**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 basically 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 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 feeling 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 to 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 nice 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 goods, 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 yelling at them “*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 and save 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 and Mkhikhi 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 is 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.

On the other hand Sabu had a safe journey in the bus up until when it was time to drop off the bus at her home bus stop. Trying to find her bus fare which she got from her mother’s friend Zinhle, she looked all over her body, but the money was nowhere to be found. And as the bus had been waiting for some time while she was trying to get her bus fare the other passengers started to mumble complaining about the delay. “*Hey Mss. Did you actually have the money or you are just playing games with me?*” – asked the already furious conductor who seemed not to believe her. “*Yes my brother, I really had the money, I actually got it from my mother from the market believe me, unless if I happened to misplace it along the way.*” – replied saddened Sabu. But the bus conductor not believing her, and being encouraged by the mumbling passengers he said, “*You know what, I actually have a record of working with people like you, so now we are going with you, let’s go man…* ” - telling the driver to move the bus, and they began to move. Sabu was unable to get off the bus that way and she continued the journey, she began to cry still searching her pockets but she found nothing and it was painful.

The bus rumbled and roared running with intention to arrive sooner at Nhlangano, as it usually does, and it kept stopping in each and every bus stop where there were passengers dropping off. Just when they had been moving for a while, when she had even stopped crying having already accepted to go with the bus up until it comes back, Sabu felt a soft touch on her left shoulder and with some bit of fright she looked over her shoulder, to her surprise she saw a familiar guy who was about to drop off the bus standing next to her sit. “*You, so you stay here!*” – She said. “*I am actually visiting my uncle’s place here at Zama, how are you Sabusiswa?*” – said Sandziso, whom she last met some months ago. “*I am actually not fine, but it is none of your concern though, anyways how are you?*” – said Sabu, who was obviously not well. “*Anyways either way, but where are you heading because you should have dropped off back then?*” – asked Sandziso with serious curiosity. Sabu having lost all her pride since the bus conductor was a few meters away from them, so he could hear all that they were saying, she just told Sandziso all what had happened and in tears she even cried out loud, “*Here is the bus conductor, who was making fun of me in front of all the other passengers…*” – pointing at the bus conductor who was also deeply touched and was apparently out of words.

Having noted the situation, Sandziso waited for the bus to stop at his uncle’s home place bus stop, and he asked Sabu to drop off with him after paying for her bus fare. And they took all their goods out of the bus and it left them at the Zama bus station. By that time they drop off, it was already late, and Sabu was even more frustrated by the fact that she knew that her siblings were now getting curious, hungry and super stranded. “*I have never experienced such shame in my whole life, I suppose Bongi is now crying!*” – Sabu grieved. And Sandziso looked at his white Alcatel One Touch old cell phone, and he noted that the time was already half past four in the evening, he then said, “*You know Sabu, I would walk you back home after having left my goods at my uncle’s home, just to help you carry such load, but since it has become very late, let me give you some money so that you can catch a mini-bus and get back home?*” And just before he finished speaking, one red Sika-Marazor came heading towards where Sabu should go, from the Mahlalini direction, roaring and rumbling and its back was like it was sitting down on the ground the way it was full, let alone it was also emitting a black cloud of smoke from its exhaust such that it even covers the whole road where it goes.

Sabu closing her nose with two of her left finger tips as to avoid the dirt that was being caused by the movement of the kombi on the gravel road, she was trying to take some of goods moving them a bit away from the road. And Sandziso started waving for the coming kombi in sign of stopping it. Upon its arrival to them, the driver of the kombi decreased its speed, and the kombi conductor opened the window on the left door of the kombi and said, “*Hey brother, we are full, are you willing to stand, where are you going?*” But Sandziso continued waving and he said, “*Actually, she is the one going, she will stand my brother, please take her, she is already late.*” And the conductor looked at them closely and said, “*Ok, let’s take them uncle, we are only taking the lady.*”

The kombi stopped, and Sandziso with the conductor helped Sabu load her goods in, and after they were done, Sandziso gave Sabu one red South African fifty Rand as bus fare, which was obviously more than enough. “*Thank you so much Sandziso, you have been too kind to me this day, the Lord will bless you, and I hope to see you again.*” – said thankful Sabu. Sandziso having perceived her feelings while she was talking, he learnt right there that they both had the same feeling with each other, with a smile he said, “*So you have just called my name in a while, but then I hope so as well, have a safe journey home, I will again come and visit your place.*”

Sabu got in the kombi and stood behind the conductor who was also standing, and the gently Sandziso then closed the door waving good byes to Sabu who was as well waving back to him and the kombi moved leaving Sandziso who continued to wave such that some people passing-by were looking at him as a mad man.

Sabu went well home and she found her siblings early asleep, and most of all she was so much grateful that after all what had happened that day she came home safe. After having put down all her load, she got straight to Bongi who was sleeping helplessly next to his sister’s feet, Aya, she called him with intention to wake him up, “*Bongi, Bongi, hey little brother, get up I am back.*” She tried again and again for some time even calling her little sister, but they would not respond, so she decided to re-arrange his brother and left them to continue with her chores since the house was already a hell of a place, everything was upside down, anyways what else would she expect from her two always quarrelling and fighting siblings.

**Chapter Three**

Life continued for Sabu’s family although nothing seemed to be changing as far as the situation was concerned at the hospital, her mother was never promising to be sooner released from her bed which is something that would always keep the family unhappy at all. Sabu would wake up some days, having received her mother’s calls, go to the hospital and sometimes of course she would go with her siblings depending on the situation at home and at the hospital.

One Wednesday late afternoon, it was a cloudy humid day, with some few drizzles which were evenly experienced almost the most part of the day, and since Sabu’s homestead is situated at the Highveld region; that day was a bit cold. Sabu with her siblings had spent the most part of that day indoors, trying to keep themselves warm, which is something Aya usually enjoys the most. Even though they were indoors, Bongi would never give settle down, he was always busy doing up and downs in two bedroom house, all day, and clearly showing that if it was not for the weather conditions outside, he would have been busy playing on the out there. As usual Aya would try to play with him and in the process they would then quarrel and fight which frustrated Sabu even more.

While lying on her bed, just thinking about a number of things which she had already experienced in her life, Sabu heard a ringing of her cellphone, and her little brother as usual ran to their dressing table and took and found it lying there on its upside down. He took his sister’s phone going straight to his older sister he was heard, “*Hey Sis Sabu, your phone is ringing, mother is calling you, here take it sister, here you go my sister.*” Sabu who was already sleeping up on her elbow, she grabbed her blanket upwards her upper body trying to cover up her breasts from her younger brother since she usually removes all her clothes when she sleeps, she stretched her arm taking her ringing cellphone from her younger brother, Bongi, who was already in high spirits with noise and excitement.

