**The lost Affair**

Introduction

This is a story of Sabu, one beautiful maiden of the Emgambeni village in the Shiselweni region of Eswatini. It is true that experience is a good teacher of life, but it is actually real that life sometimes has a way of going in favor of others, it does not matter how kind and fair you are – life has a way of life and you will never understand unless you have been a victim.

**Chapter One**

In a small village called Emgambeni a few kilometers away from Nhlangano town which is in the Shiselweni region of the Kingdom of Eswatini. It is a beautiful Friday morning, with a lovely clear sky, and of course it is the late winter season of the year. We find Sabu sitting on a small rock next to the water well, she is listening to the nice music that echoes from the different voices of different birds that are enjoying such a beautiful morning.

As she continues to sit, she then tends to enjoy the shade under the Swati oak tree(traditionally known as Imbondvo), such that she then decides to just lay down for a short moment, after some moment of rest she will then en-route back home with some water which she initially came for. So she just spread her personal shawl which she usually carries with herself whenever she has some trip, and she likes it very much, she also likes spreading it on her bed always when she sleeps. She is thinking about her journey to the hospital to visit her mother who has never been well for almost a year, she is always sick and it keeps on getting worse such that she is now kept at the hospital, but she always promises that she will be fine.

This issue sometimes gives Sabu with her siblings, Aya and Bongizwi, some stress since they so much love their mom, but she does not want to see them stressed and that is why she always keeps on telling them to be free for she will soon be well.

Whilst she is thinking, here comes Bongizwi, who is looking for her, they have started wondering as to actually where did she go because they know that she has not gone to the hospital yet.

Bongizwi: “*There you are, Aya is looking for you at home, what you doing here?*”

Sabu: “*Have you got your breakfast yet? Why didn’t you carry a container with you, so that you could get back with some water?*” – Actually she was irritated by him because he had disturbed her, but then she would not say it out.

Bongizwi: “*I had not come for water, but I came for you….*”

Sabu: “*You mad, always you come to the well, you should carry a container with you, whom do you think is you servant, that she will always fetch water for you? Now go back and get a container, I am waiting for you here!*”

Bongizwi was so much frustrated, but since his sister seemed not to be in any way withdrawing her statement (“*I am waiting for you here!*”), he then decided to go back home for a container, so he left.

A few minutes after he left, whilst she is just trying to get up to fill her container with some water from the well, she sees someone coming from the east, he is wearing an old white T-shirt branded Orlando Pirates with a plain black cap, he has just put on one simple sky-blue jean pants that match with the Adidas push-ins he put on, he has just emerged from the near-by gully, and as he comes closer, she notices that this is Sandziso, the guy whose mother used to be her mother’s friend whilst they were still staying at Mpambama, before they relocated to Emgambeni due to some chiefdom disputes fifteen years ago prior the death of her Father at work.

He then starts to utter out some personal praises and proverbs which is a Swati habit for men that they use to trigger the attention from a lady, whenever they want to make some love proposals..

Sandziso: “*.. Aw’tsa..Tsori..tsutsi....dika dika, nkab’zondile koda z’yadonsa, ng’umsa waPhenduka msun’ mine ng’njenge Mpis’ yemthakathi…. bath’ abamaziyo ngudlund’esbabayo, ngithe vez’umlenze uyibonele…. Chuziiii….*”

Sabu smiles, but not allowing him to notice the smile. She dips her container into the well, as if ignoring him.

Sandziso: “*Huh, what a taboo, how is it that such a beautiful rose can struggle whilst I am here? Let me just help you Angel..*.” - (He spreads his arm to grab the container drawing the water upwards… He looks at her face, she looks familiar).

Sandziso: “*You look familiar, do we know each other beautiful..?*”

Sabu: “*What a misfortune, someone comes from nowhere, without even saying ‘hi, dog’, then he claims to know me…! Please bring my mother’s container, she’s waiting for me….*” - she was trying to deceive him, to pretend as if her mother is around whilst she is actually not there.

Sandziso: “*Oh Lord, hello beautiful Angel, I am sorry, I forgot to greet you...*” - (Just showing an about to kneel gesture).

Sabu: “*It is just overdue, just leave, where are you going because you don’t even have a container with you?*”

Sandziso: “*Actually, I am looking for my Dad’s cattle, this is the fourth day, they are said to have been seen two days ago around here at Emgambeni, and didn’t you see them? A red young Brahman Bull with his mother...*”

Sabu: “*There are a lot of stray cattle in this area, more especially in this time of the year, people do not collect their livestock, but then I don’t remember very well if your so called cattle were among some that I saw yesterday noon, on my way from the hospital..*”

Sandziso: “*... Oh, I’m sorry, have you not been well?*”

Sabu: “*Aah not really, actually it is my mom, but she will be fine.*”

Sandziso: “*Oh, that’s bad, but she will be fine.*”

Sabu: “*Right good-bye*...” - she tries to lift up the container to carry it on the head.

