



BATTLE OF SEXES

Single Ladies, The Cheats
and The Ordinary

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BOOK #001



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Tatenda Charles Munyuki



Darling Kind Publishing

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and have no relation whatsoever to anyone bearing the same name or names.
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1...

The sun shone from wherever it wanted because, after all, it was a bar – the haven from all that was outside. At the bar sat a lady, age unknown, status unknown, occupation unknown, but she looked like the person not far from her.

Not far sat a man, status unknown, age unknown, and occupation unknown. There was hyper music playing in the bar, fading to and from. People were dancing, enjoying themselves.

I was a baby, a girl, into a lady..., the lady was lost in thought.

I am a man, was a boy, once a baby..., the man thought, toying with his glass of beer.

...what many men out there fail to understand is that women rule the world, the lady continued with her thoughts.

...we are of Adam, we are the rulers of the world. Don't let anyone tell you otherwise, the man's thoughts diversified.

...we create life, we create men...

...we sow the seed, thus the seed grows from within us...

They didn't realize it, but in their gloomy nature, in an energetic bar, their minds were in a battle, *the battle of sexes*.

The suburb looked nice enough, especially at such a time. The houses were evenly spaced. At a particular house, a car was parked outside, the lights of the lounge bright. The curtains were drawn a bit. Quarrelling voices from within could be heard if one listened closely. The difference was pretty clear they were male and female.

'You don't care about me. You men are filthy pigs!' Jane said, fully pissed.

'Come on, lower your voice. This isn't a choir!' Phillip responded sternly.

The two stared hard at each other, at opposite sides of a table. Jane was Indian, tall and extremely beautiful. She started crying, sitting on the sofa.

‘How could you do this to me, Phillip, how could you?’

Phillip walked over to sit at her side, a caring hand on hers. ‘You misunderstand, dear. She is just a friend.’

‘Don’t lie to me!’ Jane screamed. She moved away from him, shrugging away.

Philip looked forever calm. ‘I’m not. You are my fiancée and my only love. I’d never do that to you,’ he said, staring at her with loving eyes.

Jane breathed heavily for a few seconds, eyeing him. She folded her hands, unconvinced. ‘But I saw you, you were hugging.’

‘Cynthia is an old friend, you know that. She lost her mother last week. I was just consoling her.’

‘Really? It didn’t –’

‘There is nothing more to it, dear, trust me. Come over, please stop crying,’ Philip reached over for her.

Jane stared at him long and hard, and then shrugged again. She shuffled and moved over, sniffing her tears away. They hugged.

‘There, there, it’s okay,’ Philip said, patting her.

The early morning twits of the birds filled the calm part of the Avenues Flats. As expected, the flats looked normal on the outside, cars parked, security at the gate, nearby nooks with prostitutes on the lookout. Cars passed by various roads that were adjacent to the flat, but it being early, not that much traffic had started to jam yet. In one flat, nothing was well. *The walls had ears.*

Molly grasped the neck of the beer bottle and smashed the bottle on the table, to be left holding its neck. ‘I’ll cut myself, if you dare step out of that door. I’ll cut myself!’ she said, determined.

Her husband, Tawanda, young and handsome, tried to walk over, carefully to take the dangerous bottleneck from her. ‘*Iwe*, Molly, *unopenga here?* What are you trying to do?’

Molly raised the bottleneck dangerously and threateningly. ‘I said I was sorry *wani* and now you want to leave me? I’ll kill myself!’

Tawanda saw his opportunity, lunged over and held her hand tight. Molly screamed and scratched until he found it wise to leave her if he didn't want himself accidentally cut.

'You cheat on me with my friend and you have the nerve to –'

'I'm sorry – Nkosana seduced me –'

'He seduced you?' Tawa laughed sarcastically. 'Look at your dressing. Is that how a married woman dresses?'