As usual, Sabu tried several times swiping rightward on the cracked screen of her phone, but unfortunately she never made it that time, the call could never be answered up until the caller dropped. She got so much irritated such that she began talking to herself, “*What a hell of a phone, I really need a phone, what if my mom just wanted to tell me that she is coming home?! Maybe she will call again, let me put it here.*” – putting it on her bed next to her. “*Sis Sabu, when I grow up, I will buy you a new phone that will never give you stress like this one, so that we can be able to receive mommy when she calls us from the hospital…* ” – said Bongi who was still waiting next to her older sister’s bed, also deeply disappointed by the cellphone’s actions. “*Hey, you tiny cat, who told you that when we grow old mommy will still be at the hospital!*” – interfered Aya, pointing at her little brother, and whilst she was talking too, the cellphone began to ring again. “*Shut up Aya, let me answer the phone, stop your nywe… nywe… nywe…, you are too much talkative!*” – said Sabu who was already holding her cell phone.

As usual with her cell phone, Sabu tried for several times swiping rightward with intention to answer her phone, and fortunately enough this time she made it, “*Hi, hello.*” – said a male voice over the phone, and Sabu frowning with surprise, she asked “…a*nd who is this?*” “*I am actually Alfred, are you that beautiful lady, I am that guy you gave your number at the Mkhumbane complex two weeks ago, you remember that day you also helped me…*” – explained the voice over the phone. “*Oh, okay I remember you, yeah I am fine, and I am actually home now with my sister and brother.*” - said Sabu, who was visibly terrified, getting up and trying to cover her upper body using her shawl, she headed straight to the exit door with intention to hide her talks from her two siblings.

Upon making it out of the door, Sabu leaned on the small verandah wall just in front of the house, she then closed the door behind her trying to make sure that her little troublesome brother be kept inside, so that she could speak freely with the phone. “*Okay beautiful, I have actually been trying to call you several times for the whole of last week, but could not get hold of you, I had even began to think that this was not your contact number.*” – continued Alfred with some sort of relief, that eventually he could get hold of that pretty young lady, whom he had been trying to call for almost two full weeks since they saw each other. “*Oh, sorry my brother, I actually have a small problem with my phone, it has got a cracked screen so I hardly receive calls these days, even if I see a notification of a missed call, it is very hard to tell who was calling me unless they try to call again up until I receive, but now that you have said so I remember your calls, since I used to think that it was my mother at times, but as I am saying; I could not answer them.*” – clarified Sabu.

Whilst they were greeting each other, after all the period which had passed since they had seen each other, Sabu already knew exactly what she wanted them to talk about, but since she had grown up at the village by the rural areas she wanted to make it seem as if they are not interested into love and relationship issues for some period of time: she was actually buying time for their relationship issue. “*Ahem!* *So, my brother how can I actually help you, after such a period of time?*” – asked Sabu lifting up her phone and trying to position herself on the top of the small verandah wall. “*Yes my sister, I actually needed to hear that sweet melody from the voice of yours, I am telling you the truth; since that day we met, I have never had any rest, I just needed to hear you speak once more, and seriously I have never felt like this since I was born.* ” –said Alfred who was already trembling and noticeably shaking while speaking over the phone. Upon hearing that, Sabu who was a bit confused as to what can be an excellent answer to this, she just sighed for some time and said, “*What can I say? I am glad to hear that, but then; my brother what did you say your name was?*” “*I am Alfred Mavuso from the Mhlaba area, during the day I work at that place where you found us that day of the fight between those two young ladies as a block maker.*” – replied Alfred trying introduce himself much deeper. And upon waiting for a few seconds, Sabu also kept silent for a moment, and he continued, challenging her to speak as well, “*So can, I also know you very well my sister please.*”

“*Well, Okay then; my Name is Sabusiswa Hlophe, I stay with my small family here at Emgambeni where I was raised, thank you for your call Mr. Alfred right?”* – replied Sabu. “*Wow, what a wonderful name, Sabusiswa, it goes without saying that you are one of a kind, let me say that you have got a beautiful name, and you are beautiful too.*” – said Alfred.

Whilst they were still talking Sabu’s cell phone began to ring again, and then having the feeling that it might be her mother she had to receive the call, “*I suppose my mother is calling, please drop your call so that I can receive her.*” “*Okay beautiful angel, let me just abort mine, but please can I call you some time later, I really need to speak to you about something serious.*” – agreed Alfred who was already about to abort his call. Upon hearing that request Sabu said, “*No problem, so long as I will be able to receive that call, fine, you can call anytime brother.*” Alfred then aborted, and as usual Sabu tried for several times swiping rightward trying to receive the incoming call and fortunately enough she made it. Upon receiving, she noticed that she was right, indeed the caller was her mother, so she then stood up from the verandah wall and walked towards the door, and she opened the door getting back inside the house; so to pretend as if she was still busy with that call the whole while outside. While entering the house she even raised her voice much more allowing her siblings to hear their talks with her mother over the cellphone, she was doing this because she had some sort of fear about what she has been speaking with Alfred, so she wanted her siblings not notice what was exactly happening.

Blinded enough her siblings, more especially Bongizwi, had never noticed, he only heard his their talks with his mother and then he began demanding to speak to his mother, “*Aah Sis Sabu, you have taken a whole hour, we also want to speak to mommy, bring the phone!*” And Sabu trying to avoid any quarrel that she knew would arise with her brother, she just handed the phone over to him, “*There you go, speak then.*”- She said after closing the door behind her which had already been a flow of some cold weather from the outside.

Bongizwi and Aya spoke to their sick mother who was not yet ready to come home, but as usual she continued to give courage to her children that she was sooner going to be home, and everything went normal in this small family, and after that call Sabu and Aya got back to sleep since it was very cold outside. Bongizwi then took his toys and began playing all around the house making some noise which caused his sisters to constantly keep on silencing him, but as naughty as always he would not listen to them.

Life continued for these three siblings, everything was bringing hope for them each and every day, Sabu would sometimes receive her calls from her mother at the hospital, and from Alfred as well. Even though they were getting along with calling, both Alfred and Sabu, but it took Alfred so long to say exactly what he wanted from Sabu up until one Sunday when he was off from work, where he was able to ask her to give him a visit at the Mkhumbane complex. So Sabu woke up earlier that Sunday and began to prepare her siblings for church. She made for them a good meal, and had their clothes well prepared and put them on top of their dressing tables respectively so that when it is time to go to church everyone will be looking good and smart. As she was very early with her morning chores that day, Sabu finished at around half past nine in the morning, and she was ready to go. “*Aya, begin to bath because we will sooner be leaving for church, tell Bongi as well, I don’t want you to delay me.*” – instructed Sabu. Aya looking as earlier the time it was, she said, “*Sis Sabu, today we will be so early, why do we have to be, usually we get to church at around eleven o’clock in the morning, just when the church bell is about to ring, so why today?*” Aya did not really imply that they were very early per se, but she was actually buying time as they usually did even if their sister told them to get prepared when the time is almost up, both of them Bongizwi and Aya, liked to play rather than focusing on the church going preparations.