Sandziso: “*Hey, hey, wait, why don’t you let me help you with it, I will walk you home, just give it to me..*” - (grabbing the container from her).

Just in that moment Bongizwi is approaching carrying his small container that which he will use to carry some water with his sister back home. Sabu, notices him, and she is kind of afraid to let him notice this guy.

Sabu: “*No need, my little brother is here, you just have to leave, now!*”

Sandziso: “*This.. your brother.. what if….?*”

Sabu: “*Just leave!*”

Bongizwi: “*Sis, Sabu, I am back, look at my container, you will draw the water for me from the well right?*”

Sabu: “*Bring it….*”

Sandziso: “*Hi, hello…..*” - waving his hand towards Bongizwi.

Bongizwi: “….” - frowns at him and just looks at his sister.

Sabu: “*He’s greeting you….*”

Bongizwi: to his sister, “*Who is him?, what is he doing here?*” - continues frowning.

Sabu: “*.. I don’t kn….*”

Sandziso: cuts her speech, “*.. hey I am looking for some cattle, would you please help me I am gonna pay you, please!*”

Bongizwi: “*There are a lot of stray cattle here, so how come you think I know yours, and actually where do you come from..,*”

There was a moment of silence, Sabu looking at her younger brother as if she is surprised to learn that the two do not know each other. As Bongizwi noticed that he was a bit disturbed with his question but he continued after a short moment.

Bongizwi: “...s*ince I really do not recognize you.*”

Sandziso: “*Oh, OK my brother, as a matter of fact I am one of the citizens of this area, I stay at Mpambama, past those mountains...*” - (Pointing at some mountains at a distance).

Whilst they speak (Bongizwi and Sandziso), Sabu continues trying to draw some water filling Bongizwi’s container, but she does this slowly, so to attract Sandziso’s attraction. And in that way Sandziso is speaking to Bongizwi but focused on to her.

Bongizwi: “*So okay bro, you may wanna go and search somewhere else, we don’t know your so called cattle..*”

Bongizwi: “*Sis Sabu, let’s go home.*”

Sabu: “*I am done with your container, take it.*”

Sandziso: “*Hey brother, didn’t you see a red young Brahman bull with his red mother, they are all branded 216, please my brother you are my last hope, I got some message that they were spotted here some days ago..*”

Bongizwi: “*A red bull? I saw one yesterday, but I do not suppose it is the one, he was with some other cattle, I just thought they were Mr. Mziyako’s because they went down that hill, heading straight to the Mziyako homestead.*”

Sandziso: “*And when was that?*”

Bongizwi: “*Yesterday afternoon.*”

Sandziso: “*Let me carry this for you...*” - (Grabbing the container from him).

Bongizwi then released the container, but one could tell it from his gestures that he is not content about this. And also Sabu, although excited about walking with Sandziso, but then she tries to go against it.

Sabu: “*Hey, where are you going, aren’t you gonna continue searching for your so called cattle?*”

Sandziso: “*Please my sister, I am just going to walk you half way, then maybe I will see exactly where they went*”

In a moment, here sounds some music, it is a phone call. Sabu has this old mobicel candy cellphone which was actually owned by her aunt, she asked it from her as means of being able to contact her mother whenever there is a need. Unfortunately the cellphone it is now old such that, its screen has long been cracked, so it is not possible to make any call with it and one cannot even see who is calling, it has even some ink which is spread on the upper part of the screen. Actually she only uses it because she can receive calls, it only swipes rightward and sometimes it fails to catch some calls, and as well she just uses voice detection to know who is calling.

She removes it from her jeans small pocket, and tries to swipe rightward as always, it takes some several tries, but fortunately she is able to receive the call.

Sabu: “*Hello.*”

Person Over the Phone: “*Hi, Sabu my daughter, how are you baby..*.”

Sabu: “*Mommy, it’s you, how are you, I am just on my way to you.*”

Person Over the Phone: “*How are children, did you give them food? Where is Bongizwi?*”

Sabu: “*Bongizwi is here with me, we have just come to fetch some water, they are fine, although they miss you a lot, we miss you mommy*”

Person Over the Phone: “*I will be home soon my baby, I promise, please take good care of your brother and sister, can you give Bongi the phone..*.”

Sabu: (Handing the cellphone to Bongizwi), “*Mommy wants you.*”

Bongizwi: (Takes it) “*Hello Mom, I want you now, when are you coming home?*”

Person Over the Phone: “*I will be with you soon my boy, how are you?*”

Bongizwi: “*I am fine, but I really want you back Mom.*”

Person Over the Phone: “*Where are you my boy?*”

Bongizwi: (Looking his sister and back to Sandziso for a moment) “*Here mom, we are with…. We are with Sabu, coming from the well mom.*”

Bongizwi’s little tension was noted by his mother, but then she just continued with their speech as if there was nothing suspicious. As they were walking along the small path Sabu was leading followed by the young Bongizwi and Sandziso the last.

After some little catch-up with his mother Bongizwi then ended his conversation with the phone and then he handed it over to Sabu.