Molly shrugged. She had on a dress that reached her knees, but the dress looked so tight it was a wonder why it hadn't burst yet. It clearly showed off how huge her ass was, how huge her bust was and, most importantly, how tall and coke bottle shaped she looked. She was a *hybrid*, thus such a dress would definitely be a problem in society. Worse of all, her skin was *yellow-bone* light and spotless.

Molly didn't know what his problem was. She no longer wore those short dresses and shorts she so loved to wear to show off her divine legs. 'Your sister dresses like this, I am –'

'My sister is seventeen years old, for crying out loud. You can't seriously give me that lame excuse!' Tawa was forever pissed and disgusted.

Of all the things he had ever done in his life, he knew he had been extremely lucky to have such a stunning creature be his wife. He had always known the risks that came with it. *Had his choice been wise after all?*

'Till death do us part, that's what we said. If you leave me now, I'm just as good as dead. Let me just save you the trouble.'

She raised the bottleneck to cut her wrist. Tawa dived for her, knocked over a stool and managed to catch her hand just in time.

Hell, she is serious! He thought horrified. He used all his strength to try to make her drop the bottleneck. The great trouble was that she also had muscle in her, one of the things Tawa worshiped her for when it came to being dominant in bed.

Knowing very well that any funny business would leave either him or her cut, he used all his willpower and brain to make sure the improvised blade was inches away from dangerously harming any of them.

A knock suddenly came. The two stopped struggling. Then the

knock came again, more forcefully this time. The two stared at each other. Tawa made sure Molly wasn't going to cut herself if he suddenly let her go. He took the bottleneck from her apparently now weak hand. He slowly let her go and walked over to the door.

'Ndiani?' he shouted.

'Ndini!' a soft female's voice came.

It was a voice both of them recognized immediately for their shocked expressions showed as much. Tawanda cleared his throat and opened the door. At the door was a woman – very tall, slim, extremely light skinned, around the age of forty or so. She had those eyes that could easily scare a cat by just staring – serious, confident and analysing.

'Mhamba, titambireyi!' Tawa quickly moved forward, his expression totally changed, so welcoming.

The woman walked in, a shocked expression developing on her face as she looked around, then at the two. *'Ko chii chirikuitika muno? Bhodboro ndereyi nhai, Tawanda?'*

There was a brief silence. Tawanda knew how it looked and tried to think of the right words. *'Hazvisizvo zvamurikufunga, Mhamba –'*

'Ko zvaunenge urikuda kuchekacheka mwana wangu, ropa iro ravvepi?'

'Mirai nditsanangure, Mhamba,' Tawanda looked like he was about to kneel down, begging to be heard and understood. 'Your daughter here tried to kill herself – is trying to kill herself.'

'What?' Mai Molly, Molly's mother, said, staring at Molly with disbelief.

'I caught her cheating and told her I was done with her. She threatened to kill herself if I left her,' Tawa used that opportunity to explain his side.

Mai Molly suddenly howled. She advanced toward Molly. *'Wakakwana here mwana iwewe, he? Haunyare kuda kundinyandzisa kudaro. He?'*

Before Molly could even say anything, *SLAP!* She was given four more quick and successive slaps. Molly cowered to one side, screaming. More slaps came and Tawa watched, undecided. It was so odd watching such a tall, but slender lady, compared to Molly's size, beating the crap out of Molly.

‘*Aiwaka, Mbamba*, please *musadaro*,’ he later chose to intervene before Molly suddenly got the crazy idea to hit back and cause more chaos.

Mai Molly was a firecracker, Tawa discovered, as he tried to pull her back. Her height didn’t help either for she was taller than both of them. She wasn’t stopping at anything at disciplining her grown-ass child.

The houses of Mount Pleasant were as pleasant as their name because they were less populated. It was rare to see more than ten people walking around in a street. Most of the people seen in this neighbourhood were either joggers or dog walkers, or the usual gardeners tending the outside lawns.