Sabu having noticed that her little sister was just buying time, she continued to force them to prepare themselves for church. “*Hey you, you want to keep doing things slowly so that we arrive late to church as usual, hey I said prepare yourselves or I will let you go there with your yesterday’s dirt, look at yourselves, you are so dirty, you did not even bath yesterday evening, you thought I did not see you. Go and take your baths! Both of you!*” – yelled Sabu at her reluctant sister. When Aya noticed that her sister was not in any way withdrawing what she was saying, she then began calling her little brother so that they get to prepare themselves, “*Bongizwi, come, Sis Sabu wants us to take our baths now so that we get early today at church!*” “*I will follow you, start bathing then I will bath after you.*” – replied Bongizwi who was visibly not willing to adhere to what was being said by his sister. “*Hey, what are you doing, you want to continue playing while it is getting late, leave that your bike, come and let us bath now, and we will be leaving soon.*” – Sabu insisted speaking directly to Bongi.

And when Bongi noted that his sister was being serious about this, he was left with no option but to leave everything and begin preparing himself for church. After Sabu had been done with the food staff, cooking and packing for the journey as they usually did when they went for church (they would carry some food so that when Aya and Bongi are hungry, whilst away from home, they could eat), she then got to take over Bongizwi who was still trying to bath, she bathed him thoroughly, put on him his beautiful clothes, and faster he was looking good in his small black and white church suits. His hair was nicely combed, since he had beautiful black hair, and his black sharp pointed shoes were already shinning having been nicely polished by his sister. While waiting for the two of his sisters, Bongizwi, would never even take a seat, since he was already longing for church, he kept vagabonding majestically up and down like those pastors who are deep in prayers. His two sisters finished preparing themselves as well, both of them looking gorgeous in their church dresses; Aya on a pink one with matching high heel shoes, and Sabu beautifully suited with her new black and white two piece dress, that had been matching as well with her black high heels, and her beautiful hair style was furnished with a black and white gold-glittering ribbon making her to look even more of a princess.

Then they began their journey to the church which was actually a short distance from their home, something around one kilometer five hundred meters, so they walked as usually. Sabu’s actual intention was not to really go to church, but she wanted to send her siblings to the church so that they can be busy while she is away. So, along the way, just when they were about to reach the church premises Sabu invented a plan to run away from her siblings, “*You know Aya, both of you have to go first to the church, I am thinking that I could take this opportunity to go and fetch some food from our mother’s friend Mss. Zinhle from her home, when we last spoke she said I could only find her on Sunday morning at her homestead because she is a busy woman.*” – she said, “*I will run so that I can find the service, when you get hungry while I am away, make sure that you use your lunch boxes.*” Looking at her older sister, Aya, was a bit puzzled, but then she would not argue a lot since she usually enjoyed it when her sister was not around, because she used to keep on guarding them too much.

Whilst Aya was quiet, Bongi never liked this and he argued, “*No, sis Sabu, why don’t you wait for the church and then we will go with you, you cannot leave us alone there.*” “*Yes, little bro, you are right, I was actually planning to do that, but then I remembered that Mss. Zinhle insisted that I won’t find her if I come late, please take good care of yourselves, I will be back soon!*” – replied Sabu. She continued, “*Aya will there for you, she is a very good sister I know her, and I will be back sooner, please don’t worry my bro.*” She only said this, not that she meant it, but it was to give Aya some courage.

Upon noticing that his sister would never listen to him, Bongi then agreed, “*I will tell mommy that you were leaving us by ourselves.*” “*Will you carry thunder nick nacks with you from the Mkhumbane grocery shop?*” And upon hearing this Sabu gladly agreed with him, “*yes my bro, that’s my little brother, I will be back very soon!*” she continued, “*And Aya, make sure that you take care of both yourselves, I don’t want to hear stories when I get back, behave yourselves!*” There was a short moment of silence, Sabu looking at her sister for a reply. And Aya noticing that her sister is waiting for some reply, she turned right to her sister, and agreed, “*Okay, we will be fine, but if you don’t get back on time, we will head back home, you shall find us there.*” “*Okay my little sister, I will make sure that I come back on time, but if you end up deciding to go home, please don’t mess up when you get there, I don’t want to find everything upside down when I get back.*” Said Sabu with some relief that her siblings have not become so hard on her. “*Okay, we won’t mess up*” – agreed Aya.

So, Sabu left her siblings and began her journey. She was looking beautiful in her clothes such that along the way to the bus station people were so much attracted in her and others would even appreciate her. When she arrived at the bus station, she found that the red Sika Marazor kombi had just passed by, so she then had to wait for another one since it was a Sunday, so transport usually is very scarce on Sunday. While waiting, she took out her cell phone from her small, black and gold glittering hand bag, hoping that someone could call; especially Alfred who had promised to be waiting for her by this time. The phone just kept silent, it never rang, she was only irritated by some passerby people, some of whom were men, who would keep around and start talking to her, some making some love proposals, and there was no coming kombi. So, after a long period of wait at the bus station with no public transport coming, Sabu then decided to start moving by the road side in intention to board any public transport that would find her by the way. And just a few minutes on her journey, she saw one Mr. Mmema’s van coming by, and it was heading to the Mkhumbane complex, so she hitchhiked it. Mr. Mmema was one famous farmer in the community, he was known for beef production, milk goats and broiler chicken. So the van stopped by her and she asked for a lift to the Mkhumbane complex, fortunately there was some space left so she was granted access and inside the van she found that there were a number of people who were being carried by Mr. Mmema as he usually does when people are out of transport.

Upon settling herself inside on one of the passenger’s seats inside the van, just when the van had started moving, Sabu’s phone began to ring, and she then tried to receive it. As usual after some several times of trying, she then managed to answer the call, “*Hi, hello.*” – She said. And when she heard the male voice over the phone, she realized that it was Alfred, who also greeted, “*Hello Sabu, how are you beauty queen.*” “*I am good Alfred, I am actually on my way now to the complex, where will I find you exactly, because I have to be back soon, my younger sister and brother are all by themselves at church?*” – asked Sabu. “*Alright, I am already waiting for you here, I just want to see you beautiful, it won’t be long, and you will find me next to the pre-school, on the small park bay.*” – Answered Alfred who was noticeably feeling much relieved and fascinated. “*Alright, I am gonna be there in a minute, I am on Mr. Mmema’s van.*” – said Sabu.

