he grabs me and I bump on his chest. He hold me tight

The floor is utterly cold!

"Zabelo, let me go"

He is so strong as I try to wiggle away..

Sigh!

"I love you.. I love you.. I love you"

He sings these words for as long as he can.

I'm getting tired and annoyed right now

When he stops it is way too silence

"I'm in pain.."

He suddenly says and burps. His voice very low

"I've never been the lucky one. My own mother abandoned me, my father died and I lost my two children in a space of a week. TWO.."

"Zab.."

"Do you know how painful that is?"

His pained voice is cutting deep.

I look up, his eyes are glittering with tears..

OH God!

"It is not enough that God took the only parent I have, he had to take my sweet innocent bab..."

I put my hand on his face as his wobbly voice breaks..

My heart is heavy.. I feel my own tears stinging

"You will be fine, sthandwa sam. I am here"

I tell him and perk his lips

Have I been so absorbed in my own pain that I couldn't even realise that he is also suffering.

He lost two children, I've never even asked him how he really is. Never cared to even think of his feelings too. Instead I just focused on me, they say the drunk person can be very honest and sincere. He is telling me what he didn't tell me while sober.

"Please don't leave me again, I swear I will kill myself if you do.."

I hate what he is saying, I hate death but I

remain calm

"I won't"

"Thank you.. Thank you MaFuze"

"Let's go to bed. We can't sleep here, it is cold"

He let me go and I helped his heavy self to stand.

He is stumbling until we reach the bed. He throws his body and lies in a vertical position, his feet dangling on air. I try to put him in place and take off his shoes

"I love you. But I hate my mother. Can you believe that she is a liar. She is always using me for money. Please fight for me baby.. Fight her for me..."

I'm trying so hard to Ignore the mother part. I need him to be sober so we can talk about this matter.

For now I kiss his cheek and order him to sleep.

It takes a minute and he snores like crazy..

It's going to be a long night.

I woke up with a heavy heart and left Zabelo softly snoring. He has never slept this long before.

It is after Seven in the morning. I only washed my face and brushed my teeth then got bored in the kitchen making breakfast.

There are few things here and there, though it is not a full house. Eggs, vienass, fish fingers and nothing else..

I'm done, I'm busy washing the frying pan when I hear striking footsteps coming towards the kitchen..

“I’m

never letting you out of this house” his voice is too husky as he says, hugging me from behind, I don’t miss a strong hypnotising cologne of his. He has bathed?

“You smell good, Sthandwa sam” I say and turn to him. He is indeed clean and actually wearing a suit.. I fix a tie, its tradition even if there’s no fixing needed..

“thank you MaFuze, what do we have for breakfast?”

“sit down and let me take care of you”

He smiles, for a moment I drool at the glimpse of a handsome man I fell in love with.

"Are you going somewhere?" I ask, glancing shortly as I dish up our lazy breakfast and hand him his “ngiyabonga mashiyamahle" now it's my turn to smile.

"I'm trying to seal a certain deal. I'll tell you all about it when I'm sure it is happening. For now just pray for me"

I'm going to wait until he is done eating, then I'll address the big elephant.

He is done in no time and asks for another. I didn't make much so I just handed him mine. I'm not hungry

“you have a big appetite today, for someone who was drunk just yesterday”

“Everything in me is big.. like really really big.” he says, emphasises with his eyes

I'm lost for a while then it hits me..

“Zabelo, you are so dirty” he is playful today

" I'm just waiting for a certain day to tear somebody's vagina until they scream out all my clan names" what... The.. Hell

He stares at me as I feel hot and affected..

"You are stupid"

He is now laughing, I'm glad I still make him laugh

His phone rings in the bedroom, he walks away and I begin the dishes

When I'm done I head to the lounge and wait for him

"Come here" I say just as he returns. He sits next to me on the L shaped huge cream white sofa.

I sit on him, my legs spread on his sides.

Of course his hands quickly rest on my cheek bums, squeezing softly.

I perk his lips, circling my arms around his neck.

He quickly pulls me to him and kisses me,
deepening the kiss until I feel my body coming
to life

I'm breathless when we stop, just closely
staring at each other.

"I'm sorry Zabelo"

I tell him gently

"About what?"

"Your children that you lost"

I feel him tensing up, looking down.

"How are you?"

I ask gently

He says nothing..

"I know I've never asked how losing two parts
of you affected you. I am sincerely sorry for that.
This is me now, showing you that I care and
that I am here. I might not say it everyday but I

love you, I'll always love you. So please, share your pain with me. How are you, Zabelo Magwaza? "

"I'm getting there" he says and sigh heavily

I lie on his chest and hold him

"I can't explain the pain I'm in. But I'm in pain. That's all I know" His voice is pained as he says

"We will get through this, together"

One heavy topic at a time. We will talk about the mother after this

....

Zabelo dropped me off at the flat and I bumped into Jacky who has been crucifying me about not meeting Teekay as promised.

"I told you I was on a date with Zabelo njena."

I say as I open the door

He follows me inside

"The least you could have done is to call and let him know, I know from experience that a dick can make any sane person lose their mind, especially after two months of being sexually starved. I wouldn't survive that long wit... Ahem

Let me dash. I'll see you around"

He quickly leaves me on a confused state

How did he know about my two months' lack of sex. We've never talked to that level, we just met.

By the time I get out he is gone, that was strange.

I decide to call my mother, hearing her voice makes me sad somehow. I need to go to

Joburg since I'm still unemployed.

I'll see her for a day and then come back.

I sent a text message to Khanya letting her know.

I need to book a bus..

Zabelo and I are okay now so I can go back to Johannesburg..

After packing everything I call him and tell him about my sudden visit.

"You are taking a bus?" he asks, as if offended somehow

"Yes, it's cheaper "

" Don't insult me Funeka".. Am I missing something?

"You can't be serious right now." he adds, angry from what I'm sensing

"Why are you angry??"

"don't ask me stupid questions. Just pack everything you'll need. I'll be there in less than an hour then we can leave.."

He is telling me..

My heart is having a party with my lungs, the liver is deejaying.

But I keep my composure

"You don't have to baby" a girl can pretend not to be in need sometimes, for control

"Of Course I have to. I don't want any nigga talking to you all the way to Gauteng sharing crazy jokes with my girlfriend."

Really now

"You do realise that I talk to at least 20 men a day, 100 a week, 200 a..."

"I'll be there in a second.."

He quickly interjects then hangs up..

Seriously?

When I'm satisfied with the packing I get inside the shower. I'm in the middle of bathing when a hard knock comes through..

Who could it be?

They will have to wait, whoever they are. I'm busy

When I'm done I wrap a towel around my waist.

Heading out I almost faint!

Zabelo is seated on the bed.. In the bedroom

I know I didn't lock but really?

"You can't just budge in, this isn't my space Zabelo. Please respect Khanya's flat. "

I'm angry and he should see it

I join him and bed and glare at him waiting for an apology folding my arms across my chest

“Are you sure you can’t postpone this trip?” he asks unhappily. Seriously, I give him a bored look. This man is just crazy

“postpone to what day exactly?”

“I don’t know, postpone it to not today, or tomorrow...or the day after that, and the day after that and the one after and after to never..”

I quickly laugh when his strong hands unexpectedly tickles my tummy causing my body to fall back on the bed

I take his hands and stop him

“I'm too old for this. you gonna kill me Zabelo!”

he laughs too as I breathlessly utter

“Are you trying to kill me? ” I ask smiling looking up at his relaxed face

“How can I kill such a beautiful, gorgeous, pretty,

loving woman.” he starts tickling me again I swear this man is gonna be the death of me I kick him and I mistakenly hit his balls..

He screams in pain..

I can't help but laugh at him. He started it I'm not at fault here

"MaFuze you can kick anything but this. This is a pleasure pipe, without it you are nothing.."

He is caging me under him...

“ave umuhle kodwa MaFuze, you are beautiful”

His soft voice says. Tingles fills up my tummy

I feel his hot breath tickling my face

“I love you ..” I say.

He instantly attacks my lips with a heated kiss.

His hands are running all over my body leaving a

burning sensation

A crazy idea just came to my mind as we stopped kissing. My hands travel down to the so-called pleasure pipe.

"what are you trying to young lady? " he quickly tenses up as he realise what I'm trying to do

"ask no questions Mr Magwaza and let me do my job" I say seductively as my hands slowly start massaging, he softly groan closing his eyes

A RAY OF SUNSHINE

FORTY FOUR

FUNEKA

"FUNEI NEI!!! FUNEKA!"

A yelling, deep and ear cracking voice has my heart in terror and shock

The hell?

I wish I could drill Mongezi right now for budging in my room only to scream.

Ntsika follows and Mazisi at last

Is this an ambush?

That is exactly what woke me from a deep sleep.

We arrived around 2 O'clock at dawn in Gauteng, Ncane waited until I arrived. It's like she didn't sleep at all. Zabelo However refused to get inside, he dropped me just outside and left.

My mom was fast asleep so I headed to my room and hit the pillow... until now

They are all giving me a toothy grin.

"Hi MaNgcobo"

They chant in unison.

I'm annoyed to the core as I sit up yawning.

"Is this a gang up or what?" I half yell brushing my eyes to remove the heaviness off

"We came in peace, harmony and love dear sister" the most hypocritical brother responds.

Ntsika is holding a tray full of a mouth watering breakfast, Mazisi holding a cup of something.. Coffee maybe because it is hot.

Mongezi is holding flowers...

Really?

"Is it my birthday?"

I'm kinda thrown in a state of confusion

"Here is a panty dropping breakfast my sister, made by your only handsome brother in this house. Who loves and appreciates you. I love you sisi" His voice is laced with warmth as he gently says. He perks my forehead and gives me the tray. My stomach instantly rumbles as the tray rest on my thighs

"Nstika" I'm speechless

I can't explain the feelings but I'm in a bubble right now

Anger has long left my system

"Move along Mr 'only handsome brother' it's my chance now" Mongezi interjects while pushing Ntsika away from me.

"You are just jealous because I look like a model while you look like a serial killer, evil brother"

A quick hard slap lands on the back of his head and he cries abuse.. Jesus

It is so noisy

"This was the last month I gave you my money you ungrateful piece of shit!" that's Mongezi spitting.

"Come on my beautiful brother I was just joking. I still need your money" Ntsika begs. This is funny. I take a piece of fish finger and throw it in my mouth

"You mean my hard earned money that I got from slicing people's organs out, you know since I'm a serial killer"

"Sorry..."

"Okay! Since you two are behaving like hooligans, let me give my beautiful sister a hot Cuppa chino specifically made from my own secret recipes. Please sip on this coffee and relax, you deserve only the best sis. I love you"

He pinches my cheeks and says he can't kiss me like Ntsika did because his lips have been to unholy places.. Damn him for saying that.

coffee is put on the tray and this time a wide green rest on my face

"Thank you tle bhuti"

Am I dreaming?

"Funai nei! MaFuze ka khandakhulu" only Mongezi can call Zabelo khandakhulu.

"beautiful flowers for my beautiful sister. I missed you, I am deeply sorry for not being there for you when you were going through the most. I I should have been there, I should have broken Zabelo's Jaws. I should have held your hand when you lost my nephew. You are our sister in this family, the least we could have done was to show how appreciated and loved you are"

He hands me the flowers and holds my shoulder.

I did not expect this at all. My cheeks are burning, with the amount of smiling I might not be able to return back to my normal face

"This is me saying happy Valentine's my sister" only he can say that to me. Valentine in May!

"Fool" Ntsika mumbles and earns himself a kick on his butts.. Ntsika returns a kick

"God please stop behaving like monkeys for once!" Mazisi sternly says. They stop instantly.

"Anyway, what we are trying to say is that we need you here. We love you, we don't want you to live miles away from your family. We don't want you to be alone while we are still alive"

Mazisi adds..

Gone are the playful crazy brothers..

I'm looking at their adorable faces right now.

"Aw, I could hug you right now. Thank you, I appreciate this. I feel so good and I don't even know why Ntsika didn't capture this moment because I'd love to keep it forever..."

I should be shedding a few tears but naa. Not me. I don't cry when I'm happy

"This is the part where we say ncoo" That's Ntsika, the twins simultaneously click their tongues

"Voetsek wena!"

"Welcome back sis" they all say and head out except Ntsika who joins me in bed and eats my breakfast..

"so I met this girl.."

He take a huge bite of my half cooked egg and I quickly hit his hand

"Not my welcome home breakfast!"

"Hawu, ukhulumel ukudla Funeka.."

Why did I come here again?

The moment I step out of my bedroom It feels like I have been away from this house for more than two months. I put everything on the sink and jog to my mother's bedroom and budge in.

She is still fast asleep.

There are pills on the pedestal.

The thought of losing her flooded my mind.

It hurt, I hate to even imagine a life without this woman

"Funeka" she says in a low voice.

I guess I woke her

I get in bed and greet her.

It is showing on her face that she's not well, but her wide smile makes me forget the awful feelings and focus on this moment.

I'm too gullible sometimes, I should have just sat at home instead of looking for a job. Even though she doesn't like the idea of leaving me jobless but being here now reminds me that some day I'll have a job but not her. She won't be around for long so I might as well capture each moment with my mom

"You are fighting your own thoughts. What's bothering you Fuze ka mama?"

She's looking closely in my eyes

"Will I be wrong if I stop looking for a job and look after you myself. I mean it's not like I'm struggling and stuff. I can still take care of us, I can even ask for my job back so I can just spend my time here, with you and sleep by your

side. Always"

She smiles, revealing her beautiful set of teeth

"You want me to believe that you will not run to that boy's house some days and come back in the morning.."

What!

"Mama! I haven't spoken to Zabelo in ages"

Of course I'm going to lie. He is not on good books in my mom's heart. I cried until I told her what he did and that was the last nail. She never liked Zabelo to begin with

"I don't believe you. Anyway I don't want you stopping your life to look after me. The main reason for me to bring you here was for you to find a job. Instead you found a man who broke

you, made you lose your child and left you for another woman"

Jesus intervene. Is she sick even on the brain?

"Where did you come up with such a strange idea? I didn't miscarry because of Zabelo, I drank too much and lost the baby I had no idea I was carrying. And Zabelo did not leave me, Mandisa was just throwing herself at him and he loves me"

She looks at me for a good minute, disapproving of my comment. Then she sits up straight and I do the same.

"You were pregnant, that was wrong to begin with. You left here broken because of that man. You didn't want to ever return here because this place reminded you of the horrible things he brought into your life. The way I see it, you lost your way the moment you allowed that man into

your life and the only reason you are here is because you fixed things with him. I'm pretty sure he drove you here"

I sigh heavily

"Zabelo is not that bad mama. He is a good man and he loves me. It just that he has lost so much and have little support system. Do you know that his mother doesn't support or show him love" I'm rooting for my man here

"Don't tell me stupid things Funeka. That man is a hurricane that brings terror and disaster , as long as you are with him nothing will go right in your life. You will always have breakdowns and heartbreak. I'm sad that one day I won't be here to whip you back to your senses.."

That's it. I rest my case

She is hurting my feelings right now. I didn't come here for this

"The Bible says thou shall give son in law a chance for he is a gift from God" she cracks up and her sound of laughter fills up my ears

"Care to tell me which verse is that?"

"Jeremiah 30 verse 21. It goes on and reads, thau shall forgive and forget about the past"

She is still finding me funny

I should consider being a Comedian. I'm doing a great job

She is breathless as she stops laughing

"Take my Bible over there so I can teach you real verses, not these faked one suiting your own agenda"

I get up and grab the Bible and goes back to my spot

"This Bible will be yours one day, you should familiarise yourself with it"

There you have it Funeka. Your legacy, what a life I'm living.

During the day bab Ngcobo instructed mom and I to head outside and we found a whole setup in the garden. It's like a mini picnic

Difference is there is a huge bowl of fruit salad

Red wine

Fruit juice for my mom and not me.. Nope

There are salted caramel cupcakes and a carrot cake.

My mouth instantly waters

I'm surprised to see Nangamso and Pretty, and my father at the same table. I greet and hug

them then we begin the amazing picnic.

KFC wings are here as well, and a full bucket of KFC pieces.

I was enjoying this until I asked for wine. Now everyone is giving me a strange eye..

I'm above 18!

Anyway I'm glad I was welcomed so warmly, clearly I was missed here.

After the beautiful day I stay on my phone. Zabelo hasn't called me back. When I returned from outside I found about Seven of his missed calls. Let me just call the man instead.

His phone drives me straight to voicemail.

My heart completely shuts down

I miss him now.. I didn't focus on him because I was busy but now that I'm alone. I want to see him badly.

There's this heaviness seating on my chest, the longing desire to see him just itches every part of me. I try him again.. And again and...

Aarh!

Damn it!

My heart is aching and my mind is just thinking of him way too much.

Oh kill me Baba osezulwini, God knew I'd be like this yet he still allowed my path to cross with Zabelo. Now I'm shaking with insecurities.

What if he is with Mandisa..

That alone has me requesting an Uber to his apartment right away..

I tell my mom I'm seeing a friend. She gives me a long stern and says nothing..

Sigh!

A while later the lift pings open and I find his apartment locked. Tears instantly stings my eyes.

I try him one more time and still.. Voicemail..

I still remember where his house his. He said he finished the house because of me

I guess that makes it my house too.

I request again. He might be there..

I'm definitely not going to the club, last time I ambushed him like that things went south.

If I don't find him in that house then I'm going to ask for Mandisa's address. He might be there.

The Uber drops me outside the gate.

It's not locked, which is a good but strange thing. I don't even know why I came here, what

if I bumped into a locked gate.

God knows how many orgasms he has given her.

I only gave him a blow and he didn't even initiate sex.

My head is in turmoil as I invite myself in. I don't even have time to admire the house. I quickly head upstairs. With each heavy step I feel like my lungs are clutched, I'm suffocating and sweaty at the same time.

The door is tightly open.

"Aw.. Mandisa. You are soo good.."

My whole world comes crushing down..

My armpits are burning up and I can't bring myself to open the door...

Wave of emotions attacks me..

He wouldn't.. Would he?

I'm here, frozen and salty sensation gracing my horrible face until the door opens widely and I hear a loud gasp.

"OH God!!.. Uhm it's not what you think sis Funeka.."

Wait, I'm the sister.. What a downgrade

"Oh please, it's exactly what she thinks. It was nice having sex with you Thami."

Okay this voice it too tiny to be Zabelo's

I wipe my tears and get the anger of my life instead of relief..

"Hey Funeka. Bye Funeka" she says and smile walking away after giving me a sly smile

"Who are you?" I've never seen this face in my

life. I'm more focused on this yellow bone
skinny, very tall boy before me.

"I'm Thami. Zabelo's brother. He hasn't been
here in a while."

This doesn't make sense. And doesn't give him
the right to do this horrible unspeakable act.

I head downstairs with my spinning head and
gulp the water I find in the fridge.

I'm breathless.. I cried for nothing!

After what feels like forever he reaches the
kitchen.

"I am really sorry, please don't tell my brother. It
was a mistake sis Funeka." I'm even surprised
he knows me.

Zabelo has a brother that I've never heard of, he
brought him into what should have been our
house and he slept with his ex, not just any ex.

Mandisa! They had sex in the same bed Zabelo and I shared our intimate, first time moment.

I'm gonna die

Yaze yayinun engafi nay ntombazane

"Do you realise that you slept with your brother's ex,his baby mama, on our bed?"

My voice is low as I question him

He licks his lips. He is a cheesy boy with no manners. He is still in boxers and stinks!

His phone rings in his hand and he hand it to me

I frown but he puts it in my ear.

I feel like a penguin compared to his height

"Hello, are you there ngane yam?" It's the voice of a woman.

"Hi" I reluctantly reply

"This is Zabelo's mother. Don't tell him what Thami did. He will be angry and throw us out. We still need him, I'm unemployed and Thami is doing his driver's licence that Zabelo pays for. Please my child, I'm still trying to fix things between us, this will ruin my chances"

How... why?and...

"Okay" that's all I can say.

I'm gobsmacked.

She thanks and say she will be here soon

"How Many are you here? How long have you been living here?"

I ask the tall one

He look young, maybe Nstika's age

Why is Mandisa sleeping with Zabelo's younger brother

"just the four of us, my mom and two sisters.
It's been a month and a few days since we
arrived here"

Wow..

I request an Uber again!

This time I don't even know how to feel.

I know him and I just got back together but he
should have given me the heads up. He should
have told me about his family, about his mother
that I still fail to understand her situation with
him

"wait. Mom might want to see you. Don't go just
yet.."he says as I head out

I turn and ask

" Who invited Mandisa here? "

" My mother did. She lost a child and she
wanted to comfort her."