Sabu: “*Why have you dropped the call, who told you that I was done with mommy?*”

She knew it very well that it was not his fault, but then she just wanted to say a word to apparently do as if they are ignoring Sandziso.

Bongizwi: “*She just dropped it*”

Sandziso: “*Hey, hey, please don’t blame him, I heard your mom saying that she will call you later, please do not worry a bit*” – and in contrary to what Sabu was trying to do, acting as if ignoring Sandziso, their conversation triggered him to speak.

As they kept walking they then came closer a barbed wire fenced garden, and inside there it was obvious that there is not much that has been planted. One could only see some cabbages that are also not that much healthier by mere look, they seem not to be well irrigated, and there is much weed, it is actually an old garden by mere look; you can tell that sometime ago, it was a beautiful home garden, but then now it is has lost some texture. And Sabu feeling not happy with it she just began to stop Sandziso from continuing with that route. She turned back to them and let her brother go past her.

Sabu: “*Hey, you need to leave, we are heading for home now, just go away and continue looking for your cattle.*”

Sandziso: “*Okay sister, but then hey brother, please can you show me where the cattle went when you last see them.*”

Bongizwi: “*Bring my container*” - Stretches his arm and takes it from him.

Bongizwi: “*Go past this garden, and then right there you will go down that hill, you will see a home that has a big house that is roofed with red painted corrugated irons, that is the Mziyako homestead, you will have to go past it and search around there.*”

Sandziso: “*Thank you so much my brother, when I see you again I am definitely going to thank you.*”

As they were speaking Sabu had been continuing with the journey, so when she tried to look back she noticed that her brother had been left.

Sabu: “*Bongizwi, let’s go, what are you still doing there?*”

Sandziso: “*He is coming, he was just showing me the Mziyako homestead, good bye sister, I will see you both next time.*”

Sabu: “*Let him go, bye.*”

Bongizwi left and for a moment Sandziso was staring at them as they continued going up past the garden, obviously it was all without saying that he was interested in Sabu who also in return would keep on looking back as if she was looking at her brother. After a moment of starring he then took the route that he was shown by Bongizwi and disappeared.

Up on arrival at home, Sabu then began to prepare a meal for lunch so that she can carry some with her for her sick mother and leave some for her siblings to be able to serve lunch whilst she is away to the hospital. She usually goes with her siblings to the hospital, but for this day, since she has got less bus fare and the Hlathikhulu government hospital is a bit far from home when it comes to walking, so she decided to leave them this day.

After she was done making this lunch, she called Aya her younger sister; this was just to make sure that she has the good instructions before Sabu leaves.

Sabu: “*Aya my sister, I am now going to see mommy, but then I want you to take good care of Bongizwi, I will be back soon, but let me quickly take my bath first because it is already getting late, okay?*”

Aya: “*So, today aren’t you gonna go with us to mommy?*” - pretending to be frowning actually she was not really frustrated about Sabu’s decision, she only liked it when her older sister was not around.

Sabu: “*No my angel, today we do not have much bus fare, and the problem is that mommy said I should come see her, promise I will call you so that you can speak with her when I reach there, I will leave my cellphone so that you can use it, and if mommy calls please tell her that I am on my way to her.*”

Aya: “*Okay, but please be fast home, do not be late!*” - She says this to cut their conversation letting her older sister free to get going.

Sabu then went to the hospital, upon arrival at the hospital she was able to call her younger sister, as they agreed she was able to let her siblings both speak to their mother who was much better by that day. Their mother was so much glad to be able to speak to her children, but then because Sabu had left young children alone at home she was forced to quickly take her return home.

That day was one of the wonderful days because everyone in the family had been happy, Sabu had a very safe journey and their mother- who also was so much fascinated, was getting better, it was a perfect day indeed.

As time went by life continued in the family, Sabu would sometimes go to town in order to withdraw some money from her late father’s benefit (this money is usually the inheritance of a parent to his/her children whenever he/she is no longer able to take care of them), since her mother was sick there was no other source of income in the family. At times she would go with her siblings so that they could be able to visit their sick mother.

**Chapter two**

The situation continued at the hospital. Sabu’s mother was not getting well and as days went by, she was getting worse. At some day’s intervals, Sabu would continue taking her siblings to the hospital just to see their mother and give her some moral support. Some days it would even be difficult for Bongizwi to go to school due to bus fare shortage; since they only depended on their late father’s inheritance to survive these trying days.

One Saturday morning whilst Sabu is praying, as she usually does because they are a Christian family, so their mother used to teach them Christian habits and cultures. Her phone rings; automatically disturbing her unfinished prayer. She just went straight to their dressing table where she usually place it when she sleeps, and she tries swiping rightwards on its screen, and fortunately it receives the call. As she wished, she finds that the person over the phone is her mother. “*Hello my beautiful daughter*.” – greeted her mother with some noticeable joy and happiness. And Sabu replied, “*Hi mom, how are you this day, it’s a beautiful Saturday morning*.” Having noted their sister’s voice projection, Aya and Bongizwi had already gotten up, they had just come closer to her and it was going without say that they were longing to speak to the phone.

