



***Book Zanokuhle - His Heir (Owethongo)***

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## Chapter 01

(Today I woke up with one of those dreams. I dreamed of myself slaughtering a white goat and I was dressed up like a sangoma. When I woke up from that dream I felt tired. As soon as everyone left I locked myself in my bedroom and slept. I just woke up now because these little rascals are back from school and they are shouting and threatening me.)

Ndlelenhle : I'm going to tell mommy that you didn't pick us up from school!

Zibusiso : Ndlela? Ndlela?

(She is hitting Ndlela's shoulder because she wants him to give her attention)

Ndlelenhle : Mhmm?

Zibusiso : You will tell daddy about the milk angithi? Angithi uzosho ukuthi uphuze ngomlomo emile kwi fridge?

Ndlelenhle : Ehhe I'll tell him!

Me : Ey Zibusiso ave uyiqhalaqhala.

Zibusiso : Anginendaba!

Me : Mina uyangidina mfana ngikutshele

Zibusiso : Nawe uyadina!

Me : Zothani uyangigxoba wena.

(She is walking over my head. I don't know where she is going. They are all over my bed.)

Zothani : Sorry.

Me : What do you want?

Zothani : Phone yakho

(I prefer Zothani. She doesn't speak much. She plays games and keeps quiet)

Me : No! I'm still charging it. Nina Ngidlala ifoni yami niyishiye kanjalo

Zothani : Ay mina bhuti.

(She cries. Oh she cries more and speaks less)

Me : Nawe hawu! Phumani futhi la

Zibusiso : We don't want to! Asifuni!

Me : Mxm

(I get out of bed and take the throw. I head downstairs and leave them in my room. I switch on the TV and sleep on the couch. I hear my father's car parking outside and quickly close my eyes. I want them to think that I'm sleeping. I hear my mother laughing outside. They are coming. The door opens)

Sthabile : Thukena awukahle

(She laughs)

Nyathuko : Hawu izimbali zakho wazishiya

Sthabile : Ehhene Nana I told you nje. But I asked Sandy to keep them safe.

(Silence. I know they are fucking kissing)

Nyathuko : Uh-huh Sthah uh-huh letha la

(My mother laughs)

Sthabile : Come on baby I'll give you another one.... Hhaibo kwaze kwangcola layindlini Thukeh. Buka ubhakha ka Ndlela phansi. Hawema!

(Damn!)

Nyathuko : Ubani lo olele?

Me : Obvious u Zanokuhle. Ongibambela lezicathulo Nana. Aibo angiyazi ke mina lento

Nyathuko : Zano?

(Forget it)

Sthabile : Akwenziwe lutho layikhaya weThukeh. u Zanokuhle akakhiphanga ngisho inyama le engithe ayikhiphe. Izitsha zigcwele u sink. Nyathuko ngicela ukhulume naye ngoba mina ngizohlanya

Nyathuko : Calm down Mam'Zondi. Nkosana ka Baba?

(He uncovers my head and touches my forehead)

Nyathuko : Ulele sthandwa sami.

Sthabile : Ayngeke Thukeh sizovumela u Zanokuhle eneke amasende nje whole day endlini engcolile? He can't even wash the dishes? Mina ngishiya sengi cleanile layindlini njalo ekseni before I go to work kodwa sibuya njalo kunje? This is not fair Nyathuko! Iyaganga lengane.

Nyathuko : I'll talk to him.

Me : You always say that. Aybo musani ukudlala ngami ngisazodlala ithuna. Mina kumele ngime emsebenzini ngiphinde ngizoma layikhaya kushone ilanga kanti.

Nyathuko : I'll clean.

Me : No Babah! Akavuke u Zanokuhle.

Nyathuko : Myeke kancane Sthah.



Mommy! Mommy is here!

(Zibusiso screams upstairs and they all run downstairs screaming)

Zothani : Daddy!

Ndlelenhle : Daddy!

Zibusiso : Mama! Mama!

Sthabile : My babies wozani la ku Mah. Aibo why nisagqoke ama tracksuits esikole kanti when did you all come back from school?

Ndlelenhle : Now. U....

Zibusiso : Ehhene mama! u Zano akasilandanga esikoleni

Sthabile : Aibo!

Zibusiso : Sahlala sodwa!

(Bloody qhalaqhala!)

Nyathuko : Akanilandanga?

Zibusiso : No

Ndlelenhle : u Mam wafonela umkhulu... umkhulu wafika wasithatha

Zibusiso : Mama? Mama?

Me : Yes baby

Zibusiso : Sesilambile. We finished lunch angithi? Salamba u Zano engafiki

Me : Hawemah izingane zami jesu.

Zothani : u Siso wakhala nami ngakhala

(Zothani explains and I hear that she is crying already. I'm dead today)

Me : Uyabona ke Thukeh.... weZanokuhle? Zanokuhle! Please wake up ngingaze ngihlanye

(I rub my eyes and open them)

Me : Mah

Sthabile : Izingane zilandwe ubani esikoleni?

Me : u Mkhulu why?

(She closes her eyes and scratches her braids)

Me : Utheni u Thukeh kuwena before we left this morning?

Me : Utheni uBaba?

(She sighs)

Sthabile : Please wake up and wash the dishes.

Me : Okay

Sthabile : Wozani nizokhumula Zothani

(She goes upstairs with her children. My father comes and sits down next to me)

Nyathuko : Are you okay?

Me : I'm fine Baba

Nyathuko : Are you sure?

Me : Yes I'm sure

Nyathuko : Manje pho yini ungazilandanga izingane esikoleni?

Me : I forgot.

Nyathuko : Okay. Woza siwashe izitsha

Me : Ngiyaxolisa Baba

Nyathuko : It's okay mfan'wami. Come

(He rolls up his shirt sleeves. We go into the kitchen and wash the dishes)

Nyathuko : Usaya e Ndwedwe?

Me : Yeah yeah. I'll go

Nyathuko : Have you spoken to Lubanzi?

Me : About the house?

Nyathuko : Yes. Ngidlule khona izolo ebusuku ngafica ephuza namantombazane.

Me : But I can't just tell him to leave the house Baba

Nyathuko : It's your house. Indlu owayishiyelwa u Nqabayethu leya and you need to respect it.

Me : I know.

(My mother walks in carrying Ndlelenhle on her back.)

Sthabile : Ehla phela

Ndlelenhle : Uh-huh

(She laughs)

Sthabile : Hhaibo sesfikile phela... Nana? Nangu u Ntokozo engi Whatsapp uthi u Khulu uyagula.

(She puts Ndlelenhle on the counter)

Nyathuko : What's wrong?



Sthabile : Ngisabuzile but akakaphenduli. Uthi she tried to call you.

Nyathuko : Where is my phone?

Sthabile : Awuyishiyanga emotweni?

Nyathuko : Let me go and check

(He kisses my mother and brushes Ndlelenhle's head on his way out.)

Sthabile : Go and sleep sizocleana no Baba wakho

Me : No it's okay

Sthabile : Mina Zanokuhle ngeke ngisineke ube ungidakelwa. Uwena owathi asisekho isidingo sokuthi siqashe u Moltah ngoba awusasebenzi and now you can't even wash the dishes. Izitsha ebezidla wena. Aybo Dinangwe musa ukudlala ngami. Nami ngiyakhathala emsebenzini

Me : I'll clean

Sthabile : No I'll clean. Hamba uyolala

Me : Thanks

(I dry my hands)

Sthabile : u right?

Me : Yeah I'm fine.

Sthabile : o Zothani bane play esikoleni Friday. Ngicela ungiyela

Me : Ngiya e Ndwedwe

Sthabile : For what now? Ubungayile e Ndwedwe 2 weeks ago?

Me : Bengiyile Mah kodwa ngifuna ukuyobona u Khulu

Sthabile : Ay kulungile ngizoziyela vele izingane zami no Thukeh lezi akuzona ezakho.

(I know what she is trying to do and I don't have the energy.)

Me : Yebo

(I say and head out)

Sthabile : Angithi vele ngeke usaludinga usizo lwami? Mina nawe asisasizani?

Me : We do help each other.

Sthabile : Okay

(I go straight to my room. I hear Zothani and Zibusiso fighting in their room. Let them fight. I lock my door and throw myself on my bed)

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They won't let me in. Tell him to forgive me

(He says and I shake my head. There is blood running down his face but I can't see where the blood is coming from.)

Take it

(I look at the white goat and shake my head)

Take it!

(I open my eyes and get out of bed. )

Me : Ngiyaphupha ngiyaphupha

(I keep saying while pacing around. I take off my clothes and go inside my bathroom. I shower. I finish and check the time. It's 18h52. I open the door and go downstairs. My parents are all over each other on the couch. They are both naked. They do this every night. They just take off their clothes and stay naked.

I don't know but it has something to do with my mother and gaining her confidence about her body or something. It's crazy but I don't care. My father grabs the blanket and covers their bodies.)

Nyathuko : Nkosana ka Baba

Me : Nondaba

Sthabile : Zano u Baba wakho akafuni sipheke

Nyathuko : Amanga Sthah

(We laugh)

Me : Nidleni pho nina? Yazi silambe kanjani.

Sthabile : Ice - cream

Me : Weeh

(They laugh)

Nyathuko : We ordered Pizza mfan'wami. Hamba udle

Me : Siyabonga

Sthabile : Ninobani?

Me : Mah?

Sthabile : Uthi niyabonga. Did you hear him Thukeh? Nasekuqaleni uthe balambile ngathi othi ngithule

Me : Sorry.. We... Anginakanga.

(This is new. My mother just mentioned something that I didn't pay attention to. I don't know when I started using "we" instead of "I" but that's not a big deal.)

Nyathuko : Yah akanakanga sthandwa sami.

(Ndlelenhle walks down)

Nyathuko : Awulele ngani?

(He comes to me and holds my hand)

Ndlelenhle : Zano?



Me : Yah

Ndlelenhle : I have homework

Me : Ay ay suka la!

(My parents laugh. Ay I hate Ndlelenhle's homeworks. They require you to actually take your brain out and put it on the table before you get the answers right. )

Ndlelenhle : Zano please

Me : Ubungasho ngani early?

Sthabile : Ubelibele ifoni. U Zibusiso no Zothani bona abanayo?

Ndlelenhle : No they are sleeping now.

Me : Ay Ay wait. Sisadla thina

Ndlelenhle : You'll do it for me?

Me : No I'll help you do it. Wena ufuna ukubhalelwa ama homework akho uyahlanya habe!

Nyathuko : Go and fetch your homework Ndlelenhle

Ndlelenhle : uZano akafuni

Nyathuko : Uyafuna u Zano uthe usadla

(I sit down and eat. My parents are kissing and laughing on that couch which reminds me that I need to move out soon)

Me : A

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A... A for Apple Ndlelenhle. Awusawazi u A?

Ndlelenhle : Nawu nje!

Me : Mxm uyahlanya wena. u A lo? Bhala u A la!

(He writes down)

Me : Ay suka la! Awuwazi umehluko ka R no A?

Ndlelenhle : You said I must write this one!

(Ndlelenhle is slow and it's frustrating)

Me : Hamba uye ku Mah ekusize

(I whisper to him)

Ndlelenhle : Mommy?

Sthabile : Yes boy boy

Ndlelenhle : Uthi u Zano ngisize.

Nyathuko : Come let me help you

Me : Uzokuthethisa u Baba mfana ngoba udom kanje.

Sthabile : Ay Zanokuhle ngathini ngaleyonto?

Me : Si.... Ngiyamudlalisa.

(My phone rings. It's insurance people. I abandon the call)

Sthabile : Ufonelwa intombi?

(She laughs)

Me : No this is not a girlfriend

Sthabile : I see. Usazodla la?

Me : No do you want it?

Sthabile : Uh

Me : Are you pregnant again?

(My father laughs)

Sthabile : Yeka nokudla kwakho Zanoluhle

(I laugh)

Me : Mah come on

Sthabile : No I'm not pregnant.

Me : That's better

(They laugh)

Me : Geez! You are pregnant. I'm going to bed. Yho mah! What's wrong with you?

(I stand up. They are still laughing. What's wrong with these people?)

Sthabile : Wait don't go.

Me : No!

(I go to my bedroom. My father walks in and closes the door)

Nyathuko : Usulele?

(I sit up)

Me : Cha

Nyathuko : Is everything okay?



Me : Yeah yeah yeah. Everything is fine

Nyathuko : Good. Bengithi ngizokhuluma nawe la

Me : About my mother's pregnancy? Cha asikho isidingo Baba

Nyathuko : No not that.

Me : So she is pregnant futhi?

Nyathuko : Cha

(I don't believe him)

Nyathuko : Kuzoba nomsebenzi wokufaka u Zibusiso no Zothani iziphandla

Me : Oh

Nyathuko : Sizowenzela la

Me : Yebo

Nyathuko : What do you think?

Me : Nothing. When is the ceremony?

Nyathuko : Ubuzelani?

Me : Khona ngizohamba ngiye ekhaya

Nyathuko : Why?

Me : Baba sobabili siyazi ukuthi lemisebenzi iyisikhumbuzo nje kumina ukuthi angiyena owakwa Zondi

(He swallows)

Me : So yeah tell me when it is khona ngizohamba.

Nyathuko : Zanokuhle I don't understand

Me : You don't have to understand.

Nyathuko : Uyindodana yami.

Me : I know that kodwa igama nje lelo and to prove that uzobona ngosuku lomsebenzi sekuthiwa angiphumele emnyango ngoba sekushiswa impepho and mina angiyona ingxenye yaleyompepho.

Nyathuko : Is this about what happened the last time sise Ndwedwe?

Me : Yes. U Mkhulu u Bheki wakwenza kwacaca ukuthi angiyena owakwaZondi. He kicked me out like shit..

Nyathuko : Usunehaba manje

Me : Okay

Nyathuko : Okay ngiyavuma. Mhlampe eNdwedwe abazange bakwenza wazizwa wamukelekile kodwa mfan'wami... Zanokuhle uyindodana yami futhi ngikuthanda ngenhliziyo yami yonke but there are things that I cannot change...