From one house, some love song diffused from the windows. It was around lunchtime. A sweet voice came from the room where the music was coming from, particularly a large kitchen. Joyce, African, medium height, very pretty, with her huge eighth month pregnant belly, was busy doing the dishes. She stopped to listen. From the outside came the sound of a car arriving and being parked.

Minutes later, the door suddenly opened. Tod, Caucasian, tall and handsome, formal business-like, walked in – her ever-so charming boyfriend.

He walked over to where she was. ‘Honey, I’m home!’

Joyce smiled at herself, didn’t respond.

Tod swooped in, hugged her and her belly. ‘Hey, you!’

‘Hey!’ Joyce responded sweetly. She turned and they kissed briefly. ‘You back so soon? Why?’

‘Thought of taking a half-day today, to be with my loving wife, of course.’

Joyce giggled. ‘Really? It’s only a Monday.’

‘So? I’m the boss and the boss can leave work anytime he wants,’ Tod said, hugging her more tightly.

The two stared at each other, lovingly. They both broke into a series of giggles. Tod finally let her go, walked over to the kitchen table, and took an orange from the fruit bowl. He started peeling it clean.

‘Your dad is the boss. He’ll not be pleased with you.’

‘Who cares?’ Tod shrugged. ‘He is an old man.’

They laughed some more. Joyce hurried on with her dishes, aiming to finish them as soon as possible.

‘Say, why are you doing dishes? Where is Hope?’ Tod suddenly asked, looking around. Hope was their faithful maid.

‘She went out to buy me some stuff.’

Tod walked over, gulping up his orange in two and swallowing. ‘You could have called me. This is her job and you should be resting.’

‘I rest all day,’ Joyce frowned-in-kind. ‘It’s boring. I need some exercise here and there.’

Tod softly took the dishtowel from her. ‘But the doctor said –’

Joyce snatched the dishtowel from him and grinned. ‘The doctor said I should exercise often to keep my blood flowing well.’

‘Are you sure?’

‘Yes, dear, trust me!’ Joyce said, giving him a naughty peck on the nose. She giggled at his expression.

‘Oh, if that’s so, let me help you,’ Tod softly took the towel away again.

Joyce laughed and opened the water into the sink. ‘If your father could see you now, leaving work at lunch on a Monday to do dishes.’

Tod grinned. ‘I’m sure he’d understand how much I love my girlfriend and child,’ he said, though he wasn’t even the least bit convinced with what he was saying. His father was an odd character.

Nobody could really predict what his father would or wouldn’t do, except his mother. He wondered if his life couldn’t be any perfect. A beautiful pregnant girlfriend, a lovely house, a comfortable and secure job. Life couldn’t be much perfect than this. He was living an ordinary, yet, blessed life. He couldn’t ask for more or less.

2...

Sometimes I wonder, seeing these girls, so young, so vibrant, so free and almost innocent, what it would be like to be that age again. To be free of men, free of heightened emotions that come with sex, the feeble promises of being or searching for love, the need of being an un-kept lady, the hopes of being married and having a family of my own by the age of thirty. After all, that is what normal is... or does normal mean a whole lot different to what our parents used to believe? Either way, I believe the son of a bitch deserves to hang. He has broken my heart into a thousand pieces more than those idiots before him and after...

‘Sin not to those who sin unto you...’ the words of the priest trailed, waking up the depressed woman sitting in the front bench of the church. She looked up, took a glimpse around. *Can I be more of a hypocrite?*

Every face she glanced had that gleam of worship, of passion and of praying. With their expensive suits and dresses, could any of these people have experienced what she had experienced in life?

No, Cynthia thought, looking back to the forever gifted pastor. Not even one of them had – they all had the skin of the privileged, the silver or golden spoons. However, she was a testament of a very bizarre unpredictable life.

Who could have thought she would be in a church, sitting side by side with these children of the bay?