Whilst they were still speaking with Sabu, her mother was very much concerned about her young children, so she asks as always, “*Have you got enough food there? Or you need to go and get some mealie meal from my friend, Zinhle, at the Open miller shop*.”, “No mom, we are still fine, I think we will go to her maybe next week Friday.” – interfered Sabu; who was actually not willing to go there. But her mother felling as if her children were sooner going to go hungry, she insisted, “*No, no you must go today, I really don’t want you to go hungry my children, I love you please.”* – And it went without saying that she was afraid to let her children suffer even though she was in hospital.

“*Aah mom...”* – sighed Sabu. “*If you insist, then I will go today, but what if she is not there because she usually goes away from the shop?”* – Sabu continued to argue. “No, no, no, she is going to be available today, in fact I have already called her, she is expecting you, don’t worry my baby,” – she continued, “*when you get there, just tell her that you are going to give her the money when you fetch your father’s inheritance next month*.”- As they are currently sustained by their late Father’s inheritance while the mother is at the hospital. “*Okay mom, I will go, let me start preparing my things for the journey*.” – agreed Sabu.

As they were speaking, Sabu’s mother was longing to get to speak to Aya and Bongizwi. “*Where are my babies? Are they still asleep for such long?”* – She asked. Sabu replied, “*No, they are actually here, they want you, and here is Bongi*.”- handing over the cellphone to Bongizwi. They then greeted with their mother; Bongi and Aya, and she was so much pleased to have spoken to them, as a mother like any other mom, this was what was always keeping her happy, just to know that her children are safe and they are doing well.

Sabu then began to prepare breakfast for the small family so that she could get going, since the Open miller shop is a bit far from their home, so for her to come back early she needs to go earlier.

When she was done preparing herself, it was already about the late hours of the morning. It is a sunny day, with a few drying morning dews, the vegetation looks so much attractive, and indeed it is beautiful Saturday. She then left her siblings, so to be soon back from her journey. She had to walk, since there was little money at home so she was afraid of wasting it with the bus fare, thus she was walking faster and faster, such that when she meets people she would not even recognize them well, others whom she know, it happened that she would not even greet them.

Vehicles would pass her by the gravel road as she was walking on the right side – since here in most Southern African countries, pedestrians are actually supposed to use the right on the road because vehicles use the left side. Whilst looking at some hectares of grain fields which she keeps passing nearby the road, she continuously sees people pouring cattle manure in their fields using their oxen, which is used as primary fertilizer – since it is getting to be the spring season, so it goes without saying that the citizens are already longing for cultivating to plough. Others, also using their oxen, they are cultivating their gardens; so to plant vegetables, and whilst she sees that, she is reminded of her mother’s garden too; which by this time of the year, it would have been looking beautiful if her mother was not sick, and that is very much painful.

She tries not to give her thoughts attention, she tries to think about anything else just to forget about these thoughts. And as she tries to do that, she is again reminded of that guy Sandziso, which is something that has possessed her lately; since she saw him, she has continuously had thoughts about him.

“He has grown up than before, why did he not come again to seek his father’s cattle?” – She thought out loud. “*Aah, maybe he got them. But why didn’t he come to say thank you to us because we actually helped him? He would not find them if it were not for us*.” – She continues.

As she continues with her journey – just when she is a few meters from the Mkhumbane complex, she hears some argument sound from two young women who are noticeably fighting over a lost key. She noticed that it was a key that was lost through their words: the first woman shouting “ *You have been making me your fool all these days, telling me that you have been locking my room… you piece of shit, you are a liar..*” – As Sabu is seeing a number of the people getting closer to them, she is also tempted to get closer to these fighting ladies, which is something disturbing her journey. “*You are the piece of shit, you idiot, you are the one who took the key and went with it to your stupid boyfriend, you thought I was not seeing you, I will tell mommy*” – yelled the second young woman.

Right when Sabu has arrived in the fight scene which is behind the most famous butchery in the Mkhumbane complex, just next to a small block yard where a few gentlemen are busy making some concrete blocks, she notices that she actually knows these two fighting ladies – these are Nomcebo who is her former classmate and Ceb’sile, who is Nomcebo’s younger sister. Since they are fighting they even try to take the newly created blocks to hit each other and that seems like there is some even more job for the block makers to do, so one of them a tall handsome guy, who is with a black beard and is actually tough due to his work, he bravely goes to them and tries to separate them. He takes Nomcebo, who is seemingly the most powerful of the two, he grabs her both hands leaving her with no option to continue fighting, and as she tries putting some force her left beautiful bracelet which she got from the 2011 annual ‘Cisha Logezi’ campaign gets torn.