Me : Things like me being a Dlomo I know that. I know nguwu Dlomo into engingayiqondi ukuthi why can't they accept me? Why am I being punished for the decisions that my mother made? Abantu bakwa Dlomo banenkinga no Mah. Not nami. But I'm the one being punished.

Nyathuko : Yini le ongangitsheli yona?

Me : Nothing. Do you really love me Baba?

(He narrows his eyes)

Nyathuko : Mfan'wami I do....

Me : Manje yini ungangifaki esibongweni sakho nami ngibize u Zondi njengomfowethu nodadewethu? Abangifuni kwa Dlomo Baba so please take me.

(He swallows)

Nyathuko : Your family loves you and....

Me : Which family?

Nyathuko : You know which family I'm talking about. Nkosan....

Me : Please don't. Ngicela ukulala Baba

(He sighs and stands up. He scratches his head and walks out. I lock the door. My phone rings. Another bitch who calls me her boyfriend but can't even let me hold her hand. Deep down I know she doesn't love me. She just loves what I put into her empty bank account.)

## Chapter 02

Zibusiso : I'm playing the blind girl and Zo is playing the witch.

(She laughs out loud. Zothani's eyes well up with tears)

Zothani : I told them that I don't want to be a witch.

Me : Did you tell your teacher that you don't want to be a witch?

Zothani : Yes

Me : Manje pho sokwenzenjani?

(Ndlelenhle walks in and he looks angry)

Ndlelenhle : UBaba akayishiyanga imali

Me : Money for what?

Ndlelenhle : To watch the school play! How am I going to buy the ticket without money?

(He is shouting)

Me : Manje pho ufutha bani kanjalo?



(Silence)

Me : Ucabanga ukuthi nguntanga wakho wena.

(They look at each other)

Me : How much are they selling the tickets for?

Ndlelenhle : R40

Me : R40 ukubuka umbhedo? They are crazy!

Zibusiso : Akuwona umbhedo!

Me : Umbhedo vele. Take your school bags sihambe

Zothani : Are you coming with us wearing that shirt?

(The devil must really be testing me today)

Me : What's wrong with this shirt?

Zothani : Lihle Siso?

Zibusiso : No it's ugly and big. Bazokuhleka abantu esikoleni

Me : Zibusiso mina ngisiza nina ngikutshele. I don't give a shit about that play.

Zibusiso : Kungcono sihambe noBabah ngoba ugqoka kahle uyabo Ndlela?

Me : Ubona Ubonani u Ndlela wena mabhamuza ngamehlo?

Zibusiso : Nawe

Me : Lento efana nendoda le

Zibusiso : Shimane

Me : Isishimane uwena lento efana no Njabulo le

(My mother needs to stop calling me Isishimane in front of these kids)

Zibusiso : Owakithi vele u Njabulo

Me : Izwa nje leli qhalaqhala leli

(She pouts her lips and takes her heavy backpack. She walks out. She can't stand being called iqhalaqhala. I change my clothes because they are complaining about my dress code.)

Me : Shiya leyoncwadi Zothani. Let's go

(I drove them to school. Ndlelenhle was throwing tantrums all the way here)

Me : I said I'll buy the ticket for you.

Ndlelenhle : No! Give me the money and I'll buy it myself

Me : Imali ihlangene ngiyasho nje.

Ndlelenhle : Unamanga wena Zanokuhle.

Me : Okay

(He breaks into tears and gets out of the car with his school bag)

Me : Uyahlanya lo... What time is the play starting?

Zibusiso : 11h00 am. Uzolinda la?

Me : I'll go home and come back

Zibusiso : Hhay! u Ma'm uthe nilinde!

Me : Umsang....

(I pause when I see Ndlelenhle speaking to some lady. I quickly get out of the car)

Me : Ndlela?

(I call out his name while walking towards them)

Me : Sawubona

Her : Hi

Me : Is there a problem here?

Her : No no I was just trying to calm him down. I saw him crying and... and... You know..

Me : It's okay. I get it

Her : Are you his father?

(Geez!)

Me : No I'm his brother.

Her : Oh okay. He wants money

Me : Yeah I know and I told him to wait.

Ndlelenhle : Uthe ihlangene wena.

Me : Yes and I said I would buy you the ticket for the play.

Ndlelenhle : I want to buy it myself!

(The woman laughs. Why is Ndlelenhle doing this in front of such a beautiful woman? I'm sure she thinks I'm a broke nigga)

Me : Ihlangene vele kodwa kulungile

(I take out my wallet and give him R100)

Ndlelenhle : Yonke?



Me : No uzobuyisa enye

Ndlelenhle : Izolahleka

(The lady looks at me)

Her : Okay the ticket is R40 so how about I give him my R40 and....

Me : And I will buy the tickets for us.

(She smiles)

Her : My point exactly.

(She opens her purse and takes out R40. She gives it to Ndlelenhle and Ndlelenhle gives her the R100.)

Her : You will buy the tickets

Me : Nono no keep the money. You will buy the tickets. Sohlangana emnyango

Her : Fine

Zothani : Bye bhutina

Me : Bye Princess

Zibusiso : Bhabhayi wena

Me : Nawe

(I laugh and they walk away. The lady next to me is smiling)

Her : Wow so those are all your siblings?

Me : Yep. Fanele angabe sibawu 7 kahle kahle kodwa ke uyayayazi impilo

Her : What happened to the other three?

Me : Bashona.

Her : Oh I'm sorry.

Me : Wena why are you here?

Her : Uhmmm.. To support someone.

Me : Someone? Okay.

Her : Yes my little brother.

Me : Oh that's good.

Her : Yeah

Me : Okay... guess I'll see you around.

Her : Sho

(I go back to my car. What am I going to do with myself? I set my alarm for 10h30 and take a nap.)

(At 10h00 I got out of the car and looked around. My phone rings in my pocket. It's my mother.)

Me : Mah?

Sthabile : Thukeh can't get hold of you.

Me : Why?

Sthabile : I don't know mhlampe i network. Nihambe kahle?

Me : Yeah yeah ngila esikoleni

Sthabile : Okay u..... Awubambe kancane nangu u Baba wakho efona.

Me : Okay

Sthabile : Nana?

(Will they ever stop calling each other by that? I mean they are old now.)

Sthabile : Yeah baby ngikhuluma naye manje.... Okay love you too... Yah Zano?

Me : Ngisekhona. Mah we are fine

Sthabile : Please remember to take the pictures and videos for us

Me : I will. Bye Mah

(I hang up and leave the parking lot. I don't see the woman who has my R60 but I know she is around. I see Zothani's teacher and she asks to have a word with me.)

Me : Mrs Robyn

Mrs Robyn : We have a problem.

Me : Problem?

Mrs Robyn : Zothani doesn't want to be part of the school play anymore.

Me : She did mention that. She doesn't want to play the witch role.

Mrs Robyn : But she can't quit now. It's going to ruin the whole play. Can you please talk to her?

(I sigh and lift up Zothani)

Me : Zothani look

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Princess if you do this I promise ukuthi ngizohamba nawe ntambama siyothenga loya ice cream wase McDonald's.

(She shakes her head. I want to drop her on the floor with her head. My mother better not be pregnant. These kids are enough)

Me : Come on Zo it's not like you are going to be a witch for the rest of your life. It's just for today.

Zothani : Siso is laughing at me



Mrs Robyn : Well you can't quit now!!

(She yells. My blood boils. How dare she speak to my sister like that? I slowly put Zothani down)

Me : Actually she can and she quit now. Khumula lamalephulephu abo Zothani sihambe. Nx!

(I click my tongue. Zothani takes off their ugly dress that she was supposed to wear for the school play.)

Mrs Robyn : But...

Me : But nothing!

(I hold my sister's hand and we walk out. 11h00 am is taking forever. We go back and sit in my car. I couldn't allow Zothani to go back to her class because what if her teacher takes all of her frustrations

out on her. She is sitting right next to me. She is playing games on my phone. Suddenly there is a hard knock on my window.)

Me : What the fuck?

(I open my door and get out.)

How dare you?

(Oh it's that woman who has my R60 but why is she angry?)

Me : Excuse me?

Her : Excuse you! Bhuti weh tell me who do you think you are?

Me : Who do I....

Her : How can you tell your sister to quit the play just like that?

Me : Oh that. And how is that any of your problems?

Her : Ey la! She is not just a witch she is also playing my s...my brother's evil wife and if she quits....

Me : Your brother won't have a wife and that's fine. Nicabanga ukuthi ningobani nina niphoqa ingane yasekhaya ukuthi idlale o evil wife la? U Zothani ingane!

Her : It's for the school play!

Me : I don't care!

Her : Please you can't do this. You have no idea how much this play means to my brother. He's been talking about it for weeks so please don't ruin this for him.

Me : It's done. Sorry.

(I say and get back into the car. I'm not in for bullshit)

Zothani : Uyathetha bhuti? Uthi mina ngi wrong?

Me : No no Zo. Don't worry about her.

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(The tickets for the play were sold at the door. I looked and looked for a woman who took my money but she was nowhere. I used the last R100 in my wallet to buy Zothani and I tickets. Zothani had to pay for her ticket since she wasn't part of the play anymore. We walk inside the big school hall and sit down)

Zothani : Nanguya uSiso

(She smiles and waves her hand)

Me : Ngeke ekubone. Where is Ndlela?

Zothani : Bahleli la phezulu

Me : Okay.

(We watched the play and I must say that my sister will be one hell of a good actress one day. Zibusiso killed that shit I'm proud of her. After the play they rewarded them with medals and certificates. Us as "Parents" yes parents. We were called to come and eat after the play. The woman who ran away with my R60 is sitting right next to me. She keeps chuckling and shaking her head. She clears her throat)

Her : So how do you feel knowing that you are the reason my brother got eliminated from the play?

Me : Bamukhiphile?

Her : Did you see him?

Me : I don't know him.

Her : Of course. Yazi lento oyenzile yimbi ngikutshele.

Me : If you say so.

Her : You have no idea how important this was to my brother. Umoshe yonke into!

Me : Okay

Her : You are unbelievable!

Me : Says the person who ran away with my R60.

Her : What you did was unfair. Umoshele umfana wami usuku lakhe

Me : Give me my money.

Her : I hope you burn in hell.

(Her voice is breaking up. What? She is crying. She is really crying.)

Me : Wait are you....

(She stands up and pushes back the chair while staring at me. Tears are running down her face. She grabs her phone from the table)

Her : You know what? Go to hell.

Me : Please don't....

(She walks away. I grab my phone and car keys. I try to follow her but it seems she has just vanished into thin air.)

Me : Fuck!

(I curse under my breath. My mood drops from 50 to 0. Later we drove home from school)



Zibusiso : How was my acting?

Me : Uyishayile

(She smiles)

Zibusiso : Look at my medal. Touch it

Me : Ngizoyibona ekhaya Siso. Please sit down and keep quiet. I'm driving here and uyangiphazamisa

Zibusiso : Sorry ke

(I sigh)

Me : Niyawafuna ama milkshakes?

Yes!!

(They all scream)

Zibusiso : Mina ngizothola awu two angithi bhuti ngoba ngiyi star?

Zothani : You are not a star.

(Zothani is jealous now)

Me : Unomona wena

(We laugh)

Ndlelenhle : Did you take any pictures and videos for mommy and dad?

Me : Oh yes I did let me show you. Where is my phone?

(Now I realize that my phone has been quiet for the whole day and that's quite strange. I take it out. )

Me : Manje ngibone bethatha ama video lapha bazokhipha i DVD yini?

Ndlelenhle : Yini i DVD?

Zibusiso : We don't know that. They are going to upload the videos on our YouTube

(I swear to God Zibusiso thinks she is the queen of England. The way she speaks... Jesus!)

Me : Manje thina sizoziso..... aibo!

(Hell no! This is not my phone)

Ndlelenhle : What's wrong?

Me : This is not my phone.

Zothani : Where is yours?

Me : I don't know but this is not my phone

Zibusiso : It's not but where is yours?

Me : I don't know Zibusiso. Icimile futhi lefoni le

(I stop the engine and try to switch on that phone. The battery of it has died)

Ndlelenhle : Shuthi aphambanile esikoleni.

Me : But how because.... Damn! Yeah aphambanile Ndlela.

(That woman didn't run away only with my R60 but she took my phone too and I took hers. Disaster!)

### Chapter 03

(A couple of weeks ago my parents were celebrating their anniversary. I was sick so they couldn't really celebrate it but anyway everyday is an anniversary for those two. I want to do something nice for them but I'm still trying to figure out what exactly.)

Ndlelenhle : Ngithini mina?

Me : Just ask him what they like or where would they like to go if they were given an opportunity to go away....something like that.

Ndlelenhle : But they like going to Mzinyathi and Kwa-Mashu.

(Eish this domkop. Why would our parents go to Mzinyathi or Kwa-Mashu to celebrate their wedding anniversary?)

Me : Angikhulumi mina ngokuvakashela o Gogoh. Just ask them ukuthi bathanda liphi izwe.

Ndlelenhle : Izwe lani manje?

Me : Ey yeka Ndlela mfethu ngoba uyathithiza.

(My mother walks in)

Sthabile : Lelikati lika Thukeh lichamela izinto zami lapha e garage. I miss u Jack ngoba wayengachameli nje izinto zethu.

(Unfortunately Jack died. My father ran him over with his car... Accidentally and after that he couldn't eat for two days.)

Me : Ngicela ukudla isinkwa sakho ngoba usebusy. Ngizokwenzela esinye mase ulambile.

Sthabile : Okay. Intombazane yefoni namanje ayikakafoni?

Me : No I'm still waiting for her to call. Uthe uzofona yena mina ngingafoni.

Sthabile : What if isigebengu lentombazane Zano?

Me : Aybo ayisona. Mah incane leyangane ingangami.

Sthabile : Kodwa uzolinda uBaba wakho uhambe naye

Me : No man that's unnecessary. Mah lomuntu bengihleli naye esikoleni. She is harmless.



Sthabile : Fine. Anyway.... waitakuyona imoto ka Thukeh le edumayo?

Me : No

Sthabile : u late namhlanje. Let me whatsapp him.... u Ndlelenhle engisize ekhiphe isandla etotolozini nkosiyami please!!