I'm not going to like this woman

"And you saw it fit to sleep with her. A woman 10 years older than you.. "

He chuckles

" She was struggling and I was trying to support her. And please don't talk about age, you look like my brother's little sister"

My God.. This is the hurricane my mother talked about

"I'm going to tell your brother what you did"

I leave his rude ass looking spooked.

By the time I reached home my phone was completely off.. I'm in no mood to talk.

My mother's bedroom was locked so I just headed in my bedroom and threw my heavy body on the bed..

I took a one minute shower and slept naked.. I haven't unpacked and I had no energy to page through my suitcase looking for pyjamas.

I'm in deep sleep when I feel a soft pat on me. I thought I was dreaming until he calls me MaFuze.

Mxm!

I open my eyes and sit up, folding my amrs.

"wear something comfortable. We are leaving"

Now he is making things worse

"I'm not your wife Zabelo. And please respect this house. You can't just budge in as you please"

I'm shouting so slowly. Everything in me wants to scream but I can't do that

"Just wear something or I'll carry you without warning"

Duuu

"I'll scream if you do that. I'm not your puppet Zabelo you can't just ignore me the whole day and come here unannounced barking out orders.."

The lights are on so I can clearly see his stone-cold face being replaced with anger

"Am I dog Funeka?"

Oh Jesu Nkosi

"Just leave. I'm not going anywhere with you"

I turn and lie on my side back facing him.

I'm feeling sleepiness slowly revisiting until I feel my body floating on air..

What the actual f*ck

He is carrying me on his shoulders like I'm some sack of mealies stolen from the neighbours garden.

Of course I won't scream, I'll cause more havoc and it hasn't even been a full 24 hours since I returned..

What an intense drive..

When we park outside he actually remembers that I'm naked and hands me his t-shirt after taking it off.

I can't handle this man, I can't.

We step inside his apartment

"You didn't tell me your family lives in our house. You didn't tell me about your family to begin with, Zabelo! You know everything about me yet I don't even know a single thing about you and your family"

I'm screaming, he hates it but I don't care

"I called you seven times. Seven times and you didn't pick up. I wanted us to meet so I can tell you but clearly you were too busy to even talk to me"

"Ah mxm" it's too late. He heard me.

I need to pee if I am to face this man after what I just did.

I turn and walk away before he even grill me further.

I pee and wipe myself, wash my hands then splash my face with water.

I feel a warm body pressing behind me..

A heavy breathing on my ear..

I feel cold air rushing through my veins when his dangling member makes contact with my skin..

This isn't how I pictured our first time after reuniting

I stare at him in the mirror and quickly look away. His eyes gives me cold shivers.

I close the tap and try to move but he completely blocked me from even moving at all

He is pushing me down and my forehead land on the mirror

His knee spreads my legs apart.. Oh... No

I gasp softly

I'm exposed.. The shirt has gone up

One finger start rubbing my clit and I moan inwardly biting my lip

I'm getting wet..

He stops and roughly plays with my titties.. ..

I feel his thing pressing hard on my clit and this

time I fail to hold it in..

The hand sink is slippery and it's getting hard to balance here. How do they do this so easy in movies

"Aaah!.." he is all in. He just thrust in without warning and I feel my body coming to life..

My legs are weakening as he gives me deep, fast strokes. I am a qualifying candidate for an opera music audition with the way I'm screaming.

He pulls out and drags me out of the bathroom. I'm thinking I'm heading to bed only to be pushed down on the ground, chest flatly down, my ass all out..

One finger is pushed inside and I moan

He pushes in again and I gasp, holding the fluffy carpet tight..

"Za... aa.." my voice sounds so pressed and faint as I cry out feeling paralysed in unspeakable pleasure stabbing the spots only reserved for him. He is too deep inside and I can't hold on like this..

He moves faster, rougher.. With each stroke my senses fly out the windows. His groans are fueling me.

He can do this position himself. I slumber on the floor on my stomach and cry even more as my aroused clit hits the ground..

I'm deeply aroused and I can't help but feel every part of me being squeezed

He doesn't let go, he is still giving me deep strokes.. I find myself apologising as my muscles tighten, squeezing harder and deeper he goes..

"oh...my hurricane" I whimper as an explosive orgasm hit me...

He is not going to let me go...

A RAY OF SUNSHINE

FORTY FIVE

FUNEKA

My hands are clutching on his shoulders, a throaty moan leaves my mouth as he slowly positions himself inside me.

He is in fully, not moving and I feel like screaming

"Zab... please" His name is always too long when I'm under his sexual spell

My back arches but he presses hard and I loudly moan

"MaFuze look at me" he commands deeply, encircling his hand around me as if carrying a

few hours old infant. My head is resting on his strong arm

"Please don't close your eyes"

His voice is laced in gentleness as he says.

Deep, measured full thrust begins tormenting me hitting every corner.

I am a screamer but this moment just tucked my voice in between my lungs

I'm softly crying in pleasure, my mouth gaping, his face veined as he softly groans

Our eyes glued

He has me completely under his control.

He promised to be gentle and he is way too gentle, giving me full, slower thrust as if I'm going to faint. Each stroke grips me deep within and leave me paralyzed

"Za.. bel" it's a faint cry as the most intense emotions drives us in the world of our own

My hips keep rising to meet his deep, slow and torturing thrusts.

I literally hear the slippery sound our organs are making

Today he is making love to me, the connection is thick and deep as we sink deep in the world of ecstasy, mourning in pleasure.

His pace suddenly quickens and a loud unexpected moan leaves my mouth

I feel it building in every inch of my body, squeezing all of me.

Eyes roll back, my toes curling as I let out yet another loud moan exploding and trembling beneath him.

I feel him tightening and groaning on top of me..

We stay in this position, breathless and sweaty
A fallen soldier is still buried in me.

He slowly looks at me and our lips meet
and we get lost in the hot steamy kiss that has
both of us wheezing.

We stop and I put my hands on his face and
stare at him

"I love you too Magwaza" I tell him and my heart
just float in joy and happiness

He smiles, this time his eyes sparkle and I know
I just made him happy

"I'm sorry about yesterday, I was a bit rough" he
says, brushing my face. I'm still beneath him,
and he hasn't pulled out

"A bit?" I ask, my voice frail

"Okay, maybe not a bit" he laughs softly and I join him

"Please pull out. I'm exhausted" he laughs, then pulls out. He wipes me clean after taking the first thing his hands find, It is his boxer.. Ew Zabelo though

I'm laying on his chest listening his heartbeat
It's morning already. And time to address the huge elephant

"my mother never wanted me."

He starts, my heart begin racing

"There is no hard story behind, she just looked at the setback I might be in her life and decided to drop me on my father's doorstep, that's what my father said. When my father was killed Ngcobo took me under his wing, but Nstika's mother came along the way and mothered me,

Mongezi and Mazisi. She's the closest thing I have to a mother. "

I listen attentively and says no words.

"When I was old enough Ngcobo took me to her and introduced me, her words were 'wow you have grown. I thought you'd never make it without that father of yours'"

He chuckles, there is evident pain in his voice

"She knew my father died but she never came to check on me. As if that wasn't enough she told me to live my life the way I see fit, she's not going to be part of it. She has her own family. Because I was desperate for her love I kept in contact with her and her other children. I'll call and ask to speak to her children and she wouldn't mind. Even when she asks for huge amount or money I give her because at least I get to talk to her..."

"I love her MaFuze and I so long for her to love and see me back as his son" His voice trembles and I feel my heart getting heavier

This is heartbreaking. He longs for a woman who's not willing to meet him halfway

"they came here a month ago I think, they were coming to see how I was after I... lost my child. They've never left ever since. I'm okay that they are here, I want them here. "...

This is deeper than me.

But I'm glad he told me. I hug him and tell him I love and appreciate him in my life. I promise not to leave his side. Zabelo might look like a stone cold on the outside but inside is a little boy who still longs for his mother's love.

"I think she is trying" he still has hope.

I don't trust her mother after so many years of not caring but I let it slide for now

He goes on and tell me about his siblings, Thami, Siziwe and Pearl. Thami is 22 years old while Pearl is 20 and Siziwe is 19.

His phone rings under the pillow. He takes it and answers. I feel him tensing up and wonder what's going on

He clicks his tongue, throws the phone on the bed and stands up heading to the closet..

He is busy searching for clothes I think. When he is fully dressed I charge towards him, he puts something I can't make off behind him and pushes down his hoodie.

I'm in awe.

"Zabelo. What's going on?" I ask him, splashing my nakedness in the open as I head to him

"Nx! Thami threw a party in my house! My fuckin house!"

Jesus! My blood sky rocketed instantly

"I knew that he was bad news when he had sex with Mandisa on our bed...."

It is too late to take back my words..

He is grilling me with his gaze

"I was going to tell you..."

"when?" he questions too soon and I gulp

"well, I was angry. I was going to tell you I swear.."

"We'll talk about this later. I need to teach that boy a lesson" He is heading for the door . I quickly takes a huge hoodie in his closet and put it on. I'm not staying behind.

It takes just a few minutes for us to drive inside

his house. He was speeding, I kept on praying that we don't die along the way.

The gate was wide open. I doubt they bother even closing the gate anymore because I was here yesterday and it wasn't locked either.

He parks in the middle of the yard and head out.

I follow like a puppy, running after him.

He budes in, no knocking and yeap..

Beziwa la!

Things were happening..

There are bottles everywhere, teenage girls and boys scattered around, sleeping.

He takes something from his back..

I'm still in shock when it goes of twice bursting my ears.

He had a gun! I didn't know and how did I not notice..

It takes a nanosecond for every one to rush out in speed carrying their things...

He ascends the stairs in speed and I run after him once more..

This boy is full of himself.

He is fast asleep in our bed, after such noise.

He drags him and pin him on the wall

"ah... B... BhBhut. You are here

.."

He is stammering, one hard slap has him screaming for his mother who appears on the door in speed.

"Ungjwalezo uban boy? Am I your mate?"

"NO! YOU ARE KILLING MY CHILD! PLEASE LET GO OF HIM!!"

Yeap the mother is a hypocrite..

He let him go after kicking him on the balls

I wish I had my phone with me.

As angry as he was, I had to ask that we pass by the shops so he could get me presentable clothes and a morning after... The hard gaze I got after mentioning that will be the death of me

He drops me at home, in the yard and leaves. I'm in a long dress at least

Though this is my first and last time wearing this, now I know I'll never ask Zabelo to buy clothes for me

He sucks, this dress can fit for 50's birthday parties.

Luckily the kitchen is empty, I quickly rush to my bedroom and straight in the shower.

I've started again, sneaking in and out.. Zabelo drives me crazy

After the shower I look for my mother and find her reading a Bible.

She smiles when she sees me, I breathe in relief and join her. Spending time with her is why I'm here in the first place

I'm happy

A while later I get back to my bedroom and switch my phone on. Messages flood in, one number catches my attention.

I quickly call, a woman speaking fluent English picks up and I introduce myself and say I saw the number..it's the private practice that called me for a second interview. Apparently they wanted me yesterday and they called another

candidate because I was not available...

Why didn't they call Mazisi like the last time?

I'm in tears.. What have I done?

A RAY OF SUNSHINE

*UNEDITED**

FORTY SIX

FUNEKA

I slept early yesterday, my mind was in turmoil with the news I got. It just made me hate myself for what I did. So foolsh to switch my phone off knowing fully well I was expecting an important call that would have changed my life for the better.

But waking up this morning, seeing my mother's face, I just knew that I'm in the right place.

Opportunities come and go, I'll find something else. I take the laptop Zabelo bought for me and head to my mother's room.

She's sleeping, she sleeps a lot, her life is slowly deteriorating and I don't even know what to do to make it all go away.

I sit on the chair at the corner, connect the laptop to my phone then begin applying.

This time I only do for opportunities around Johannesburg.

Applying is always draining, a while later I head to the kitchen and make something to eat.

There is something wrong with Zabelo, he's

never stayed this long without calling me. After yesterday's events he was just so down and I let him be. I thought he'd be fine, clearly I was wrong.

I'm busy snacking on a sandwich when the twins walk in, being followed by Zabelo and Ntsika.

My heart suddenly swims in nervousness and tingles at once.

I haven't shared a space with Zabelo and my brothers in a long while and I'm not sure how to behave. A part of me is relieved that he is okay.

Mongezi quickly snatches my sandwich and shoves it all down his stupid throat. He swallow and rest his heavy hands on my shoulders

"Mubiza, you are so tense. When was the last

time you got a massage? " He just called me ugly in front of my man. Zabelo is sharing a soft laugh.

"Stop doing that!" I scream and he laughs, removing his hands.. Jesus

"When was the last time you got a massage?" Zabelo repeats the question for him, a sly smile resting on his face. I almost cough as I remember the torturous massage Zabelo gave me and denied me an orgasm. I'm definitely blue ticking this question

"Why are you all here? Aren't you supposed to be working?" it's day time, that's why I'm asking

They stare at me, expecting an answer. Ntsika has stopped what he was doing in the fridge, Zabelo is seated opposite me while Mongezi is standing behind me and Mazisi settled next to me

" Why are you here? Don't look at me like that."

"We are going on a family date. Go and get your mother ready" Mazisi says.

That brings a smile to my face.

I thought they were being crazy as always only to get the happiest day of my life.

We are seated at a restaurant savouring on a mouth watering dish, mom couldn't make it. She said she didn't feel like going out.

It's just me and my three brothers. I thought Zabelo would be here too but I guess he drove in a different direction.

I would have loved for Nangamso to be here too but she is studying and has no time to mingle all the time.

"Mubiza" not again!

"What?" I half yell. He doesn't seem affected at all

"Do you really love lomnyamana wakho?" OH wow. Sometimes I wonder if he didn't hit his head while young

"he is not mnyamana , just rich in melanin" I defend my man and they are laughing at me

"Doesn't he scare you at night?" he adds, Ntsika and Mazisi laugh even more.

"So you brought me here just to make fun of me?" I'm hurting, he brushes my head and says I should stay away from dark men because they dance with the evil

"And you dance with Jesus because you are a mellow yellow" they all stop laughing. So I hit a nerve

"We are not mellow yellow, we are just blessed with a human skin"

Devil sent them to me, I swear

"and we don't scare the kids, they run to us when they see our face" Mazisi as well

"You are annoying, bloody yellow bones"

I had fun today, as much as these barbarians are full of stupid jokes I enjoy spending time with them. I brought my mother a take away and told her that I was seeing Nangamso.

She saw my whatsapp status and wanted us to have a night out, I'm not busy so I agreed.

It's after six as the Uber drops me outside Zabelo's club. She wanted to be here, if I happen to vanish then it's on her and not me.

I make my way in and find myself a table with

two chairs. I text her letting her know I've arrived. It's quite crowded but the music isn't loud.

I'm busy on my phone talking to Khanya when some chick drags the chair reserved for her

"Hey, that seat is taken" I say, standing on my feet

"Taken by who?" She's rude, I see. The first thing I notice is her pink dyed hair. She's light and taller. But I can take her on

"That's none of your business. Put that down pinky pinky"

She is under shock for a while and then charges towards me.

"What did you call me?" Oh God! I take back my words. I can't take her

"leave me alone please, I didn't come here to fight" I'm scared, she's towering over me.

"You Jozi girls think you know it all. Guess what, I'll kick your butt and mop these floors with you..."

"Pearl..what's going on here?"

His voice never confuses me.

He appears and frown, I didn't tell him I'm coming here

"Bhuti, it's this skank..."

"Voustek! this woman you just called skank is my wife, uMaFuze lo"

She blinks her fake long eyelashes

"Is it her? Oh God, pictures don't do her justice. She's pretty. . I didn't see her bhuti I swear"

She says a bit gentle

Zabelo orders her to apologise and she does then walk away.

I'm tongue tied for a while.

"So, that was Pearl, your other sister ?" I just want him to confirm

He encircles his arms around my waist bringing me closer and lowers his face

My body does that reaction only he can get

"Kiss me" he says in my ears..

My cheeks are getting warm

"Zabelo just focus, who is she to you?"

"I said kiss me" he is stern this time.

I perk his lips but he holds my neck and kisses me deep.

"Don't worry about her, she is good and she loves you " he says as we stop the kiss.

My heart drops, what a bad first impression

"MaFuze.."

I look at him and blow a heavy sigh

He sees my worry and I feel his hand on my exposed thighs, that brings shivers.

I try to move away but his other hand remains strong on my waist .

I'm wearing a tight, short blue dress which makes it easier for him to slide his hand in between my thighs

" Zabelo.. just...We are surrounded by pe... oh" I throw my head on his chest as he plays with my folds on top of my lacy thong

I want him to stop but I don't want him to stop..

"Do you want me to stop?"

He whispers in my ear, pushing my thong away, meeting my flesh.

I feel him slipping in my folds, parting my cookie lips with two fingers and finding my clit, rubbing it in small circles.

"Aa... Mmm " I'm crying softly on his chest,

feeling my knees weakening , my body being pleased in a place full of people..

"What a perfect match made in heaven!" screams Nangamso behind me..

The hell!! Wrong timing

I've been grumpy, happy and crazy since Nangamso disturbed my session with Zabelo. We spent our time and parted ways.

I called Zabelo asking him to drive me home.

He comes a while later and drive me

I want to ask him about Thami's rude behaviour but just decide against it. He is quiet.

When we reach the gate I kiss his cheek

He smiled shaking his head

"Thank you for the ride. I love you" I say

He looks at me

"My mother cheated on her fiance and had me, then went back to her fiance after dropping me like a refuse bag.."

He takes a box and gives it to me

"I know you won't cheat on me. I love you and I will marry you MaFuze"

That has my heart dancing and rejoicing

I get out and so does he

"come, let me say goodnight like a husband to his wife" he says

I put my hands on his chest as he slides his hand around my neck and he kisses me.

The kiss is intense, full of dominance and deep emotions and end with him hugging me tight saying that he loves me

I feel like staying in his arms like this but I have to go.

I throw my body on the bed and open the box thinking it's a necklace or earrings but I feel my blood vessels drying up..

It's a ring!

Was he proposing?

A RAY OF SUNSHINE

FORTY SEVEN

I'm literally pacing up and down with my gift box in my hand. I've put back the ring, but my brain can't rest. So many questions are pushing their way in and my head is spinning..

My heart on the other and is on an unending

race, my hands are just sweating.

What if he really was proposing?

I'd definitely say yes..

I can imagine myself walking down the aisle, in a white wedding dress and looking at him at the alter waiting for me..

He would look so good In a white tuxedo, I can just see his dark shade skin popping about and shinning just for me...

Okay let me hold my horses..

I'm calling Khanya, I can't be going crazy alone.

She picks up just when I'm about to give up

"Did you see the time Funeka?" she asks, clearly irritated

"Zabelo proposed! Well I think he did" I half scream, a wide smile finding it's way on my lips

spreading all over my face. I'm suddenly on cloud nine

"Yeeeeess! Oh my God!!!.... No wait.. Did he propose or you think he proposed?"

Her voice is a bit strong now. I think she's fully awake

"I think he did. He gave me a ring" I say and look at the box in my hand

"Did he go down his knee and pop the question?"

Now she is dropping my spirit

"No. He gave me the ring." I snap

"and said what? Nothing"

Mxm..

"Well, he said he is going to marry me."

I tell her

"But did he ask you? Or he just gave you the

ring?"

Why is she suddenly a detective. My man gave me a ring, isn't that enough

"He didn't ask. We were.. Arh. Just sleep we'll talk in the morning"

"I can't believe you disturbed my sleep for just a thought. I hate you Funeka.." she angrily says and drop the call..

I blow a heavy sigh.. Feeling all worked up

Let me call Nangamso

"Is someone dying?" that's the first question she ask, she's angry too.

"No..."

"Is the world ending? Are we being attacked by the Boko Haram or something?"

What...

"No.."

"THEN WHY DID YOU DISTURB MY BEAUTY SLEEP FOR NOTHING! I WAS CLOSE TO BECOMING A MILLIONAR, THIS CLOSE TO WINNING A LOTTO!"

I've even moved my cellphone from my ear, her sudden outburst is cracking my eardrums..

"Zabelo proposed" I tell her.

She is quite for a while..

Then a worse, bursting scream follows. I'm sure everyone is awake wherever she is

"Woow. So how did he do it? In a hotel room after you left or maybe in his room decorated with rose petals and all the whitey shit. You lucky bastard!"