At her side, dressed to kill anyone looking, sat Molly. She looked consumed with what was being said, when her mind was totally elsewhere. It was her first time at church that month and it wasn’t by choice. It was an excuse to leave home on a lovely Sunday, very well knowing her mother wouldn’t accompany them to church.

“A showcase of who is richer than who as the pastor steals our

money calling it a tenth,” Mai Molly had called it after attending it the Sundays after their wedding.

Having been raised by the woman, she understood where she was coming from. Her mother was the forever-suspicious type, the kind of person conspiracies were boiled from. On her hand was a bandage and it reminded her of the fight with Tawa – her forever loving and trusting husband. Remorse filled her, the environment of the church drowning on her. She had no idea why she had let herself stray to her old ways, let Nkosana have his way with her.

Had she led him on? Perhaps she had. Nkosana was fun, handsome, muscular and confident. He was someone her husband wasn't. However, she had come out disappointed. He was a *super-person* – a total disappointment in bed. His manhood wasn't as muscular as he was buffed up. His charm wasn't as caressing as he looked to be. He was, in fact, a bad lay, a waste of the cheating card. That was probably why she had overreacted, after discovering that she had cheated for nothing except the blinding covers of a sour candy bar.

What had been the point in cheating, really? She was now twenty-seven years old and by now should at least have had a child. *Would she even be a good mother?* She thought sadly.

Next to her sat Jane – Phil's fiancée. Jane was aware of who she was, what she was all about, enough also to know that she was often at times too emotional. *Was Phil really cheating on her?* She knew she had to be very sure before she committed herself to marriage.

There were rumours that he was a player, but he was so sweet and kind to her. She was twenty-four years old and her parents were expecting her to have been married by now. They had had her brother when they were only twenty and then now being in their mid-forties, with three children, she felt they were still too young and had rushed into having a family as quickly as they had done. After all, her big brother was a year plus older, and she was two years older than her little brother. Being the only girl in the family, she did feel the pressure.

Her brother was still single and she thought that him being

the first born and, mainly working for an oil company in Dubai that made him filthy rich, was the main reason their parents didn't pester him about marrying and stuff. Phil was the only boyfriend she had ever known, in college and after. His father was a family friend and as such, she only thought it normal to be involved with him. However, her friends didn't really approve of this choice. They figured her too fragile and emotional to be involved with someone like Phil.

Joyce very much thought so too. She sat at Jane's side and could very much sense her unrest. She had a stable and lovely life so far and wished the same for her friends. She had met Jane at high school, after winning a scholarship to such a school after spending two years without going to school.

She was the only child, so at twenty-six years old and expecting her first child, she had an idea what family meant, and Jane had become like family to her. The only relative she had known had been her aunt who had disowned her more than a year ago. She had never known her parents – only that they had died tragically a long time ago, a matter she had tried, but failed to discover. Her aunt had never discussed such a matter. It always made her paranoid with anger every time Joyce had started to ask.

She had no idea if any family from either her mother or father's side were still alive. Her aunt had never introduced or told her about one. At one time, her aunt had suddenly left the country for South Africa and left her to inherit crazy debts, debts that had nearly made her drop out of college until Jane had helped her out. She owed too much to Jane to want to see her nothing, but happy.

By now, she felt the need to protect her as if she was her big sister. She didn't believe Jane would be happy with Phil. There was something about Phil, beneath that charm, that swag and appearance, which she didn't like. She didn't know what, but she knew.

She had discussed it with Tod, and Tod had advised her to let it be. She had ignored the advice and approached Jane about the issue, but it was useless. Jane was under Phil's spell and Joyce was cautious to further the matter, knowing very well that if she pushed it, it would likely destroy their precious friendship.

Her eyes went to Tawa. Now, that was one man whom she had wished endlessly that Jane would end up with. He was smart, well-educated, self-made humble businessman who had chosen to help and work for the church. Tawa had had his eyes on Jane for quite some time and unfortunately, much to Joyce's awe, Jane had never noticed it. He wasn't in her class of status, so possibly barely noticeable to high-class Jane. Moreover, most stunningly, she had watched as he had ended up with Molly.