(She yells and Ndlela quickly takes his hand out of his pants. He has this habit of keeping quiet and staring into space while playing with his little dick. The reaction on his face always kills me especially his tongue that is always out when he is doing that shit. My mother hates it when I laugh so I always try not to laugh)

Sthabile : Hhaibo! Umuntu eze endwaze nje impela ebhucungana netotoloji emini ka bha phambi kwabantu. Hamba ubize owele lapha e garage khona nizobhala ama homework.

Ndlelenhle : Okay.

(Ndlelenhle walks out)

Me : What's wrong with him?

(We laugh. My mother and I always gossip about her kids.)

Ndlelenhle : Nothing is wrong. Izingane zabafana eziningi ziyayenza lento for self-pleasure purposes.

Sthabile : What?

(I laugh)

Me : Nothing

Sthabile : Aibo uyazazi yini izingane zakwa Zondi.. Aibo jehova mhlampe useya haver nje u Ndlelenhle.

(I laugh. My mother is crazy)

Sthabile : Yazi iwele lakho u Enzelwe yena wayethanda ukuthinta ibele lami before elale but that was innocent. Ay le aka Ndlelenhle iyangithusa. Ngizotshela u Thukeh futhi manje.

Me : Uzovele ekuhleke uBaba.

(She chuckles)

Sthabile : Anyway bengisasho la ukuthi I want to do something for u Nyathuko wami umyeni wami.

(She pouts her lips and we both burst)

Me : Yeah come on go deeper.

Sthabile : UBaba wezingane zami. Indoda yami ngedwa

(I laugh)

Me : Ay you are going deeper manje mama umfundisi ibambe.

(She laughs)

Sthabile : Okay fine. So I wanted to ask you ukuthi yini nje engingamenzela yona? Bahlanyiswa yini abantu besilisa? Ukhumbule ke njalo ukuthi u Thukeh ungaphezulu kuka 40 so ungangitsheli nge Fifa ntoni ntoni

(I laugh)

Me : Akanawo u 40 uBaba.

Sthabile : Ubani yena? Mudala kabi uBaba wakho ukuthi usafuna uku impressa izifebe njengomkhulu wakho u Maxwell lo ongafuni ukuguga.

Me : Usuqalile ke.

Sthabile : Ukuthi wena you don't understand.

Me : Ay wena udlala ngo Baba. Wena nje udinwa ukuthi uBaba akakuniki izinkinga mase ulokhu uyazibheka ke la zingekho khona ubone ukuthi azikho and then you create your own.

(She laughs. She knows I'm right.)

Me : Ujabule ke mase elokhu ekuncenga. Elokhu engasadli la ebhema waya waya

Sthabile : Unamanga Zano Thukeh and I don't fight anymore sagcina last year ukuxabana.

(I laugh out loud. Why is she lying?)

Me : Last year? Nangu umuntu ebheda.

Sthabile : Aibo vele.

Me : Aw nina enikade nixabana last week nakhu u Baba eze efika la emini elande izicathulo zakho ngoba....

Sthabile : Oh that. Sasingaxabene. Saze salala ehhotela nje.

Me : Ehhe ngoba nabuya la ningakhulumisani. Waze wathi uBaba akafuni ningakhulumisani phambi ko Zothani ngoba bayagula menixabana phambi kwabo. Wena Mah usile uthanda uBaba mase elokhu ekuncenga.

(She smiles)

Sthabile : Mina no Thukeh ngeke usi understande.

Me : Ay ayikho leyonto. Mina uyabo kuthiwa ngu Baba ay mina ngingakushiya mfana. Ngikushiye 3 months nezingane. Ngivale ifoni. Ukhale uze ufunde isifundo.

(She laughs out loud)

Sthabile : Aybo who do you think you are?

Me : Ngiyakutshela Mah.

Sthabile : Thank God awuyena ke u Thukeh.

Me : Yah ngoba mina angabe angikuncengi njengo Baba. Angabe ngiyakushaya nje mase wenza lezinto zakho. Ngikushaye strong futhi.

(She shakes her head and smiles with her phone. I doubt she is listening to what I'm saying. Tough! Because I actually wanted her to hear this. I'm tired of her acting like a baby every time Baba is around.)

Sthabile : Uthi u Thukeh esiphatheleni yokudla?

Me : Mtshele ukuthi uzopheka

Sthabile : Who? Me? Angisayilokothi eyebhodwe... Dinangwe tell me phela

Me : Tell you what?



Sthabile : What drives men crazy?... What do you think drives Thukeh crazy?

Me : Uhlanyiswa uwena nje nawe uyakwazi lokho.

(She laughs)

Me : I'm serious.

Sthabile : I know but there must be something else emhlanyisayo. Wena what drives you crazy?

(Vagina Mah vagina)

Me : I don't know being away? Peace?

Sthabile : No I'm not sending my husband away mina aibo. Kuthiwa imoto akayithenganga bengizomuthengela

Me : Ay iyabheda imoto

Sthabile : Yazi uBaba wakho akakaze ethenge uhlobo lwenye imoto selokhu ngamazi ileyamoto ebomvu nje one way. Ngisho umbala awushintshi uthenga obomvu.

Me : That's loyalty.

Sthabile : Psssh! Loyalty phi?

Me : Yazi yini engahlanyisa u Baba?

Sthabile : Yeah?

Me : Land. Uyakhumbula wahlanya kanjani ebona ukuthi kunendawo engaka lapha ngase Bridge City?

Sthabile : Land neh?

Me : Yeah buy him land.

Sthabile : Kuzomele ngikhulume no Mapholoba ke yazi.

Me : Yeah Mkhulu knows these things.

Sthabile : No Baba omdala u Zenzele njalo ave enolwazi ngalezinto.

Me : Ay angazi ke.

(The phone rings in my hand)

Me : Ey Ey abantu balentombazane sebeyafona.

Sthabile : Switch it off.

Me : I can't. Sohlangana kanjani? ngoba uthe mina ngingafoni she will call me.

Sthabile : Who is calling?

Me : Kubhalwe Mama.

Sthabile : It's her mother

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mhlampe kubalulekile. Bamba ifoni usho ukuthi ifoni uyitholile.

Me : Okay.... Hello?

WeFiza where are you? I want to go now and I don't know where I'm going to leave the kids.

(The woman says)

Me : Ngiyaxolisa Mah but akuyena umnikazi wefoni lo. Ifoni le u Fiza uyikhohlwe kumina.

Kanjani? I know you are hiding her! u busy manje udiza namadoda. Eze engabuyi nesisu.

(She says)

Me : Mah....

Please tell her I said aibo!! Aibo!! Ngiyakhuzi.

(My eyes widen. Ay no this woman is angry.)

Me : I w..... Hello?

(She hung up on me)

Me : Wayivala

Sthabile : Uthini?

Me : She said I must tell the owner of this phone ukuthi Aibo!

(My mother laughs)

Sthabile : You know what? Angiyingeni. Ngisayo ayinela u Thukeh phezulu

Me : Okay. Nami ngiyahamba manje. Uzofona ngendlela lomuntu.

Sthabile : Okay call me as soon as she gives you your phone.

Me : Okay.

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(I'm not sure if her name is Fiza or what but that's what I heard. I found her waiting for me in Ballito Mall yeah the owner of the phone who ran away with my R60. I park next to her and roll down my window.)

Me : Yah Fiza.

(She moves her eyes up and down. I guess she is always angry)

Fiza : Yah. Why are you so late?

Me : So your name is Fiza?

Fiza : It's Fisisani .

(I laugh)



Me : What the hell is that? What does it mean?

Fizisani : It means none of your business. Why uhamba ngemoto yezigebengu?

Me : Eyezigebengu? I didn't know that.

(Uncle Nqabayethu left a few cars for me but my parents sold them and saved money. Last year I woke up one day and decided that I wanted a black VW kombi and I went and purchased it. It's almost the same as the one that Nqabayethu gave to me as part of my inheritance.)

Fizisani : So your parents let you use their cars just like that?

Me : My pare.... Oh no no eyami lemoto sisi.

Fizisani : Oh I see. So what took you so long to get here ngoba unemoto wena?

(She moves her head when she speaks. Exactly like my sister Zibusiso. Geeez! not another qhalaqhala. I want to laugh.)

Me : Ey nansi ifoni yakho. Give me mine ngihambe mfethu... Oh and your mother called wathi ngikutshele ukuthi Aibo.

(She swallows and crosses her arms over her chest.)

Fizisani : Oh and what else did she tell you?

(I shake my head)

Me : How old are you?

Fizisani : So you asked her about me?! How dare you?

(Okay what have I done now? She is angry. Her bottom lip is quivering.)

Me : Ey sisi I don't know what you are talking about. Nginike ifoni yami ngihambe mfethu.

(She opens her handbag and takes out my phone.)

Fizisani : Here.

Me : And my R60?

Fizisani : I don't have it.

(I laugh)

Me : It's okay keep it. Yazi ngifuna wenzeni ngaloyo R60?

Fizisani : No I don't know.

Me : I want you to go and buy yourself a little bit of happiness because ay you are sour.

(I tell her with a straight face. I don't want her to think I'm joking. She swallows)

Fizisani : I'm sorry ukuthi nje I thought my mother told you about.... (sighs) never mind.

Me : Fine

Fizisani : So aren't you going to buy me some food after I waited for so long?

(I laugh)

Me : Ulambile wena yingakho unolaka kanje.

(She laughs)

Fizisani : Get out of the car

(I look at my feet and remember that today I didn't feel like wearing shoes. No I tried to wear my sneakers but my feet started burning and I wanted to scream the hell out of me. )

Me : I'll give you money uhambe uzithengele

(Her face drops)

Fizisani : Aw are you rushing somewhere?

Me : No no no I... I just can't.

Fizisani : What's wrong?

(I sigh)

Me : I'm not wearing shoes

Fizisani : Oh why?

(I shake my head)

Me : It's a long story.

Fizisani : But ngifuna ukuhamba nawe mos.

(I laugh)

Me : But you can't.

(She hands me her handbag and takes off her shoes. She gives them to me.)

Fizisani : Sohamba ngezinyawo sobabili ke. Come get out of the car.

(I can't imagine myself walking around the entire mall barefooted.)

Me : No please don't do this. I....

Fizisani : Ngiyakucela. Buka sengize ngiyaku supporter esitelekeni sakho secathulo

(She laughs. Oh she thinks she is funny now. I jumped out of the car)

Fizisani : At least you have beautiful feet.

Me : Yeah ngifuze uBaba wami.

(She laughs and wraps her hand around my arm. What the fuck?)

Fizisani : Let's go



(I search for my wallet inside my pockets while looking at our feet.)

Me : Here

(I give her my wallet. I don't know why but I just did.)

Fizisani : What's your name?

Me : Zanokuhle DL... Zondi.

Fizisani : Fizisani Magwaza.

Me : Okay

Fizisani : Let's go Mr Zondi shall we?

Me : Bazothini abantu sibhadazela ngezinyawo manje?

Fizisani : It's none of their business.

(I smile. Aw Njinji)

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Chapter 04

Fizisani : KFC

(I shake my head)

Me : Fiamma Grill

Fizisani : Owkay

(We ended up in Fiamma Grill. When we walked in everyone looked at us like we were crazy. That shit was a bit uncomfortable.)

Fizisani : They probably think we are coming from the beach.

(I chuckle)

Me : So where do you stay?

Fizisani : Kobongo

Me : What?

Fizisani : Shakaskraal.

Me : Oh. How old are you?

Fizisani : 20. Wena?

(Lie Zanokuhle lie)

Me : 23

(She smiles)

Fizisani : Okay. Uyafunda?

Me : No

Fizisani : Why not? Because you have money and I'm sure your parents can afford university fees.

Me : They can but life is not that simple mine is not that simple.

Fizisani : Tell me more.

Me : Can we not talk about it?

Fizisani : Fine. Thanks for the food it was great.

Me : It's nothing.

(We are walking around the mall. At least no one is paying attention to our feet now. I don't like how these men are looking at Fizisani. I wrap my arm around her waist. )

Me : Let's buy shoes

(She laughs)

Fizisani : Very funny

Me : I'm serious. Come

(We walk inside the Polo store. The only store that is still open near us.)

Fizisani : Zanokuhle we don't need shoes.

(I laugh)

Me : Let me spoil you.

(I sit down)

Me : Take whatever you want. I'll pay

(I don't feel well anymore. My shoulders feel heavy. I think it's being around a lot of people. I'm burping like I'm drunk.)

Fizisani : Are you okay?

Me : Yeah. Go ahead I'll sit here.

(She looks worried now. I try to pull out a smile)

Me : I'm fine really.

Fizisani : Okay

(She walks away. I wait for her and she is taking fuckin' long. She is buying like she is scared. I called one of the store assistants)

Me : I think that lady is struggling. Please help her and make sure she is comfortable. I'll pay so don't worry about the money.



Assistant : No problem sir.

Me : Please make it a bit faster. I want to get out of here

Assistant : No problem

(After a few minutes I saw her smiling. She seems to be enjoying this.)

(I finish paying and we walk out and head back to the parking lot.)

Me : I'll take you home.

Fizisani : You don't have to. I see ukuthi awukho right so please go home and get some rest.

Me : It's okay. I'll take you home

(She gets inside the car and I drive off)

Fizisani : Why are you doing this?

Me : What?

Fizisani : Ngikhuluma ngalezinto ongithengele zona

Me : Because you are my friend and...

(My phone rings. It's Gugu. We haven't spoken for the past two days but we are in a relationship.  
Fizisani looks at me and at my phone. I sigh and answer. )

Me : Gugulami

Gugulami : Hey baby. Where are you?

Me : Ubuzelani?

Gugulami : Zanokuhle angisenalo yini ilungelo lokubuza?

Me : I don't know.

Gugulami : Ngizoza namhlanje. I want to see you.

Me : Fine uzongifica e Phoenix.

Gugulami : Okay. Ngizofona

Me : Sho

(I hung up. Fisisani clears her throat)

Me : Ngisahamba ngendlela okuyiyona angithi?

Fisisani : Yah.

Me : Okay

(Silence)

Me : Ngibongile ngamateku

Fizisani : Zanokuhle it's not like ngiwathenge ngemali yami. Bekuyimali yakho mfethu so yeah.