She's rumbling, totally and I'm about to burst her bubble

"He didn't do all that. He gave me a ring"

It is coming.. Oh God

"And popped the question?"

Aarh,!

"No, , he just gave me the ring" I say a bit frustrated

"And said what?"

"Nothing. Well, not in so many words but..he gave me a ring so I know he wants to marry me"

God I'm messed up

"For all we know he might have given you the wrong box. These men can buy a gift and not even bother checking inside, maybe they made a mistake at the shop. How do you know he was proposing marriage without him asking?"

I drag my crushed body to the bed

"it's a hunch. I just know"

"Yehhen bawo, yeka ukulunga kwam. She woke me just for a hunch. Funeka do you realise that we parted ways after 12 and I just slept like few minutes ago. And here you are disturbing me for a mere hunch. Apologise to me right now.."

She's scolding me for real.

"I apologize"

"F#ck you mdidi wakho" and she drops the call.

Amen..

My phone beeps...

Its a text message from Zabelo

Sweet dreams MaFuze, I love you mkami. I hope the gift fits you perfectly. If you do not love it, let me know and we will change it. You are loved my special person*

Where is the ring finger again?

He definitely wants to marry me...

I scream on the pillow and throw my feet in the air.. I can finally put a face to happiness. It looks like this moment..

He smiled at me and slip the ring in my finger..

"You may kiss the bride" the pastor says

He lowers his face and...

"WAAAAH!"

I jump up screaming, my heart threatening to leap out.

That was a deep, scary yelling of my three idiotic brothers.

I'm on my feet, on my bed terrified and angry.

They are dying of laughter..

I should have locked the door.

Who wake someone up with such a scare, they

are too old for this

I slowly seat on my bed, tears forming in my eyes.

I almost had a heart attack, my heart is racing and they are mocking me

"come on sis, we were just joking" Mongezi says as he sees my teary face. Now they all look concerned

"Leave my room" I softly say, stifling a loud cry. I was close to getting my kiss, Zabelo and I were getting married and they ruined it..

"Okay, we are so..."

"LEAVE MY BEDROOM!"

They freeze at my outburst..

It takes no time for bab Ngcobo to rush in my

room looking spooked

He sees my tears before I even wipe them

"What's going on here? What have you done to my princess you chicken heads?" yemama, did he just called them chicken head..

"They scared me, I was peacefully sleeping and they screamed on my ears and laughed about it. I almost died of a heart attack baba"

His face wears a deep frown as he looks at them one by one

"Are you crazy? Three grown men attacking a young vulnerable girl. I'm so disappointed in you" I fold my arms as a smile form on my lips

"Hhay baba, now you are putting it as if we are thugs. We didn't attack her" Mongezi has a loud mouth

"aren't you the one who budged in her room

without being told and woke her in a scream. A scream? Are you suddenly babies. Should I buy nappies and purity?" I love bab Ngcobo

Their grumpy faces, priceless

They mumble in annoyance until baba kick them out and seat next to me.

He put his hand around my shoulders and ask how my night was

"it was okay, I slept like a baby until your son's disturbed me" he is laughing

"Do you want me to shoot them?"

He ask

"I want you to make them clean the garden, the pool. Wash all the cars in the garage and cook supper.."

Now that's the best punishment

"consider it done MaNgcobo"

We share a look and simultaneously burst in laughter.. This is going to be a good day

There is that something about bab Ngcobo. His presence warms me in a way I can't explain. Even with my biological father, I don't get this feeling

"What's that?" he suddenly ask, staring at my ring.. Flip!

"aaa..this thing. It's just a ring. I bought it"

I just lied, he looks at me. Not smiling.

I feel myself getting nervous

"Why?" tjo

"I just wanted to spoil myself you know" I stupidly say. Jesus, who spoils themselves with a ring

"You decided to spoil your self with a ring worth 20k or more. That's a real diamond" ZABELO DAMN HIM!

If I ever had superpowers. Now is the time for them to manifest. I want to vanish into thin air

I flang my nose and blink looking away

"We maNgcobo ka baba, who gave you this ring?" His face is no longer tender like few minutes ago. His voice is stern and the child in me is forced to obey

"Zabelo gave it to me" my voice is low as I respond, playing wit my pygama top

"eehee. I've been way too good on this boy. I've been watching him taking you any day, any time he wants. It's time to pay him a visit, man to man. He has decided that he is no longer my son, udla esbayen nj sam mahhala" he stands up and walks out..

I need to warn Zabelo, where is my phone

"MaNgcobo!" I almost jump as he shouts my name. He appears on my door

"Can you lend me your phone. I need something".. What...

I hesistently hand him and watch as he dissappears with it . There was a thin smile on his face when I handed him.

Did he do this on purpose?

How will I warn Zabelo now. I can't even reply to his message that he sent last night. Maybe if I can go to his place

"MaNgcobo!!" not again!

I get off the bed and meet him halfway

"I'm about to go to work, get yourself ready. I'm going with you"

Look at the devil , blocking my success..

"Yebo baba" I smile, while my heart is itching.

Damn this old man.. Nx

Mazisii is the CEO yet baba hasn't retired fully.

He still comes to work when he feels like it and today he dragged me with him.

And no I'm not at the office.

Its midday, my body feels so exhausted as if I've been hit by a train.

I have been cleaning and mopping the truck containers with some guys here. Baba dropped me off and said something about an urgent meeting. My gut told me an urgent meeting was Zabelo.. My poor man.

He told me to wear white only, I put my best white ankle grazer with my heels and white top.

Right now I look like I just ran through the mud,

He was just punishing me I think

Where are my heels?

I have no idea

"Now we are on lunch boss lady, take a break" says some guy who's name didn't stick. I nod my head and stretch my body. My waist is on fire

I hear his laughter before he appears and he laughed even more when he sees me..

Bab Ngcobo never loved me I swear

"aren't you the most beautiful thing

right now" he is mocking me, I'm sucking as I move towards him. These containers are high hence he helps me down and hand me my phone

"You are done for the day ntombi yam. Again tomorrow, Same time, same place..." am I

dreaming?

A call comes through as I'm about to respond.

It's Zabelo. I give him a look, he is now chatting away with his workers.

I move further away and pick up

"Sis please come to the hospital, it's Zabelo..."

I feel the spirit leaving my body..

After I got a text of the address to the hospital from Thami I quickly requested an Uber to the hospital. I tell him when I've arrived and he takes me to him.

Surprisingly he is on his feet shouting at a doctor

He can't even see me

"Sir, as I've said your injuries are serious. I'm

keeping you for the night for observation..."

"Observation yamasimba! I'm not spending a night here. I'm leaving, these are just scratches nothing major. I'm a man not a sissy, scratches don't scare me"

He is angry, the poor Indian woman is trying to explain but he hears none of it. Its always the Indians facing the crazy black man

I clear my throat

"Zabelo" he quickly turns..

My God!.

I'm up in his face in a second, his face is bruised, lip broken. He flinch as I touch his tummy. He can't stand properly..

"What happened to you,take a rest on the bed"

The way I've been having an increased heart rate, I'm scared I might actually get a heart

attack for real this time

"I'm fine, these are just scratches.."

Zabelo is crazy if he thinks I'm allowing this

"Magwaza, these are not just scratches. Please sit down sthandwa sam and let me look" I politely say. The Indian is still irritated, looking at us

A proud smile rest on his face and he peck my face

"my wife has spoken. I love you Funeka Magwaza" I think these injuries are messing with his head

Thami is laughing behind me

I'm glad he called me

He lies on the bed and I raise up his top and gasp

His tummy is red as if received real blows...

"Zabelo, you are hurt" my voice is low as I say not even knowing where to touch. He quickly takes my hand in his

"Where is the ring?" he ask, disregarding my question

The ring.. It's in my pocket. I took it off when I realised I was joining the cleaning team

"It's in my pocket." I tell him

He frowns. God his face is swollen

"put it back on please."

I take it and give him

"You didn't ask properly, you didn't go down your knee so now is the chance"

He is a bit confused

"Go down on your knees and ask her 'will you marry me? 'that's Thami interfering.

" But she is going to be my wife, I'm going to send my uncles to hers and... "

"Tjoh bhuti, you are a hopeless case. Go down on your knees" that's Thami again.

He obeys, flinch as he get up and go down his knee

I put out my finger and he slide the ring.. I'm seeing nothing wrong, in my own bubble feeling tingles attacking my tummy until Thami laughs

"God! You haven't asked a question bhuti!" he says

Oh..the question "You are my wife and I love you.." he says and stand up.

He lowers his face and kiss me

"Tjo, you were supposed to ask and not tell her.." I hear Thami saying behind me.

"auch..!"oh God. I've forgotten that his lip is

busted..

" OH No. I'm sorry Magwaza" I say brushing his lips softly with my thumb and even blowing for pain relief

Laughter erupts behind us..

Turning I find A light skinned woman with two girls, Pearl is one of the girls I recognize her face..

Now I'm embarrassed, for kissing an injured man

The doctor shakes her head, now looking at me as if I'm mad. She leaves after I promise her that Zabelo will spend the night

Damn baba for costing me a kiss

"Who did this to you?" the woman ask walking in. Her girls following behind

"No one, I fell"

"Aibo, Zabelo" I exclaim, he is lying.

We are looking at each other, his stare is firm.
He is shutting me up

"MaFuze this is my family, family. Meet my
wife" Haleluya Mfundisi.

"What happened to you? Did you bath with
mud?Where are your shoes?" that's Pearl
gawking at me up and down..

Until it hits me.

I'm still in my all white drantched, dirty clothes..

I'm never lucky these days am I?

A RAY OF SUNSHINE

FORTY EIGHT

FUNEKA

I can't shake the strong resemblance between Siziwe and Zabelo. She is dark in skin, like him.

While Thami and Pearl look exactly like their mother, mellow yellow. Siziwe is shy or calm and reserved I'm not sure but she is the only one who hasn't said anything else other than greeting me and holding Zabelo's hand. I'm not complaining, but I'm complaining because she is holding his hand and I'm just here..

Literally here flapping my eyelashes as his mother does the unexpected and breaks down.

Is it supposed to be this awkward to share a room with a runaway mother in law.

I don't know if she is dramatic but she is crying, I can't help but feel like skinning her alive.

She abandoned her child for many years and

only cries for 3 minutes. The nerve of this woman

"Maka Thami, I'm fine"

And I've noticed that he refers to her as 'Maka Thami' only

"We almost lost you Zaza..."

Puking! That's exactly how I feel.

Puking on her curly weave and dragging her gorgeous self out of here. She is crying because she almost lost a jackpot.

I'm just waiting for a day, just a day she will provoke me. So help me God, I have no respect for a woman left Zabelo in the cold, only to rejoice his money..

"I'm sorry we had to meet under such unfortunate events my dear, I'm Nora. Nora Ndlanzi" she says, extending her hands for a shake while wiping tears.. Fake tears.

Now I know why I never liked the Nora name

"Hi Maka Thami, I'm Funeka" I say, no smile whatsoever. We shake hands like signing a cold deal. If Zabelo calls her mom then I will, for now Maka Thami it is.

"He is lucky to have you in his life, you make him happy" it's a genuine voice as she says, smiling with her eyes. This woman is beautiful no doubt about that

"I'm the lucky one" that's my man's stern voice. I can't help but share a soft laugh trying so hard to remain still

"Either way, I'm happy that my son is blessed with a woman like you"

I thank her. What else can I say.

I'm close to ululating when they all head out following each other , I'm still in my clothes of

shame but who cares.

I'm with my man

"phew, I can finally breath in peace" he says,
blowing a sigh of relief.

"Zabelo! They were worried about you"

"I don't want to he suffocated, I'm not sick nor
am I dying Dude"

"Dude? Did you just call me dude"

Now I'm convinced that something moved in his
head, he is losing it

He is giving me that one panty dampening stare
of his, he is making me shy right now.

I look at him and my lips spread into a blush

"ngyakthanda, MaFuze. I love you very much."

I'm blushing.

"I love you a lot more Zabelo" I tell him,

truthfully

"Come here, I. Missed you dude" This time I crack up as he says, opening his wide arms.

As I'm about to climb up I hear his laugh in the corridor and I feel air packing it's bags, leaving my lungs breathless and dry

I remain standing on the same spot

And in a second bab Ngcobo grace the ward with his presence..

Zabelo is quick to seat up, he didn't even flinch

" Baba " he says, a bit amazed. I've seen Zabelo being rude to this man, showing hate and no remorse. Not even once did I think I'd see the day of him being spooked. Baba definitely hit him..

He did.

" Njinji, I heard you are in a bad shape. What

happened son?" If a devil never had a face, now it does and it is Bab Ngcobo.

He grabs my hand and we both stand before Zabelo

"It's nothing serious baba" Zabelo responds, his voice is a bit shaky.

Baba is laughing softly

"Baba, who told you Zabelo is here?"

I ask him, he raise his brows

"Is this not my son?"

"It is"

I reply

"Exactly, I raised this man after my friend died and I'll always know when something is wrong with him" That doesn't shut my pie hole up

"Because baba you know exactly who.."

" Funeka" Zabelo chirps, he is shutting me up.

This man, I'm fighting his battle here

"I'm glad this man is fine, let me shake hands and leave" Zabelo hesitantly give out his hand and he shakes him, holding longer than usual.

His face is now just stern as he looks at my man

"I'll be waiting Magwaza" with that he let's go and walks out..

I hear Zabelo breathing in relief

"Waiting on what...?"

"MaNgcobo!!" ... No.. No. Not now

He appears on the door and smile

"Let's go home ntombi yami, we have work to do tomorrow" what!

I drag my depressed body, feeling my heart dropping to zero. This is pure evil!

I wanted to spend some time with Zabelo and now I can't..

"Are you okay? You seem tense" he asks as we walk side by side.

"I'm okay" I flash a forced smile

Reaching home my anger quickly flies out the window. The kitchen is a mess!

Mongezi and Mazisi are wearing aprons, cooking.

Ntsika is literally seated on the floor, he looks awful and dirty.

"Family I'm Home" I get in yelling and swaying my non existent hips from side to side

"Yeer wena mangcola. just go and bath, you stink" Who else other than Mongezi

"What happened to you? Did you fight with a whole phara nation or what?"

Ntsika adds, his voice is even worse.

They look irritated, Masizis can't even open his mouth

"Wena Ntsika don't even start, you look worse than me. How did the garden go? I didn't think baba will actually pull this one. I'm soo happy right now"

The engry looks I get..

Even Mazisi has stopped what he was doing and they are all staring at me unbelievably

"You little devil, this was your idea!" Ntsika says and they all charge towards me

"I'll scream one more time if you put your hands on me and this time you will wash the roof and mop the yard" I threaten them, just as they stop

I take that as a way out as I rush out in speed.

They are cursing behind me

After a much needed shower I call Zabelo.

"Aren't you in pain? Did they give you comfortable blanket. I hope you are not hungry Zabelo. I can't believe I didn't bring anything to you. I'm so..."

"MaFuze" he softly interjects. I'm rumbling

"How are you? I'm really sorry I had to leave"

"It's okay I'm fine, I'm on my own bed sleeping comfortably "....

"Own bed?" I ask

"In my apartment, yes" he is saying it as if I'm supposed to guess that he is there..

"You were discharged Zabelo?"

God, is he crazy

"I discharged myself. Do you love the ring?"

Jesus.. Zabelo is not okay upstairs I swear

"Who is going to take care of you? What if at night you can't sleep. What If.."

"Funeka, I said I'm fine."

I can only hope that he knows what he is doing

"Helloooo, How are you? I was wondering if..."

Yeap, I enter the kitchen with Adele's song and they stare at me clearly frustrated. I stop and start sniffing

" Something is off, Mongezi your pot is burn..."

I scream as he charge towards me

This time Ncane and mama shows up and grill Mongezi for scaring me.. I'm such an egg today

When they leave Nstika literally pushes me out...

"oksalayo ngyabuya la, pheka maMgogobhozi

silambe Kab thina"

I say...

"VOUSTEK!!" That has me in stitches

By the time we hit the pillow, I close my heavy eyes and sleep..

About supper, we ended up ordering in because no one could stomach that food cooked by my brothers.. I don't know how come they can't cook, at this age. Ncane spoiled them too much.

Weekend came and passed real quick, I've been kept busy. I haven't seen Zabelo since that day at the hospital. Baba Ngcobo never allowed me out of his sight. Even when I lied saying I'm visiting My own father he said he will come with me. I ended up ditching the idea

"This has gone too far. You have been in and out of my house as you please, day in and day out. You are a child here MaNgcobo and I am here to remind you that. This is my house, as long as you live under my roof you will behave like a child that you are. Akunamfazi la KaNgcobo, if Magwaza wants a wife, he shall follow the traditional route that we all know and stop luring you with a ring. Ring yoknukan leyo! " that's exactly what he said the other day when he caught me trying to sneak out. The embarrassment I got, I couldn't even say a single word to him. I took that walk of shame back to my bedroom

And today he woke me early in the morning and told me to get ready for work.

He makes sure to keep me busy so I don't have time to run to Zabelo

"I can see you are ready for the day" He says as I join him in the car. He start the engine and off we go

"I'm ready" I yawn after that, he laughs and raise the volume, ukhozi Fm comes on. I'm really riding with an old here.

I'm ready for the hard labor today.

I asked Ncane for some overalls, she gave me.

They fit since I've gained wait, in my shoes I have on black sneakers.

I even have a sunhat just in case..

"Wendodakazi" he suddenly says and I look at him

"Are you happy? Is he making you happy?"

I'm lost for a while until I realize. He is talking

about Zabelo

I nod my head thinking how Zabelo has been pumping my phone with crying emojis

"Good, because I'd be happy to break his legs, for real this time" I've never met someone who takes pride in beating up a young boy..

Zabelo Is a boy compared to him

When we arrive at work baba takes me to the office with him and throw me in a meeting, full of stakeholders and tells me to take notes..

This man doesn't take me serious at all..

Just when I was ready for hard labor I'm thrown at the office.. I hate him with passion

A RAY OF SUNSHINE

FORTY NINE

Not edited

During the day baba took me to lunch in this cosy restaurant and we had lunch together then he released me and ordered me to Uber back home while he headed back to work.

And yes I didn't think twice.

By the time he reached work I was on my way to see Zabelo.

He's been pestering me an entire weekend, saying he is dying and in pain.

Serves him right for being stubborn but then again, I don't want him to be sad. I love him

I pick up my ringing phone and laugh, I sent him a message few minutes ago telling him I'm on my way to see him

"Zabelo I said I'm on my way, can you stop calling me now" I should have just surprised

him with a knock. But then I would have been met with a closed door because he is at the club

"You are playing me MaFuze and I don't like it" shame, he is sucking

"Why can't you believe me when I tell you I'm on my way?"

"because the last time you said that I waited the whole day" He will never let this one go

"Zabelo I told you that bab Ngcobo caught me when I was about to leave, that's why I never showed. How many times must I explain this to you exactly"

I hear something breaking

"Damn it!.. I'm. I'll call you just now"

The call drops and I concentrate on this chat with Khanya.

She is coming to Johannesburg sometime this week so we can celebrate my engagement properly.

And it beat me that I haven't posted a picture of my ring captioned 'I said yes'

I'm growing..

I text him when I'm outside the club and then make my way in.

I spot him balancing with one of the chairs, speaking to whoever is in front of him.

He then turns and walks towards me.

He is limping slightly, back to his shorts, flops and golf T-shirt.

His face is recovering though

"come and give me a kiss, I missed you"

That's how he greets me by the way

"Hellow Zabelo, how are you? I'm fine too thank you for as.."

I half scream as he swiftly pulls me to him and I bump on his chest staring up at him

"You talk too much" he whispers softly, playing with my chin and I'm suddenly floating through space as tingles fill up my tummy. The club isn't bust and the music is low hence I hear him perfectly

Now that I look at his face closely I even wonder how I survived that long without seeing him

"Have I ever told you how beautiful you are mama?" a ball of joy just seat on my tummy

His eyes are warmly staring at me as we breathe the same air. My cheeks are burning up with the amount of blushing

I put my hand and brush the hairy side of his face

"You can tell me now, I don't mind"

My low voice can fit for a baby right now

"Umuhle muntu wam, my queen"

This man is on a mission to make me disown my family and live with him forever

His face is full of a contagious smile as he watch me melting in his spell of love

"Futhi Ngiyakuthanda mina mama, kakhulu" I capture his lips, kissing him slowly, feeling all the feelings of him bursting all over my blood vessels.