Upon arriving at the complex, Sabu went straight to the back of the Mkhumbane grocery shop to hide from the public eyes. And when she got there, she took her mobile bathroom kit from her small hand bag, which she usually carries with herself when she happens to have trips like this one, and polished herself so that she could sustain her beauty and glamour, removing some small dirt that she could have got along the way since she wanted to show up more beautiful and attractive to Alfred. She had also carried a small mobile mirror with her, so she would continuously look at herself, while preparing herself. On the other hand, Alfred was busy trying to position himself, practicing some smiles, folding his hands and releasing them, trying to find the right posture and gesture to meet such a dear lady. He sometimes heard himself speaking alone, uttering some of the first words that he was going to say in the greetings. Indeed it was like ‘the few minutes before entering the exam room.’

After a short moment, Alfred felt like it was taking so long for her arrival, so he then called her again, just to enquire her whereabouts, and Sabu failed to receive that call due to her cellphone’s problems, and she was disheartened about that. Alfred was not only frustrated, but he was also frightened thinking that what if she was lying, maybe she is not coming. And after a short moment of thinking he decided to try and call again, and whilst he was trying to call, waiting for her to pick, he felt his heart beats like there were three racing horses. While Alfred was busy with his thoughts, Sabu was then eventually able to pick up the call, and she answered, “*Hi, I am already around, right now I am walking to the park, you still there?*” “*Yes, yeah, yes, I am still waiting my dear, I mean my sister.*” – agreed Alfred with some giggles of fright, such that he even uttered words that he never meant to say yet. And he continued, “*Let me come and get you by the way!*” “*Okay, although I am very close now, but fine come.*” – agreed Sabu. So Alfred began going towards the grocery shop to fetch her.

A few meters from the park, Alfred saw the beautiful Sabu moving as if she was taking her final match on the modelling competition, she was meant for the thing, and her body structure would agree with her moves in every way, such that Alfred found himself standing and starring at her coming. While she was getting closer and closer, Alfred stretched his right hand with intention to shake her hand, and Sabu then did the same but then with her left hand, carrying her hand bag on the arm, she covered his shoulder letting him closer to her chest, which was one supper feeling Alfred had ever felt. He also stretched his left hand too, covering her, but though allowing some space between his chest and the warmth of her sharp pointed fit breasts.

After the hug, Alfred who was out of words, just gave way for her to go showing the way with his hands, and Sabu walked towards the park, and Alfred then got to be behind her, and indeed he could never believe what he was seeing, he thought in his mind, “*this is the true definition of beauty, she is all equal, someone could even say she was one of her makers!*” Whilst thinking he never wanted her to note that he was left, so he quickly covered the few steps distance between them, so they walked together, Sabu on the right and with him on the left. And after a short moment of silence, Alfred then began to talk by trying to show her the already visible parking stands, “*Okay, here the park is, so which seat is better for such a dear lady?*” – He asked intentionally, just trying to raise up some conversation in between them. Sabu looked at the whole park; it is a small well planned with some beautiful real and artificial trees, its floor is made of artificial kikuyu grass with some artistic writings and drawings which symbolize where there should be path ways, and there are already a few other couples who have come to enjoy the beauty of such a park. And after looking, she sighed and looked back to him, with a smile she asked, “*You have been here right?*” “*Yes, I was.*” – He agreed. “*So, then you must have already prepared some seat for us.*” – She said. “*Ok, I was actually looking for that one.*” – He said, pointing to the center seat. “*It is well situated, with some clear view of the clear sky, and the perfect shade from that oak tree, which is also accompanied with the fresh south-easterly wind, protecting us from the direct rays of the already burning sun.”* – He continued. “*If you think so, then so be it.*” – replied Sabu. So they moved and settled themselves at the center seat, with Sabu seated behind the pre-School facing the road, and Alfred seated opposite her facing the pre-School.

Just a moment after they have settled, they looked at each other, and of course when their eyes were to meet they would both look down on top of their concrete made, flower shaped, and dark pitch painted table. So, then Sabu said, “*I understand I have been summoned, and right now, here I am, so what do you want of me, Mr. Alfred?*” Alfred waited for a moment, as if there was another Alfred who were to come and make the answering. But then he began, “*You know Sabu, let me begin by saying that you are so much beautiful, I actually have never met this type of glamour since I was there, you are the fullness of perfection, what they call glory is what I see right now, all that is in you makes an excellent unique creature, I mean, I am sure the day God made you, he was in his finals of the human making competition.*” “*Wait that is too much, you want me to bluff or…*” – interrupted Sabu. But he continued, “*I am actually serious, this is what I see, today you are even more beautiful, I can’t actually express it in words, what you are, because you are really more than anything words can say.*” “*Oh, what can I say, you know thank you so much my dear… brother, I am very happy to hear that, actually it sounds as if it is the first time in my life to hear it.*” – said Sabu, who was also out of words, as to what to really say after such complements.

Alfred looked at her eyes while she was speaking, and then in a few minutes, “*Sabusiswa Hlophe, your name right?*” – He asked, looking as if he has some unfinished speech. “*Yes.*” – replied curious Sabu. Then he continued, “*Okay, Sabu, I have asked you to be here today, so that we have a moment to talk about this.*” “*And…, what is it?*” – asked Sabu. “*Sabu, I want to ask you that we get along, as in both of us.*” – Replied Alfred, moving his right hand to and fro, to himself and to her, trying to point at both themselves while his eyes looking directly to her eyes. “*Get along! As in what sense, I mean what really?*” – asked Sabu, becoming even more curious.

“*I mean, Sabu I love you.*” – He said. And after that they both kept shuttered for a moment, looking at each other’s eyes as if they have seen a walking snake. But then in a moment, Sabu uttered his words, “*You love me.*” “*Yes Sabu, Actually I loved you the first day we met, that very same day I actually knew that you have the perfection of my life, I felt it in my flesh, I felt it in my bones, down my cells, you are everything I want Sabu!*” – explained Alfred, his voice trembling, with his eyes hardly making it to twinkle.