Me : Yeah. Uhlala nobani ke lapha kini?

Fizisani : Mah.

(I look at her. We are back to being sour)

Me : Kuphela?

Fizisani : Ufuna ngihlale nobani omunye. Nawe?

Me : Are you okay?

Fizisani : Please drive bandla.

Me : Okay.

(My phone beeps. It's a whatsapp message from Gugu. She sent me a picture of her naked. I exit whatsapp and lock my phone.)

Fizisani : Take left.

Me : Okay

(I drive until she tells me to stop)

Fizisani : Ngicela ume eduze kwaloyamuntu ogqoke i jacket e purple

Me : Uma ehamba ngimulandele?

(She rolls her eyes. I laugh)

Me : Usudinwe yini kanti?

Fizisani : Ngidiniwe?

Me : Yeah

Fizisani : Ay cha angidiniwe shuthi ububi bami nje

Me : If you say so.

(I stop the car. She takes her shopping bags)

Fizisani : Ngicela unginika izicathulo zami

Me : Zilana ngemumva

(She gets out of the car and I also jump out. She takes her shoes)

Fizisani : Ngibongile

Me : It's okay. Ikephi kini la?

(She wears her shoes and walks away. Just like that she was gone. I sigh)



Me : Right.

(I shake my head and get inside the car. I drive off.)

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(I arrived home. I find my parents playing on the couch like little kids.)

Nyathuko : Nkosana ka Baba usubuyile

Me : Yeah kodwa ngizolala e Phoenix.

Nyathuko : Ngoba?

Me : Nothing Baba. Khona into engifuna ukuyenza nje

Sthabile : Iphi ifoni?

Me : Nansi

Zibusiso : Ngixubhe kahle Babana?

Nyathuko : Yes princess ka Baba.....Isn't it late for you to drive to Phoenix?

Me : No kuse early.

(He looks at my mother)

Me : I'm fine. Ngempela ngi right

Sthabile : Wahamba ngezinyawo pho? Aphi amateku?

(Eish)

Me : Ummm.. akhona.

Sthabile : Zanokuhle were you hijacked?

Me : Aibo Cha Mah. Nayi nje imoto emnyango

Sthabile : Sothini phela mase ungena ubhadazela ngezinyawo.

Me : No bekushisa. Futhi mina angithandi uku driver ngezicathulo

Sthabile : Since when?

Nyathuko : Uzobuya nini?

(Thanks Baba)

Me : Ekuseni

Sthabile : Usheshe ngoba sizocela ukuthi uyise u Zibusiso no Zothani e salon ksasa beyoluka. I'm working till late so ngeke ngikwazi ukubayisa

(Ey Ey. These are not my kids!)

Sthabile : Awuthandi?

Me : Angishongo njalo. Ngizobayisa

Zibusiso : Sifuna ukuhamba no Babah

Sthabile : Babah is working tomorrow.

Nyathuko : It's okay. Ngizobayisa sthandwa sami

Sthabile : But Zanokuhle....

(I walk away. I don't have time for this nonsense. I go to my room and take a shower. I try to wear my shoes but it feels like someone is stabbing my feet)

Me : Fuck!!!.

(I throw them away and bang my headboard in frustration. What's wrong with me? I've never had a problem with shoes so why now?)

Me : Nx!

(I take my phone and walk out barefooted.)

Zothani : Uyahamba futhi.

Sthabile : Ehhe uyahamba baby angithi uziphethe u Zanokuhle.

Nyathuko : Sthah stop it.

Ndlelenhle : I'll sleep in your room ngoba uyahamba.

Me : Ngizokubhokoza uzobona

Sthabile : Leave him Zanokuhle. Unezinkinga zakhe namhlanje

(Mxm)

Me : Sengiyahamba

(I say and walk out. I'll use my other car I'm leaving the VW. My father walks inside the garage)

Nyathuko : Dinangwe

(I sigh)

Me : Baba

Nyathuko : What's wrong?

Me : Nothing Baba I'm fine.

Nyathuko : Awusakhulumami?

(I get out of the car. He looks at my feet)

Me : The dreams are back.

(He slightly shakes his head)

Nyathuko : Yah



Me : Yeah. Mhlampe kuzobangcono mengilala e Phoenix

Nyathuko : Abuye nini?

Me : It's been weeks now.

Nyathuko : Are these the same dreams that you've been struggling with?

Me : Yeah kodwa sengiphupha ngigqoke izingubo zezangoma okanye ngisemanzini ngiphethe ishoba.

Nyathuko : Yeah?

(He holds my hand)

Me : Yeah. Kunalendoda nje futhi engihluphayo efika njalo nembuzi emhlophe ithi ngiyixolisele.

Nyathuko : Indoda?

Me : Yes. Ihlala njalo inegazi ebusweni

(His eyes narrow)

Me : I don't know Baba. Lento isiyangikhathaza. Yazi izolo ebusuku ngiphuphe kukhona umuntu othatha izicathulo zami and today I couldn't wear my sneakers ngaze ngahamba ngezinyawo whole day.

Nyathuko : This is serious Zanoluhle. Akuseyona into ekufanele siyithathe kancane.

Me : I know. Kuningi Baba and I can't take it anymore.

Nyathuko : Cha Cha

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don't say that mfan'wami. Everything is going to be fine. Siyayazi into ekufanele yenziwe

Me : Igobongo?

Nyathuko : Yah igobongo

(I chuckle)

Me : Igobongo engizolidlelaphi Baba?

Nyathuko : Can you not go khona sizokhuluma?

Me : No Baba I don't want to talk about this. Ngicela ukuhamba

(I get inside my car and start the engine)

Nyathuko : Zanokuhle?

Me : I'm sorry Bhambatha

(I drive off. As soon as I arrived in Phoenix the Uber dropped off Gugulami)

(She opens the fridge. My girlfriend eats. She eats a fucking lot more than my mother does. )

Me : It's empty. I'm ordering for you

(I take the towel and dry up my head that is already sweating.)

Gugulami : Okay

(She comes and sits on my lap.)

Me : Here. Add something else mina ngisuthi

Gugulami : Okay. Ubuwenzani ke namhlanje?

Me : Nothing. I was home all day

Gugulami : Mina I went to do some shopping and I saw these stunning shoes ngasho ngathi indoda yami izongithengela lezi

Me : Yeah.

(Her food arrived and we went to bed. I do what couples do and start touching my girlfriend and for the first time she responds very well. We kiss. I start feeling these things like insects crawling underneath my skin.)

Gugulami : Wait wait.

Me : What's wrong?

Gugulami : Khona into enuka layindlini

Me : What?

Gugulami : Awuyizwa?

Me : No angiyizwa. Gugu stop lying! Ayikho lento oyishoyo. Wena nje usuqala lama tricks akho abhedayo. Fuck!!

(I scratch my head)

Gugulami : What tricks?

Me : Yeka. Lala

Gugulami : Of course ngizolala. I didn't come here for sex. Bengizobona wena mina.

Me : Ungibona nani?

Gugulami : Zanokuhle please. I'm tired ngicela ukulala

Me : Gugu ubani lo olala naye ngoba ungalali nje nami

Gugulami : Ngilala ne Dildo

(I swallow. I shift away from her and switch off the lamp.)

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Gugulami : Zanokuhle!! Zanokuhle wake up!!

(I open my eyes and jump)



Me : Huh? Huh?

(I look at Gugulami. She is crying)

Gugulami : Are you okay? Waze wangithusa Zanokuhle!

(She hits my shoulder and jumps out of bed)

Me : What happened?

Gugulami : You tell me! Ngibona ngawe usubaqaka nje la eduze kwami like you were struggling to breathe. Bengithi uyafa

Me : I'm sorry. I was dreaming

Gugulami : About what?

Me : I don't know! Bengiphupha umsamu nje unokhamba nocansi olubekwe odongeni and.....

Gugulami : You know what? I'm not interested. I'm going home

Me : Please don't go Gugu

Gugulami : No! I can't stay here

(I take my phone and check the time)

Me : It's 02h30 am

Gugulami : I know. My ride is coming

(I get out of bed immediately)

Me : Gugulami come on sthandwa sami. Ngicela ungangishiyi

Gugulami : Angikushiyi I'm giving you time to sort out your life.

(She wears her dress and puts on her shoes)

Gugulami : My taxi is here. Bye

Me : Bye

(She shakes her head and walks out. I sigh and rub my face.)

## Chapter 05

(I can't live like this anymore. I don't want to live anymore. When is the world ending anyway? What the hell is taking Jesus so long? I want him to come back now and end the whole thing my whole life. I drive through the gate. The door is open. I thought no one was home. I look at the time. It's 09h00 am. I park my car and walk inside the house. My father is here. He is talking to someone over the phone. I salute him and head upstairs. He holds my arm stopping me.)

Nyathuko : Yes Auto Movers and please add white roses.

(He is staring at me like he is trying to read my face)

Nyathuko : Sthabile Zondi yes.... Thanks.

(He hangs up)

Me : Another delivery for Mah?

(He laughs)

Nyathuko : I love my wife Zanokuhle.

Me : I know.

(I sit down and release a sigh)

Me : Why aren't you at work?

Nyathuko : Because I'm taking the girls to the salon.

Me : Didn't they go to school?

Nyathuko : No but they are not here. Nondaba took them out for breakfast.

Me : Okay. Uhlanya lona luphi?

(He laughs)

Nyathuko : Loyo ke ukwenze kwacaca ukuthi yena uya esikoleni.

Me : Baba uNdlelenhle useqonyiwe

(He laughs and sits down next to me. He wraps his arm around my neck.)

Nyathuko : Unjani Nkosana kaBaba?

(I let out a heavy sigh. I'm depressed)

Me : I'm fine Baba

Nyathuko : Asiqaleni phansi. Unjani Nkosana ka Baba?

Me : I don't know. My life is falling apart Baba

(He crosses his legs. Baba thinks this is a business meeting.)

Nyathuko : Mhm-Mhmmm

Me : Yes and.....

(My phone rings. It's Gugu. She wants money. I abandoned her call.)

Nyathuko : And now?

Me : Kusizani Baba? Yazi ngikhathale I'm tired of this girl. I'm busy spending money emantombazaneni angakwazi ngisho ukungitshela ukuthi ayangithanda amantombazane engingalali noku.....

(I pause and rub my forehead)

Nyathuko : Are you having sexual problems?

Me : Maybe.



Nyathuko : Yini inkinga?

Me : It doesn't matter. I want this whole thing to stop. I want to feel normal I want to be normal. Why can't they leave me the hell alone? What the hell do they want from me?

Nyathuko : Do you really want to know what they want from you?

Me : Yah.

Nyathuko : Asenze igobongo.

Me : No!

Nyathuko : Zanoluhle igobongo alichazi ukuthi usuzothwasa. Igobongo is.... It's done to open a line of communication between you and your ancestors khona bezokwazi ukukukhombisa bekhulume nawe

bekwazi nokuku khanyisela ukuthi what they want from you kahle kahle. Akuchazi ukuthi usuzothwasa Nkosana ka Baba.

(I shake my head)

Me : I don't know Baba. Let's say ngiyalenza ke lelo gobongo which I highly doubt ukuthi ngiyoke ngilenze but let's say ngiyalenza ke and bangitshela ukuthi kufanele ngithwase.

(He sighs)

Me : If we are being honest ilokho vele abakufunayo. Sengiziphuphile ngigqoke izingubo zezangoma

Nyathuko : No no no amaphupho kuyenzeka ekhombise okunye kanti achaza okunye nje okuseceleni.

Me : I know.

Nyathuko : Let's do it.

Me : Ngeke bevume kaDlomo. Baba uyazi ukuthi kwenzekani kade ngikhona? UGogozi wangitshela la ezinhlamvini zamehlo ukuthi ngibanjwe amadimoni akwaZondi lawa u Mah awalanda kade evuma ukuthelwa ngenyongo yakwaZondi. Those people are Christians abasoze bavuma ngidlele igobongo lapha kwaDlomo

Nyathuko : There are other ways.

Me : Ziphi?

Nyathuko : Ungahamba uyolidlela enyangeni.

(I chuckle. I thought he was going to tell me what I wanted to hear.)

Me : I'm not going to do that. Ngeke mina ngiyohlala amasonto nezangoma ezinukayo

(He looks at me)

Nyathuko : Ufuna senzeni?

Me : Ngifake esibongweni sakwa Zondi. That's what I want you to do. Wena wangithembisa ukuthi kade ushada u Mah wawumshada nami but it doesn't feel like it and lokho kungikhombisa ukuthi you didn't mean what you said.

Nyathuko : Zanokuhle....

Me : No I'm tired of your excuses. It's either ningifaka esibongweni sakwa Zondi ngenze lento efunwa abantu abaphansi without being judged okanye ningiyeka ngayo yonke lento yamadlozi namagobongo angasile.

(I stand up and go into my bedroom. I'm not getting out of this room

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not anytime soon. I'm sick and tired of these people. How can my father encourage me to do something that he knows very well that is against my family's beliefs? Where am I going to open that line of communication with my ancestors? because my family won't let me do it kwaDlomo. Who the heck are those ancestors? Because my grandmother made it clear that the Dlomos have no ancestors. This is bullshit. Bullshit!!)

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(Ndlelenhle and the twins are knocking at my door. They've been knocking for the past two hours and they are starting to irritate the shit out of me. I get out of bed and open the door)

Me : Nifunani?

Zibusiso : Uthi u Mah woza udle

Me : No hambani nimutshele ukuthi I'm fasting okay?

(I tell them with a fake smile on my face)

Zibusiso : Unamanga!

Me : Okay. Hambani ke la

Zothani : Are you sick?

Me : No Princess I'm fine.

Ndlelenhle : Ma'am said...

Me : I don't want to hear it. Ngicela ukulala

Ndlelenhle : Uthe u ma'am wena ungibhalisa wrong i homework.

(Jesus! I'm offended)

Me : Oh really?

Zibusiso : Phela u Zano akafundanga angithi Zano?

Me : You know what? Utshela u ma'am wakho ukuthi ngithe fakof.

(I shut the door on their faces. I go back to bed. There is a missed call from Fizisani. Let me call her back)

Fizisani : Hello!