I've been longing for his touch, his lips.

I just let the moment dive deep in me as he

deepens the kiss with my heart racing hard in my chest.

A soft moan finds its way out as he squeezes my bum seductively, awakening unholy juices down there..

My hands bring him closer as I tug my hand around his neck for life, pressing my depth in his front and he groans softly.

As the kiss stops we are both breathless, hunger written on our faces.

"Let's get out of here" say no more! "

As the door closes to his apartment he quickly pins me against the wall, kissing me aggressively and fast.

I want him badly

He helps me take off the overalls and he curses

as we try to get them off

When done I help him push down his briefs and in no time I'm facing the wall, moaning his name as he gives me full, deeper thrust..

After the much needed release we both slumber on the bed and blow a sigh

"Your father will kill me one of these days. Why is he so cruel, didn't he date in his time" he says caressing my back. I'm laying on his chest.

I laugh softly brushing his tummy, his breathing hinges..

I'm quick to pull up the only remaining clothing on him, the golf T-shirt and I'm afraid to say he is still not recovering fully.

I seat up and give him a look

"Zabelo" I know he loves saying he is fine when he is not

"Its nothing, don't worry"

He says, I'm not even suprided.

I drag him to the shower, I'll bath him and then rub some pain relief cream on sure they gave him he just never bothered to use it

After I make sure that the temperature is perfect we fall under the shower and I take the Loofah sponge pouring enough shower gel on it and begin bathing him softly

His hands are running through my body, distracting me.

Baba was killing my man seriously

I'm focusing on his strong abs when his hand slide in between my folds

"Za... belo H.. awu" I whine at his lethal touch

and he just smirks

"Do your own thing and let me do me MaFuze please" oho, he doesn't know me

The sponge land down on his already erected member and I wash softly

He gabs

"Are you bathing me or you are just turning me on MaFuze" now it's my turn to speak

"Do your own thing and let me do me Magwaza please" he laughs at my comeback

An innocent shower instantly turns into something else..

I made sure to return back home before Four in the evening and baba wasn't home so I decided to spend time with mom instead.

When he returned he finds me home, I'm such an obedient child these days.

Days flies quicker, I'm fast asleep when I'm woken up by my mom's screaming voice. What have I done now?

"Funeka, Are you out of your mind!" I wake up, yawning and check the time on my phone. It's after Seven am

I overslept, I guess bab Ngcobo is letting me off the hook today because I was with him and my own father yesterday playing snooker in some bar. Whatever beef they had is slowly starting to subside because of me. I think they both love me and they put thier differences aside to see me happy.

"Mama, what's going on?"

A stern look drills my sleepy self. I stretch and seat up

"so it is not enough that this Magwaza boy is making you loose your mind, now he wants to trap you for eternity"

Zabelo and I talked about this and I allowed him to give a letter to my mother. Since she is the one responsible for me, I just met my father so he can't be in a position to make such decisions on my behalf

"mama, take a seat" I politely say and quickly dive a hot slap coming my way.

I scream and rush towards the corner

"Aibo, what's going on here?" That's bab Ngcobo rushing inside

"What's going is that this child wants to get married! At this age, Funeka do you have any idea how hard marriage life is. I will now allow this to happen, over my dead body!"

That statement cripples even the tiniest bone
in my body

Baba Ngcobo is just as shocked

"Marriage is a beautiful thing. why can't you let
the child make her own decisions and stop
being childish and selfish. You are overreacting
and scaring the child Martha"

Says bab Ngcobo and yes.. I'm scared.

I don't understand how she hates Zabelo so
much. It doesn't make sense

"You are losing your mind Funeka. This place is
just not good for you. If you don't stop this
marriage nonsense we are going back home"

"Aibo now you are losing it..."

"Stay out of my business Zamani, this is
between me and my child. MY CHILD!"

With that she walks out banging the door behind her..

I'm confused

Martha

Her chest is heaving and falling as she reaches the bedroom.

She only sat for a second and start pacing up and down again feeling walls closing in on her.

The door bust open and Zamani walks in and look at her pacing around until she sit on the bed controlling her breathing..

Its just utter silence for a while

"She's mine isn't she, you don't want her to get

married because you know it means telling the truth, nothing but the truth.. " he softly says

"Shut up.. You don't know what you are talking about" she seethes already on her feet again , her eyes daring him to even utter such nonsense with his mouth

"for a longest time I've wondered, searching for something, some confirmation and now I got one..". They swore to never talk about that night..

"GET OUT!"

A RAY OF SUNSHINE

FIFTY!

"Sis Funeka, are you still in there?"

Siziwe's sweet voice calls out on the other side of the door

"I'm here nana, can you give me some water please" my voice come out strained as I plead.

"I'll look for a container first then come back. Give me few seconds" I nod completely disregarding the fact that she doesn't even see me.

I wipe my sweaty forehead and seat up.

My chest is tight, I'm nauseous yet nothing comes when I try to let this bile seated on my chest.

A while later she returns and hands me the bottle of water. I drink up and blow an exhausted, shaky sigh

"How are you feeling now?" she softly ask. I can tell that she is worried about me

"I'm feeling a bit better, thank you"

I close the toilet and seat on top

I've been feeling like this since three days ago

I happened to eat chicken curry while I was visiting my father. I've been there since Wednesday and it's Friday today

I should be fine considering the amount of days but no. Now I just ate some hot wings and that exacerbated my situation.

"I'll stay here until you are ready to go"

What I've learnt about Siziwe is that she is shy, down to earth and very sympathetic. She gives very warm hugs and loving, with a cute smile. I love being around her which is why I asked her to come with me in here. Maybe I feel Zabelo's presence with her around.

Pearl on the other hand is just Nangamso the second, their personalities clash because both of them are crazy. She is loud, dirty minded, and talkative.

Its been weeks since I got engaged to the man of my dreams, weeks of begging my mother to allow Zabelo do right by me. She is still adamant to let me get married, I can't even understand her sometimes

"Sis Funeka" Siziwe says

"Yes sis"

"I had a bad dream, I think something bad will happen tomorrow" that's rather unexpected and strange. Why tomorrow out of all the days,

"What's special about tomorrow though?"

I ask

"N.. Nothing. Don't mind me, I'm being crazy as always" she says

"Maybe it was just a dream Siziwe"

I hear her heavy sigh

"I've been meaning to tell my brother why we left home and never returned. But mom will skin me alive if I do. I want him to know, I want to tell you so you can be the one telling him. He deserves to know" this is the girl that can barely make a conversation with me, or any one else of that matter. She's that girl who seat alone in a closed bedroom while the rest of the family is having a quality time in front of a TV.

And me, I love being around her. I just love being around her

I get up, open the door and she quickly stands too.

I'm feeling better finally

"Why did you leave then, did something happen?" I've always had that feeling in me that something might have pushed Zabelo's mom to come this side

"My mo..."

"Are you servicing each other in here?"

It can only be Pearl. She just walked in, Nangamso and Khanya are right behind her.

We are in this elegant restaurant, just having a girl's time which is a headache because Nangamso and Pearl don't click

"We've been waiting for ages for you guys. Are you sure you aren't a lesbian and backstabbing my brother with his sister!" Pearl adds eyeing me suspiciously

"Ew! How did you even reach such a disgusting

conclusion? You are not okay sis" - Siziwe

"Only a dump can come up with such a stupid idea"Nangamso says and I know it is coming so I leave them arguing and head out

We are in the middle of June, winter is having a great time and I'm having a hard time on the other hand. I'm already feeling cold, I'm in nothing but laid back outfit. Tube top and skirt, a light cardigan and sneakers.

I've finally installed a long, shiny weave that I feel like I'm some good looking housewife that spend her time spending the husband's hard earned money. Khanya and Nangamso made it their mission to make me look good. My nails are done as well, Khanya came here on last week Wednesday and since she came I've been up and down.

The noise hit the roof as I look at them talking and laughing loudly. I miss Zabelo so much, my heart even hurt a little. He's been busy today. That's why I'm so snuggled on Siziwe, she is another version of Zabelo

"Are we boring you?" Khanya asks, disturbing my train of thoughts

"No, I'm just cold and the sun is setting. When are we leaving?" I ask and get a bad eye from the three night walkers. Nangamso, Khanya and Pearl can party the entire night and wake up the next day all refreshed.

"We came here like two hours ago and already you want us to leave. Hhay gogo, not now please" Pearl just called me granny, awoa

"my sister is not a granny, have you seen such a gorgeous granny wena! Hhaybo"

Hhay Nangamso..

"I'm cold and I'm having a headache. You all can sit here and have a good time. I'm done"

I stand up

"Okay, wait ke so we can ask for take aways. Imagine this whole food going to waste. Not on my watch, imali ka bafo le. It's my brother's money" and I've been getting a lot of 'its my brother's this and that' a lot lately..

"Request an Uber Nangamso, please" I say

My phone rings.

I feel my heart dancing a different tune

I stand and move away then pick up

"MaFuze" His voice does things to me.

"I miss you" I say and start writing non existent words with my foot

"I've been very busy sthandwa sam, I'm sorry it

you feel neglected. I'll see you tomorrow
though, I promise"

My heart sinks

I keep my mouth shut, my head hanging low

"MaFuze"

He says gently

I say nothing. I miss him, can't he just see me
atleast for a minute

"You don't love me any more Zabelo, you don't. "
I sadly say. Missing someone so badly must be
a sin because, it can't be right

"When would you like to see me?" he asks

"Now, I want to see you now" he chuckles softly

"Your wish is my command my love"

"What's that supposed to mean? Will you see
me today?" I'm stifling a smile as I ask

"Turn around MaFuze, I want to see your beautiful smile"

I'm still confused but I turn anyway.

"You are beautiful my future wife and I love you"
I'm literally blushing as I look around, Zabelo is messing with my head

"Don't play with my feelings Zabelo, I will not forgive you I swear" I tell him

"Look around" he orders

I do as told..

Roaming my eyes I spot him standing on the entrance and I quickly run towards him and throw my arms at him hugging him

He hugs me tight

Connection sparks like wildfire as our bodies collide

As the hug breaks he grabs my neck and onslaughts me in a steamy, pant dampening kiss.

I spent most of my afternoon with Zabelo and today I was woken up by Nangamso and Khanya annoying me. I was sleeping so good and they woke me and forced me to take a bath.

I even forgot that there is this so called Nangamso's friend who invited her to a certain party and she wants me and Khanya to come.

I drag my body to the bathroom and take a long bath then return to the bedroom covering my body with a towel.

On the bed lies a red, elegant dress that I feel it screaming my name

"And then? Is this a party or gala dinner?" I ask them and they tell me to wear the dress

I ask no questions and put it on.

Wow!

"Who's dress is this?"

I ask, turning and blushing. It has a slit, all the way from my mid thigh down.

"It was mine but seeing that it looks good on you, then you can have it. I'll try something else"
Says Khanya. I could hug her right now

I've taken more than twenty selfies as we navigate through the busy road. It's after Ten in the morning and I must say, I'm a bevy of beauty today.. Thanks to Khanya's talent of make up, I'm all dolled up like a model

Laughter fills the entire ride, there's no dull moment with Nangamso and Khanya in the

same space. Ntsika just add on the situation as he drives, he is our driver for today and I don't even know how he agreed

He is taking us to the venue, but we will pass by home so he can have a change of clothes

I stare at these elegant hills and blush.

Its like I'm on my way to a certain high profile event with red carpet and all...

"Are you sure I'm not overdressed for this certain party Nangamso, I wouldn't want to steal the light for miss party" I'm starting to have nerves as I look at myself and them. They are good but.. I'm fire

"Relax, you are beautiful just the way you are" says Khanya and I smile thinking how Zabelo would react if he was to see me in this hot number

"Can we pass by Zabelo later. I want to see him before we leave" they gigue and ignore me..

Mxm!.

My phone vibrates

I've sent Zabelo some of the pictures I took and he is salivating. Only if he could see me in person. I'm sure he'd be taken

Something is off, when we reach home I just feel this happy mood. Ntsika rushes inside the house and we remain in the car, in the garage.

There is this mouth watering aroma roaming around, I feel my stomach grumbling. I should have eaten something heavy instead of a cereal but I was too beautiful to think

"Can I go out and eat something?"

"NO!" They chant at the same time.

"I'll take a bite and..."

"We said no Funeka" that's Khanya's strict voice. I remain seated, I wonder why Ncane cooked so early in the morning

"Can I atleast go and say hi to my family since I'm already here..".

"Just sit tight and wait for my order" that's Khanya again looking at her phone and typing faster

"Why does it feel like you are hiding something?" just after asking the door opens and instead of seeing Ntsika I see bab Ngcobo and my father whom I believe left early saying he had something to do.. And now he is here..

They both ask me to come with them, Baba takes my hand on the right and bab Ngcobo on the left.

"Why do I feel like I'm suddenly being ushered to the aisle" I joke, they are both wearing suits and I can't really stop my mind from going wild.. They laugh it off and lead me inside.

I'm confused as we take the back door and the moment we reach the backyard garden I literally freeze...

"Welcome to your engagement party MaNgcobo" ..

What...

Oh My God!

The MC, or shall I say Mcs.. Ntsika and Mongezi both welcome the guest and I'm seating here, staring at this man next to me. I cannot remove my eyes from him.

I've held my mouth, my beating chest and even shed tears. To think I don't cry when I'm happier

but today I did.

If I wasn't sure about him, I am now. He looks so good in a fresh haircut and suit..

He glares at me and a warm smile spread across his lips. I can't even think, or...

I'm floating in shock and amusement.

Zabelo kept this from me.. How did I not even suspect this

"Ngyakthanda MaFuze" he says and steal a kiss on my cheek

I blush, my tongue is still paralyzed as we are seated at the front.

The only thing I keep saying is

"Why didn't you tell me, I can't believe this is happening" ...

Zabelo actually put this one together. Even mom is here looking pretty, my whole family is here. Zabelo's mother and his siblings as well.

Its like I'm dreaming right now

"It's time to pray lovebirds".. That's Ntsika screaming earning some laughter in the crowd

A RAY OF SUNSHINE

FIFTY ONE

MARTHA

She is glued in one spot, emotions of joy and happiness floating below her navel as she watches the car driving out slowly leaving whistles and ululations behind.

That alone is enough to make her heart twitch.

She has been selfish, seeing her daughter swimming in a bubble of happiness, love and support made her realize how selfish she has been.

"They are happy aren't they?" turning her head she finds Zabelo's mother also admiring what was in front of them

"They are" she says

"I've been selfish, seeing your boy loving her so openly, planning this for her and going as far as taking her to her favorite destination. It just sweet and romantic. She is lucky to have him" she adds, with a warm smile

"She is, my boy is a sweetheart hey. I know for a fact that he will treat her like a queen once they get married.."

Nora wouldn't miss a chance to gloat

"I taught my baby better, he is also lucky to have a woman as honest and loving as my baby girl. Funeka is smart, she has a degree in Social work. Currently she is working at her family company but I know my child, she will one day have a company under her name. She is destined for greater things "by the time Martha is done floating about her child, Nora is ready for a come back

" Zabe wami already owns a club and few other businesses. My son is monied mfazi, Nina just give us a date of the lobola and we'll buy her easily like that cheap wig over your head " she smiles proudly seeing Martha is suddenly tongue tied

"my sister must be proud to have raised such a gentleman. I heard his mother left him, shame poor boy turned out pretty good even without his despicable, vile of a mother. I'm glad my head with a cheap wig didn't make me shy away from raising my child."

With that she turns and leaves Nora's jaw dropped.

She first look for her sister, Betty and when she finds her she ask that they talk for a while.

Betty has been ignoring her since Zamani made assumptions about Funeka's real father.

"ahem.." That's Martha clearing her throat after they sat on the bed.

Betty is quite, she is not the one to never ask about her health but today she didn't. She has an unreadable expression as the elephant in the room grows heavier.. Atleast for Martha

"Sisi" she starts

"I'm sorry" she adds and heave a sigh not knowing where to start

Betty's silence is even getting to her.

Zamani might have told her, she's just waiting for her to say it. It would have been better if she throws insults at her instead of a cold shoulder

"Thing is.. No amount of sories can erase what I've done to you sis. I'm a selfish person, I know she was conceived before you were in the picture but you deserved to know and for that I sincerely apologize."

Intense silence!

Only the shallow breathings are audible.

"I'm going to tell Funeka the truth because I know that even if she stumbles or hate me she has people on her corner for support. I might not be here for long and the least I can do is to give her, her true identity"

It's silence again.

"Is that why you kept pushing me away? Because you couldn't tell me that the so called lover I met was the father of your child?" finally, Betty's low voice asks.

Shame has her by her throat as she nods

"I didn't want Zamani to know, it was a one silly mistake. I loved his brother. And Thulani was a loose canon back then, I didn't want to cause

drift between them."

Betty now looks at her in disbelief

"from what I heard Zamani and Thulani were never in a good relationship. The drift was already there sis, even way before that little secret. You just don't want to admit that you slept with two brothers and fell pregnant for the one you didn't love, you ran back home after Thulani was arrested because to you that was the escape you needed to hide your secret. "

Martha wallows in embarrassment as she face down the floor

" You told me about Thulani, lying to my face that he was Funeka's father. Why didn't you tell me the truth? How do you think I feel knowing

that I've been here, looking at Funeka as if she is Thulani's child only for her to be my husband's only daughter. How do you think I feel? " her voice hasn't raised since she started speaking. Calm but sharp and saddened
Only then does a tear drop from Betty's eye

" I'm so sorry. "

" Please.. " she whispers

"stop apologizing. You've always been selfish. You left for green pastures leaving me behind with our sick mother and I took care of her, the day you return you are pregnant. I leave for joburg hoping that you will take care of her and you fail that she had to die alone.. While you were busy nursing your own selfish feelings.. "

This time Martha shed few tears.

She didn't mean to ignore her mother's strained

voice calling for her, she was in a battle of her own.

"I told you that truth because I thought you'd never bring it up again Betty. I was in a bad place, I've never forgiven myself nor have I forgotten about that day" tears flood even harder in her eyes, her lips trembling.

"I'm making you realise that my mother gave birth to a selfish child. Every time I try to look at your reasoning I find nothing. You hid Funeka all this while, only to tell her a lie to cover your secret. You lied to me, you couldn't tell me that Zamani was the father because you knew I'd tell him. As if that wasn't enough you brought her here, under my roof.... You are beyond selfish sis.. I'm exhausted, emotionally and physically. Just do you. Tell her, don't tell her. I don't care.

And thank you for causing a drift between Zamani and I, because apparently he has always suspected but didn't bother to bring it up because you never said anything. All in all, he was a coward too, he didn't have the courage to fight for the truth.. I'm done. I'm.. So done "

She wipes her face and stand up leaving Martha crying silently.

This is one of the things she was afraid of, causing a drift in her sister's marriage but some things can't be buried forever.

After wiping her own tears she looks at the time on the wall and realize it's after four in the afternoon.

Its clear that Betty is heartbroken and that alone breaks her spirit.

She head out and find Nora still glued on the same spot...

She is not crying but she is deep in thought

"Haibo mfazi, you can't be this lost while you have a monied son that can make your problems go away" she tisses, trying to stiff away from her own skeletons whispering horror in her ears

Nora finally looks at her

"I'm not proud of what I did but I will not apologize for making a decision that was best back then. I'm human, I make mistakes too"

She says and sigh

"That decision might have been best for you as you put it but at least be apologetic because it affected an innocent child who never asked to

be part of those mistakes" adds Martha

"that's easy for you to say, you don't know what pushed me" Says Nora.

"I've had my fair share of the decisions I took thinking they were best. But in actual fact they were selfish, I just wasn't bold enough to admit and stand for the truth" Martha says

" You've never carried an evidence of cheating. Worse, cheating while belonging to someone else..."

"Atleast you didn't cheat with your brother in law, unlike some of us" Martha drops the truth..

A quick shocked stare is shared between the two women

Suddenly they fall into laughter in a serious

matter

As they stand like that a car drives in, they pay no attention because deco people are busy moving thier staff..

"but we need to acknowledge our mistakes"

Nora is about to respond when her worst nightmare suddenly comes into sight getting out of the car

"OH... J.. Jesu" A stuttering, frozen Nora utters while stemmering back.

She screams once seeing a gun on his hand while Martha moves before her asking what's wrong..

A loud gunshot goes off..

Sending everyone near on the ground.

Funeka

The most memorable, glorious moment of my life! This one goes to the books of stories I'll be reciting to my grandkids every night until my last breath.

After my bath I crawl back in the huge bed with white covers after changing to a skimpy nightie.