“*Okay, I do get you, but then I think this needs some time, I will have to think about it and then come back to you.*” – replied Sabu. “*Okay my dear, but when really do you think that you will be done thinking?*” – asked the visibly curious Alfred. “*I think, if you call me later by the day, I will know what to say, now I think my little brother is already crying for me.*” – She answered. “*That means you are ready to leave now?*” Asked Alfred. And Sabu looked at him once more and then answered, “*Yes of course, unless if there is something else that you want me to do for you.*” “*Oh, Okay, Actually this was why I asked you here, and Sabu, let me say that I really appreciate what you did, giving your precious time up, to come to me, I am very much grateful, thank you so much for this.*” – He replied. “*It’s my honor, and since we are almost done here, I really suppose we say goodbye for the day.*” – Said Sabu, standing up. “*Don’t you need a drink, I really could have got you one, but then I was afraid of the flavor, please let us go via the shop to get some.*” – proposed Alfred. “*Oh, thank you so much, I am actually on diet these days, so I do not touch any edible unless it is time, I only take water.*” – replied smiling Sabu.

“*Okay my dear, it’s just that I am surprised that some people eat on time, your stomach is it already programmed?*” sarcastically he asked. She laughed out, with her right hand covering her mouth looking downwards to her small hand bag, she said, “*Stop being so silly, let’s move.*”

Alfred also laughed and he stood up, trying to assist her take her little bag, “*I really wish that someday we have more time Sabu, but then thank you so much.*” – He said.

After they have ascertained themselves that everything was in order they hugged once more and then began to move. Walking together, they made a very beautiful couple such that one old man, just passing across their direction, he said, “*Oh, what a perfect match my beautiful children, learn on each other, you must never lose each other, and remember you should never listen to what people say, because it won’t be always for the good of you both.*” “*If you want answers, look up to your darling, and that will be your solution to anything.*” ”*Go well my children.*” He left them, and they both looked at each other’s eyes and together they said, “*thank you grand pa!*” – They continued with their way to the bus station, hoping to catch the red Sika Marazor kombi, which was its time to come by.

So after a short moment whilst they were waiting at the bus station the red sika Marazor Kombi came roaring and rumbling as if it was climbing the steeply hills of the Kilimanjaro mountains, its exhaust pipe of course emitting black clouds of dense smoke such that someone would hardly see anything following the kombi in a distance due to the mixed dust and smoke emitted by the Kombi. Seeing such behavior of the vehicle Alfred then asked Sabu, “*Do you really trust that such motor vehicle can land you home safely?”* And Sabu just looked at him and then said, “*As you know that in this area there are not much means of transport, so what can we do other than trusting in God with what we have on hand?*” “*Okay, but then I am not content with this, please make sure that you inform me when you reach home, I just need to make sure that you are safe, I really do not like this, actually when I grow up to be a great business man the first thing that I will do is to upgrade transport in this area.*” – said Alfred. “*Wow, that would be so great, but it is already here, good bye Alfred, I shall see you when I come to the shops again!*” – said Sabu, who was just stepping into the kombi.

They left each other and the kombi made its turn as usually and then left with her. Alfred stood there starring at the kombi visibly wishing as if Sabu could come back for something, but she did not, he starred up until the kombi turned the corner by the Madvulini Primary school where he lost its sight. Then that was when he was able to head back, and someone coming by would obviously notice his lips that he was talking to himself. It actually went without saying that he had loved the lady.

On the other hand, Sabu in the kombi just remembered that she had promised her siblings to come with some nick-nacks and some food stuff from her mother’s friend Zinhle. She had actually forgotten the nick-nacks because she was obviously lying about the food from her mother’s friend. That was a bit unfortunate since she could not just turn back to the shops, so she decided to come up with plan ‘b’; buy the nick-nacks from a local tuck shop when she drops off the kombi. So the kombi continued moving up until it reached her place, and she paid her bus fare and dropped off. After dropping off she just went straight to the tuck shop that is next to the markets in the bus station, since the markets were not operating on Sundays.

So that is how she implemented her plan, hoping that her siblings would believe her as she was able to get their wants. She got them both the notorious ‘Hello’ nick-nacks and some fruits with sweets just to make them believe that she got it from the Mkhumbane stores.

By the time she got out of the shop, it was already a few minutes before two o’clock in the afternoon, so she then knew it that the church service had already been over, since it ends at one o’clock in the afternoon. So she then decided to head straight home where she expected her siblings to be by that time. As she was walking busy in her mind planning what to say to her brother and sister about the food that she promised to have been gone for, she came across Mrs. Mziyako who was the church lady councilor who greeted her with relief, “*Sabu my daughter, thank the Lord you are already back, how are you my child?*” Sabu not knowing if her siblings had told the councilor about her whereabouts she got a bit confused as to what to say to the councilor if she would ask, but then she replied, “*I am fine mother, I was hoping to be back and find the church service, but then I was delayed where I was.*”

“*Wow, but don’t worry my child you will make it next week, you brother and sister, they are very well, I left them playing with the other children by the road side, but I suppose they are now home. They were well behaved at church I liked it for them.*” – narrated the church councilor. Sabu upon hearing that, she said with visible joy and appreciation, “*Once again thank you mother, I will just head straight home for them now, thank you mom.*”

The councilor seeing that she was about to leave then asked, “*Hey, my daughter before you leave, when did you last hear from your mother and how is she. The bishop today announced that this coming Wednesday we will be visiting her at the hospital.*” “*She is coping, when I last met her, this past Friday, she was looking far better than ever, I am actually looking forward for her release sooner these days.*” – answered Sabu. “*Okay my child, it was actually my pleasure meeting you, I shall let you know when we are heading to the hospital, have a safe journey home.*” – continued the councilor, letting her go. “*Thanks again mother, goodbye!*” – said the leaving Sabu, and the councilor then continued with her journey. While still heading home, Sabu was relieved to hear what the councilor had said about her siblings since she knew that when they were playing with others it means they had already forgotten about her, so that means they were well behaved at the church service as the councilor said indeed.

When she arrived at home she found them watching the ‘Tom and Jerry’ series on TV, and when they noticed her arrival they were so happy, “*Sister, you said you were going to Mommy Zinhle’s shop, did she give you anything?*” – asked Bongizwi, who was looking surprised at her sister. “*No little bro, I actually did not find her, I think I was late since she actually told me that I had to be very early.*” – replied Sabu. Sabu noting that they will need more answers she tried to block them by the sweets and nick-nacks she had got for them so they eventually focused on the business on hand hoping that their sister would then go to the Mkhumbane complex some other time later by the week. Just after she had given her siblings the sweets and their nick-nacks, they heard a ringing of Sabu’s phone and her siblings ran to her in order to speak to their mother since she is usually the one to call by this time of the day, more especially on Sundays just to check if they were in church. “*Sis, Sabu your phone is ringing do you hear it, mommy is calling you!*” – said Bongi with so much joy and happiness. So Sabu then removed her phone which was still in her small hand bag and then as a norm she tried to swipe rightwards in so to be able to receive the call, and after a number of tries she was able to answer it, “*Hello mommy, how are you doing today?*” Surprisingly she heard a male voice over the phone, and when she took a look around her, she also noticed that her siblings are right next to her visibly willing to take the phone and greet their mother. So she then decided to pull away from them, but still continuing speaking like she is speaking to her mom so that they never get to understand that there is a different voice over the phone. “*Sabu, I am Alfred actually you said I should call you before the day ends, do you remember me?*” – enquired Alfred being surprised by the way Sabu is answering him.