Me : Ubungifonela noma ubungibhaza?

Fizisani : Ufoneleke ngephutha

(I laugh)

Me : Mngani wami sibangani kanti mina nawe?

(She sighs)

Fizisani : Nothing. How is your girlfriend?

Me : She is fine.



Fizisani : Good. Akakuthethisanga ngoba kade uhambe nami izolo or you didn't tell her?

Me : No I didn't. She didn't ask me about it either.

Fizisani : I see.

Me : Awufuni ngikulande siyodla i KFC?

(She laughs)

Fizisani : What? abaphekanga yini kini?

Me : No they didn't cook. Owami umama uyivila

(She laughs. I hear kids in her background)

Mama! Mama!

(They are shouting)

Me : Une creche yini lapho?

(Silence)

Me : Fisisani?

(I look at my phone screen. Call ended. I call her again)

Me : Hawu kwavalwa ifoni manje?

Fizisani : Sorry bad signal.

Me : Okay. u grand?

Fizisani : I'm fine. How was your day?

Me : Peaceful.

Fizisani : Okay. Mine was long

Me : What were you up to?

Fizisani : Cleaning

Me : Umuntu wesifazane o....

(She laughs)

Fizisani : Don't even start.

Me : Fine. Asihambe phela siyodla

Fizisani : It's late

Me : Kusavuliwe

Fizisani : Can I call you back?

Me : Sizohamba kuqala?

Fizisani : Yes just give me 30 minutes and I'll call you back.

Me : Uyathembisa?

Fizisani : I promise.

Me : Sharp

(I wait for her to hang up.)

Fizisani : Ngathini kunina ngokungimemeza mengikhuluma nefoni? Niyabukisa? Huh? Nifuna ukungihlaza?

(I'm not hanging up. Let's hear more)

UGogo uthi awukho ushukela

(A little voice says)

Fizisani : Futhi? Tell her I don't have money!

(She shouts. There is silence after that)

Fizisani : Yebo!!! Kuvuliwe... Suka emnyango wena nesisu esikhulu.

WeFizisani uyenzeni imali yalezingane yeqolo? What did you do with their money?

(Someone asks)

Fizisani : Ayke nali ibhadi lami.

(I can't hear anything anymore. I hang up. What the hell is going on here?. I sigh and put my phone away)

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01h15 AM

(My phone is ringing next to me. I open my eyes)

Me : Shit! Shit!

(I fell asleep and in my mind I think it's Fizisani. I answer immediately)

Me : Fisisani?

Hello? Is that Zanoluhle?

(I look at the screen. "River". Who is River kambe? I need to stop saving people's numbers like this.)

Me : Yes yes uyena.

Zanoluhle it's me Makhosazana.

(Makhosazana?)

Me : Okay



(I sit up)

Makhosazana : We need your help. Ndlalifa is dying.

Me : What?

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Chapter 06

(Sometimes you might think your life is bad until you meet someone who has it all worse. Around 3 am this morning I found myself in Ndwedwe. I'm glad I was able to help Ndlalifa and Makhosazana but this needs to stop. I can't just drop everything even in the middle of the night and rush to help strangers. What if something bad happened to me?)

(I'm about to drive through the gate. Where is my father coming from at this time? We meet at the gate and we are both waiting for the gate to open. He drives in first. I hope he puts his car in the garage so that I can run inside the house while he puts it in. I don't want to talk. Eish! He is getting out of his car.)

Me : Yeses!

(I mutter and roll down my window.)

Me : Ey Baba

Nyathuko : Nkosana ka Baba you didn't sleep here. Where did you sleep?

Me : Actually I slept here but the thing is there was an emergency and I had to go. Kodwa ngihambe manje ekuseni.

Nyathuko : Is everything okay?

Me : Yes. Wena uphumaphi?

Nyathuko : e Pharmacy. Zibusiso is not feeling well.

Me : What's wrong with her?

Nyathuko : Ukhala ngamazinyo and her gums are bleeding.

(I quickly got out of the car. Qhalaqhala and I fight a lot but I don't want her to get sick.)

Me : Bobabili?

Nyathuko : No Zothani is fine.

Me : Kodwa bajwayele ukugula bobabili nje selokhu bazalwa bagula kanye kanye futhi bephathwe into eyodwa.

Nyathuko : I don't know. This thing is confusing. Ngiphuma komubhekela umuthi wamazinyo nje.

Me : Hhaibo asingene ngimubone

(We walk inside. My mother is sitting on the couch and Zibusiso is sleeping on her thighs)

Nyathuko : Mam'Zondi sengibuyile sthandwa sami.

Sthabile : Nana

Nyathuko : Yah baby.. Sengibuyile

(He goes and kisses my mother. Kanti who is sick? Is it my mother or Zibusiso?)

Sthabile : Did you get it?

Nyathuko : Mhmm but it's just painkillers. Usenjani?

Sthabile : Uyalala uyavuka.

Nyathuko : Hamba ulale kancane Mam'Zondi I'll stay with her.

Sthabile : Kuyafana ngeke ngilale ungekho

Nyathuko : Mhmm?

(He lifts up her chin and they kiss. These people!!)

Sthabile : Ngeke baby

Me : Mah?

Sthabile : Uphumaphi Zanokuhle?

Me : Sengibuyile

(I sit down and touch Zibusiso's forehead. She opens her eyes)

Zibusiso : Zano

Me : Yah Princess kwenzenjani sthandwa sami? Woza la ku bhuti. Kwenzenjani?

(I lift her up and put her on my lap)

Zibusiso : Kubuhlungu izinyo. Leli naleli naleli....

Me : Wonke

(I cut her off before she counts all of them)

Zibusiso : Yes all of them.

Me : Baba awushise imepho khona ezogeza nangayo

(My father looks at my mother. Why does he always need her approval?)

Nyathuko : Sizoshisa impepho Mam'Zondi

Sthabile : I don't have a problem with that.

Nyathuko : Okay.

(They kiss again before we stand up. We go to my parents' bedroom where my father burns the incense.)

Nyathuko : Ngicela ungibilisele lempepho

Me : Okay.



(I walk out and head to the kitchen to boil impepho for Zibusiso. I finish and go to my bedroom. I can finally get some rest now. I sit on my couch and close my eyes but not for long until I hear my mother screaming my name. My eyes shut open and I ran to their bedroom. Zibusiso is rolling herself on the floor. Her eyes are out. My parents look nervous)

Me : What's wrong?

Zibusiso : Uyimpande yazo zonke izizukulwane. Uma engafuni ukwenza owakhe umsebenzi kuyoshabalala konke

(I almost jumped. Someone is talking through Zibusiso. She is talking but that is not her voice. Zibusiso is a kid but that voice belongs to an older person way older.)

Me : Zibusiso?

Zibusiso : Zanokuhle come home and take your gift.

(The voice speaks through her again and after that she passes out.)

Sthabile : Is she dead? My baby!!

(My mother screams)

Me : Mah calm down.

Nyathuko : She is fine.

Sthabile : Zibusiso? Zibusiso?

Me : Let her sleep. She is tired

(My mother sighs. My father lifts up Zibusiso and put her in bed)

Sthabile : What is all this? Amadimoni ani lawa ngempela?

Me : Akuwona amadimoni

Sthabile : Amadimoni! Ubani lo obekhuluma?

Nyathuko : Sthabile can you just calm down?

Sthabile : No Nyathuko!!

Me : Why don't you listen to Baba for once?

Sthabile : You will not tell me what to do!!

Me : You won't understand because you don't want to listen!!

Nyathuko : Zanoluhle!

(I shake my head and walk out. This is too much)

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(I went to my car and drove to Shakaskraal. I don't know why I'm here but here I am. I take out my phone and call Fisisani.)

Fisisani : Zanoluhle what's wrong?

Me : Ngicela uze lana bandla

Fizisani : What?

Me : Please ngiyakuncenga

Fizisani : Where are you?

Me : Ngilana ngakini. Where I dropped you off the other day.

Fizisani : Hhaibo wena!

Me : Please. I just want to talk.

Fizisani : Okay I'm coming.

Me : Thanks.

(I hung up and she came after a few minutes. I unlock the door and she gets in.)

Me : Hey

Fizisani : Zanokuhle you look like death. What happened?

Me : I don't know.

(She hugs me and I feel my body loosening up)

Fizisani : Did you even sleep?

Me : I did.

Fizisani : No you did not. Look at you.

Me : Can we go?

Fizisani : Go where?

Me : I don't know but far away from here. Siye ehhotela or something.

Fizisani : What? No we can't.

Me : I'm tired Fiza mfethu.

Fizisani : Kwenzenjani kanti?

Me : Kuningi okwenzekayo. I'm losing my mind. Ngicela nje ukuba nawe.

Fizisani : You said you wanted to talk but....

Me : I know what I said but I don't want to talk anymore.

Fizisani : What do you want?

Me : You

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mfethu.



Fizisani : Kwenzenjani kanti?

Me : Kuningi okwenzekayo. I'm losing my mind. Ngicela nje ukuba nawe.

Fizisani : You said you wanted to talk but....

Me : I know what I said but I don't want to talk anymore.

Fizisani : What do you want?

Me : You your time and...

Fizisani : I can't go with you. Zanoluhle akakashayi no 06h00.

Me : Who cares?

Fizisani : What do you mean? No I can't. Where is your girlfriend?

Me : She is not here.

Fizisani : Call her uhambe uyohlala naye.

Me : Kuthiwa bengifuna lokho angabe ngiye kuyena. Bengizofonela yena Fiza but I'm here because this is where I want to be.

(She looks out the door with her fisted hand over her chin)

Me : Ngiyakucela

Fizisani : No I need to know what's going on before ngihamba nawe.

Me : Okay nginamadimoni.

(She quickly brings her gaze back to me)

Fizisani : What?

Me : Yes and now they are using my sister to get to me.

Fizisani : Demons?

Me : That's what they call it. Can we go now?

Fizisani : No.

Me : Why not?

Fizisani : Uqeda ukuthi unamadimoni and now you want me to....

Me : I know it's not demons kodwa ngikutshela lento nami engitshelwa yona. Nginalenzinto zamadlozi

(Her eyes narrow)

Fizisani : Yeah?

Me : Yeah. UBaba uthi kufanele ngenze igobongo umndeni wami uthi ngidinga umkhuleko. UMah yena uthi.....

(I sigh)

Me : I don't know what to do.

Fizisani : You know what you need to do.

Me : I don't want to complicate my life.

Fizisani : You are complicating your life Zanokuhle.

Me : How?

Fizisani : Listen to your father.

Me : Lento ayikho lula ngoba uyicabanga.

Fizisani : Kanjani?

Me : I can't tell you everything Fizisani.

(She sighs)

Me : Yazi namhlanje ekseni I got a call from someone. Ngo 01h30 I had to drive to Ndwedwe ngiyolanda labantu abangifonelile and into engiyibone lapha angikaze ngayibona empilweni yami.

Fizisani : Uboneni?

Me : It doesn't matter. Yazi yini engingayiqondi? Ukuthi kungani kufanele ngithwale izinkinga zabantu engingabazi. Why did they call me?

Fizisani : Mhlampe yingoba bebazi wena futhi bethemba wena.

Me : Lento engiyenzile ngizibizele mina izinkinga. So much is going to happen and mase kwenzeka konke lokho mina angiziboni ngiyobe ngikhona eduze kwabo.

Fizisani : Why?

Me : I don't know but....

(I shake my head)

Me : They are so young mfethu.

Fizisani : Labantu abakufonelile?

Me : Yeah. Ngibashiye lapha endlini ka Mah e Phoenix. And indlela ebebeyiyona... yooooo! I didn't even have the courage to stand there and look at them. u Ndlalifa yena he is worse.

Fizisani : Are they your friends?

Me : No. Sahlangana kanye nje

Fizisani : But they called you?

Me : Yeah.

Fizisani : Umndeni wabo wona ukephi?

Me : I don't know but I feel sorry for them. Nisholo ukuthi kunabantu abafela uthando ngempela?



Fizisani : Mina Zanokuhle I don't know what to say. I don't know what happened and I don't know what you are talking about.

Me : Ngikhathele

Fizisani : Sonke sikhathele. Impilo ayikho lula kuthina sonke

Me : I need to do this thing. Bangingi manje abantu abangibhekile and ngeke ngikwazi ukubasiza ngingakazisizi mina

(She smiles)

Fizisani : I'm proud of you.

Me : Kanjani kodwa?

Fizisani : What I can tell you is that lento yabantu abadala akuyona into ongayithatha kancane. My mother died Zanokuhle washona ebalekela isipho sakhe so I'm begging you to do the right thing. Ungawushintshi umqondo. Wenze lokhu abakufunayo before they destroy you or abantu abasondelene nawe.

Me : Your mother....

Fizisani : She is dead. Go home Gagashe.

(She gets out of the car and walks away.)

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(Today Fizisani and I went to buy some groceries for Ndlalifa and Makhedama. I think I'm falling for her and I'm sure she feels the same but something is holding her back.)

Fizisani : That was sad. Umzali uyenza kanjani into enjeya enganeni yakhe?

Me : They almost died.

Fizisani : Did you see the guy... What is his name kambe?

Me : Ndlalifa

Fizisani : Yes. He can't even see

Me : But they will be fine.

(She sighs)

Fizisani : Indaba yabo iyangidabukisa

Me : But love always wins

Fizisani : Yeah but basebancane kakhulu. Bashiye izimpilo zabo imindeni yabo... How are they going to survive?

Me : I'll take care of them.

Fizisani : Yazi uthando luyisilima kanjani. UNdlalifa usazoyishiya leyangane. Uzosanganiswa yitheku nje eyishiye phansi

Me : Oh come on not all men are like that. He loves her. Ngikubone emehlweni akhe lokho

(She chuckles)

Fizisani : For how long? Uzomuthanda isikhathi esingakanani before esanganiswa amantombazane ala?

Me : Uzomuthanda.

(She shakes her head)

Fizisani : Amadoda yinzinja kabi. Nginobufakazi obuthathu to prove that.

Me : Yah?

Fizisani : What?

Me : Tell me.

Fizisani : Tell you what?