Nomcebo was actually not happy with that they are fighting in public with her sister, but she could not help it since her little sister had been over provoking to her, so she had to try and give her some discipline – that is how the fight was sparked because the younger sister was not willing to show some respect to her older sister. So, for Nomcebo to try and avoid the fight she then began to take advantage of what had just happened. She screamed “*My bracelet, my bracelet, I want my bracelet, you have just torn my beautiful bracelet...*” – pointing at the handsome guy who was just trying to separate them. “*I am very sorry my sister for the bracelet, but you actually are wrong, this is a work place, you are not supposed to be fighting here, and our boss will be frustrated if he could see this.*” – Answered the guy.

“*Let me go, I want my bracelet, why have you touched me, bring back my bracelet...*” – cried Nomcebo. After a moment of this dialogue between Nomcebo and the guy, Sabu noticed that it was getting a huge attention and a number of people were continuing to flock in to the scene, she then interfered with intention to remedy the situation.

Sabu said “*Hey Nomcebo, old friend, what is it my friend, what is happening?*” – She was actually not her friend even during the days of their school, it was only just that they used to share the same desk at class. Squeezing and expanding Nomcebo who was still caught up in the hands of the guy, she replied “*This guy friend, he has just torn my bracelet, that’s it down there, I want it back, I will arrest him, I want my bracelet..*.” – pointing at the torn bracelet by her right foot. “*Oh sorry xm friend, I remember how you used to take good care of it, but then how xm…* ” – Sabu sympathized. “*Let me go, I want to go and tell my mom, so that she can arrest you!*” – insisted Nomcebo. As the conversation continued, Sabu noticed that her friend Nomcebo was very angry, she then decided to propose “*Hey friend, I think you can have mine, just forget him, I am sure he was not willing to tore it, remember you initially wanted mine, it is still new, I have not been using it so much.*” – showing her bracelet to Nomcebo, she was not really willing to give her the bracelet, but in order to calm down the situation she had to pretend as if everything was fine.

The guy who was tightly holding Nomcebo’s hands, after hearing this he released them and let her go, and when he turned his face to Nomcebo there was a moment of silence, they looked at each other’s eyes, and the guy was out of words, but it was written on his face that he was so much grateful of what Sabu was saying. Sabu said “*Thank you my sister, my pleasure brother!*” – Just jokingly telling him that he should have said thank you. “*That was grateful of such a kind and humble lady, thank you so much my lady, I think I can never forget what you have done for me this day, indeed my parents will honor you.*” – He thanked.

“*They do not have to, it was just some help from a stranger, it is no big deal*” – Sabu said.

From that moment Sabu just knew that there was more than what has just been physically observed between the two of them, but then she just had a feeling of some betrayal. She had never discussed love relationships with Sandziso, but her mind just tells her that she is about to betray him. Whilst having such thoughts, she had noticed that she had just become silent, then she immediately said “*Oh, I have some business to take care of, Nomcebo friend, aren’t you gonna join me leave?*” – trying to take Nomcebo out of the already crowded scene. “*No I just want to teach him a lesson, let me be, I shall see you when we do meet again!*” – Nomcebo disagreed. “*Ok, I will leave your bracelet then, I am actually running out of time, please take it friend.*” – insisted Sabu handing over her bracelet to Nomcebo.

Nomcebo took the bracelet, but she never stopped yelling at the handsome guy about what had just happened. Just when Sabu was finding her way out from the crowd, the guy just followed, “*Hey sister, please wait, can you just have a moment with my dad, he will be happy to see you for what you did for me this day, please.*” – He pleaded. But Sabu trying to hide her feelings, she tried to disagree - “*No, I am fine, that was for my friend, not you, and have a nice day.*” She then left, continuing with her journey.

The people who were already crowded at the scene, they also began to move away, leaving the brick makers with the two sisters who were fighting. And in a moment Nomcebo also decided to leave taking her route straight to home, and a few minutes later, her sister also began wipe of some dirt from her black skinny jeans, and in some parts of her pink top that was stained during the fight, taking her way home too.

After everyone had left the scene the brick makers then decided to start afresh their work for that day since the fight has caused a huge destruction to a number of already made bricks, they are so much frustrated about that. However, someone is not that frustrated about it, he is only traumatized of what he has just experienced. “*Guys we need to hurry, I’m telling you Mgongo will eat us alive today!*” – Said Sipho, referring to their boss who is actually Mr. Magongo and they usually call him ‘*Mgongo*’. “*Yea man, it’s these bitches, but I told you, we should have beaten and chased them away, what do we really call this disaster now?*” – emphasized Mkhikhi, who was so much irritated by this, he actually wanted to chase away the fighters before the fight, but then he was forbidden by his work mates who apparently wanted to watch the fight. Whilst all these talks are continuing, one of them (the tall handsome guy who separated the girls) seems not to care as if he has forgotten about what their boss can do to them about this, he is apparently in deep thoughts.