Sabu continued replying like she is speaking to her mother whilst on the other hand swaying away from her siblings so to have some space with Alfred, and after a moment she was by the main entrance to the house so she made her usual trick of quickly opening the door and not allowing her brother to get out with her, and she was successful to quickly close it. When she got outside she had to restart her conversation and clarify to the already frightened Alfred. “*Hey Alfred, it is me Sabu, I am getting you, actually I have some problem with my younger brother he is always here with me so I was trying to get away from him, I am sorry dear.*” – clarified Sabu. And upon hearing that, Alfred then was relieved and so he could continue speaking, “*Oh, I do understand Sabu, in fact I was getting afraid that maybe I was calling a wrong number, but thank you.*” “*So, I am actually calling you concerning that promise you made earlier on today, that before this evening ends there is something that you would want me to know.*” And just when Sabu was starting to say a word her phone happed to shut down letting Alfred even more curious on the other side, while he was afraid to call again, he waited for a few minutes thinking out loud to himself, “*Maybe she doesn’t like me, why is she behaving like this, I am certain that no one can do such a thing, not when she is the one who said I should call her for an answer.*” “*I am actually not looking for a positive, or I am not sure, but let her just say anything, I will take it whatever it is I am fine, maybe let me just call her once more.*”

Sabu on the other side she was busy trying to boot her phone so that she could be able to receive Alfred again, and she was very much frustrated by the fact that her phone was not easily booted without charger, so she now had to go and put it on charger which was something that could not easily be accomplished because of her siblings inside the house. She hopelessly continued trying to boot it, and while she was not aware it came back on with some relief she then waited for Alfred to call again.

While waiting she began to think that maybe he has decided not to call anymore, so she helplessly went back into the house constantly looking at the phone thinking that he may call again, and when she was opening the door she heard it ring again. With so much joy, she tried answering it and as usually it took her some effort and time, and fortunately enough she was able to receive it, “*Hi my dear Alfred, I am sorry, it is my phone I really do not know what to do, please forgive me and I love you.*” – answered Sabu. To her devastating surprise, she heard a female voice over the phone, and that was her sick mother who also got very much shocked of what she had said. Traumatized and surprised, her mother asked, “*Sabu, Sabu, are you okay my daughter, who is Alfred, what are you saying?*” In that moment she never knew what to say and there was some silence between the two of them, Sabu’s phone shut down again, leaving her leaning on it over her left ear.

From that scene Sabu’s phone could never be switched on again, and Sabu herself was not sure as to what to do next following all that had then happened, she only got inside the house moving slowly and hopeless she was obviously visible to her siblings that the was something behind her sluggish movements. Her siblings became so much frightened because they knew that she was talking to their hospitalized mother outside over the phone, so they felt like there was something wrong with her. Their efforts of trying to dig the truth from her were futile, since she never said a word to any of them that evening, even when they both were crying she never said anything to them. And that became the saddest night of the whole family.

On the other hand, Alfred was mad too, he had tried many are times calling Sabu’s phone and it only reported to be offline. Walking up and down at the main verandah at his parental home he was thinking, “*Why would she do this, maybe she has a stay-in boyfriend, he’s beating her right now, oh God, but why did she not tell me?*” “*She is going through all of this because of me, so what do I do now, maybe she was lying to me about any answer, why would she promise something that she could never deliver, I have already tried calling her a hundred times with the same response.*”

While Alfred was busy moving up and down, his younger sister, Nolly, who was looking for him found him at the verandah, and she first got surprised of what he was doing, so she starred at him for a short moment listening to him since he was thinking out loud. And after sometime she asked her brother, “*Hey bro, who is she and what did she do to you? You are talking to yourself, are you all right?*”

Disturbed and apparently stroke with fright, Alfred grumbled like a wounded lion, “*Hey you mad piss of shit, who told you to come here, don’t you have some home work to do, what are you doing here? Get out of my sight you bastard, and never ever come back here because if you do I am gonna kick your small ass!*”

So upon hearing this, which was the first time of her entire life to hear especially from her brother, poor Nolly, so much saddened went inside the house and went straight to her bed for a sleep, she could never even say a word to anyone in the house.

Life became so difficult for Sabu such that those days she never wanted to switch her phone on, even if her siblings would ask her to speak with their mother, she kept on telling them that she was doing fine and lying to them as if her phone was faulty. She did not actually know what to do since what had happened was first of its kind in her entire life, and she had never wanted to affect her mother’s health on her condition.

As days went by, Sabu continued doing things like this although it was really affecting her physically and emotionally such that the following Sunday when she was in church with her siblings the lady counselor perceived that something fishy was going on with Sabu. So after the church service she called her, “*Hey Sabu, my daughter how are you my child.*” She said holding her by her right hand moving with her straight to the administration room trying to do it as if she was busy with her church chores whilst she only needed to get her speak what was wrong.

“*I am fine mother.*” Replied Sabu visibly trying to cut their conversation short. While noticing this, the counselor did not stop talking to her, “*Great my child, how is life at home, are you coping my children, you know that you are always welcome to me and my home whenever there is something bothering you, are you okay?*”

“*Yes I am okay mother, and we are actually good with my siblings!*” Sabu replied again, trying to be positive whilst she was visibly not. “*Okay my child, but I am feeling something, you are not okay these days, please do tell me anything, I promise you I am going to help you my daughter. Remember Sabu, if you are not okay in your family in these trying times, which will be the downfall of the family, do you want that?*” “*Do you want people to say you failed your family, let us go through this my child, I have actually been talking to your mother this morning, she called me, she speaks like there is something wrong with you my child!*” enquired the counselor. Other than saying any word Sabu upon hearing about her mother she just cried hysterically such that it drew attention of the other church members who were still there by the church premises. And upon seeing this the lady counselor just walked her home with her siblings who were also in somber mode after what had happened to their sister.

They walked all the journey home and when they reached there, the counselor said, “*You know Sabu my child, now that you are home, try and get some rest and when you have rested enough please do call my number, you know that I can talk to your mother whatever it is, it shall come to pass my child.*” And then she left them, no one amongst them was able even to say good bye. After she had left Sabu just went straight for sleep and her siblings did the same, but to her surprise, she stayed almost the whole of that night looking. She could never have a nap, she only would listen to her younger sister and brother snoring interchangeably from time to time. Her mind was possessed with all what her phone could bring her if it could be on again. Whilst thinking she noticed that it was about to be dawn by the roosters crocking.