Khanya did this, I have no idea how but they even packed a bag for me. We are spending the night in this elegant hotel I don't even know but it's not far from home.

Tomorrow we are boarding a plane straight to Capetown!

That alone has my lips spreading into a wide

smile.

When I asked why can't we spend the night at his place then board a plane tomorrow he said the plan is to be in a different, good place and indeed this room is beautiful.

The door opens and the man that has my heart at the palm of his hands enters, being followed by what I call room service..

This life, can I stay in this moment forever..

The guy leaves after putting everything on the table. I'm not hungry, Zabelo ate something with chicken next to me on our engagement and the smell just turned my appetite off.

Zabelo leans against the wall and stares at me as if it's first time seeing me.

I'm subjected to endless giggles and blushing all at once

"You looked stunning today my love" this has to be one of things he excels at. Zabelo makes me feel wanted, content and loved in all angles.

He finally did me right, he went down on his knees and politely asked me to be his wife. And I said yes as always

"You looked pretty too" I say, his face turns into a deep frown

"Hhay MaFuze. When have you ever seen a pretty man? Please don't use that word and me in the same statement. Oil and water, we don't mix" he is so serious, I can't help but laugh at his response. I expected it

He ends up joining in and laughing softly

"Come here" he gently says, opening his wide

arms. He is still in his perfect suit and I'm just close to nothing. I'll kick Khanya for packing such a skimpy red thing

"Red looks good on you" he says as i reach him, his arms encircles my waist and I look up at him smiling

"Thank you for today Magwaza. I had a beautiful day and I loved every moment of it"

His eyes drop for a moment and he looks at me..yes he is blushing! What a beautiful sight. My love for him suffocates me even more

"I love you Zabelo and I can't wait to be your lawfully wedded wife" he gently grabs my neck and rest his lips on mine driving me in a passionate kiss.

His phone start ringing loudly in his pocket, he ignores it as his hands run around my body.

We are too high to even wonder about phone calls. Everyone know this is our night, anything else can wait.

apologies for erros

A RAY OF SUNSHINE

FIFTY TWO

FUNEKA

I'm drawn from a peaceful sleep when Zabelo's phone rings. I keep my eyes closed as I feel him shuffling and speaks softly maybe not to wake me but I'm already awake.

He seems to be in an argument about switching his phone off. Its irritating me

I'm slowly drifting off again when I hear him shouting in shock getting out of the bed

"What do you mean she is gone?"

He loudly asks, his footsteps fading away from the bed.

I seat up straight, who is gone now? Gone where?

There are lights illuminating from outside as he turns and stare at him.

I don't like how he is looking at me as he if about to break my heart.

"we'll be there in a few. Sharp" the phone lazily drops on the floor, his face turning sour.

He sighs heavily, I literally feel an intense aura he is suddenly carrying.

Something is seriously wrong and I'm starting to have that feeling at the pit of my stomach

"Who is gone Zabelo?" I ask, seeing that he is not willing to tell me anything. His eyes are suddenly shying away from me. I watch him picking up his phone, my nightie which ended up on the floor last night, and all his belongings.

He is packing, is it not too early for our flight?

The time on the wall indicates that it is just after five in the morning, winter and long nights.

"We'll talk when we reach home. Go and take a bath"

I remain seated, something is going on and I want to know now

"Zabelo"

"MaFuze please don't fight me on this. I need

you to listen to me, please" it's the tone of his voice that makes me listen. It's as if he is suddenly hopeless and I'm adding to the situation with further questions

This has to be the quickest bath I've ever taken.

I'm out in a short while and I find him ready, he even picked an outfit for me. I don't have time to dwell on what he picked, I just put on the dress and look at him

"We are no longer going to our vacation are we?" I softly ask, disappointment hitting my heart. I'm hoping for a different response but his look tells me the answer I dread to hear.

He opens his arms and hugs me..

The hug is tighter, he keep saying he is sorry.

I'm confused about the sudden change of plans

but I know he is going to tell me.

"Zabelo.. What's happening?" he doesn't let go, instead his arms suck the life out of me.

On the road he can't even spare me a look.

We left, I couldn't stomach anything and so we had no choice but to leave that breakfast which he ordered.

His other hand is holding me so tight, I notice that as we approach home his hold tightenes with each second.

"Who is gone Zabelo, did your mother leave again?" that's the only explanation. Why else would he cancel our vacation. Arg! Such a vile woman. Couldn't she wait for us to have our vacation before pulling this stunt? I knew she wasn't going to stay forever.

"I'm sorry babe, I know you really wanted her to be in your life" he tenses up at my statement, the gate opens and now I'm starting to be edgy even.

He parks.

Zabelo is scaring me, he leans on the steering wheel. Looking around the yard I'm met with the police tape in our yard as if it's a crime scene

I suddenly feel this urge to scream, a sorrowful atmosphere engulfs my body and I shiver..

Something is wrong

"Zabelo, look at me and tell me who is gone and why?" my voice raises a bit. Now I demand to know because whatever is going on has to be serious. Why would we cut our vacation without even getting on the plane

"ahem. There is no better way to say this

sthandwa sam" His voice is so low as he utters,
still burried on the steering wheel

The yard is awfully quite and empty

"Look at me and tell me what's going on"

He sighs, blink a couple of times and rest his
eyes on mine.

Why does he look so scared

"I'm sorry MaFuze. There was a shooting
apparently, just after we left. Your mother. She..
She.. Something happened and she.."

"SHE WHAT?" I can't stop the racing heart in my
chest

"gone" he whispers. I almost didn't hear him.

He is crazy.

"Gone where?" my voice is changing, my head is
spinning but I'm thinking he means my mom

went back home to KZN.

That's what he means

"I'm really sorry.."

There are different expressions..

And there is only one that you just know is your worst nightmare..

I head out of the car, blinking and conflicted.

I feel him behind me but I'm running now.

I budge in the house and find a full house.

Everyone is here, even My father's family is here.

I'm subjected to sympathetic looks..

Ncane stands up and come to me

Her eyes are red..

"Ncane...where is my mom?"

My trembling voice manage to ask as strained
as it is

One tear drop from her left eye and I feel
lightheaded, a sharp stab on my heart,engufing
my chest. Breathing is suddenly painful and
difficult

"I'm so sorry my baby.."

My eyelids get heavier, my sight blurs and I feel
weak, everything around me seems to get
smaller and smaller until I'm in deep darkness..

ZABELO

Being helpless is one thing he can't tolerate.
Sadly the situation is out of his reach.

After it hit her that she lost a mother, she collapsed.

Zabelo feel his heart being ripped apart as she looks at Funeka seated on the couch with Betty. She's been staring into space since she regained consciousness

Failing to stay, he heads out and drive out in speed. Mongezi told him that the those who were at the scene said that some middle aged man shot twice and ran out leaving Nora shocked. It was clear she knew the man.

Martha unfortunately caught a bullet that wasn't meant for her. She was at the wrong place, at the wrong time and she died on the scene.

The sound of tyres scratching scares any living thing nearby as he drives in his yard. In a blink he flies out of the car

He doesn't knock but just badge in and be met with packed suitcases, his three siblings and his mother who suddenly look like she is about to faint

"Going somewhere family?" his voice is deep yet venormous as he asks. His bond chilling stare rest on his mother who swallow nothingness

"I'm sorry tle Zabe.." her trembling voice comes to play

"I'm not the one who lost a mother, mine died a long time ago. I won't ask twice woman, tell me why aren't you the one lying dead on that mortuary, tell me what the f#ck happened?"

They all squim in nervousness

"It's my husband. I left him and he doesn't want me to" Nora's statement

Siziwe chuckle

"go on mama and tell my brother that we ran because you also cheated and made the man raise me as his own when you knew very well that I wasn't..."

"Siziwe...".

"LET HER SPEAK!"

Gulping in fear she shut her mouth

"We left because that man finally found the truth and you mother decided to clean his bank accounts and run instead of staying. Not to forget that you also owe one of the dangerous man a very huge amount of money...all in all we

have many enemies because of you"

Zabelo feel his blood boiling. This woman left him as an infant and return many years latter just to cause havoc!

How will he look at MaFuze knowing fully well that he is the cause of her loss and pain. Nora stayed because he allowed her to and how she has brought her skeletons that caused a lot of damage. Only if he listened to the voice in him and did his research.

" Who was it Nora, was it a husband or a loan shark?"

"it was John, my hudband.."

"seems like I have a man to kill, how cute"

A RAY OF SUNSHINE

FIFTY THREE

FUNEKA

"I'll be in the kitchen when you need me," Says Khanya, staring at me sadly. She just took a tray of food. I couldn't stomach anything but I ate because of how she's been slaving around making sure I'm fed and full.

I nod, she walks out after giving me a faint smile.

I do what I've been doing since Sunday morning.

I crawl in bed feeling beyond physical pain. Sometimes I look at myself in the mirror and slap my face hard, shouting to wake up.

I'm confused, one minute we were enjoying my engagement then the next day she was gone.

Just like that

All I do is just wake up, sleep, wake up and sleep. It's an unusual cycle, then I'm in an unusual, unbelievable, heart breaking place.

I just sit by as the days go by, in my head nothing makes sense.

I'd be lying if I say I cry myself to sleep.

I don't do it.

I don't want to cry so whenever the lump gets harder I suppress it just as hard until it subsides down my tummy

I'm dozing off when I hear the soft knock. My heart skips just a beat, hoping it is him.

I open my eyes to be met by bab Ngcob.

I'm sad, I wanted to see Zabelo.

"Ngane yami, don't mind me I'm just here to watch you fall asleep"he gently says, brushing my head softly.

I smile a little and close my eyes again.

In whatever that has happened, I'm glad my mom united me with my family. I don't feel alone

We are back at Mtubatuba.

She will be laid to rest on this side.

I have no idea how the arrangements are going, last I was told they were preparing to move her to this side. Corpse is extremely expensive. I have no idea how they will pull it off but my brother's have been very hands on with everything .

I fall asleep fighting the lump growing in my throat..

Waking up in the morning there's this sour taste dangling in my tongue, Khanya is fast asleep

next to me. Nangamso could not come, she's in the middle of exams.

I get off the bed and head to the kitchen for water but I instantly inhale some awful smell and everything just rushes up and right on the floor..

I puke..

I can hear someone asking what's wrong but I can't answer now can I..

I'm given a glass of water and I gulp instantly

After that I quickly clean up before everyone wakes up and almost puke again

I drag the chair and seat outside under the Mango tree. We used to sit here, mom and I. During the mango season, we'll just guard everyone who wants to steal the Mango.

She would do my hair and I'd lie on her thighs listening to her telling me stories.

She was sick, but that doesn't mean someone had to kill her.

Nobody gives me a full story of what happened, how the gunman just shot mom and vanished. I don't understand, why? Why her?

I finally feel fresh air and not that suffocating one at the kitchen

Ntsika was making eggs. He is here, Mongezi, Zabelo and Mazisi have been up and down making sure the arrangements are in order.

I'm glad the distant uncles and aunts haven't arrived, this house is tiny and would be a mission impossible to fit everyone. It's a four roomed house

Two bedrooms, kitchen, bathroom and a lounge.

I look up the sky, morning breeze hitting my face

As if bringing me peace which I need so much.

I'm exhausted

I don't have strength in me to deal with loss

I just have this hole, no amount of days or years will fill it. I'll have to live with it. Maybe one day I'll wake up and it won't hurt as bad as it does now..

I spot ncanne slowly making her way to me with a scarf covering her shoulders. She is broken, I see it in her eyes, her posture itself is just heartbreaking.

"Funeka" she acknowledges my presence and looks up, fighting back tears.

She is a sensitive woman and she's the one

who manage to make me cry my own river

"it was Sunday when Martha and I returned with a stolen Mango from the Mzobe's. Martha being forward climbed up the tree and got us some fresh mangos. And during the day there was a case, Mr Mzobe had reported us to mom and we got one hell of a beating.."

She laughs, a sad laugh that can turn into a loud cry in an instant

I hate this, I blink tears away and lay my face on my hands

"We never stopped. My mom one day came with a mango seed and told us to water the tree every single day so that we won't bother the Mzobe's anymore. And we did, the first Mango the tree produced were 12, we counted them and knew them by head. And the following year the number increased. I never thought that one

day I'll stand here, alone and crying because God has once again claimed one of his angels. "

She's still seeing good in this situation. I appreciate her presence in my life.

She grabs my shoulders in comfort

"I've lost a mother before and I know the feeling of loss, it's a hard stone to swallow. But I am here if the pain gets too much. I love you baby" headache is slowly creeping in

"I was thinking if you would like to choose a coffin" she says softly, I can tell with her trembling voice that she doesn't want to ask me this but she has to

"I'd love that Ncane" with that, she takes my hand, wipes my face clean and tell me to get ready.

It doesn't take long to get ready, I'm getting dressed in the bedroom when we hear the car driving in. Khanya peaks through the window and smiles softly.

"They are here, finally. Let me prepare something to eat for them" she says, I can spot joy from a distance

"Get ready Khanya and stop worrying about those fools. They will sort themselves out"

She drop her gaze

"But Zabelo is with them Mos" I last saw him a day before yesterday.

He is distancing from me, even our phone calls are short

"You can fix something quick then we can get going" she does a little dance and heads out. I think she's getting addicted to Mazisi. She calls

him a strict CEO. Mazisi has a good heart but he hardly smiles. And Mihlai is in the picture, I don't know what is going on between the two but there is unfinished business. All I know is I'm not getting involved. And I wonder what happened to the taxi driver

I'm done getting ready when bab Ngcobo comes in and we head out. He's been very supportive and hands on with groceries, the grass cutting in the yard. My own father will come today since it is Friday.

Sunday is the day of burial. I'm not looking forward to it.

I wish the days to just stop moving so that day does not come

"Bafana, is everything coming together?" baba asks, that's how he greets them by the way

They quietly nod, seated on the chairs.

"Good, I'm glad to know that those big heads raised with my hard earned money are finally producing fruits" low chuckles. It's so awkward.

They are stealing short glances at me as if I'll break

"Sanibonan" I greet and they instantly stand up. Even Zabelo

They are so tense and frozen

"Funai nei" Mongezi softly says, he isn't sure whether to hug me or not. He ends up grinning.

"Khanya let's get going" I tell her.

We will be travelling with bab Ngcobo.

Sometimes you'd think you are stronger only to stand in a room full of coffins, with all sizes and

shapes and be forced to choose the one that will be the last shelter carrying your own mother.. A woman that raised and fend for you That's when reality kicked in..

I remember failing to breathe, glued on the same spot and panting for air..

I should never have agreed.

Since I returned I have been a mess, I'm spending minutes crying then showing my smile.

I'm laying on baba's thighs. He is seated at the corner on the mat. Brushing my back gently as r telling me that he is here with me, it is calming and soothing.

Khanya put food in front of me.

Nothing fancy, just beef and pap

Ncane is seated on the sponge on another

corner with my mom's favourite neighbour and friend, Aunt Susan. every piece of furniture was moved to the outside old one room.

My stomach grumbles, I hear baba laughing softly.

"Let's take care of that embarrassing noise maNgcobo. Sit up" and just like that, I'm fed like a little baby.

Days will go as normal even when you are in an unusual situation. It's finally Sunday morning.

This morning might be good to others but to me it is a gloomy one.

Even the atmosphere is dark, frightening, depressing and sombre

I can hear the soft, lingering and heart-wrenching melody as I fix my dress for the umpteenth time before the dressing table that

my mom got from one of the people she was working for at that time.

I can't believe the day of the send off is finally here, staring at me and there is nothing I can do.

Why does life have to be so hard? Why do we get close to people, love them and be forced to say goodbye

"Funeka, it's time to see her and say goodbye " I turn, both bab Ngcobo and my father are at the door. Khanya is next to me as she says softly. I'm sure Nangamso is somewhere in the house crying, she's way sensitive.

"sisi" it's a different, deep voice. Ndalo

He gets in and puts his arms around my shoulders.

He arrived Friday and has been up in my face

enough for me to realise that he is loving and not afraid to show emotions. Unlike my brothers who freeze before me, he holds my hand and tells me it's gonna be okay.

"You don't have to do it if you don't want to. Some people are afraid to have the last image of their loved ones be the one laying in a coffin, unresponsive" he tells me.

I wipe the uncontrollable tears flowing, my chest so tighter as if a heavy object is resting on it.

"Ahem.. I'm afraid" I whisper, playing with my dress. and I am afraid. This is the time I wish my mother gave me a sister so I can have the courage to want to see her last face, how she looks.

"Erase scary death in your mind. Let all her beautiful memories fill up your mind and tell

yourself that this is goodnight, for now. You will see her someday, for now allow her to have a beautiful sleep. She will always be by your side and in here.. She will stay forever "he says, patting my heart gently.

" Just say goodnight mama, you will know in your heart that she will be with you in spirit "

I feel my emotions slowly taking a back seat.

This is the only day I get to say goodnight to mama.

I want to implant it in my unstable mind and one day.. One day I'll look back and never shed tears.

"And you don't have to be afraid, dear sister. You are not alone" I turn, my fathers holds my hands and we head out. With each heavy step I take I feel my knees getting wobbly but the old men hold me tight and never let me hit the ground

My Brothers, Zabelo and some uncles are all surrounding her coffin.

"Here is your mother Funeka, say goodbye to her and let her soul rest in peace" that's the uncle I've seen at least twice in my life.

There she is.. My superwoman

Her face is pale, but she looks like she is in a deep sleep. In a deep, painless sleep.

My heart is bleeding

But I keep the brave feeling that I'm not alone

And I whisper inaudibly

"goodnight mama, I love you" just saying that, I feel like the elephant sitting on my chest just removed one foot away.

A RAY OF SUNSHINE

FIFTY FOUR

FUNEKA NGCOBO

I'm wide awake, cold walls staring at me in the dark, Unbearable pain just sitting heavy on my chest, bleeding my heart as if a sharp stab is constantly attacking.

I'm seated on the floor with my arms wrapped around me, leaning against the bed and involuntarily sinking in the deep, dark pit of nothing but darkness of intense sorrow and despair

I wish I knew how to make the pain stop, to have a heart made of steel, the one that's cold

and feels nothing.

I would even pay my last cent to be free of this miserable, suffocating feeling that slices my heart into pieces.

As they say, even the long, darkest night does come to pass, in this case the worst day of my life has ended. I wish it ended with these feelings, I wish the loss I'm buried in ended with the day too.

Maybe I wouldn't be feeling like someone is ripping my heart apart, I wouldn't break down at any memory of her hitting my mind constantly.

Like everyone else who's suffered a loss I also had that little hope tucked somewhere in my brain. I didn't have to openly focus on that hope every second, didn't have to think of it more often and nurture it with a little prayer but it was

there.

Hope that maybe, maybe she will wake up.

Maybe that's where I got the courage to wake up the next day, the stupid hope that she still had time to wake up again.

When I poured that last soil on her grave, my body trembled terribly. I remember screaming, screaming that they stop blurring her, I felt the burning need to see her again, to hold her and hug her without letting go.

The strong hands that grabbed me made it impossible to fight, in my mind I thought maybe if we were to give her another day she would wake up. I thought that if I screamed too loud God might hear me and miracles would happen..

The choking, heavy lump in my throat is hard to swallow, it ends up with a loud, trembling sob that escapes my mouth and from there I can't

stop it.. I can't stop crying, furiously clutching my chest hoping that I grab the pain with my hands so I can throw it where the sun doesn't shine

This is not the way to live..

It hurts

I feel strong hands hugging me.

ZABELO NGCOBO

Time on the wall indicates that it is after six in the morning. Khanya is awake and busy in the kitchen with the rest of the family.

He is seated on the chair next to the bed watching her snoring softly as if she wasn't in pain. Only if she could sleep the entire 'time heals' syndrome and only wake up pain free.

Zabelo did not sleep, he sat in the lounge. He

once lost the only parent he knew, as young as he was, the pain he felt was raw, he knows this journey too well. The first night after the burial was the worst and he knew the post funeral breakdown would hit her while everyone was fast asleep.

Some might think that the worst day of loving someone is the day that you are told you've lost them, when the actual worst day is the first night after the burial.

Having nothing else to do but to move on

Having to deal with the actual loss that they are gone and never coming back.

It's a hard, sharp reality that bursts the little hope, that maybe feeling, the one that put you in a bearable pain believing that maybe they will wake up. The heart piercing image of seeing your loved one being buried deep on the ground

living nothing but heartache behind is one terrible way to move on

Seeing her wallowing in an intense anguish stabbed him in the deepest part of his soul, knowing he was responsible for the pain just made things worse.