“*Alfred, Alfred, why aren’t you saying a word, what do we do now, you have been silent for a while, do you think this is gonna be a joke when he comes back?*” – Yelled Sipho to the tall handsome guy who separated the girls, he is Alfred Mavuso; a son to Mr. Martin Mavuso and Mss. Yvonne Johnson (a white European woman) from the Mhlaba area, so he is a colored, tall, bearded with soft hair and actually handsome young man. Alfred is actually an interest of girls amongst these block makers, a number of local girls usually are fond of him and instances of fights similar to this one are usually because of him, but then this one is not. As if he had not heard a word from Sipho, Alfred just removed his protective gloves and went straight to the tap just to wash his hands and he looked as if there is actually nothing to care about in this work place, even though things are not so much going well as far as their work performance is concerned. After washing his hands he just came back and takes a sit next to the busy work mates, he seems to be no longer willing to work anymore. “*Are you going to stay and watch at us like that, do you think this was our fault?*” – Asked Mkhikhi who was visibly getting even more frustrated by what Alfred was doing. But he just continued to sit and watch them as if they were to do the work on their own.

Meanwhile, Sabu on the other hand has reached Open Miller, Mss. Zinhle’s shop which is situated next to the big Madvulini Milling opposite the main Mkhumbane complex, it is a mealie meal exchange shop actually where the locals buy mealie meal and or send their maize meal in exchange for mealie meal, because the big Madvulini Milling actually deals with huge quantities of maize or mealies. On her arrival, Sabu is lucky to find her mother’s friend, who was just about leave; she actually had got a report from the shop keeper that mealie meal is now running low, it might be finished before the evening, which is a great risk of running out of stock the next day. “*Sabu my beautiful girl, I almost left, you are lucky to find me, come let me hug you*” – Said Mss. Zinhle who was overwhelmed with joy to see Sabu. Sabu came straight to her and they hugged. “*How are you beautiful, you have grown up to be a so beautiful young lady Sabu, I have been missing you, why didn’t you visit me for so long?*” – Zinhle continued. “*I am fine mom, I was going to come, I actually have been missing you too*” – answered Sabu.

Whilst they are greeting the shop keeper and some customers who were on business got taken by the scene such that they were actually attracted because they actually used to take Mss. Zinhle as a boss Lady during working hour, she is not a very friendly woman, although she is not rough, but she maintains the gap between herself and her workers. So this was amazing to see since she has never been so sweet and down like she is doing to Sabu. And of course Sabu then greeted all of the ladies who were inside the shop. “*Okay, let me just introduce you, my lady, to my work friends*” – Zinhle said, referring to her shop keeper and the present customers as friends, since she was visibly so much thrilled. “*Ladies, this is my sister friend’s daughter, Sabusiswa Mabhengu, Mkhonkhosi, look how beautiful she is*” – Said Mss. Zinhle to the ladies in the shop. And to Sabu she said, “*And beautiful, this is Nokuphila Mokoena our new shop assistant, do you know her?*” – Zinhle asked. “*No mom, I actually knew Lwethu*” – denied Sabu. “*Oh that one, she got scholarship, so she went to further her studies at the University of Eswatini.*” – Zinhle clarified. “*Oh, yes I remember her telling me that she was waiting for the ministry of labor and social security to approve her.*” – said Sabu.

The shopkeeper had already been admiring Sabu, she was a young beautiful and friendly lady, so she said, “*Thanks Mss. Zinhle, we are very much happy to finally meet Sabu, I have always been hearing about how beautiful and kind you are Sabu, Mss. Zinhle usually talks about you and your little brother, you did not come with him.*” “*Yes Nokuphila, Sabu my angel, where is your brother Bongi with Aya, how are they, why did you not come with them?*” – interfered Zinhle giving Sabu a chair so that she could take a rest.

Sabu continued the catch ups and chats with her mother’s friend and Nokuphila, And they were all happy to be together, she told them that she actually wanted to be soon back home that is why she did not come with her siblings because going with them would take much time such that they would find themselves getting back home late, and that was not what their mother would like since there would be no one left home. So after a short tea break which the trio just had, just celebrating together, this in fact is a way how the Swati people welcome their visitors, it shows love and kindness to give your visitor something to eat in the Swazi culture. And Sabu was taken more as a visiting friend than a customer in this case.

So, after the tea Zinhle then got into business with Sabu, so to send her back home quickly, since she had left young children alone. “*You mother, when did you last visit her?*” – Zinhle asked Sabu. “*I was actually with her three days ago, she getting well, I can’t wait to be with her back home*” – replied Sabu, who was trying more to be brave towards the situation. “*That is great to hear, I also have some time since I went to her, I am planning to give her a visit before the end of next week, this week I couldn’t make it, I actually was not around, I was at Madlangempisi where there was a funeral at my home area.*” – explained Zinhle. “*Oh, yeah I remember that mommy, told me that you were bereaved, I am sorry mom, I suppose the lord was with you*” – sympathized Sabu. “*Yes my angel, it will all be well in the right time, by the grace of the Lord, your mom told me that I should give you some mealie meal.*” – agreed Zinhle. And Sabu continued “*Yes mom, we are going to send you the money when I withdraw our father’s pension.*”