She had met Molly at church a few years ago, a hot young secretary who had been invited by one of the church members and ended up never leaving the church.

There was no denying that as far as appearance was concerned, Molly ruled at the church. Her dressing even made it so. The only way she had gotten to know more of Molly was because she worked for one of Mr Anderson's companies.

Since she worked there as one of the legal advisers, they often saw each other. And since they went to the same church, it was only civil they became friends as well. Joyce had thought Molly would change if she got married and had children, and she was still yet to analyze and assess that possibility.

The church service ended around twelve, towards lunch. The parishioners met outside, greeting each other, discussing about their lives and weeks. At one area was Molly, Jane and Joyce. They all looked fresh and stunning.

'Your stomach looks like it's going to pop out!' Molly said, staring at Joyce's belly. The others giggled.

'It's true. That's a lovely dress,' Jane said, checking her out. It was probably an import, some kind of expensive design, she thought. Tod wasn't shy to spoil his lady.

'Thanks, Jane, so is yours,' Joyce said smiling. It was something Jane would notice. Personally, she wasn't much into fashion and had stopped resisting from Tod buying her expensive clothes.

'The day you see me in such a dress is the day I die!' Molly said. Laughter resumed.

'I only wonder what your children will be like, Molly,' Joyce said, caressing her belly.

'If ever, gorgeous and sexy like their mama,' Molly said, posing left and right.

'And forever crazy too!' Jane added.

They all laughed some more. The environment was a buzz, most people excited to see each other.

Flashy cars could be seen at the parking lots.

'Hey, what happened to your hand?' Joyce suddenly noticed the bandage on Molly's hand.

'Nothing,' Molly shrugged, folding her hands over her handbag. 'Just cut it preparing supper.'

The others stared at her stunned, as if she had suddenly said something vulgar.

'You cook? Since when?' Jane asked, surprised as the others.

'Since that ma of mine chose to pay us an unexpected visit,' Molly replied, practically frowning.

'Your mother is in town?' Joyce asked.

'Yah, apparently she needs some dough to pay her farm workers or something,' Molly said, apparently bored.

'Wow,' Joyce said excited. 'I must see her!'

Molly stared at her surprised. 'You know, I never understand why you two click. Me, her –'

'Water and oil,' Jane added.

Brief laughter followed. It was so true.

'She was there when my aunt wasn't. She gave me good advice.'

'Well, your aunt is something else. Is she still not speaking to you?' Molly said.

'Yes. She claims the family doesn't need a whore and a child conceived out of marriage, taboo,' Joyce said sadly.

'What family?' Jane asked surprised.

'I have no idea at all? She met some relatives in SA and I don't know what she is on about nowadays. She rarely stays at one place and she is always asking me for money.'

'Your aunt is crazy, I've always said that. After what she did to you and after all you did for her?' Jane was appalled.

'Well, you know these old ladies,' Joyce said. 'Too traditional, but your mother is different.'

Molly murmured, full of disagreement. She didn't say anything, clearly against this notion of thought.

'What? They do get along with Tawa,' Jane said.

'Tawa is too soft. He is like a blind bird, just flying,' Molly said, avoiding eye contact.

'No offense, but he is too soft for sure,' Jane agreed.

Molly giggled. 'None taken.'

Joyce giggled as well. 'You guys, Tawa is a great guy. Don't say such nasty things about him.'

'We are only saying it as it is, Joyie. These men are an odd species,' Molly said.

Jane nodded. 'Couldn't agree more,' she said, and shrugged. Her head turned, and not far, she saw Cynthia exchange hugs with an old lady. She frowned. 'I think Phil is back to his old games, and he thinks I'm too stupid to see.'