By that Monday morning Sabu then decided to have her phone charged so that she could let the Lady counselor speak to her mother as she had promised that she could help. So after she had tried for several times she had finally lost her fear and decided that if anything happens then so be it. Because of her phone’s condition, Sabu could not be able to call the lady councilor but only wait for any incoming call that. And for a moment she used to receiver the missed call notifications from different callers, her mother, Alfred and others.

On the other hand, Alfred was not coping without any feedback from her, he even had started searching for her around the Mkhumbane Shopping complex thinking that maybe she would decide to go to the complex again maybe for some reasons or something. One Thursday he decided to go and just stay at the park so that maybe someone who knows her could come and be a possible messenger. So he put on his fancy clothes since that day he had asked for a day off from work, so the was no need to be seen on the work uniform as usual, which made him look more attractive as he was indeed a handsome guy, everyone knew it in the area that he was a good looking and handsome colored young man.

After preparing himself for that day, as if he had something like an important meeting to attend to, he then began his journey. Walking slowly and visibly stressed he went via the main Mkhumbane road, just making sure that he would not meet his friends from work because they were going to ask him a lot of things. So this way led him to pass next to Mss. Zinhle’s shop, and when he was a few meters away from it he saw a familiar face, a lady who was out to drop off some dust into the dust bin that was nearby the shop.

Without hesitation he noticed that this was the lady he lost many years ago, Nokuphila. “*So she is here, I remember her from the day of Nomcebo’s scandals, which means that she may be working or just living around here.*” – He thought out loud. While thinking, he ended up deciding to get into the shop so that he could verify that indeed it was Nokuphila whom she saw. Upon entering the shop, Alfred was very much surprised to see that Nokuphila works as the shop assistant whilst he is always around but they never meet. “*Hey, are you real, I mean after all these years is this you. Please get out!*” – reacted Nokuphila who was practically not willing to have any conversation with this guy.

Alfred tried and tried to ask for her attention but she would not listen to him, and even promised to have him arrested for robbery, so he then decide to give her some space and continue with his journey.

After noticing that Nokuphila was around, Alfred knew it very well that he was not going to give up coming to the shop, but for this day he just left because his mind kept on reminding him that it could happen that the very same person he was looking for this day was once seen walking with Nokuphila which meant that she could just come around any moment and that could mean some chaos. He really wished that he could be able to ask Nokuphila about the whereabouts of Sabu, but the problem was that it could mean hurting both of them since they would end up knowing what he was doing. So that is why he decided to continue with his journey and go to the park to wait by, and upon reaching there he saw the place was more beautiful than ever before, he would even find himself talking to himself about the beauty and blossoming of the place.

While watching people passing by at the distance, and others coming in and out of the park, he noticed one lady at a distance who was in familiar clothes. And after a thorough examination he was able to note that it was Nokuphila and she was heading straight to the Madvulini Primary school. Without hesitation he jumped out of his seat and went straight to her, not knowing exactly what he was going to do and say to her, but he could not help it he needed to meet her and say something to her – that is what he deeply knew in his heart.

As fast as he was when approaching to her, he even walked on prohibited areas of the park, trying to take short cut paths and just when he was about to reach to her, she had already seen him and she was already visibly furious. So when Alfred noticed that she was already untouchable, he knelt down next to the road, just a few steps before her, gently and smoothly rubbing his hands with somber gestures, he looked into her eyes for a moment without any word. And whilst Nokuphila was looking at him, she felt the pressure from the eyes of the onlookers who were passing by and she found herself uttering the words, “*Hey you, get up, what are you doing there, are you mad, get up!”* But instead of getting up, Alfred lowered his head, bowing before her with his eyes in glasses of tears he said, “*I know you would never forgive me in this your life, but would you never adhere to the sorrows of nature as well?*” “*I beg you, not to pity me right now, since I do deserve even the hottest slap from you right away, but could you just hear me out before I die in this world.*” – He added.

While Alfred was down there trying to beg for her attention, she found herself on tears from nowhere as well, and the public who were already watching like it was a movie scene, was heard shouting the words, “*Hold her! Hold her! Hold her!*” Without hesitation Alfred slowly rose up and spreading his hands towards Nokuphila who also failed to resist the move, they hugged and embraced each other for some time with no word from either of their mouths.

One Monday morning Sabu was at her homestead doing her house chores as her daily business since her mother left to the hospital. She noticed someone by the gate who was coming through straight to her. She then approached to meet that guest. She noticed that it is a young lady, and the face looks familiar but she didn’t recall her at all. “*Hello my sister, can I help you?*” – Greeted Sabu. This young lady was carrying a small beautiful handbag in her hands, and before she said any word she just knelt down and handed over the handbag to Sabu. With surprise, Sabu stood for a moment, she was actually reluctant about taking the handbag, but after a short moment she then decide to stretch her hand slowly and she took the small beautiful handbag.

Just when she has taken the hand bag, the young familiar lady said, “*Hi, I was sent to tell Sabu that, after she has taken this small handbag she must look over that hill up there!*” – Said the young lady who was visibly in a hurry to get back. When she said these words she pointed up a small hill that was about a couple of hundreds of meters next to Sabu’s homestead, and when Sabu looked over there, she saw Sandziso waving some greetings at that distance.

Sabu smiled and she waved back too, and as she was still looking, Sandziso disappeared and when she looked back to the young lady, she saw her by the gate. The young lady turned to her and said, “*Please just read the small letter in the small pocket of that bag!*” and she left. Sabu quickly looked for the small pocket of the bag, she found a small memo like card, which was beautifully decorated and she was very much eager to read what was inside it. With her eagerness to read what this small letter had for her, she opened it. To her surprise, it only had three words which read, “*The Hill Please!*” She got very much surprised as to what was she supposed to do, but then she knew it very well that she had some feelings about Sandziso, so she decided to go and search for him at the hill so to ask about what was basically going on.

She got in the house and put the bag on top of the table, and even without opening the bag to see what was inside, she rushed to the hill, so that she could find him not too far.

When she was about a few meters before she reached the top of the hill, where Sandziso was standing, she saw the young lady leaning over a rock at a distance. She looked again, scattering her eyes for Sandziso, but to her surprise she did not see him. So she asked the young lady, “*Hey, where is Sandziso, what are you guys doing, you are confusing me guys.*” And the young lady just smiled and she began to walk away. When Sabu tried to run after her, she heard his voice calling her, very close to her back. When she turned to the voice, she saw Sandziso coming to her already spreading his hands towards her. And upon seeing that, Sabu could not resist it, she willingly spread her arms as well, and as Sandziso approached her they hugged, and Sabu was visibly in tears of joy. They hugged for a moment whilst she was feeling one of the best feelings in her life.