For the first since, he was able to hold her and brush her back until she fell asleep.

Only if he could, he'd turn back the hands of time and never allow his mother back in his life.

He is swimming in guilt, knowing his mother is the cause of her pain just makes him hate himself more.

He can only hope that this will not be one thing to break them apart..

A call comes through as his phone vibrates in

his pocket.

Looking at the caller ID he stands instantly and pick up at the far corner

"Tell me you have good news Kiddo, please do"

Kiddo, the go to guy when one need a quick information

"I'm afraid that man seems to have vanished into thin air"

Before he can stop himself, his fist has landed on the wall feeling anger grabbing his last hope

"F#ckin damn it! You are slacking boy. Should I find someone else to do this job for me?"

He has been on a hunt, searching for Nora's husband

"This has never happened to me before. It's a first, gimme just a day I promise y..."

"Tseg! Didn't you say that on Friday? Hhu how many fuckin days must I give damn it. I'm

running on a thin lane here, I need this information as soon as yesterday! "

He hisses enraged with the fact that Kiddo was proving to be useless..

"I'll be in touch once I find some leads. Sho mfo"

Kiddo hangs up before he starts swearing at him again and he clicks his tongue and turns..

Only to be met by Funeka, seated on the bed and staring at him emotionless.

"MaFuze" his heart is doing the marathon as he gently ask her, wondering if what he said spiked some questions in her.

"I'm sorry if I woke you" he reaches her and stands still. Not knowing whether to hug her or hold her.

It was easy to hold her last night because she was buried in deed sorrow but today she is just

staring deep in his eyes as if she can read everything he's been trying so hard to keep to himself.

He asked the family to keep her uninformed of how her mother died until he find the killer. For now the investigation seems to be fruitless

"You've been avoiding me" she finally says, staring at him without blinking

"I'm not" he argues

"I'm not asking you Zabelo, I'm telling you. You have been avoiding me as if I'm an egg that might break when you touch me. I miss your touch"

As uncomfortable as he gets, he manages to flash a smile and that alone brings a smile to her face. For a moment her dull eyes are replaced with a bit of twinkle in them

"Come here," he says, opening his arms widely.
She doesn't protest, feeling his arms around her
bring that hope. Hope that not all is lost

.... *WILL CONTINUE THE CHAPTER
TOMORROW.. FORGOT TO CHARGE MY
POWERBANK AND THE POWER IS OFF NOW..

ANYWAY GOODNIGHT LOVIES  **

A RAY OF SUNSHINE

FIFTY FOUR CONTINUATION

Nora Mahlaba

"Mrs Mahlaba"

Nora nods at the guard acknowledging him and
heads inside the huge silver gate. She is invited

by a big, greenery yard with perfectly cut grass. She still can't get enough of the beauty of the house. It is a triple story modern house, big enough for her to start fantasizing about owning such a house.

She brushes her long, curly weave before knocking. The door opens revealing a gorgeous, no nonsense woman. She's in tight jeans, red stilettos and a red blouse. Her head is bald but she screams money with perfect makeup.

"Mrs Mahlaba, come in" she boldly says, Nora observes her surroundings in awe. Her husband, Mahlaba is a tenderpreneur, counted as one of the richest men in his hometown, however staring at this magnificent interior makes her feel like her 10 roomed house back home seems like a tin fish.

"You may seat" she sits down and their meeting starts

"Are you sure you weren't being followed? That son of yours can be a bit meticulous, I don't trust him"

Says Khethiwe Ndlovu

"No one followed me. I took an Uber to town, then from there took a cab to here"

Nora replies

"Great then, we've managed to divert his mind elsewhere with this whole plan. What's left is for him to return from KZN, then we'll set him up and I'll have my revenge when he goes to prison and you will get your money" Qhawe's mother states, her voice filled with deep hatred

"I just hope he will not dig up enough and realise that the man who shot at me wasn't my husband" adds Nora

"By the time that happens he'll be in too deep. I've told my guys to release that guy. When he learns that he's been found, he will fly here and finish him without thinking twice. He will never suspect you of anything. Did you pretend to be ready to run right? "

Nora nods

" Yes, he was livid and said out loud that he would kill that man. I just want to get this over and done with so that I can have my money and buy a house like this one "

She says, admiring the house with her eyes

Khethiwe chuckles and looks at her, wondering how such a beautiful woman has no brains..

Nora heads out after shaking hands with the woman. She is even envisioning her life without money problems and these many people she owes. She'll manage to pay some debts and even be left with some.

She calls a cab and in no time she is on her way to her favourite place. The casino..

She smiles, feeling like all her problems are going to disappear. She is grateful for the woman that approached her in the Casino with a plan to hand Zabelo to jail because he killed her son.

All she had was to offer a million.. A million Zabelo would never give.

She'll just go with the plan, get the money and later confess everything to the police and the woman will be arrested while Zabelo will be released. That what she believes will happen..

As much as she cares for Zabelo, she wouldn't choose him over money.

Khethiwe came up with a plan to lure Zabelo into prison.

The plan was to have Nora shot but not killed, and she would say it was her husband.

Zabelo being him, would obviously look for the man and kill him. That's when the plan will be in motion.

It is unfortunate that Funeka'S mother was in the wrong place at the wrong time.

But at least that gave Zabelo even a better motive and drive to look for the man and kill him..

FUNEKA

I just came back outside and I can't stop looking at my face. I look awful

I stare at myself in the mirror, countless thoughts bombarding my mind.

My hair was cut, I'm completely bald headed. It's a sad tradition on my mother's side of the family. We cut our hair when mourning

"You are still beautiful MaFuze, stop overthinking" Zabelo says. He is seated on my bed and I've been staring at myself every second trying to find beauty but I see none

"You are saying this to make me feel better. I'm ugly" I hear him heaving a sigh.

"Come to me" he orders softly

"I'll come in a minute. I'm still trying to make

sense of this new man staring at me.. God Zabelo I look like a man!" I half yell turning to face him

I know I'm whinning but it's the truth

I feel so sad for this new look

Why did I have to be born in this family!

He comes to me and hold me on my shoulders looking down at me

"You are beautiful, you are beautiful, you are Beau..."

"Okay! I've heard you"

Why does he keep on repeating the same thing. He is annoying me too

"No you don't hear me because you don't believe me. Say it to yourself, 'I am beautiful' .

Say it"

Is this man serious?

I give him a look and fold my arms

"I'm not a kid Zabelo" "

" Just say this with me and I will stop annoying you. Come on.. "

Hraa.. Why did i fall for him again

" I am beautiful.. "I mumble

" MaFuze" he warningly says..

"I am beautiful, I am beautiful.. I am beautiful"

Jesus.. I need Jesus

"that's better. What else do you need to feel beautiful?" he asks

"I need weaves. Lots of them. And I need a new makeup kit. And I need new clothes. And I also need a.. "

His phone rings disturbing our moment

Arg!

He frowns and pick up moving away from me

That was a quick call. He comes to me and hugs me tight.

I love his hugs but this one seems off

"I have to go to Johannesburg as in now.. "
that's all it takes for my mind to send me back to my sad reality..

It's been a while since Zabelo left.

I'm feeling his absence like crazy.

Its funny because I'm in a house full of people, Ncane, bab Ngcobo and my father are with me. Ntsika too

Nangamso, Ndalo and Pretty left yesterday night from what I was told. I was too engrossed

in my head to even notice.

Khanya left this morning, I cried when she left.

My distant uncle and aunt are leaving too, after cutting my hair off.. Nx!

"Funeka nana, can you carry this for me?"
bloody abusive aunt. It's a black plastic. I'm sure there is meat inside.

I rise from the mat and take the damn plastic.

They say their goodbyes to everyone and we head out.

I'm glad that taxis pass just outside the gate, I don't have to walk long distance carrying this

"How are you and the little one doing?"

She is losing her mind but I respond anyway

"I'm fine aunty"

I don't even know why she is asking me when she is already leaving

"I know this is not an easy time for you dali. But for the sake of that soul you are carrying please don't stress too much. We don't want you losing a child and a mother in such a short space of time.."

Never have I been thrown in such a deep confusion

The taxi hoots outside the gate before I can say another word.

What a weird woman

A RAY OF SUNSHINE

FIFTY FIVE

ZABELO MAGWAZA

By midnight he drives inside Johannesburg.

He has been getting updates on his guy about Nora's husband.

He is no longer speeding, just driving at an average speed.

He is in deep thoughts

Kiddo mentioned that when they found the man, he was badly beaten up and cannot even speak.

Explains why he's been awol, maybe some Joburg goons hijacked him or something.

His thoughts are disturbed by a phone vibrating in his pocket. He fishes it out, and glances at the screen.

His heart bounces a little, Funeka is the one calling, for the seventh time if he is counting correctly. He stuffs it back into his pocket, a

distressed sigh escapes his mouth.

He knows she will ask why he just left, he hates lying to her and prefers ignoring her instead of telling lies.

His eyes are suddenly heavy, blinking a couple of times he feels that he is getting sleepy and the plan to see Nora's husband seems to be a problem

He drives inside his apartment premises with a plan to take a little nap and wake up to continue with his journey.

Reaching his apartment he throws his body on the bed and let sleep take over..

Until his phone disturbs his deep sleep.

"MaFuze I've been on the road for hours. I couldn't pick up your call" He lazily utters, eyes closed.

It is silence for a while until he hears soft sniffs

"MaFuze.."

His heart tears apart as he realize that she is hurting and breaking down wherever she is.

She drops the call with no words said to him

He seat up, feeling like the world is suddenly on his chest.

Staring at the time, it's approaching one o'clock AM. She probably can't sleep, she is still sinking in deep, dark waters of sorrow and it will take very long to heal.

Instead of being there for her he had to leave in such a hurry and never gave it a thought of how affected she might me.

He's been ignoring her calls even.

Now he is the one calling. His heart is beating hard.

She doesn't pick his call and that send his mind in turmoil

He calls Ntsika who doesn't bother picking up as well.

He curses before he calls Betty.

"Zabelo, is everything okay? I heard you left in a rush" Betty says, in a sleepy yet gentle voice

"I'm okay mah, I'm worried about MaFuze. Can you please check on her" his voice is filled with panic and worry

He suddenly hates being here, if he had powers he would just telephath his way back to Mtubatuba

"Okay, let me wear something first, I'll call you back" Betty has a heart of gold. One of the reasons why Zabelo adores her.

"thank you ma, I'm sorry for waking you"

He says a bit gentler

"It's okay son, don't feel bad about it. We are all worried about Funeka"

He's been pacing up and down, wondering if she is okay wherever she is. If she will sleep, or not. How many tears has she shed, how does she feel now?

He has been too focused on trying to find the killer that he failed to be fully there for her. Even if he does kill the man, if she hates him now In the end it will be worthless

It is funny how it took him to be miles away from her to realize his shortcomings

His phone rings once and he quickly pick up

"mah, how is she?"

He quickly asks, his voice filled distress

"I'm not saying we can't take care of her but. I think you shouldn't have left Zabelo"

His knees weakens instantly and he falls on the bed and furiously brushing his beard

"Is she asleep?"

He ask again

"No. She is crying and... rumbling stuffs. I can't make sense of what she is saying. I'm worried Zabelo. She wasn't this bad with you around" Betty's voice is beginning to tremble as she says

"Can I talk to her" He softly asks

There is some shuffling and then silence

"MaFuze, I'm sorry for leaving. I'm sorry for ignoring your calls. I'm sorry for failing to be with you when you need me the most. I'm so sorry nana. Please just.. just close your eyes and sleep. I love you " he says

There's no response until Betty speaks on the other side

"When are you coming, she needs you here. Zabelo, did you know about the pregnancy?"

He blinks, blows a sigh and gulp

"Pregnancy? What pregnancy?" he is spooked, his shocked voice is visible

"Never mind. She was probably rumbling and I misheard everything."

Says Betty

"Please tell me what you misheard"

That's Zabelo begging

"I'm not even sure what I heard Zabelo. Just come back okay."

"okay ma. Please watch over her until she falls asleep"

"You don't have to ask. Of course I'll watch over her"

When the phonecall ends he grabs his keys without thinking twice.

.

.

FUNEKA

"Are you sure you took everything you needed?"
Ncane asks, for the second time.

I nod, not trusting my voice at this point.

My chest is tight, one word I'll break into a loud, piercing cry.

She smiles sadly and lock the door

She then holds my hand and we walk toward the car.

Each step I take feels heavier than the last, as if a piece of my heart is sliced, bleed and falls on this yard.

I feel walls closing in on me

My lungs seems to too stuck to let air in and out

Getting inside the car I lean against the window, staring at what made me, what raised me. What used to be my sanctuary, my heart, my peace. Now all is left is nothing but cold walls filled with the memories of the only person who

made my life a better one.

Warm tears makes thier way down my face as the car moves further and further away.. Until all I see is just blur..

It's been seven days since I said my last goodbye to my mother. I've left my home, I don't know when or if I'll ever return. She made that a home, without her it's just nothing but a heartbreaking memory.

I couldn't bring myself to say goodbye to her..

I couldn't look at that huge pile of soil, without imagining if she is fine or she's at peace like everyone said on her funeral.

I couldn't bring myself to speak to her knowing fully well I won't get a response.

I just left.

But my heart is behind

I can't understand how people survive with this deep hole that death digs mercilessly and leave you in nothing but scattered pieces of your heart, mind and soul

I know I cannot take this pain anymore.

I don't know when I fell asleep with the pain I was in. I wake up in Zabelo's arms

I blink and realize that we are finally in Bassonia

He lead me to my room..

"No.. Take me to my mother's room" he doesn't protest.

I'm glad he came back the following day after he ditched me.

I was seated under the tree shade watching leaves rustling in the breeze when he drove in. In that moment, I felt a little hope crippling in.

"thank you, I will be taking a nap in here"

He perks my forehead and tells me to sleep.

I can smell her perfume as I lay my head.

I probably shouldn't be using any of her things but this is the only way I feel close to her.

"Zabelo.." I whisper when he is about to leave

"don't leave"

I'm probably abusing him but I don't want him to leave

He nods and grab the chair at the corner and seat.

I'm dozing off when I feel the blanket being pulled away gently

Cold air invade my skin as he pulls up my top.

I have no idea what he is doing but he has been doing this since that day he returned

When he thinks I'm asleep he pulls up my top and gently caresses my tummy..

It is a soothing, calming feeling that has me falling asleep peacefully.

Maybe that aunt was right about insinuating pregnancy. It's been on my mind since she left, I would have told him but I need to be sure first and I couldn't do a pregnancy test while I was back home. Everyone was always around me, here I can even ask Nangamso for help.

I feel lighter, falling in a deep slumber wondering why Zabelo hasn't said a thing about this because he clearly knows something that I don't..

NORA MAHLABA

Her phone rings for the hundredth time.

She knows who is calling and she is ignoring her

"mama, your phone is ringing" Pearl reminds her. They are watching TV in the lounge

"Leave me alone wengane!"

She snaps, Pearl frowns and decides to put her concentration back on the tv

Her phone beeps, indicating an incoming message

It's from Khethiwe reminding her that if the plan doesn't work she will deal with her.

Zabelo never bothered to kill the man as they had envisioned

Instead he has been with Funeka the whole week

If there was a time she hated Funeka

It has to be now..

The girl is all Zabelo thinks about and it irks her to a point where she even imagine putting a bullet through her skull

A RAY OF SUNSHINE

FIFTY SIX

FUNEKA

"Are you sure you are not pregnant?"

The water instantly takes the wrong pipe and I cough insanely after that

The table is utterly quiet

All eyes staring suspiciously at Zabelo who looks unbothered with the fact that I might be carrying a sex evidence, our sex evidence

The bastard is not even brushing my back like many lovers do

He is fork and knifing his breakfast in peace as if Ntsika didn't just psycho analyzed me in front of everyone

"We are waiting" Mongezi mockingly says, just as I stop coughing.

There is Ncane, bab Ngcobo, Ntsika, Mongezi and Mazisi who is also staring at me amused.

I'm going to get Ntsika for this

"ahem.. What was the question again?"

I ask, hoping for something else but I know Nstika

"I said are you sure you aren't pregnant dear sis"

If I had superpowers I'd throw him in the wall with just my mind

"And what makes you reach such a deep conclusion Ntsika?"

I ask, trying so hard to stare at him without blinking

"I'm sorry, don't mind me just pretend I'm not even here" says Zabelo taking two bacons from my plate with one half cooked egg, I can't believe he is the only one in this table who is still eating in this heat that I'm suddenly thrown under

"But you are here dude!" that's Momgezi

"Don't call me that, I have a name and it's certainly not dude" what an unnecessary waste of my peaceful breakfast

My sin was to run to the toilet at the smell of eggs and return with a cup of water. Now

Ntsika just dropped this question

"As long as there might be a chance that you hit my sister skoon, I will call.."

"Mongezi! "-Ngcobo

If I don't turn into a tomato then I'm strong. How can I suffer such embarrassment so early in the morning

"Let's just finish this breakfast and mind our business. Wena Ntsika no one asked you about your crazy tittok videos where you take my wigs and dresses and make them your video costumes. Leave my child alone"

Now it's my turn to laugh

"You have tik tok mah!"

He looks spooked.

"Brenda shows me your videos everyday at work" she adds with a little laugh

"and you didn't think I deserved to know my privacy has been bleached"

He is sulking and I'm glad he has finally left me

"Your videos are public Ntsika" that's Mongezi reminding him

"But not to mom!"

I don't understand him

"why not me?"

"because.. Because the things I do aren't meant for your eyes.. I just.."

"you mean the videos where you pretend to be a woman or where you twerk for your fans.."

I'm loving this

After breakfast Zabelo asks to take me out. He asked Ncane and she agreed

I didn't ask bab Ngcobo he has a wife and she

will be the one dealing with him for me

"Are you sure I look okay?"

I'm in tight jeans, polo neck and boots. It's a bit chilly outside.

The jeans aren't tight but today they seem too tight. I won't be able to run if the world is suddenly attacked by zombies, maybe I'll be the first victim to be turned into one

" You are beautiful, go now. He is waiting"

Ncane responds. I don't like being bald, I put the bannie on and head out

I get in the car and we drive out

"Where are we going?"

I ask, leaning on the chair

"the doctor"

I turn my head quickly

"Why?"

"To check if Nstika's theory is true"

I feel a rush of heat bursting through my body..

Here I am thinking he is taking me out since I couldn't stomach anything

My phone rings before I can say something

It's Siziwe. Finally!

She's been ignoring my text messages

"for a moment I thought you have forgotten about me" that's my first line

She giggles, warming my heart. I strangely love this girl

"I'm sorry, I've been scared to call after what mother did"

She says

"Anyway I hope you and my little nephew are doing fine"

This girl is confusing me

"hold up Siziwe.."

Tyres scratching!

I almost hit a dashboard with my head.

The car abruptly stops

My heart is racing

"Ahem.. I'll call you back sis. Bye"

I end the call with Siziwe and look at this crazy man next to me

I'm so angry right now

"So it's not enough that I buried my mom just last week. Now you want to kill me too?"

My high pitched voice doesn't seem to scare him

"You are friends with my sister?"

Oh wow.. Wow

"Aren't you going to apologise for almost killing me?"

I ask him angrily

"Funeka, whatever business you have with Siziwe must end. Now. In Fact you must delete that number"

Is he losing his mind

"I have no idea what's going on in your head right and quite frankly I don't care. Just don't think I'll let you treat me like crap. I'm no one's puppet. Now please drive or take me back home"

Intense silence falls upon us

Until the engine comes to life and we drive in
utter silence

He tries holding my hand as we walk towards
the building but I yank it off.

I'm not talking to him until he apologises to me

He is the one who speaks with the white lady
doctor, Megan Brown.

She is his doctor, I see the way their
conversation flows.

I've been introduced as a wife.

I don't have the energy to correct him

I do the process of urinating and take the walk
of shame back to the doc's office.

Then we wait.

Nerves has me by my feet

I wish I wasn't angry. I'd be holding his hand right now..

Laughter erupts once in a while as they converse in a beautiful chat with the doctor. Nx

Look at him do free as if everything is normal

"Okay. The results are now ready. One line means the test is negative and you are not pregnant, and two lines mean the test is positive and you are pregnant."