'Not again?' Joyce groaned. She didn't like hearing this at all. 'Didn't he learn from the last time?'

'Apparently not. I'm going to teach him a lesson this time if it's true. Cheating is just not right!' Jane said.

Molly laughed sarcastically. 'Ladies, the heart wants what it wants.'

Jane stared furiously at her. 'What is that supposed to mean?' she said heatedly.

'Not to sound too crude, but men will always be men,' Molly said defensively.

That brought into the picture a long and unnecessary argument, as the women walked away to the parking lot.

The plush lodge was used by many men visiting it every Sunday. Men that guest it came either with women or with other men. Most men came to enjoy some time away from work and their wives. It was a famous infamous secret getaway.

Some music came from the braai area. At the area was Philip, Tawa, Tod and two of their colleagues. Meat sizzled at the stands, whilst beer and wine was nearby, including a few snacks and vegetables.

‘Women are easy,’ Philip said, raising the meat-fork in the air for emphasis. ‘Give them gifts and they will worship you. Even after you spit on their faces.’ Laughter followed.

‘That’s so true. On my monthly budget, I always reserve at least two hundred dollars for make-ups, and I don’t mean cosmetics,’ one of the colleagues, Simba, said. There was more laughter.

‘I find the woman’s brain very odd,’ Tawa said. He was holding a glass of wine, making sure he didn’t drink too much. He had a mother-in-law back home to respect in the evening.

‘Says the newly wed, already?’ Tod said, in his hand a glass of juice. He wasn’t going to drink at all that day, with Joyce waiting for him at home. *Was this how he was going to act once married?*

‘Trust me, when you get into it, you’ll be seeing things from my perspective,’ Tawa said.

‘I thought you had it all, Tee,’ Philip pointed out. ‘The sexy wife, growing reputation as the parish’s wonder kid. What more could one ask for?’

Tawa shook his head. ‘I don’t know. I thought this would be a dream come true, but –’

‘But what?’ the other man called Mike cut him short. He so desired to have what Tawa had, especially the sexy wild wife.

‘You know my wife, you must have an idea,’ Tawa complained.

‘It’s hard not to know your wife. She is one gorgeous creature. People in the hood often wonder why she married you, of all people,’ Mike said.

Laughter followed, the men getting more active at the braai stands.

‘Hey, don’t burn the meat, Tee!’ Tod shouted. ‘I’m sure he is just kidding.’

‘Of course not. Have you seen the body on his wife? Don’t tell me you haven’t feasted your eyes once in a while,’ Phil said so openly. More laughter came, Tawa grinning. He was used to these kind of taunts from his fellow men – one of the things that came with being married to Molly. It came with the territory.

‘Come on, dude,’ Tod said, having a taste of the meat. ‘I got my own lady, and child, along the way.’

'How is that coming along, white boy?' Phil asked.

'Spectacular!' Tod replied confidently.

'You lucky bastard. You know everyone had their eyes on Joy,' Simba said. 'She is one marvel, not to mention intelligent.'

'Why do you think I pumped her balloon as soon as I discovered her?' Tod said. Laughter continued.

Tawa shook his head. 'This really did seem like men's gossip. 'You guys talk about women as if they are —'

'Come on, wonder boy, every man knows that women are daredevils. If you don't control them, they will control you!' Mike said with bravado.

'That's not true,' Tawa was adamant.

'Are you serious? You married Molly two weeks after Jane introduced you two and you say that?' Phil laughed at him.

'Molly and I fell in love. That was just that!' Tawa didn't like Phil's tone. Phil had a tendency of being too outspoken. Perhaps one of the reasons he didn't really like Phil was because he had managed to get the girl he had been eyeing for years, without even trying.

'You seriously don't know your wife that well, do you?' Phil challenged. He too didn't really like Tawa. He was the poster boy most parents would be proud of, that women would die for. Mostly, because he didn't think he deserved someone like Molly for a wife. 'I grew up with Molly and I'm sorry, bro, but no one controls Molly.'