Me : Ukuthi why ucabanga ukuthi amadoda ayizinja?

(She sighs)

Fizisani : I was just saying. Ay sekufanele ngihambe manje

Me : Sisakhuluma.

Fizisani : No we are done.

Me : Ngiyakuthanda

(She coughs)

Me : Hey are you okay?

(I give her a bottle of water)

Fizisani : Yeah I'm fine. I need to go

(She quickly gets out of the car)

Me : Fiza wait.

Fizisani : No

Me : Yini wenzisa okwengane manje?

Fizisani : Please leave.

Me : Okay. I'll call you

(She walks away. I start the engine and then turn it off. Something is telling me to follow her. I get out of the car and look around. I follow her. She is not even aware that I'm following her. I stop walking when I see her talking to some girl. They walk together and I follow them. She opens the gate and they walk in. Two children around the age of two... three years run to her and hug her. They are busy opening her plastic. She hits their heads and the kids run back inside the house. Someone clears their throat behind me and I quickly turn around. It's a man and there is a young boy holding his hand. The boy is around Zothani and Zibusiso's age or maybe younger than that. )

Me : Oh Sanibona



Man : Can I help you?

Me : No no

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no I'm fine.

Man : Ucutheleni la?

Me : Angicuthile bafo I'm actually waiting for someone.

Man : I see. Ulinde bani?

Me : Ubani? Uhmhhh my girlfriend.

Man : Who is your girlfriend?

Me : Wangibuza ipasi nesipesheli manje kungani ungavele ungibophe makukuthi ukungifika kwakho la kukwenza ungibone nginecala?

(He laughs and shakes his head)

Man : Ay ngiyakuzwa. Ndalo go and call your mother. Umutshele ukuthi ngisemotweni.

Okay

(The little boy responds)

Man : Qabula ku Babah phela

(Ndalo kisses his cheek and walks away. The man takes a few steps and turns around)

Man : Are you Fizisani's baby daddy?

Me : What?

Man : Are you not?

Me : What are you talking about?

(He shakes his head and walks away. Now I'm confused. Baby daddy? I shake my head and head back to my car. I walk past a Silver Mercedes. I get inside my car. As I start my car I see Fizisani coming from far. I switch off my lights. She is going straight to the Mercedes. The door opens and the man walks out. What the hell? He takes out 10kg rice and potatoes. He gives it to Fizisani and he gets back inside his car and drives off. Fizisani takes the bag of rice and puts it over his head and he takes a bag of potatoes and puts it under her arm. She walks away.)

Me : What the fuck is going on here?

(I watch her until she disappears and I start my car. My mind drifts back to the first day we met. Is Ndalo her little brother? I remember how angry she was that day because her little brother couldn't be part of the school play. I'm cracking up my head here.)

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( I arrived home. My father is busy on his laptop. I'm surprised to see him sitting alone without his "twin". Maybe they fought.)

Me : Baphi abantu?

(He looks at my feet)

Me : Ziyashisa izicathulo.

(I laugh)

Me : Where is Mah?

Nyathuko : Upstairs. Uya ayina

Me : Oh.. I'm hungry

(I head to the kitchen)

Nyathuko : weZanokuhle?

Me : Geez!

Nyathuko : Excuse me?

Me : Aibo Baba indlela ongibiza ngayo

Nyathuko : Woza la

(I guess this is serious)

Me : Is everything okay?

Nyathuko : Uphumaphi?

Me : La e Shakaskraal. Yinindaba Baba? Is Zibusiso sick again?

(He shakes his head)

Nyathuko : No. Sit down

(He closes his laptop)

Me : Ookay

Nyathuko : Silenza nini igobongo?

Me : I don't know.

Nyathuko : Okay. Kade ngise Phoenix izolo ekseni

(I swallow)

Me : Okay

Nyathuko : Bengilinde ungitshele ngalezingane engizifice lapha but I see you are not saying anything.

(I clear my throat)

Me : About that. Bengithi ngizosho. Baba u Ndlalifa no Makhosazana baxishe babulawa i step father sika Ndlalifa. They wanted Ndlalifa to marry somebody else kodwa wanqaba and kwasuka umsindo. Angisakhumbuli kahle but that's what happened.

Nyathuko : Manje pho bafunani endlini ka Sthah?

Me : They called me bacela ngibasize. Bengingeke Baba ngibalethe lana



Nyathuko : Babalekile kubo?

Me : Yes. Bayathandana.

Nyathuko : Ngiyabona. Angibafuni lapha endlini ka Mam'Zondi.

Me : What? Baba no. No please don't...

Nyathuko : Keep quiet and listen to me

Me : Okay

Nyathuko : Bazohlala e Machobeni

Me : What? No! Baba kuqashe abantu nje lapha eMachobeni.

Nyathuko : Ngibakhiphile.

Me : They can't. Baba I know indlu yakho le eseMachobeni kodwa Bhambatha iyabheda.

Nyathuko : Ayibhedi. Ngayakha kabusha leyandlu

Me : Uzofuna i rent?

Nyathuko : Cha. They will stay for free kodwa ayikho imali ozobanika yona

Me : What do you mean Baba?

Nyathuko : You will not take care of Ndlalifa and his girlfriend. UNdlalifa uze nentombi yakhe ngoba esezibona ukuthi uyindoda muyeke ke efunde ukuthi indoda yenzani

Me : They don't have money!

Nyathuko : Uzofuna umsebenzi!

Me : This is unfair.

(He crosses his legs)

Nyathuko : Yazi ngithe ngibona u Ndlalifa ngazikhumbula mina. Umehluko ukuthi mina ngangingazazi ukuthi ngifunani. At Ndlalifa's age ngangididisekile nje and izinto ezinjengalezo izona lezi ezangenza ngalahla i direction empilweni. I want Ndlalifa to be a better man. Ngifuna azi ukuthi indoda yenzani so that he can appreciate life ephinde eyihloniphe.

Me : Baba....

Nyathuko : Nkosana kaBaba they can't depend on you. They need to stand on their own.

Me : Ngiyakuzwa

Nyathuko : I know what I'm doing.

Me : Sho

Nyathuko : Angizwanga?

Me : Ngiyakuzwa Nondaba

Nyathuko : Ukhiye waseMachobeni ngiwushiye phezu kombhede wakho. I want them out of Sthabile's house first thing tomorrow morning.

Me : Yebo.

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## Chapter 08

(The twins' ceremony had to be postponed. After I left Makhosazana and Ndlalifa in Machobeni I met with my father in Mtshebheni. I left my car in Mtshebheni and we drove to Mzinyathi to see Khambule regarding igobongo. If there is one sangoma that my father trusts then it has to be Khambule.)

Me : They are going to be fine. They seemed happy

Nyathuko : That's good.

Me : But they don't like white

(He laughs)

Nyathuko : Then Ndlalifa needs to get a job soon eshintshe yonke into.

Me : Maybe you should consider giving him a job lapha ka Bhambatha.

(Silence. I shake my head)

Me : So uyabanika leyandlu?

Nyathuko : It will depend. Uma beziphethe kahle kuzoba eyabo

Me : Baba yazi indlela oyithanda ngayo leyandlu I'm surprised.

Nyathuko : That house holds so many memories but I'm ready to let it go now. Uma UNdlalifa nentombi yakhe bephathana kahle I'll let them create their own memories.

Me : You like them huh?

Nyathuko : I'm just impressed that's all. Okwamanje ngeke ngithi ngiyabathanda kodwa yibona abazokwenza ngibathande.

Me : I see.

Nyathuko : How old is Ndlalifa?

Me : 19 years old.

Nyathuko : Ungangawe.

Me : I wonder if he knows what he is doing.

Nyathuko : He knows.

Me : Ushiye kubo kushone umkhulu wakhe and he said he is not going back for the funeral.

Nyathuko : Yeah?

Me : Yeah and I don't blame him.



Nyathuko : Yah.

Me : Uthe siyaphike ku Mam'Zondi?

(He chuckles)

Nyathuko : I told her I'm going to work.

Me : Wangabuza ukuthi mina ngikuphi?

Nyathuko : I told her ukuthi uhambise uNdlalifa nentombi yakhe eMachobeni.

Me : Maybe we need to tell her the truth.

(He looks at me)

Nyathuko : You know how your mother is.

(I sigh)

Me : Yah.

Nyathuko : Mfan'wami asilungise lento yegobongo kuqala. u Sthabile sobuye simutshele

Me : Okay. Kodwa bazonqaba kaDlomo angithi uyazi?

Nyathuko : Asiqale sikhulume no Khambule. I'll deal with the Dlomos

(I shake my head)

Me : Ay ngiyakuzwa.

Nyathuko : Did you tell your girlfriend about this?

Me : Baba I don't have a girlfriend.

Nyathuko : Oh yeah?

(He unfastened his seat belt.)

Me : Ey kuyabanda la.

Nyathuko : Gqoka leyo jacket yami elapho esihlalweni sihambe.

Me : Thanks

(I take his jacket and put it on. I get out of the car.)

Me : It's empty today.

Nyathuko : Yeah. Come

(I see Khambule walking inside his hut. He is old now. I follow my father and we also walk in)

Nyathuko : Mzilankatha

Khambule : Nondaba

Nyathuko : Yithi labantu

Khambule : Ngiyabona. How are you my boy?

Me : Ngiyaphila Mkhulu.

Khambule : Good. Siyasinda lesipho

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huh?

(I think I know what he is talking about. I sigh)

Me : Kakhulu

Khambule : I know but you'll be fine.

Nyathuko : Beza ngolaka ke manje

Khambule : I see them. Abafuni ukukhuluma nomunye umuntu kodwa bafuna ukukhuluma nengane yabo ngqo

Nyathuko : Is that so?

Khambule : Yes.

(He lights his candles)

Khambule : This boy doesn't need anyone to hold his hand. Akadingi inyanga ezomutshela ukuthi enzeni because umoya omungenile wants to speak to him directly.

Nyathuko : Ngikubonile lokho ingakho nje bengicabanga ukuthi enzelwe igobongo.

Khambule : That will help kodwa angithi uyazi ukuthi igobongo lihlukene and before enze igobongo they need to tell him ukuthi bona laba abamungenile bafuna ukudla yiphi impande.

Nyathuko : But that's impossible isn't it?

Me : Indiki nendawe

(They are both looking at me)

Khambule : Oh.

Me : I know what I need to do. Inkinga yami igobongo engingazi ukuthi ngizolidlela kuphi.

(My father swallows)

Me : Ekhaya kaDlomo ngeke bevume. Basindisiwe

Khambule : Abantu bakwa Dlomo bangenaphi la? The Dlomos have nothing to do with this.

Me : Angiyena owakwa Zondi

Khambule : But lokho akusho ukuthi owakwa Dlomo. Owakwa Dlomo ngegama nje wena. Your parents were not married ngakho awukwazi ukwenzele igobongo lakho kwaDlomo.

Me : Oh



Khambule : Yes. Igobongo lakho ungalidlela kwa Ngcobo not kwaDlomo.

Nyathuko : Izidalwa azikakacacisi ukuthi kufanele elidlele kuphi

Khambule : That's fine kodwa ngeke elidlele kwaDlomo because they don't recognize him. Izidalwa zakhona azimazi.

Me : Now I get it. Ngiyaliphupha leligobongo. Ngiyazobona ngilimisele kodwa akuveli ukuthi ngilimisele kuphi. Kuvele kubemnyama.

Khambule : Limisele ekhaya ko Mah.

Me : KaNgcobo?

Khambule : Yes.

Me : Ngeke bevume.

Nyathuko : I'll talk to Mapholoba.

(I sigh. This won't work)

Khambule : It will work.

(Oh he can read my mind now?)

Me : It's not that easy.

Nyathuko : Mapholoba and Mchumane will understand.

Me : And if they don't?

Nyathuko : They care about you. Nkosana ka Baba lento isiphakathi kokufa nokuphila so they have to understand.

Me : Wena Baba usumkhohliwe umkhulu.

(He sighs)

Khambule : Niqaphele ke futhi Nondaba. Don't show off your desperation because some people will use that against you. Bethathe wonke amandla alomfana kodwa bethi bayanisiza kanti bayanisebenzisa. Please remember to be patient nilinde izidalwa zikhulume nalomfana. Ningaxhamazeli

Nyathuko : Mzilankatha

Me : Why can't they leave me alone? Labantu abacacisi balokhu beng.....

(I pause and rub my face. This is frustrating)

Khambule : Izidalwa zakho zizokukhanyisela khehla. You are not just anyone wena ungowethongo.

(I shake my head)

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Chapter 09

A MONTH LATER

(I don't know what's going on between Fizisani and I but I love it. Yeah one minute she is hot and the next she is cold but I love her nonetheless. She is the best thing that ever happened to me. All I have to do now is break things off with Gugu and cut all ties.)

Me : Ngizobuya phela maduzane.

Fizisani : How am I going to breathe without you?

(I laugh and kiss her shoulder)

Me : Hamba nami ke

Fizisani : I can't. My love igobongo liyahlonishwa. No sex until you are done with it so lokho kuchaza ukuthi ngeke ke sibonane.

(I sigh)

Me : I know.

(You know? For the first time in my life I had sex with a woman without any complications. No sweat no smelling feet no strange dreams. Fisisani is my happy place my peace. I feel normal around her.)

Fisisani : But sizofonelana every hour.

Me : Every minute

(We laugh)

Me : Ngiyakuthanda Fisisani

(She swallows and looks away.)

Fizisani : Breakfast?

Me : Cha

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ngithe ngiyakuthanda.

Fizisani : Zanokuhle please.

Me : I know you love me. I know you do kodwa into engingayiqondi ukuthi kungani kunzima ukuthi lokho ukusho ngomlomo wakho.

Fizisani : Because you don't know me. Zano ziningi izinto ongazazi ngami. Izinto engazi kahle ukuthi once you know about them uzongishiya. Lonke loluthando olungaka oluzwa ngami luzoshabalala

Me : Ngeke.

(She laughs and shakes her head. I can see tears in her eyes)

Me : Khuluma nami phela muntuza wami

Fizisani : Cha. I'm not ready. I don't want to spoil this. I don't want to ruin what we have. Ngicela nje unginike ithuba nami ngike ngijabulele ukuthandwa. Ngicela ukujabula while I still can. Can I have that?