I suddenly feel his warm hand holding my sweaty, clasped hands resting on my thighs

Our eyes lock for a second

I know I have his heart, just as he has mine

Megan shows us the lines and smile

" And we have two lines here. Congratulations Mr and Mrs Magwaza, looks like you should start saving money for diapers . You are

pregnant, Seven weeks pregnant" wow... wow

After the test the doctor did an ultrasound and she found a gyna for me. A close friend of hers I think

I'm not sure how to feel I'm still... shocked I guess. Zabelo on the other hand is totally fussing, he has been touching my tummy and asking how I feel. He's even apologised

We passed by Woolworths and he bought the goodies he thinks I might crave. It worries him that I don't have any cravings.

I don't have anything I like for now. I just have things I hate...

My mother told me she craved soil when she was pregnant with me.. How gross!

Maybe that's why I'm this crazy

Out of everything I could have wanted in that womb, I chose soil. Demonic!

I'm praying to never have any cravings

Imagine all of me looking for soil.. I can't!

I might have fallen asleep along the way. I only wake up when he tries to get me out of the car.

I tell him to move and I get out and hold his hand. I'm so sleepy!

The moment I touch the pillow I take a long nap.

**

ZABELO MAGWAZA

He left her fast asleep, hoping to be back by the time she wakes.

He has more pressing matters he needs to

attend to. And that's to first see Siziwe and tell her to stop bothering Funeka...

And everyone to stop calling her.

She is pregnant, he wants to make sure this time she never loses the child.

His phone beeps before he even reaches his house, it's Kiddo asking for a meet up immediately. He change his plan and head to him to a nearby restaurant

"Kiddo" he says and they fist bump and seat

"I'll go straight to the point. I think we got more problems coming"

He frowns. Just when he thought everything was going according to plan, now this!

Funeka is pregnant and the sooner he solve this the better

"I pay you to bring me solutions and not problems Kiddo" he boldly says

"Let me explain first. Our guy spoke a while ago for the first time. You said that the man is from KZN but his accent is definitely not from KZN. He has this Joburg Zulu. And check this out.."

He gives him pictures

"I went through your brother's Facebook account and that picture on your right is the so-called husband. It's his father, on the right is our guy from the cctv, the one who shot at your mother and she claimed that it was her husband. But those are two different people."

His heart rate beats slower than normal as he stares at the picture.

He never bothered to know his mother's husband that well. When he goes home, which happens once in a long while, he'll always return much quicker.

When he asked about the killer, his mother said it is her husband and he just believed her without a doubt

"Your mother lied. Question is why?"

Adds Kiddo

"Since the man can speak, what has he said so far?"

He ask

"Nothing concrete. Just that one of his old friends offered him a job. He wasn't meant to kill but to shoot. He messed up and killed the wrong target, he thinks it's the bosses that roughed him up, kidnapped him for a week and then released him. He never saw their faces bla bla bla.. I don't understand why they didn't just

kill him since he is an accomplice"

He sighs in exhaustion

Holding his forehead feeling all the hope he had crumbling down.

He should be home enjoying the best news but he is here, trying to put the puzzles

"Does he know my moth.. Nora? Or Nora's husband?" even calling her mother suddenly taste even bitter than before

"He doesn't know anyone in Gray town, or Graytown for that matter. He knows no name of Nora. We asked for that old friend and we haven't found him. He is said to be missing too"

He clicks his tongue

"have my mother followed. She knows some things that I don't.."

He says then stand up, feeling heavier and

heavier

"Let's go, I need to see this man myself. There is always a loophole in every story and I'm going to find one. That I'm sure"

I'm on my way to see Siziwe.

I woke up to an empty room and Zabelo was nowhere in sight. I looked for a spare key and left

I've received calls from home

They are asking when I am coming back. They really are worried about me

After this, I'm going back home

The Uber drops me outside, the gate is locked,

and I wonder why.

I call her and she comes to open for me

"You've been ignoring my messages. Why did you do that?"

I ask as we settle on the porch chairs

"I didn't know what to say, after what happened. I'm really sorry"

She says

"It's okay, it's life. And it's not your fault"

I say

"but it's still my parent's fault. I feel responsible because I dreamt that something bad might happen. Maybe if we stopped the engagement your mom would be alive. I'm really sorry sis Funeka. I can't believe my dad wanted to kill mom and mistakenly shot your mom..it's just so wrong and hard to come to terms with "

I feel air leaving my lungs..

What is she on about

A RAY OF SUNSHINE

FIFTY SEVEN

FUNEKA

"Please MaFuze" he pleads, his voice getting lower as hold the spoon of beef stew and rice to my mouth. His eyes reflect sadness and something else.

My stomach growls, I end up letting him feed me.

The sudden revelations about my mom's death crushed me for those few minutes.

I just broke down completely, wondering why

Zabelo didn't tell me anything. Why did it have to be his family to bring me such sorrow

He came to get me, I think Siziwe called him

He brought me to his apartment and cooked for me. He called Ncane and told her I'm with him for the night and apologised for not bringing me back as he promised.

I could tell ncane was giving him a hard time but I guess he succeeded in convincing her to let me spend the night.

I can't believe this is my first time eating a food he cooked, it's not bad. It's eatable, that's all I can say.

He makes sure I'm full before he gives me water to down my supper.

I watch as he takes everything and stands up

from the couch heading to the kitchen. I let the TV watch me, it's a sports channel and I'm not even surprised.

He comes back after putting the dishes in the sink, without his food and settles next to me.

I guess this is the time to talk

"Aren't you hungry?"

I've said it out loud before I can even stop myself. It's the first words I'm saying to him since

His eyebrows furrow for a mere second, probably confused and shocked about my sudden caring nature

"I'm okay" he hesitantly says

"You need to eat Zabelo. I refuse to share a bed with a hungry man. I don't want to end up being

the meal" okay, that wasn't intended, I just blurt it out.

His unpleasant expression is instantly replaced with a smug.

I instantly regret saying such words to him, now he thinks I'm not upset. I'm still upset at him for hiding such critical news from me but let me allow him to shine, just for now

"You can just tell me if you crave sex maFuze, no need to beat around the bush. I heard pregnant woman love sex"

I didn't say I want sex, but now that he mentions it I feel myself getting a bit excited

"Just dish yourself some food and leave me alone. I'm not like everyone else, I don't want sex"

His eyebrow raises a bit

"Are you sure you can resist all this sexiness? "

A low chuckle leaves my mouth as he push his
top reaching his strong torso

"Let's talk about something else"

I say

And just like that he is back to being all sad

"I'm sorry MaFuze. I was wrong and I'm truly
sorry you had to find out from Siziwe. "

He starts by telling me this

"Why did you hide it from me then? I deserve to
know what happened to my own mother Zabelo
"

"I know you deserve to know. I was going to tell
you after I have dealt with the culprit but every
time I get close, something else comes up and
now it's just.. It's a bit complicated"

An exhaustion sigh follows

"Dealt with the culprit?"

"Yes"

I give him the explain look

"You don't have to know every detail but just allow me to deal with this the best way I know how"

This response makes me uncomfortable

"Are you going to kill someone?" I ask in a whisper. I'm holding my breath and crossing my heart that he doesn't say what my mind has concluded

I'm thinking he will blink or look remorseful or shocked. He has a straight face, he has already made up his mind I just know

"One thing you need to understand about me MaFuze is that I will do whatever it takes to

protect you. What happened hurt you, I don't want to see you hurt. Whoever hurt you will pay, all those involved will curse the day they ever laid their eyes on you"

His voice is evidently cold, my breathing rate instantly accelerates.

I feel bouts of fear attacking my body

"nothing bad will happen to me MaFuze. I can take care of myself" he assures me gently as if reading my mind.

I've always known that he is not that law-abiding citizen. Half of the club owners aren't. But I just can't help this pit in my stomach

"What if you get killed?I don't want to lose you too Zabelo.."

"MaFuze. You will not lose me I assure you"

Holding my chin he says, staring deep in my

eyes.

"You don't know that, revenge does not end. It's just a vicious cycle, you will kill that person and in turn their families will hunt you down and kill you. Then what? I will give birth to a fatherless child? Or be killed just to get back at you"

I'm trembling, even the thought of losing him just cripples my mind.

He rubs my eyes with his fingers, wiping the tears that have managed to escape my eyelids

" Look at me MaFuze. I will not die. I will be here when our baby is born, we will raise our baby together and grow old together"

His voice is bold and full of hope. But I know better

"Listen to me. What happened has happened, it

doesn't matter what you do Zabelo. My mother is gone and she is never coming back whether you hunt down the culprit and kill him. The pain he left me will run for as long as my blood does. So please, just do what's right. Hand him to the police if you ever find him, my mother was a good woman. I don't want any blood to be spilled on her name. Please respect her"

I'm not revengeful, I'm hurting. I should be rejoicing that the man who killed my mom will be killed too.

But I just can't. It's not who I am

I'm also afraid, I'm afraid of losing someone else I hold dear. I will not take it, I know I won't

He plant a wet kiss on my left eye, then my right one and I feel myself getting warm.

He kisses my forehead and

Our eyes lock

Maybe I finally know the feeling of having that one person who completes you without saying a word. One look at him your heart just becomes full of his love.

"I love you MaFuze" he whisper gently and I feel butterflies at the Lowest of my navel

My heart is beating for him, I love this man. His feelings seem to double each passing day and I'm starting to wonder how one person can have so much effect on me.

He looks breathtaking in my eyes, I feel his warm breath trickling my skin before his lips graces mine in a heated, lingering kiss

He kisses me, taking my breath away as if its the first time. It's his touch roaming around my

body that owns me, it ignites every ounce of
love I have of him

My heart is violently beating

My body is screaming for more of him

A soft whimper escape my mouth, there's that
swoosh feeling in between my thighs

I feel unholy juices forming down there

He gives me a break to catch my breath

His forehead resting on mine as our escalated
breathing and heaving chests make the noise.

His hands are now buried inside my top, just
drawing circles on my bare back evoking sexual
hunger. The complete desire to be filled is
growing and the urge to rub myself on his hard
member is hard to ignore.

Now I know, I missed him

My hands travels down his zip and I touch his
hard member with my hands

He sucks his breath and hold them together

"MaFuze" he whispers breathless

Sexual lust is loud in here

"We can't. You are still mourning"

What..

"Zabelo, I've waited seven days. Isn't that
enough?I want this. I'm pregnant and I want
you" A low chuckle leaves his mouth

I deserve to be striked by lightning for using
this pregnancy for my selfish reasons

My poor baby

"I thought you are not like everyone else"

He reminds me and I hate myself for saying that
I'm annoyingly turned on, my body is heating up.

I can feel my aroused clit throbbing so fast and the wetness that has gathered in my vulva is not helping

"Zabelo" my sulky spirit is out on display

He kisses me again, I love how he takes control of my body but still makes me feel safe, not trapped.

Reaching the bed he helps me out of my clothes, I'm never wearing jeans I mean why do I have to suffer so much to remove them.

He ended up laughing at me

I'm too horny to find humour in this

I can finally breathe now that I'm in my bra and thong

I grab his top and take it off and he kicks off his pants with his boxer.

This time I'm the one who onslaughts him in a

hunger kiss.

He pushes me gently, helping me lie on the bed without breaking the kiss

He unclasps my bra and starts rubbing my nipples slowly. A burning sensation spreads throughout my body. I'm gaping, his lips now resting on my neck

His hand travels down my thighs, caressing.

I rub myself on his hard member as the need to have him deep in me grows.

" Zabelo.. please" ...I beg softly and he listens because my thong is slid down my knees and I use my toes to push it off completely

"... ahh" He is playing with my drenched folds and I throw my head back on the pillows feeling pleasure building deep in my body.

" Mmm... " I'm crying gibberish arching my back,

gently grabbing the bed covers as he softly rubs my clit in small circles.

I feel his knee spreading my thighs further apart and a tip of his member resting on my entrance.

My heart is racing as if it will be ripped out of my chest

He position himself and slowly enters my opening and I feel fireworks of pleasure ripping through my body

I cry out deeply as I get lost in a squeezing, unspeakable pleasure closing my eyes completely...

I woke up tangled in his arms. The best feeling ever. Zabelo's presence brings me peace and hope that I desperately need at this time of loss.

He took me out and we had breakfast in one of the restaurants just a few minutes away from the apartment and drove me home.

I made him promise not to kill whoever is responsible for mom's death. He kissed me and told me to stop worrying.

I don't know if he will listen to me or not.

I couldn't read him

I take the Bible that belonged to my mother and start paging through it while resting on the bed.

Ncane walks in and seat next to me

"Ncane" I say

"How are you feeling?" she's such a good soul

"taking it as it comes"

She nods

"So, are you really pregnant?"

I blink, and then nod

She smiles instead of being angry

"I'm happy for you. You should enjoy this pregnancy with Zabelo by your side.

You've been through a lot and you deserve this happiness. However this sneaking around will not always work in your favour. You know how your father is"

She's right

As if he could hear us, he walks in and stand before me

"MaNgcobo"

"Baba"

Now I'm feeling a little spooked

"Maybe I should just give you to him on a silver

platter. Anyway, how are you feeling today?"

Tjo, talking about being scolded in a gentle manner

"I'm okay baba, how are you?"

"I'm fine. Do you have any plans? Seating around might be stressful, especially if you'll be alone in this house. Ntsika isn't always around to keep you company"

I know seating around won't be a solution

"I'd like to get busy. So I'll go back to working with you if that's not problem"

I say, he smiles

"Of course it won't be a problem. But I think Mazisi must try to give you a better position. I don't want you to be overworked, seeing that you are pregnant"

I clear my throat. He might have overheard my

conversation with ncane

"Thank you"

He walks out leaving me in an awkward position.

The rest of the week is pretty much busy.

I'm no longer Mazisi's assistant but I help with the administration. I started on Wednesday

I'm working with that mean lady who hates me for some odd reason. But she has been very kind since I began. I'm not sure why she's being too nice but I'm enjoying every time here. I get little time to focus on what I'm going through since I'm forever busy.

I love being her assistant, I'm learning a few things about Admin and it keeps me on my toes.

My phone rings bringing me back from the busy pile of work

"Tell him I haven't killed you" Simone says softly as I pick up.

She knows Zabelo might be the one calling

"MaFuze"

He says

"Magwaza wam"

He laughs softly

"come to Mazisi's office"

I stand up and head straight to the lift and up I go to the office

Without asking any questions.

I found him with Mazisi.

They are having McDs burgers.

I take what's mine and eat, perks of being the CEO's sister. Eating before lunch time

They are downing red wine..

That's where my sin lies

Yesterday Simone had red wine in her bag and during lunch she drank some. The smell just hit me so good and I asked for just a sip

She doesn't know I'm pregnant anyway.

But now I can't stop craving just a sip

I'm hoping this little craving will fade because last time I drank alcohol while pregnant it ended badly.

After a good, busy Friday I head home with Ncane. The house is full when we reach home. Mazisi's twins are here, running around. Mihlali too

We found her cooking in the kitchen.

I head to my room after greeting and take off my clothes and wear comfortable ones.

After that I rush to where the babies are, they are sleeping peacefully.

I head down the stairs and straight to the kitchen

Mazisi is cornering poor Mihlali, he is standing behind her and totally caging her

Amen

Zabelo

He find his mother chilled in front of the TV.

He joins her and take the remote, switching off the tv

"and then? I was watching that!"

She yells

"I will ask you one question and for your own safety I hope you tell me nothing but the truth. Why did you lie to me about your husband? And what business do you have with Khethiwe Ndlovu?"

Nora swallows nothingness feeling her blood vessels drying up

"I don't know what you are talking about"

Her voice is trembling as she says

Zabelo gives her a picture that Kiddo gave him

"Isn't that you in that picture with the same woman I'm asking you about. Or you happen to have a twin that I don't know of"

He is strangely calm and that alone send shivers

"Ahem.. I can explain."

"please do. While at that do remember to call your real husband to take you back because

you are moving out of my house in the next hour.."

A RAY OF SUNSHINE

FIFTY EIGHT

ZABELO MAGWAZA

Khethiwe's car drives inside her yard slowly. She spots her security guard laying on the ground, hopelessly.

"Switch off the engine. He is here" she says to the driver and looks around even though her PI assured her that Zabelo was alone when he got inside the gate. She had him followed to be sure of his plan

"You know what to do" she whispers to the three guys she is with and tiptoes her way in.

Intense silence fills up the surroundings as she slowly walks inside, a gun already gracing her hands.

Zabelo is seated on the third staircase, a half bottle of whiskey in his left hand, while the right one pointing a gun at Khethiwe who just walked in alone.

"Finally, I almost finished this baby here. It blends so well with my tongue. My kind of taste" He says, amused at the bottle on his hands and gulp a sip

"Drop your weapon"

Orders Khethiwe coldly

Zabelo laughs a bit, and slowly stands up

"This is a masterpiece, I have few of this kind even in my own collection. You must hook me

up, you seem like a very knowledgeable woman...and a gullible one too "

The atmosphere thickens

They are glaring at each other, hatred adorned in their deep Icy stares.

Khethiwe feeling angrier that the man killed her only son. She is a bit far from Zabelo as she looks at him on the staircase

Zabelo on the other hand looks at the woman who hurt MaFuze. Brought nothing but pain.

A woman who gave birth to a man that killed his child.

"I heard you wanted me, here I am" he says, sternly. His cold voice sends shivers to anyone close by. His piercing stare has cornered Khethiwe and she feels her heart skipping a

beat.

He is a tall, dark skinned man with a dark, unsettling aura.

"I've waited for this day, to look you in the eyes and smile as I rain all my bullets on you..." A bursting sound suddenly goes off as he drops the bottle of whiskey from his hand. It shatters on the floor, scattering around as Khethiwe seethes, her eyes emitting anger

"Let them rain, I'm waiting" he says, unbothered

"You killed my son, you dog! my only son and for that you will pay. Thanks to your dump mother for telling you everything and brought you here, in my house, under my mercy"

"Mercy, you say. I wouldn't be so sure if I were you."

Khethiwe mocking laughter

"oh boy, you didn't strike me as naive as your mother. I call the shots here. This is my house, unlike you. I am not alone"

She tells him to shake him. Knowing that her guys would appear any second since they used the back door

"It's been more than five minutes since I graced you with my presence. Yet, you haven't done a thing. Your time is running out, my patience is running thin. I will not hesitate to kill you when my time to strike comes. So now is your time, I'm giving you a fair chance. you wanted me. Do your worst"

Khethiwe blinks a couple of times, her eyes scanning for her guys who seems to take longer

"Sometimes I don't get why people like you underestimate me. No one is coming, not even those bodyguards wanna be of yours. Call your PI, he has something to say to you"

Leaning on the rails he says, boldly

"What did you do to him!!"

He screams

"Don't worry, he died a quick death after telling you exactly what you wanted to hear."

She stumbles back, her hands shaking but she never let's go of the gun

"You know, MaFuze doesn't want me to kill anyone. She doesn't want anyone to die but the thing is you messed with the wrong person. And I can not look past that.. Your time is up"

Mongezi appears with five guys with him

Her knees weakens instantly, her heart

suddenly beat harder than normal as she realizes

She underestimated the situation

"Listen.. I can.."

*Bhaaa! Bhaaa! *

Moment of silence

Khethiwe is on the ground breathless

Mongezi looks at Zabelo and nods.

It is over...

FUNEKA

I haven't been able to get hold of Zabelo since

yesterday afternoon.

I woke up to zero missed calls from him.

After kicking his mother out, I need to know if he is okay. Siziwe told me, they all left except for her.

Zabelo loves that woman and I have no idea why he would kick her out. I know it's her husband that killed my mother, not her. I don't get why Zabelo would do this.

I'm starting to worry

"What are you thinking about?"

Ncane ask as she joins me in the lounge

Bab Ngcobo is behind her.

They settle on the opposite couch

"Nothing serious" I say

"Stress is not good in this state, Funeka. Tell me what's going on?"

I hate talking about Zabelo a lot, it's like I'm disrespecting baba

"I can't reach Zabelo on the phone"

I've turned into that woman.

"You worry a lot about him. He is an old man. He is okay, I'm sure he is busy and forgot to charge his phone"

Maybe they are right.

What if he was busy at the club, I mean it was Friday last night so.. And it's weekend today

"he is probably busy" I'm convincing myself than them

"There is something that we would like to talk

about Funeka" that's baba, this sounds serious.

He hardly called me by my name

"yebo"

"We were thinking. Zabelo is like a son to me. We may have our differences but I trust him with you. I've seen how protective he is of you, he takes her of you and he loves you. But this thing of sneaking around has to end"

I face down feeling shameful

"Which is why your mother and I decided that you move in with him since we can't perform any lobola negotiations right now. You are still mourning but as soon as that ends he will do right by you"

A RAY OF SUNSHINE

FIFTY NINE

I'm happy that morning sickness doesn't hit me regularly anymore. However I still can't stand chicken and eggs.