'Hey, guys, let's chill,' Tod saw it prudent to cut them short before tempers started to flare, amplified from the braai's heat. 'Women are just women. There are no women here, let us not think much about them.'

'Aye, aye, sir!' Simba said.

Laughter followed as they changed their focus to what mattered the most that afternoon, which were the eats, drinks and sports-politics talk.

3...

Days passed and Molly was glad to see her mother leave for her farm. She hoped she wasn't going to spend all the money Tawa had given her on whiskey or on the parties she often held for her old friends. That was very much like her mother, too unpredictable in behaviour. It was a wonder that her third husband had left her the farm before he had died.

Molly was forever grateful for it for she couldn't imagine living with her mother in her old age. Somehow, she wasn't surprised her mother had managed to marry them for money and managed to get what she desired from all these husbands. Security first, love later – if ever. She remembered growing up an odd fast life, a life her little sister had grown up living too, only less exposed. It was a blessing her sister's father, the second husband, was an okay man. He had raised his daughter well and she was the little sister even she was proud of having – the almost innocent smart little sister she often saw when she was back home from university from South Africa.

Her attention was elsewhere as she sat with the 8 P.M. news on. Work was work, boring almost, but the Andersons paid well, she couldn't complain. She was still in her work clothes – an expensive suit and expensive high heels. She stood up and thought it wise to have a drink. She didn't reach the kitchen for her tummy suddenly did a flip.

'What the hell!'

She rushed to the bathroom and threw up. It took her minutes to compose herself, drink a little water and she was surprised that she felt okay almost instantly. *What was she nervous about?* Thoughts of her husband followed.

Had he forgiven her? She checked the time. It was eight thirty and

he wasn't home yet. *Had he thought of paying her back?* It seemed the fairest reaction and yet she couldn't help feeling so angry at the thought of him cheating on her. It was so ironically twisted.

She left the bathroom back to the dining room, for the kitchen where takeaway food awaited her. No more mother around to fuss, no more cooking. It was back to the old ways, where they ordered fast foods.

She walked back into the living room and was surprised to see Tawa sitting on the sofa, watching the news.

'Hi,' she tried. *When had he arrived?*

Tawa turned to look at her and smiled weakly. 'Hi, wife.'

Molly took that as a good sign and kicked off her shoes. She tiptoed over to where he was sitting.

'You look to be in pain?' Tawa noticed.

'The shoes!'

'Why don't you wear flats instead?' Tawa stared at her shoes. He couldn't imagine how women walked in such shoes daily.

'Flats?' Molly laughed, placing her feet on his laps.

'Why not?' Tawa said, feeling her feet. They were indeed warm and pink at the toes.

'Flats don't do justice to my lower figure. Who wears flats nowadays?'

'Your friends wear flats,' Tawa pointed out. His mind was on Jane. Jane always wore flats.

'For your own info, dear husband, Joy is pregnant and Jane is too tall for heels. You can't say you don't find me appealing in heels?'

'Of course, you look great in heels, but –' Tawa said quickly, massaging her feet and tickling them.

Molly giggled. 'That's solved then. Let's not argue anymore. Did you bring back with you your own takeaway?'

'Aren't you going to cook?' Tawa stared at her. He had been surprised at what a good cook she was the few days Mai Molly was around.

He had never seen her cook, let alone boil her own egg. He had been hoping the process would continue.

‘Hell, no!’ Molly jerked up. ‘With mother gone, we go back to what we did for dinner. Anyway, I brought some with me, we can manage.’

‘Thanks, hun, we can eat later.’

‘So I guess we have plenty of time to do other things and not worry about food,’ Molly peered at him, licking her lips seductively.

‘What other things?’

‘How about I show you how grateful I am that you forgave me, my loving husband,’ Molly said, leaning over.