After a moment of hugging, they released each other gradually looking at each other’s eyes, and then Sandziso said, “*Sabu, I love you, that’s all I can say!*” Upon hearing those words, Sabu hugged him again in a sign of acceptance. They continued their hugging, and either of them could utter any word up until Sabu heard her young brother, who was at home that day, running around the yard calling in search of her. So this made the two love birds note that they were already out of time, so she left heading towards home. They only waved their hands in a sign of goodbyes to each other, whilst they departed. Sandziso waited for her to reach home whilst watching her like he was going to ask her to come back again. But Sabu only looked back at him just when she approached the gate and for the last time she waved him goodbye, and Sandziso slowly raised his hand trying to do the same, and out of love, he continued looking at her up until she was hidden by the walls of their white old painted house. After a moment of watching, as if he was believing that Sabu was going to come back, Sandziso then realized that she was busy, so she was not coming back, and then he left.

On the other hand, when Sabu entered the house, she opened the small beautiful handbag, so curious to know what was inside. To her surprise, she saw a small sealed cellphone box, and she became so surprised that it took her some time to open it. But then with curiosity, she ended up opening it and found a brand new Samsung mobile phone, with a small letter which read, “*This is not to buy or bargain anything, please use it to contact me on this number +268 11194516. It is just a small gift that I have been saving for since the beginning of this year. I love you!*”

After reading this, out of joy, Sabu just cried and cried for some time, and her younger brother had already been trying to help her exchange the SIM card from the old phone into the new phone, but it could not work because he had made a mistake putting the card in a memory card slot.

After all her joy and cries, Sabu just wiped her tears of joy and then took her new phone from Bongizwi and re-inserted the SIM card onto the right slot, and then she switched the phone on. It was one of the best phones she had ever had, and of course she made her first call with Sandziso through the provided number, and they enjoyed every moment of their speeches.

So after everything, Sabu felt very much lucky since she was going to be able to call her hospitalized mother through her new mobile phone, which is something she just jumped to right away after speaking with Sandziso. In her first call, the phone rang unanswered up until it cut, and knowing what happened between her and her mother during their last phone call she was so scared, in fact she thought that her mother had not gone past the issue. She then became afraid to initiate another call, but to her surprise, after a few minutes, she saw a new incoming alert, which was a call back message from her hospitalized mother. She then decided to try and make a new call to her mother.

The phone rang and it was picked up, and when she tried to greet her sick mother who sounded so much happy, the phone was cut again. It was a sickly feeling, but then Sabu remembered that it was because of service, she had not serviced her SIM card for some time, and that last airtime which she had put in there had just got finished.

When she noticed this with her phone, Sabu realized that she had not enough money to buy some airtime, since her phone needed to be serviced through airtime, so she then decided that she will just send another call back to her mother so that she would know that she has just run out of airtime to call her.

After some time, by the day, when Sabu had just been busy with her daily chores, she heard several message alerts from her new phone, and when she looked onto them, she realized that it was Alfred who had been sending her messages and trying to call her all these days whilst here phone was off. This brought a small fright to her, but then she decided to send one call back to Alfred, just to make him know that she had then regained her phone back. And just after she sent the callback, her phone just rang and it was indeed Alfred. She was first afraid to receive it, but then she remembered that she was the one who initiated the call so she answered it. “*Hi, hello Alfred, how are u, please don’t kill me, I have a lot to explain I know.”* – Sabu greeted with some guilt. While she was busy trying to explain and apologize for what transpired that day they last heard from each other, Alfred only sighed and said, “*Hello beautiful angel, I am only glad that you are fine, what I only needed was to hear from you, that’s all, and now that I have just heard your beautiful voice, everything is fine, you do not need to explain anything.*” After having heard this from Alfred, Sabu became silent for a moment, and they both noticed that silence such that Alfred then started another speech, “*Sabu, so how have things been, moreover, I have been seeing you in my thoughts each minute of this our unintended break, I have been dreaming about you, I have been feeling each move that you have been making, you know I love you.”*

Knowing what happened the last time, and also knowing her feelings, Sabu then failed to resist Alfred, instead she found herself saying, “*Alfred, I wanted to tell you that, I love you, but then I experienced some problem with my phone that I was using, but then now I have a new one.” “Oh, my gosh, you have just made my day, my week, and my month and I mean my year. Thank u for letting this loving soul into your heart, I mean I will never let you down, you will always be this Queen in my heart, thanks bbe, love u.” –* appreciated Alfred with noticeable joy. They continued with their conversation as new lovebirds, although Sabu was not that content, since she had just created one other new relationship that same morning which was something that she was not familiar with.

After a while, whilst they were still having their conversation, Sabu recalled that she had not been able to contact her mother due to the service problem, so she then developed an idea to ask for help from Alfred who seemed to have much since he was still not complaining about airtime for over a long conversation over the phone. “*Alfred, won’t you be offended if I ask for something from you?”* – asked Sabu shyly with her soft low voice. And Alfred being so happy he just said, “*Anything my love, I can do for you, don’t be afraid, just say it my baby.”* And then upon hearing that, Sabu was able to make her request of which Alfred was gladly willing to do, “*You know my love, I have said this before to you, my mother is in the hospital, and I want to call her, but I do not have any service here with me, so please my bbe.*” “*Don’t worry my love, anything that you want simply tell me, I will just send you E30.00 service airtime for now my love, Love u”* – replied the happiest Alfred.

Her boldness, about asking Alfred for the airtime, had helped Sabu a lot since she was then able to call her hospitalized mother and greet her. It was the greatest feeling to her and her mother to have heard each other’s voices after a long time since Sabu had last made scandals with her mother.

**The Last Chapter**

One Monday morning, Sabu woke up with a call from her mother from the hospital and she quickly picked the phone up and answered the call. “*Sabu, my daughter how are my children, where are Aya and Bongizwi?”* – asked her joyful mother. And Sabu noticing her joy, asked, “*Mommy, you sound so happy and so joyful, what is it?”* It was long since her mother has been hospitalized, such that Sabu had been used to knowing her mother in an abnormal state. So, her mother’s feeling that day brought back so much joy and happiness. And upon hearing her insisting to know the cause the such a happier mood, Sabu’s Mother then revealed, “*The doctors, they said today is my last day here my bb!*” And just after hearing that, Sabu jumped with laughter and shouted, “Bongizwi, Bongizwi, mama is coming home!”

Heloy