I make sure the chair is steady before climbing on it..

Which is a hard job because my belly is very much visible and getting a bit big

I'm four months pregnant now..

Today marks the second month since I moved in with Zabelo

I thought bab Ngcobo was fine with the idea, until I realised that he did this for me to be free..

But the man is always here. I'm counting hours. I know he will be here earlier than everyone else.

I'm glad they finally agreed that the lobola negotiations will start once I've given birth.

I wouldn't want to be a fat lady in a white,

wedding dress.

We are hosting lunch in my house. Yes, it feels good to say it. Everyone in my family is coming, hence why I woke up early. Early for me being after 8 in the morning.

I'm forever exhausted, I sleep more than I should. It's still early but boy I'm suffering.

Its a miracle I haven't stopped working even though I'm forever late

Zabelo and Siziwe walk while I'm busy taking the bigger dishes

Zabelo rushes to me and hold my waist

"Are you out of your mind Funeka?"

He is angry, I hate my name when he abuses it like this

"I'm taking the dishes.." I mumble as he helps me get down

My feet touch the tiled floor and I look up at an angry baby daddy

"I had to keep myself busy, Zabelo. I can't just sit, people are coming into my house"

His frown deepens. There it comes

"We both agreed that you will not strain yourself MaFuze. Siziwe will take care of everything. Nangamso is coming, Mihlali too. And Ntsika's mother. They will do the cooking, you are pregnant. You can't just overwork yourself. And what if you fell in that chair, broke your bones and hurt our child. Sometimes I don't know with you.. I just don't "

I sigh and peck his lips

"don't be upset, Magwaza. I was just trying to

be busy but I understand. I won't overwork myself, I'm sorry" I politely say

He side smiles, lean in and kisses me briefly

Now I'm staring at him pushing my top up, revealing my belly and he kisses it and brushes it gently

Siziwe pushes him away and as always they start arguing

"Just give me a chance already! You sleep with her all night. It's my time now. Anyway, How is my niece doing?" She's busy planting kisses and speaking with her so called niece

I no longer pay attention to their unending stupid quarrel

They treat my belly as if it's theirs

Zabelo put his arms around me and I lean on his shoulder.

I believe that it is easier when you find the right person, loving is easier and the best feeling ever

"You still remember the mother of thee niece Siziwe?" I ask her

She pouts her cute lips and perk my cheeks

"You know I love you right"

She's sweet talking me right now

"and I got your favourite" she's grinning as she says

Now she has my full attention

This girl. I will marry her after her brother

"You are the best!" I say, smiling widely

"What's your favourite again?"

Oh, we still have the third leg we hiding the truth from

"grapes babe, I love grapes"

He looks at me deeply

Siziwe rushes to one of the plastics and gives me grapes

And a red wine

.. I feel my heart beating so loud

She put the wine in the fridge and hand the grapes to me

"I love you sister in law" I say, faking joy and Zabelo seems to buy it because he starts smiling as I begin eating the grapes.

I love grapes, not because I crave them. I just naturally love them, no big deal

"So, we finally have the cravings" His voice is full of amazement as he utters

He's been buying anything he thinks a woman craves when pregnant, went as far as buying a biltong.. Yeah you heard that right

"I guess so. Yeap"

I scream as he suddenly swings me around.

I'm getting dizzy as I giggle loudly

The moment he stops I stumble a bit and he holds me still

He is happy, way too happy.

There is that twinkle in his eyes

Now I feel guilty.

"wow.. I will buy lots and lots of them"

I know he will

Only if he knew this baby is red wine

"Why didn't you tell me that grapes are now your cravings? You told my sister instead of me" His question throws me off guard. I didn't expect it

"Please, don't be jealous. It's not a good look on you big brother"

Thank Siziwe for saving me. They argue again and the question is forgotten..

Baba walks in while I'm helping with the veggies chopping and seat next to me

Siziwe is making a stiff pap

I'm sure Zabelo is preparing a braai somewhere outside. Ntsika, Mongezi and Mazisi should have been here by now.

"My beautiful princess. Sizo, how are you?"

" he says, perking my cheeks.

Sizo is Siziwe by the way. Trust old people to shorten your name even when there is no need

He talks with Siziwe for a while and finally remembers me

"where is your wife? And your crazy sons" I say

"There was too much drama in that house. I had to leave. My wife had to remain behind to calm the situation, I came with Mongezi"

I wipe my hands and pay more attention

"What situation?"

"Apparently Mazisi cheated. I don't know what's up with him and Mihlali but she found out this morning and she was so crazy. She messed up his dreads"

Wow.. Juicy staff

"Who is the woman? I want to know who the woman is"

His eyes light up

One thing I recently learnt about this man..

He is a gossip

"None other than your friend.. What's her name again? Khanyi"

What..

"KHANYA! SHE IS IN JOBURG AND SHE DIDN'T TELL ME!"

I stand up, where is my phone?

"Hey, don't you dare mention my name okay! I'm just a messenger here"

I hear Siziwe laughing..

It rings, she's not answering.

I'm burning up, I don't know why I'm even angry. Khanya is old, she can sleep with anyone..

But except!

Mazisi is my brother and Mihlali is my sister in law.. Or that's what I think. There is no label to

the relationship but they have sex..

Yes. Baba told me

"She's not answering" I hopelessly say

"Good. I don't want her to think I'm some lame gossiping father in law. Do you realise that I might have two daughters in law?"

Jesus this man

I go back to my seat and drill him about what happened until Mongezi decides to come in and greet me.

I notice Siziwe freezing up. She doesn't like lot of people, I understand

" So you just left your twin in a war with Mihlali, you are not a good twin brother Mongezi" I say

"I cannot believe baba couldn't keep this from

you. My brother is still traumatised. Can you believe that Mihlali offered to wash his dreads only to put a relaxer on them and now they are ruined.."

I'm waiting for a part where he says he is joking

"Are you serious?"

I ask, baba wasn't specific

"It's bad, I tell you. You should have seen him. I felt so bad, he's had these dreads for God knows how long." I know what I'm about to ask is stupid.

"ahem.. Did you take a picture?"

Mongezi cracks up and hands me his phone..

Damn. It's bad

We are not a good family are we..

Its been a while since baba and Mongezi arrived.
Still no sign of Mazisi and the rest of the family.
I'm starting to feel bad for Siziwe. She's busy
doing almost everything.

I've helped with the salads though.

I wanted to make chakalaka but the moment I
stand up Zabelo walks in

It like he can sniff me when I'm about to do
something he doesn't like

I drink water and turn back to look at him

He takes the huge bowl and heads out. .

"Your brother will make these nine months
annoying. He needs to relax and let me be busy.
I'm pregnant, not sick" I say

Siziwe shares a brief look and continue stirring
her pap

"He worries about you a lot. Let him be, trust me there are many women out there who will kill to have such a caring man sis Funeka. He may be annoying but at least he is here, loving you"

Sometimes I forget I'm not her blood.. Arg

I need wine

I know it's so wrong but it's just half the glass, I can't stop the urge to have at least just a sip.

So I do that, I take a sip and lean on the fridge closing my eyes.

I feel like my body is coming to life. It's so good that I moan softly

"Taste good doesn't it"

I hear the glass shatter as it slips off my hands and I half scream

My heart is literally drumming

Siziwe looks just as spooked

We didn't see him walking in again

I shrink at the intense gaze I'm subjected to

I spot Siziwe walking out really fast leaving me
with a raging lion

"I can explain.."

"Explain then" the response comes too quick
and cold.

I gulp, holding my tummy

"I just needed a sip. Just a sip"

I'm making him even more angrier

I face down, his gaze is grilling me enough

In the middle of an intense atmosphere Mazisi
walks in, he is completely bald. I

Instantly cracks up.. Oh Bawo

I guess we will finish this later. Atleast in saved
for now

**

Happiness can be written in bold, it's so hard to miss in this table. Everyone is in their happiest time. Except Zabelo and I..

My father is here with Nangamso and Pretty. Ndalo is here too, for the mid year break

Mihlali didn't come, everyone has been laughing at Mazisi I even felt sorry for him

Ntsika and Mongezi are having a great time mocking him

Zabelo still hasn't said anything and that makes it hard for me to participate fully.

And he is not eating

"Can I say something?"

I feel my knees getting jelly

"Zabelo. I'm sorry. I won't do it again" I quickly say, now all the attention is on us

"let me speak MaFuze" he says, stern but a bit gentle.

"It was a mi.."

"Please"

I sigh. I'm gonna be the joke on this table

"I want to say that I'm grateful for you all.

Having you all here means a lot to me. But most importantly I'm grateful to this one person who saw me for me, loved and forgave me even when she didn't have to.

She brought life to me, she filled even the deepest, broken parts of me with pure love and respect. I'm not a friendly person everyone around me knows that but since she came I've been smiling a lot more because she is capable of bringing the bubble side of me"

Chuckles..

His hand is tight on mine as he gently speaks, looking at me. I'm fighting back the lump in my throat

"When compared to something, I can say I was just living in my darkest hours and never even bothered to search for the light until one night.. She just appeared out of nowhere and brought up the light I never knew I needed. She just stood there, like a ray of sunshine illuminating her way inside my heart so easily. Right there, I just knew my life would change.. "

°°A RAY OF SUNSHINE°°

FINALE..

~~SIXTY~~

°FUNEKA°

One thing I've learnt about Zabelo is that he will make you blush, be in his bubble and shower you with kisses and then the next minute he will scold you

I get out of the shower wrapping my body with a towel and find him on a laptop, he is in his boxers and a vest.

I've never seen him this serious about work before, it's the first time today seeing him busy. After such a long, crazy yet beautiful day.

"Finally, I almost thought you drowned in there. I was this close to calling the rescue team"

Mxm. He is mocking me

"since when does one drown in a shower?"

My response goes with an eye roll at his stupid

statement

"Maybe drinking wine while pregnant can cause drowning in a shower. Who knows?"

He looks up, I feel the heat from a distance and dodge his stern gaze.

"I apologised, Zabelo" I say

"Does an apology erase alcohol in your body, does it stop putting our child at risk Funeka?"

This is the time to shut my pie hole.

I change into a night dress then join him in bed. The plan was to put my head in the pillow and let sleep take over.

Until he speaks..

"Come and check this with me"

He says, staring at the laptop.

Sigh*

He is on Google

"read this out loud"

It's about the danger of consuming alcohol while pregnant.

I know he is angry at what I did but now he is exaggerating

"Zabelo, I said I was sorry njena, what do you want from me kant?"

I didn't mean to snap at him but I'm just getting angry too

He turns and I instantly regret snapping at him. His look is just so hard, his eyes are emitting anger

"I will read" I quickly say

I look at the screen feeling his stern look on my

body and that just gives me the heebie jeebies.

Now I read..

"Drinking alcohol during pregnancy increases the risk of miscarriage... premature birth and your baby having a low birthweight"

My hands quickly run to my tummy and I hold it for dear life.

He doesn't say anything but grabs the laptop and puts it away.

My mind is still held up on miscarriage..

I cannot go through that again..

I feel him holding me and making me lie on my side. He leans behind me and puts his hands on my tummy and begins brushing gently..

"I didn't mean to scare you, I just needed you to

remember the danger of what you were doing. I love you MaFuze, goodnight" he gently says and plants a wet kiss on my neck.

Of course I know the danger of drinking alcohol, I just didn't want to pay attention. The only thing I focused on was just my cravings. Maybe I needed just a wake up call

An urge to pee wakes me from a deep slumber. Zabelo's side of the bed is empty and I wonder where he is.

I make my walk to the loo and pee then throw my body on the bed.

My phone rings somewhere in the sheets, I put them aside and find my phone.

Its Khanya

The crazy friend of mine

"Besty, or should I say sister in law"

That's my pick up line.

She is laughing

"I'm glad one of us is amuzed by this"

I say, irritation so loud in my tone

"Okay don't be mad. It was just sex, didn't mean anything"

She says so easily

"Let's hope you will still say these exact words in the next few weeks. Mazisi has a girlfriend and four children, Khanya. He is still struggling with grief, and hasn't let go of his first dead baby mama. You will get hurt "

I remind her, she will get hurt and I will be caught in the middle

"I'm not planning to marry the guy, just having fun"

She is just.. I can't change her mind

"I hope you know what you are doing. Anyway, why didn't you tell me you are in Johannesburg?"

I ask her

"I was going to tell you. It just that Mazi just wanted to spend time with me first before I decided to visit you"

"Mazi..and you say it's just sex. Soyicel livuthiwe we Khanya Zulu" clap once

"Just.. Stop judging me. I know he is your brother but he is old enough to make his own decisions Funeka"

Sigh!

"bye Khanya" I hang up before she says something else that will annoy me.

Where is Zabelo anyway?

Siziwe should be here, she usually wakes me when Zabelo leaves early. I don't know what the arrangement is between them but when he leaves her she comes to check up on me.

Maybe he is somewhere in the house.

I grab a robe, cover myself and head out

Entering the kitchen I'm met with a rather strange situation.

Mongezi is towering over Siziwe?

"Aibo.." I exclaim loudly

"Funei nei" Mongezi says, moving away from her

He comes to me and try to touch my tummy but I hit his hand

"Why are you here so early in the morning?"

I ask him

" I'm in love with a humble woman and I wanted to tell you"

Siziwe coughs. She looks nervous, Mongezi looks amused

I squint my eyes at him

"What did you do to a child, Mongezi? Did you scare her?"

He laughs

"She is not a child"

He says so carefree and heads out whistling ..

What was that about?

"Sis Funeka, I prepared something for you. I made porridge, pancakes.. and I decided to start cooking something so I defrosted beef in the microwave and I'm about to chop some

veggies too.. Would you like anything?"

Anyone would be confused as I am.

She was speaking so fast, and everything that she said didn't add up. Why cook so early in the morning

"Sisi, are you alright ? "

I ask, staring deeply at her.

Who makes so many things at once.

" I'm fine. I'm fine" strange morning

"Don't mind Mongezi, he is crazy. He enjoys scaring people. If he gives you issues, let me know and I'll deal with him"

She nods.

"Where is your brother?"

I ask, dishing myself some porridge

"he said he was going to the club but will be back in less than an hour"

I'm helping Siziwe with her early cooking when a sudden knock comes through, Khanya walks in holding a cake. It's black forest and I feel my mouth watering.

I even forget about our little fall out.

"I'm glad you still remember that I am your friend" I say, she hands me the cake and I start blessing myself.

"You will always be my best friend, hey Siziwe"

The kitchen is filled with laughter, Khanya is like that. She will find a cold house and bring it life. She's that bubble friend everyone needs.

Even Siziwe isn't as reserved anymore

Another knock!

I'm about to go check but Zabelo walks in and behind him is none other than Mihlali..

And Mazisi. That has me on my feet, I feel like protecting Khanya so I stand before her as a shield

Mihlali relaxed Mazisi's hair, who knows what she can do to Khanya.

And why are they together?

Ntsika follows too

Now this is awkward

"Welcome to world war three everybody" that's Ntsika walking in and sitting on a chair I was seated in.

Zabelo stands before me, plants a soft kiss on my lips and grabs a chair then sits.

"Funeni nei" Mazisi says to me, grabs a chair and also sits down

Now I have three people seated, Mazisi, Zabelo and Ntsika.

Khanya is behind me, on her feet

Siziwe is before the stove while Mihlali is a bit far

It's intense and awkward

"Mihlali. Hey"

I smile, widely. I'm nervous, my house can't be a warzone

How dare Mazisi bring Mihlali here without telling me

"Hey sis. Pregnancy looks good on you. You look gorgeous" she says innocently

"She does. I told her too" adds the pole behind me. Can Khanya shut up

"Thanks.. Look at me being unwelcoming."

I take the empty chair and give it to her..

Mongezi walks in again and laughs. This one is always laughing

"Please let me know when you need firefighters. I'm sure this house will burn down any second from now"

Yeap..

"He might be right" adds Ntsika

Now is the time to take a shower and make the bed..

As if I wasn't thrown under the bus enough, my brothers went outside. With Zabelo and I was left with these women after I took a shower

Khanya doesn't keep her mouth shut

We are now making chakalaka, pap and salads..

It's a sudden braai I never planned.

I'd be lying if I say it's not awkward.

"Are you a virgin?"

Khanya suddenly asks, staring at Siziwe

"Khanya" I say warningly

. That's a personal question

"Why are you asking?" - Siziwe

"because you look so innocent. Don't let these Joburg men corrupt you"

Sometimes I wonder if she can survive without opening her mouth

"Joburg men are corrupt, yes, but Durban women are the worst" Mhlabi adds. I knew this was coming

"At Least Durban women are the worst. Joburg

ones are just psychos who relax their men's dreadlocks. How twisted is that"

"Okay! I will not tolerate this bickering" I half yell, staring at them both.

Siziwe is looking lost as she stir her chakalaka

Mihlali is washing dishes in the sink we just used

I'm seated and Khanya is standing behind me "as I was saying Siziwe, before I was rudely disturbed. Pray for the right man who will treat you like a queen you are. Nothing hurt like giving your virginity to an undeserving dog"

Jesus

I stand up and head out for a breather. I can't stand this.

Just as I step outside I hear screams.. God I

don't need this.

I rush back in and bump into Siziwe

"They are fighting," she says..

"call Mazisi"

I quickly say and pass her

"Guys stop!" I shout

Standing in the middle of a kitchen doorway

They are fighting for real

I cannot separate those. I'm pregnant and I
can't be breaking fights.. If it was any day I'd
enjoy the scene

I hear heavy footsteps

Someone grabs my hand. I turn to find Zabelo

"Stop them"

I beg him ..

"Let's go, Mazisi will deal with this."

I follow him but my heart remains behind. I should have known this would happen.

"I leave them for a mere second and they fight!"
I'm angry, way too angry as I shout following Zabelo

He doesn't entertain my bickering

"Mazisi will pay if they break my dishes. Even if it's a teaspoon!"

I'm still shouting

"You should have stopped them! Are you a coward, Zabelo? How can you just let them fight in our house!"

Amen. I'm talking alone here

Reaching the bedroom he opens the door,
I enter and be pinned against the wall and he
attacks me with a heated kiss

We left a fight !

For this??

" I missed you" he mumbles in between the kiss.
His hands roam around my body and I know
that I'm about to be serviced..

After a much needed quicke we took a shower
together.

I'm lotioning my body when he gets behind me
and play with my tummy

His member dangles while touching my behind
causing shivers in my skin

He plant a kiss in my neck

"MaFuze, I need to tell you something"

I don't like the tone

He turns me around and I meet his deep gaze

"What's going on?"

He suddenly looks serious

"Bab Ngcobo called me, I was with him this morning"

Okay

"He doesn't like the idea of us living together with no way forward and well, I also want to do the right thing. He spoke to your uncles about paying damages and lobola before you give birth and they agreed. So I can pay lobola next month"

Tingles of joy attacks my tummy

My mouth spread into a warm smile

I feel my heart being filled with happiness and

joy

I encircle my hands around his neck and bring him close.

He rests his hands around my waist. For a moment I thought he would say he cheated again..

I'm looking at his eyes and he is looking deep in mine

"Do you still remember calling me a confused teenager?"

I ask him, thinking about how he thought I was confused when I fell for him

"I didn't say that. I just asked if you knew what you were doing."

His husky voice responds gently

"You made me feel things that drove me crazy. I didn't plan to fall for you, it just happened. And I'm glad it happened because loving you has been the best thing"

He perks my lips, I know he is suppressing a blush

"I love you MaFuze"

"I love you more"

His eyes tell me a story.

I'm loved, protected and safe in his love

Zabelo is a blessing , he is my blessing.

"There is something else"

He says as I'm about to kiss him

"It's about your family. Bab Ngcobo asked me to tell you something. Please don't get mad. There is no better way to say this so I will just.. "

He sighs. Now I'm getting nervous

"Bab Ngcobo is your biological father. Your mother did not tell you the entire truth.... ."

I shut him with a kiss and he responds. Hesitant at first but end up kissing me passionately

There are things that are meant to drain me. However I won't allow this to be one of them. My life is finally peaceful and good.

I'm good

Rays of sunshine have finally graced my life, presenting a new chapter, hope and new beginnings. I hold onto Zabelo as the kiss deepens.

He is my home..

That all I know right now.

>>>>THE END>>>>