She dived in for a kiss and with her left hand opened his trousers’ zip. Her hand penetrated in and started doing things that made Tawa start to moan. He responded in-kind by guiding her towards him, his hands on her hips. They kissed passionately, Molly taking breaths that were giggles, giggles that made Tawa harder and more vigorous to respond. Dinner was forgotten, lullabies of passion in tune.

At Tod’s house, the TV was on, but on it was an evening’s talent show showing, one of Joyce’s favourites, especially in her state and spending a lot of time at home.

Joyce sat cuddling with Tod. ‘You look happy,’ she said sweetly.

‘I’m always happy when I am with you,’ Tod said.

‘I must be the luckiest girl around,’ Joyce giggled. Tod laughed in turn. ‘You never told me about the braai. What were you lot talking about?’

Tod laughed some more. He had expected this last Sunday, but then their minds had been too tired to talk about such things. With his mother coming over that week for a visit, that had been their focus. His mother was such a darling – she had already welcomed Joyce into the family. His father was another story. He knew his father would have been happy if Joyce was white or any other colour than black. Mr Anderson was what you called an old-fashioned man. He didn’t believe in the mixture of races. ‘What about the braai?’

‘How was Tawanda?’

Tod stared at her surprised. ‘Tawa? Why?’

‘Nothing, just thinking of what Molly said the other day.’

‘What did she say?’ Tod was forever curious.

‘She said, er –’ Joyce wondered if it was such a good idea to discuss this. ‘She said all men cheat, one way or the other.’

‘So that’s why you have been looking so worried all this time?’

Joyce shook her head and looked at him. ‘I’m a lawyer by profession, we are groomed to worry.’

‘Then you don’t have to worry about me cheating on you. Never, perhaps in the afterlife,’ Tod laughed.

‘Oh, you are so naughty,’ Joyce giggled.

‘Seriously, love, you don’t have to worry about that.’

‘And yet you take your time proposing,’ Joyce said, staring at her ring-less finger.

‘Well, love, many people are married out there and they aren’t happy. I’ll marry you at the appropriate time – I promise.’

Joyce heard the seriousness in his voice and wished she could believe him. There was pressure all round, especially with Mrs Anderson coming over to see the woman who was carrying her grandchild. It was pressure she didn’t need.

Bottles lay on the floor in the dining room and it looked a bit rowdy. At that time of the evening, the lights should have been on, but it was dim in there. Snoring could be heard coming from the kitchen. These were typical snores of a drunk.

Jane suddenly walked in and couldn’t believe what she was seeing. *Is he serious?* She thought angrily. Over the past few days, she had tried to convince herself that Phil wasn’t cheating on her. She had almost believed it until that day when she had called Phil’s office only to be directed to a number at a first class hotel. She had visited the hotel in a quest to find the truth.

A few hundred dollars at the reception had given her enough knowledge. Phil was a regular client and she had waited in the lobby, hiding in disguise.

She had seen Cynthia come from the stairs, looking very happy and satisfied. Minutes later, Phil had left the place. She had taken pictures, the proof to present that evening.

‘You must be kidding me, Philip!’ she shouted.

Philip was lying in the kitchen, on the table, of all places. He looked so wasted. He mumbled something and continued snoring.

‘Philip, Philip! You promised me you wouldn’t get drunk like this again, Phil?’ Jane shouted furiously.

Phil was practically oblivious, snoring.

‘At least sleep in the bedroom, but not on my expensive kitchen table, again? Phil!’ Jane was now frantic.

This stupid ungrateful son of a bitch had cheated on her, living at her house, eating her food, taking advantage of her. Now he was coming home drunk after screwing his co-worker and she had to deal with this and stay calm?

No way!

Phil was lost away in dreamland.

‘Just you wait, this time you’ll get what’s coming to you. I’m going to cut that dick of yours and stuff it in your nose!’ Jane said, and lunged at the first thing she saw – a sharp knife. She angrily opened his zipper and... SCREAM!

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