(Fizisani confuses the shit out of me)

Me : Fine



(She smiles and presses her lips on my mouth. I laugh.)

Me : You are welcome to stay here ngize ngibuye. You don't have to go back home

Fizisani : Are you sure?

Me : Yes. Ngifuna nokuyobheka UNdlalifa noMakhosi before I go to KwaMashu. Kunento nje engingayizwa kahle.

Fizisani : Something like what?

(I shake my head)

Me : I need to go and see them.

Fizisani : Okay. Are you going to the gym?

Me : No nono. Othi ngitshele no Baba nje ukuthi engangilindi

(She laughs and gets out of bed. I leave a voice note for my father.)

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(I went to Machobeni to see Ndlalifa and his girlfriend. When I arrived the first thing I noticed was that Makhosazana is not well. Something huge is wrong with her. She greeted me and immediately went back into the house. )

Ndlalifa : Besihlushwa izinja zakamakhelwane but akusafani manje.

Me : That's good. Ay nami ngiyahamba namhlanje

Ndlalifa : Yeah. Bengingazi nokuthi uzoza ke mina since you sent us money already.

Me : Yeah yeah I know. Bengingafuni nje ukuhamba nginganibonanga. Igazi lami melithi angenze into ngike ngikhethe ukuyenza

Ndlalifa : Yeah. Ay ngiyakuzwa bafo

Me : How is everything?

(I'm asking this question for the 10th time because the truth is that I feel like a lot is wrong here.)

Ndlalifa : I don't know mfanakithi.

Me : Zithini boy?

Ndlalifa : Makhosazana is not feeling well.

(I knew it)

Me : Yeah?

Ndlalifa : Yeah. Izolo nje ubephupha kabi

Me : Ephupha?

Ndlalifa : Yes but akafuni ukungitshela ukuthi what were those dreams all about.

Me : Hawu!

Ndlalifa : I think she is pregnant.

Me : What?

Ndlalifa : Ayisekho manje enye into engingayicabanga. Isisu sakhe si....I don't know but something is wrong.

Me : Can I see her?

Ndlalifa : Yeah of course. Asingene.

(We walk in. We find Makhosazana in the kitchen.)

Me : Wele likaNdlalifa

(That's what I call her. "Ndlalifa's twin")

Makhosazana : Zano

(She smiles)

Me : uNdlalifa uthi awuphilile. How are you feeling now?

Makhosazana : I'll be fine.

Me : I see.

(She looks different. I can't describe it but she looks different.)

Makhosazana : Ngizonenzela isinkwa

Me : Thanks.

Ndlalifa : Silana ke emnyango sthandwa sami

Makhosazana : Okay Mumbo

(We walk out. My head starts sweating. I scratch my hair)

Ndlalifa : Did you see that? Into engicika kakhulu ukuthi akafuni ukuvuma ukuthi uyagula bafo but I can see that she is sick.

Me : Yeah yeah.

Ndlalifa : She is pregnant.

Me : No.

Ndlalifa : She is. Kuzofanele ngithole umsebenzi mfanakithi

Me : Ndlalifa she is not pregnant!

Ndlalifa : What? How do you know?

Me : I just know.

Ndlalifa : No mina ngizomuyisa kudokotela oyaziyo into ayenzayo.



Me : The doctor will tell you the same thing. That Makhosazana is not pregnant.

Ndlalifa : Pho yini yonke le?

Me : Ilumbo leli boy

Ndlalifa : What? Ilumbo?

(What? What the fuck did I just say? That wasn't me. I didn't say that. It must be the demons living inside me.)

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Chapter 10

KWA-MASHU

(I've set umsamo for igobongo and it's ready for me to start it tomorrow. The way my grandparents handle the news of me performing igobongo here quite impressed me. They took it so well but all thanks to my father. My mother well Sthabile is just Sthabile and she wasn't happy about it but I'll leave my father to deal with her. He is the only one who knows her correct buttons.)

Ngcobo : Did you tell your family about this?

Me : Cha Mkhulu there was no need.

MaKheswa : Bawumndeni wakho.

Me : Ngiyakwazi lokho.

MaKheswa : I don't want to find myself fighting with Mam'Dlomo because of this.

(She says and fixes her glasses. She continues reading her Bible)

Me : Ngeke uxabane noGogozi

Ngcobo : Mkhuleko is getting married

Me : Ngizwile

Ngcobo : Yes he is finally marrying Nuh

Me : It took him long enough. I feel sorry for Mpatho

MaKheswa : Why?

Me : Gogo yazi ukushada kuka mama wakho nenye indoda engakuzali it's not as easy as it looks.

MaKheswa : Zondi loves you like his son his blood.

Me : And I'm grateful. But kunezinto naye ezingaphezu kwamandla akhe. Sometimes I feel unwelcome.

(My grandmother takes off her glasses)

Ngcobo : Usho ukuthini?

Me : Ngisho ukuthi mebenza lemicimbi yabo bengivalela ngaphandle kuba buhlungu.

MaKheswa : Mfan'wami phela wena owakwa Dlomo.

Me : Yeah right. Ngicela siyeke ukukhuluma ngalento

Ngcobo : How is your mother? Akasafiki phela la

Me : She is fine. I think she is pregnant again

(They both smile. I raise my brow)

Me : Nijabulela ukuthi ukhulelwe futhi?

Ngcobo : Wena uphi umakoti?

Me : Don't change the subject Mkhulu.

Ngcobo : Your mother is married. She is a whole CEO of out moving

(I laugh out loud)

Me : Auto Movers Mapholoba.

Ngcobo : Kona lokho ke.

Me : Ay ngicela ukuya kolala

MaKheswa : uMkhulu ukubuze umbuzo

Me : I do have a girlfriend but I'm not getting married any time soon. Thank you

Ngcobo : Mina no Gogo wakho sashada sibancane kabi.

Me : When was that? 100 years ago?

(I laugh and stand up)

Me : Ngizoziwasha ekseni izitsha. Goodnight zikhokho zami

Ngcobo : Goodnight skhokho...uzoliqala ngasikhathisini igobongo?

Me : 06h00 am

MaKheswa : Ulimbozile angithi?

Me : Yes and I'm wearing my beads. Can I go now?

(My grandmother laughs)

MaKheswa : Goodnight skhokhorikho

(I laugh and shake my head)

Me : Yeeer! Ogogo bakwaMashu

(They both laugh. I leave them and go into my bedroom. There is a missed call from my lawyer.)

Me : Ufunani manje lo?

(I'm not calling her back. Damn! She calls again)



Me : Nkosazana Bella

(I answer)

Matshidiso : Mr Dlomo Good evening.

Me : Evening

Matshidiso : Pardon me for calling you this late. We have a problem.

Me : Yeah?

Matshidiso : People from the Ghetto Legacy have filed a complaint against you and other shareholders.

Me : Complaint?

Matshidiso : Complaint of Abandonment. According to the society they have not received food and monthly parcels for the past six months. That is unacceptable Mr Dlomo.

(Fuck!)

Me : Eish I know.

Matshidiso : If this goes to court things will get really ugly. We don't want that huh? You don't want to deal with lawsuit

Me : Yeah yeah I'm not fit for that.

Matshidiso : I spoke to Zithulele earlier and he suggested that we implement an agreement for the business to dissolve or be sold.

Me : What? Matshidiso into eyenzeka lapha e Ghetto Legacy is not a business. Sisiza abantu abaswele. Njengamanje sizimele so....Wait wait ubhuti Zithulele ungenaphi kuyo yonke lento? He was Bhuti Nqabayethu's witness. He can't make any decisions.

Matshidiso : I fully understand that. But we are talking about people's lives here. People who are depending on you. Mr Dlomo this is not caused by any financial crisis. It's pure negligence!

(Negligence my foot. I'm only 18 years old and sometimes it gets a bit too much.)

Me : I will handle it.

Matshidiso : Can we meet?

Me : Okwamanje angikho but I'll come back in a few weeks.

Matshidiso : Go siame. I'll see what I can do.

Me : Thanks.

Matshidiso : Goodnight

(She hung up. Screw her!... Why is she so angry? I'm paying her to handle my shit. I called my girlfriend. I'll call her again after midnight. Now I can sleep)

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05h30 AM

(Someone is walking towards umsamo where I set up for igobongo. I can't see his face. His hands are tucked in his pockets. He kicks ukhamba

ubhuti Zithulele ungenaphi kuyo yonke lento? He was Bhuti Nqabayethu's witness. He can't make any decisions.

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Me : Thanks.

Matshidiso : Goodnight

(She hung up. Screw her!... Why is she so angry? I'm paying her to handle my shit. I called my girlfriend.  
I'll call her again after midnight. Now I can sleep)

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05h30 AM

(Someone is walking towards umsamo where I set up for igobongo. I can't see his face. His hands are tucked in his pockets. He kicks ukhamba which has all the herbs for igobongo and he walks away. I run following him and when I get outside I find a baby lying on the grass. Next to the baby there is Makhosazana. She is screaming for help. She screams while pointing at the baby. I quickly move my eyes back to the baby. The baby is surrounded by a huge snake and there is blood coming out of the baby's nose. I run to the baby but I'm suddenly surrounded by darkness. I can still hear Makhosazana screaming but I can't move.)

Me : No!!!

(I open my eyes and jump out of bed. Fuck I was dreaming. I sigh and rub my face. My phone rings. It's Fizisani. Perfect timing!)

Me : Hey... Babe

(I answer)

Fizisani : Hey?

Me : I said babe.

Fizisani : You said HEY. Zanoluhle what's going on?

Me : Sthandwa sami ngiyaxolisa.

Fizisani : Who are you with?

Me : Alone. Yinindaba?

Fizisani : Nothing I'll video call you now.

Me : No problem.



(I hang up and immediately get a video call from her)

Me : Babe

(She is in the kitchen. She is still in Phoenix)

Fizisani : My love how are you? Wajuluka nje.

Me : Sweating? No.

(I touch my face. She is right)

Me : I just woke up from a nightmare

Fizisani : Nightmare at this time?

Me : Yeah. Wenzani wena ekhishini ekseni kanje?

Fizisani : Why ungekho embhedeni Zano?

Me : Geez! Fiza akukho muntu lana. Look

(I switch the camera to show her my bed. She laughs)

Me : Isikhwele sakho siyabheda

Fizisani : I miss you.

Me : I miss you too. Uyadla?

Fizisani : Mhmm-Mhmmm

Me : Okay. Mina sengiyokwenza izinto zami manje

Fizisani : Are you okay?

Me : Yeah yeah I'm fine.

Fizisani : No you are not. Uphupheni?

Me : Enye into nje ebhedayo. You know these dreams.

Fizisani : Kuzolunga sthandwa sami.

(I sigh)

Me : I hope so.

Fizisani : Take it easy.

Me : I love you.

(She smiles. She won't say it back.)

Me : I'll call you mengiqeda.

Fizisani : Wait kunamaphepha la. Ndlalifa brought them

Me : Oh yes. I know about them. Aphuma ku mmeli wami. Ngizowabona mengifika

Fizisani : You have a lawyer?

(I laugh)

Me : Bye babe

(She laughs)

Fizisani : Bye my love.

(Video call ended. I throw my phone on the bed and head to the bathroom. I finish showering and go to the kitchen. I fix my beads on my wrists and take ihiya. I put it over my shoulders. I'll be speaking to the ancestors so putting ihiya over my shoulders is a symbol of respect. I kneel down and remove a small grass mat that I used to cover the opening of ukhamba.)

Me : Bo Ngcobo oFuze oMashiya ama....

(I pause. No I won't call them. I clap my hands six times and take the wooden spoon that I will use to mix together igobongo. It's called "ukuphehla". I need to mix it until it's foamy. I start mixing but not for long until ukhamba breaks into two pieces and igobongo spills all over the floor. What the hell? This is not normal. I stand up with my eyes wide open.)

Me : Mkhulu? Mkhulu!!

(I run to their bedroom and knock. Ngcobo opens)

Ngcobo : What's wrong?

Me : Igobongo... Ukhamba seluvele lwaphuka lachithela lonke igobongo

Ngcobo : What?

(He is also shocked)

Me : Sengivele ngadideka

What happened?

(MaKheswa asks. She is coming behind Mkhulu. She is busy wearing her nightgown)

Ngcobo : You need to call Khambule. U Mtshela ngalokhu. Something is wrong.

MaKheswa : What happened?

Ngcobo : I'll explain to you. Zanoluhle call Khambule.

Me : Okay

(I ran back into my bedroom. I grab my phone and dial Khambule's number)

Me : Bab'Khambule? Hello?

Khambule : Yebo

Me : Imina u Zanokuhle... Umfana ka Zondi.. I...

Khambule : I know who you are. What's wrong?

Me : Igobongo selivele lenza izimanga. Sekuvele kwahlephuka ukhamba lachitheka



Khambule : Oh

Me : Oh?

Khambule : That's easy. It's either udla igobongo ekungelona and izidalwa zakho zidininwa ukuthi uzidlisa impande okungeyona okanye indawo lapho olimisele khona okungeyona

Me : What? But you told me to come here ngizolenzela la kwa Ngcobo!

(I'm angry now. What the fuck is all this?)

Khambule : You don't know who you are dealing with but it's definitely not izidalwa zakwa Ngcobo. Nami ke sengiyasho nje kodwa anginaso isiqiniseko

Me : Dammit! What am I supposed to do now?

Khambule : Just wait.

Me : Wait for what? Bab'Khambule this is not only affecting me but it's affecting my sister as well. Ufela izinto zami manje

Khambule : Nothing will happen to your sister. Izidalwa zakho zisebenzisa yena nje but they won't harm her

(I sigh. Khambule doesn't know how bad things get when these people start speaking through Zibusiso. She loses it but when it's over she wakes up like nothing ever happened and she doesn't even remember a single thing. I won't be able to live with myself knowing that I'm the reason she goes through all that.)

Me : I don't know Baba

Khambule : Be patient. They will show you the way.

Me : So ngenzani manje? Ngibuyele e Phoenix?

Khambule : Yes.