Zinhle who was more like a mother to Sabu, and who was always kind to her friend’s babies, remembered all what they had agreed upon with her friend, but then she said “*No my daughter, I have been thinking, actually you will not have to pay me, I have prepared even more than what your mom asked for, I will give you even some vegetables and chicken portions, to make good food when you get back home, you don’t have to pay because remember you are more like my children, you mother has always been like a sister to me.*” Upon hearing what her mother’s friend was saying, Sabu knelt down on the tiled floor and with tears filling her eyes, she cried holding and leaning to her mother’s friend, “*I really do not know how to thank you mommy, you are so wonderful to us, you were actually brought by the Lord to us, I love you mommy, even my mother will thank you endlessly for this, you are very kind to me and my siblings.*”

Zinhle just bowed and held Sabu in both her hands, getting up with her while fondling softly and closer saying to her “*Get up my child, this is the very same way your mother used to treat me during our days at school, she was more than a friend, I was in her heart and she was in my heart, she never wanted to see me cry, and for that I will forever be there for you, just remember that anytime you need any help, I will be here for you, you can always come to my home you will always be welcome my daughter*”.

After a short moment Zinhle then helped Sabu, they packed all what was necessary which were food staffs that included mealie meal, vegetables and some chicken portions packs. And Sabu could not even carry the load the way it was packed. So Zinhle suggested that Nokuphila walks her back home to help her carry the load, but Sabu refused and said, “*No mommy, since you have given me bus fare, I think Nokuphila can help me to the bus station then I will manage henceforth, you have done more than enough for us mommy, and I do not want you to be disturbed from that your journey that you were up to when I found you, please just wait for her to send me to the bus station and then when she comes back you can continue your business mom.*” Sabu refuses not because she actually intended to board the bus, neither because she did not need the help, but it was because she knew that the way to the bus station goes past by the block yard, where she found her friend fighting with her younger sister, so she just wanted to go past that place although she did not know exactly what she wanted there, but she felt she needed to be seen by those guys on her way back home.

So Sabu’s mother’s friend then agreed with her, she told them to go fast so that they could catch the notorious Mtshakela Mpangele Bus Service bus, which was to come as it was about to be twelve thirty afternoon which is its time of arrival – the bus usually makes a u turn at the complex and goes back to Nhlangano town. Sabu hugged and they kissed with her mother’s friend, and of course her mother’s friend, Zinhle, told her to greet her siblings and to tell them how much she loved them. Nokuphila who was so thrilled to be with Sabu took some of the load and they both began their journey leaving Mss. Zinhle as the shop keeper to help coming customers whilst Nokuphila is away.

On their way to the bus station Nokuphila tells Sabu how operations are going at the shop and how kind her boss Lady, Mss. Zinhle, has been to her since they started working together. It was a very good conversation they had, actually people coming across them would think that these are longtime friends whereas they have been literally together for not even two hour since they met. “*Hey Nokuphila, I feel like we have met each other twenty years ago, you are actually going to be a good friend of mine, see how open and nice you have been to me!*” – said Sabu appreciating her newly just created friend. “*Yes friend Sabu, I actually suppose that you are nice, and you are one person who actually have made me feel friendship for a very long period of time since I lost someone.*” – agreed Nokuphila.

With some suspense Sabu echoed, “*Someone, mm friend, it sounds interesting, who was he, I mean lol.*” They both laughed and it was written on their faces that they both actually knew what Nokuphila was talking about, but then Nokuphila replied, “*Lol, So who told you that he was a he?*” – spreading her smiling face towards her new friend who also did the same, which made them to closely look each other on the face, and she continued, “*But then, since you are smart enough to have known that, he was tall, hairy with soft nice hair, with a nice beard, light in complexion, with that wonderful belly you know, a very handsome one of a kind young gentleman.”* – As she was saying this Sabu turned to her, and she was attentively listening to her, and automatically her mind reminded her of the guy whom she met at the block yard. Then she said “*You know friend, it goes without saying that you really would be happy to get him back, and I it would be the same with him since you are also a one of a kind beautiful young lady.*” “*Yes it would be friend, if only he was still alive, but then death chose to deprive me my joy, happiness, I mean my life friend.*” – interfered Nokuphila who was trying to avoid tears.

Having noticed the situation Sabu consoled her friend, “*I am sorry friend, I actually never knew that, this must be the most painful experience you ever had bestie, but we are gonna be fine with time, let us not lose hope, maybe the Lord has something great for you!” “Yes friend, I actually am trying to move on with life, I think we will meet on the other side of life when I die too.” –* agreed Nokuphila. There was a moment of silence between them, and then in a short moment Nokuphila said, “*I think Mtshakela is to close now, we need to be fast, I am hearing some roaring sound.*” “*Yes friend, there it is*” – said Sabu pointing at the approaching Mtshakela Mpangele Bus Service, which is emerging on the far south west by on the road. Sabu actually was not content by what was about to happen, she really would like to take a short branch from the way to go past the block yard, but then she had no valid reason to tell her friend. So whilst she was in deep thoughts she sees three block yard guys who are coming across them seemingly they are heading to the shops, and one of them is the handsome guy. She got so much fascinated, such that she began to think out loud, “*Oh what a…*” and upon hearing herself she just stopped.

“*What friend, what is it, what about them, it is those guys right?*” – asked her suspicious friend Nokuphila. “*Nope, but maybe yesss”* – replied Sabu who was observably engulfed with joy. “*So, are you willing to share, something seems interesting?*” – enquired Nokuphila. Sabu never got the opportunity to reply to her friend since the guys had already come so closer that any word they could say could be overhead.

Just when they were about to go past each other, Sabu had already been looking downwards as if trying to hide her beautiful smiling face. She actually wanted to hide her smile but she could not do that. “*Oh beautiful ladies indeed, here they are, look at them brothers, excuse me my sister, this lad is asking for a short moment with you*” – said Sipho to Sabu. And Sabu did not want them to take note of her feelings, so she only lowered her pace trying to allow her friend to lead, so to open space for the guy to follow along. But to the surprise of all of them, Nokuphila was looking direct to Alfred and Alfred as well looking direct to Nokuphila, they were both looking astonished such that they stopped movement, and that brought some tension. After a few minutes, Mkhikhi asked “*Is there anyone who can tell me what is really happening here, Alfred speak up who do you want then, we thought you wanted that one, but now…*” Instead of answering the ask Alfred together with Nokuphila were heard echoing each other’s names.

“*What?*” – asked Sabu. “*What is going on friend, are they your friends?*” – She continued. But instead of answering her friend, Nokuphila put down all the load that she was carrying and left the scene heading back to Mss. Zinhle’s shop without even saying good bye to her friend. Upon realizing that her friend had left, Sabu began trying carry the load all by herself, but since it was so clear that the load was too much for her Sipho then volunteered to help. “*Let me help you sister, you are going to the bus right?*” – asked Sipho. And Sabu looking at him she just nodded her head in a form of agreeing with him. So they both began to walk, Sabu leading the way and Sipho leaving his friends behind he said “*Gents, let me help the lady board the bus, I will find you at the shop, make sure that you buy a fresh bread, I will be back soon.*”

Instead of continuing with their journey, the two guys continued standing, Mkhikhi looking at Alfred who was looking down to the ground as if he was in deep thoughts. It went without saying that it was an experience that he has never had since Alfred was born, when he raised up his head towards the bus, where Sipho went with the beautiful young lady, Sabu, he saw that they were about to reach the station, and the bus was already around making a turn over the road, where there is a circle which it usually uses to turn, he ran straight to them (Sipho and Sabu).

Upon arrival, he found that they already had to put the things in the bus, and he said “*Sipho, let me put them in bro, just wait I will take care of them.*” “*Today you never stop amazing me man!*” – said Sipho, but then because he knew the intention of his workmate he agreed and began to leave the scene. “*Make sure you take good care of those staff bro, I am leaving you now, and good bye my sister, have a safe journey.*” – said Sipho, bidding farewell to Sabu. “*Thank you, you have a good day.*” – replied Sabu, who was actually looking at Alfred with visibly lots of suspense. She was actually not sure as to what to say to Alfred, because all of this that had happened, it made her go crazy. After putting all the load in a safe place within the front sit in the bus, Alfred then got down and called Sabu who was patiently waiting next to the door watching him, “*Excuse me sister, I am done, and I have also sorted you a seat next to your staff, please get in and have a seat.*” – said Alfred.

They both looked at each other’s eyes, and after a moment of silence they head the bus conductor “*Hey madam, are you leaving or…*” Then Sabu said, “*Good bye!*” “*But please, your contact number, I am actually going to try not to irritate you, just to say thanks please…*” – asked Alfred. “*76294516*” – replied Sabu who had already been up the entrance steps inside the bus, and the bus began to move leaving Alfred with his cellphone trying to recall the said contact number. Fortunately enough after saving the number, when he tried to call it showed to be working, but then because he did not know what to say, Alfred decided not to call yet. He took his leave back to the block yard intending to wait for his friends who were gone to the shop. When he arrived at the block yard he found that Sipho were already there waiting for his return. “*I think someone has a lot to explain before we even eat, tell us what are you actually doing, why would you go for both of them leaving us with nothing, in fact yours was the one who came here at the morning, so what was all this madness?*” – demanded the already frustrated Mkhikhi.

But Alfred just said, “*Guys, you will find out in good time, for now I need to find Nokuphila, but then, let us eat, the boss is about to come, we need to finish those bags…*” “*Wait, hey, who Nokuphila, you mean that one whom I left you with, she told you her name?*” – interfered Sipho. Alfred just nodded, disagreeing with him and said “*She is the one who disappeared, did anyone see where she went?*” “*How could you, you know her, we have never seen her since we have been here, so this means that you have been seeing her secretly, that is why you even failed to see where she went but you were facing her direction when she left, what kind of a man are you?*” – asked Mkhikhi. Perceiving all the confusion, Alfred never again answered, but he continued with the food.