Me : What if abantu bakwa Dlomo laba abangingenile? Maybe I need to speak to my family ngilimisele khona leligobongo

Khambule : That's not a bad idea.

(I end the call and release a long sigh. This is bullshit!)

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(The last time I was here I made a promise to myself that I would never come back. Not after the way Gogozi spoke to me. I tighten my hands on the steering wheel and hit my head against it)

Me : Damn! Damn!

(I lift up my head and sigh. Baba u Mkhuleko walks out of the house. He looks at my car. I'm still parking outside the gate. I roll down my window.)

Me : Dad

Mkhuleko : Yini? Is the gate locked?

(I shake my head. I start the engine and drive in. I get out of the car and his dogs all run to me. I hate dogs especially these dogs. They don't know how to behave. They are all over me now.)

Mkhuleko : You've grown so much Wele. What are you eating?

(He brushes my head. I hate that)

Me : Normal food.

Mkhuleko : Izwa ibhesi. Nina zingane lokudla enikudla manje akusalungile ngempela. Azikho izingane ezikhula kanje. Never!

(I laugh)

Mkhuleko : Huh wuwe lo Nkazimulo?

(He points at my car. Yeah sometimes he calls me by my father's name and he never calls me by my real name not even once. I don't think he knows my name. I shrug)

Mkhuleko : Mhmm! Mhmmm! Isilwane phela lesi.

(I laugh. He gets inside my car)

Obani laba?

(There is my grandmother Mam'Dlomo. She is standing on the veranda with her hands on her waist. She smiles)

Mkhuleko : Umzukulw wakho

Mam'Dlomo : Ubani? u Yamukela?

(Angisazi ke)

Mkhuleko : Hhaibo Mah u Nkazimulo. u Mah akasaboni manje?

Me : Imina Gogozi.

Mam'Dlomo : Zanokuhle hhaibo. Whose car is that?

(I head inside. She looks at my feet)

Mam'Dlomo : Ziphi izicathulo?

Me : Le

Mam'Dlomo : Le kuphi?

Me : Emotweni

(I walk past her and walk in. There is a hell of a big ass screen TV that I bought for her on the wall but I know she will be throwing insults right in my face the moment she finds out the reason I'm here. What I do for her doesn't count. The TV is on. Gogozi can sit in this living room all day and watch cartoons. I don't understand her sometimes. Right now Masha and the Bear is playing. Yeeer! I take the remote and change the channel)

Mam'Dlomo : Hawu Zano I was still watching.

Me : Gogozi don't you get tired of watching the same thing all day? Phela lento ihlala njalo idlala into eyodwa.

Mam'Dlomo : How do you know?

(I shake my head and give her the remote)



Mam'Dlomo : Yah squmama sika Nyathuko... Webabo!

(She holds her knees while sitting down)

Mam'Dlomo : Ngiyafa imilenze weZano. If I knew that you were coming bengizothi ungiphathele i Cosamin.

(I'm sure whatever that is costs more than R2000.)

Me : Yah.

Mam'Dlomo : Ufike nini?

Me : A day ago.

Mam'Dlomo : Eyah?

Me : Yah. Baphi pho abantu?

Mam'Dlomo : Nomasonto is not here. Lizwilenkosi Zaga and Efesu base Bridge City. u Mahubo no Genesis base Nhlungwane

(Christianity goes that far in this family. Now you know)

Me : OYah.

Mam'Dlomo : Yah. Wena ekabani lemoto ofike ngayo?

(I scratch my beard)

Me : Imoto? Imoto eyami. Indala

Mam'Dlomo : That car doesn't look old to me. Uyithenge ngemali yegazi futhi?

Me : Cha

Mam'Dlomo : Sthabile doesn't listen. I told her to burn everything that Nqabayethu left under your name. Ngoba izinto zika sathane and usathane akafi mfana wami. Ulala ephenduka ngisho elibeni

(I sigh. I'm not having this conversation ever again)

Me : How are you?

MaM'Dlomo : I'm fine.

Me : That's good.

Mam'Dlomo : u Sonto uphekile. Kukhona ukudla lapha ekhishini

Me : No

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Zaga and Efesu base Bridge City. u Mahubo no Genesis base Nhlungwane

(Christianity goes that far in this family. Now you know)

Me : OYah.

Mam'Dlomo : Yah. Wena ekabani lemoto ofike ngayo?

(I scratch my beard)

Me : Imoto? Imoto eyami. Indala

Mam'Dlomo : That car doesn't look old to me. Uyithenge ngemali yegazi futhi?

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(I sigh. I'm not having this conversation ever again)

Me : How are you?

MaM'Dlomo : I'm fine.

Me : That's good.

Mam'Dlomo : u Sonto uphekile. Kukhona ukudla lapha ekhishini

Me : No I'm not hungry

Mam'Dlomo : Okay. How is your mother?

Me : She is fine. Bayaphila bonke

Mam'Dlomo : Bengithi ngizobona uGogo wakho ntambama kodwa umzimba awuvumi

Me : Shuthi usuyomubona esontweni

Mam'Dlomo : Ehhe

Me : Ndlelenhle wanted to come with me kwasho ukuthi nasi isikole.

Mam'Dlomo : Ngiyamuncamela loyo ukunodadewenu laba abanama afro agcwele ikhanda.

(I laugh)

Mam'Dlomo : Aybo ziyazazi leziya zingane zika Sthabile. Zingahamba ekseni layikhaya. Ngeke zilunge.

(This has nothing to do with their attitude. Gogozi hates all my mother's children.)

Me : Ey angihleli nami la

Mam'Dlomo : Eyah?

Me : Yah. I have a problem Gogozi. I'm sick.

Mam'Dlomo : Angithi lendaba ayizofika emadlozini angekho?

Me : We spoke about this. Ngicela ningisize ngiyenze lento

Mam'Dlomo : No! WeZanokuhle mhlampe umawakho walulahla ukholo but thina sisakholwa layikhaya and I will not allow you to come here uzokwenza izinto zobusathane.

(Mkhuleko walks in)



Mkhuleko : Kodwa Mah.

Mam'Dlomo : No asinazo izangoma layikhaya asikaze futhi saba nazo.

Me : Usho ukuthini?

Mam'Dlomo : What I'm saying is....

Mkhuleko : Sekwanele Mah.

Me : No I want to know ukuthi usho ukuthini.

Mkhuleko : Asikho isidingo. Mah uNkazimulo engalimisele igobongo endlini ka Mkhulu le engenhla

(Gogozi stands up immediately. I see her knees are fine now.)

Mam'Dlomo : Ini? Mkhuleko ngicela ungangilingi.

Mkhuleko : But....

Mam'Dlomo: Nothing!! u Mkhulu waze wafa engakaze engenwe amadimoni. Lendlu elapha ngenhla indlu ayekhulekela kuyona umkhulu. Indlu ashona eguqe ngamadolo kuyo ekhuleka! Wayengenzi izinto zobuthakathi.

(I stand up. This I will not swallow. I walk out.)

Mkhuleko : Yey welokhuzana... Wele? Nkazimulo yima lapho.

(I stop next to my car. I rub my face)

Mkhuleko : Yini manje? Kusakhulunywa nje.

Me : Cha ayikho into esikhuluma lapha. UGogozi uyangithuka.

Mkhuleko : Get in the car.

(I get in and he also gets in)

Mkhuleko : Drive

(I drive off)

Mkhuleko : Ibalulekile lento kuwena akunjalo?

Me : Dad it's very important. Sikhuluma ngempilo yami la.

Mkhuleko : But you also need to understand ukuthi u Mah usukaphi.

(I sigh)

Me : Mhlampe sekufanele ngenze lento ebishiwo u Mapholoba.

Mkhuleko : Utheni?

Me : Uthe ngibheke esinye isibongo sakwa Dlomo engingamisela kuso igobongo uma enqaba u Gogozi ukuthi ngilimisele layikhaya.

Mkhuleko : That won't work. Lezinto zesiZulu angizazi kangako but I know ukuthi igobongo alenziwa kanjalo.

Me : Then ngizohamba ngiyolidlela enyangeni.

(He sighs)

Mkhuleko : There is no need for that. Ngowakwa Dlomo mina angithi? I'm your father so it's fine. Woza kwami uzolimisela khona igobongo lakho

(I almost knocked off the tree. What did he just say?)

Me : Baba?

Mkhuleko : Ngiqinisile. I won't let you suffer ngikhona. Uyingane ka mfowethu wena.

Me : Yazi ngaphelelwa amazwi

Mkhuleko : You are welcome to come noma inini. Iminyango yami ivuliwe mfana wami

(I smile)

Me : Ngiyabonga Baba.

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(I got home and threw myself on the couch. MaKheswa is talking to one of our neighbours outside. I take out my phone. I need to call Khambule. I scroll down to his number)

Me : Mzilankatha thokoza Baba

Khambule : Thokozani Ndodana

Me : Ay ngiyile lapha ekhaya kodwa sangazwana ngenkulumo sine salukwazi sami.

Khambule : Ngiyabona

Me : But umfowabo ka Baba is willing to help me. Uthe ngingafika ngizowenza khona lapha kuyena umsebenzi

Khambule : That's good. Wena ucabangani?

Me : I think it's a good idea. Manje bengifuna ukubuza la Mzilankatha ukuthi ngingaqala yini ksasa? I really want to get this done as soon as possible.

Khambule : Uma zonke izinto ziphelele I don't see why you can't start tomorrow.

Me : Mzilankatha

Khambule : Dinangwe

Khambule : Manje lentombazane enezingane ezidliwa ilumbo uyisiza nini yona ndodana?

(I hung up and threw away my phone. This is another conversation that I'm not ready to have. How do I tell Ndlalifa that ilumbo that Makhosazana is carrying took his child's life? That bloody snake will eat all Ndlalifa's children and I won't be able to do shit about. It's something beyond me.)

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## Chapter 12

(I don't know what the hell is going on. I don't know what to do anymore. I don't know what these ancestors want from me anymore. As agreed with Baba u Mkhuleko so I went to his house and prepared igobongo last night but this morning when I woke up igobongo was decayed and there were snails in it. I took everything and threw it outside. I'm done. I'm not doing this ever again. I feel frustrated and drained at the same time.)



Fizisani : What do you mean uvuke libolile futhi ligcwele iminenke?

Me : I mean exactly that. I'm coming back home tomorrow

Fizisani : My love I'm sorry.

Me : It's okay. They don't want me to do this so I won't do it.

Fizisani : Kanti yini le ethukuthelise izidalwa zakho kangaka?

Me : I don't know. Ngiyile komalume ngaya ekhaya. I have nowhere else to go now. Ngiyayiyeka yonke manje lento.

(Something falls on the passenger seat next to me. It's a beaded bracelet. I take it and look at it. It's written Manzini. Where is it coming from? This is uncle Nqabayethu's bracelet. Uncle Mzet gave it to me but I don't keep it in my car. It stays in my room inside my drawer so this is confusing.)

Fizisani... help. What do you think?

(I close my eyes and open them.)

Me : Huh?

Fizisani : Hhaibo awungizwa?

Me : Sorry. Khona into ebengiyibuka la. Can I call you back?

Fizisani : No we are still talking nje Zano.

(I sigh)

Fizisani : You always want to run away uma sikhuluma ngalento. I'm your girlfriend Zanokuhle and I'm here for you.

(If I wasn't this confused then I'd be happy to hear her saying she is my girlfriend. This is the first time she is saying this but I can't even entertain it. This bracelet is a sign of something. But what?)

Me : Ngiyaxolisa sthandwa sami.

Fizisani : Have you spoken to your father?

Me : No. Ngizobafonela late

Fizisani : Ukephi pho wena?

Me : Ngilana ka Bester kade ngishintsha isondo.

Fizisani : Okay. Did you eat?

Me : I did sthandwa sami.

Fizisani : Okay. Tell me when you get home.

Me : I will.

(I hang up. I get out of the car and check on the guys who are changing my tyre. I don't even know what happened to this tyre. There is a woman selling apples. She is not far from where I'm standing. I make my way to her. The first thing I notice are white and red beads on her wrists.)

Me : Thokoza Mah

Her : Thokozani khehla

(I take my wallet and open it)

Me : How much are your apples?

Her : These are for R5 and these are for R10

Me : Ngicela aka R10. Amaphakathe ebe mabili.

(She puts the apples in the plastic. I give her the money and she holds my hand while staring at me.)

Her : Your soul is troubled.

Me : I know.

Her : Is it her?

Me : Who?

Her : Your ancestors want her but hers doesn't want you. Kukhona umsindo ozayo.

Me : I don't understand.

Her : And the Zungus?

Me : What about the Zungus?

Her : He wants you. Ungene kuwe

Me : Who? Ubani ongene kimi?

Her : Go home mfana wami

Me : But Mah....

Her : Go home.

(She takes the money and gives me my apples. Now I know why my car decided to act up here. I had to see her. They were leading me to her. But I don't have the answers. I have nothing to do with the Zungus. I'm not related to them so why is she telling me about the Zungus? And which ancestors was she talking about? I'm going back to my car with a lot of questions.)

Sekulungile razo

(I give them the money and the apples. I get inside the car and drive off. I feel like I'm losing my mind. I'm not going to KwaMashu anymore but I'm going back home to Ballito.)

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( Makhosazana is here. I remember telling my parents to go and check up on her and Ndlalifa. I guess they came back with them but I don't see Ndlalifa here. Makhosazana is sleeping on the couch. Her feet are swollen. I kneel down and touch them. Something moves inside my stomach. I close my eyes. I can feel it inside me. I let go of her feet and it stopped. I sigh and get up. Ndlelenhle run down the steps)

Me : Sssh!

Ndlelenhle : Sorry

(He whispers)



Ndlelenhle : Ubuyile.

(He is still whispering)

Me : Yes

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we are still talking nje Zano.

(I sigh)

Fizisani : You always want to run away uma sikhuluma ngalento. I'm your girlfriend Zanokuhle and I'm here for you.

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Me : Sssh!

Ndlelenhle : Sorry

(He whispers)

Ndlelenhle : Ubuyile.

(He is still whispering)

Me : Yes come. Let's go to my room. When did you come back from school?

Ndlelenhle : We came back early today.

Me : Nilandwe ubani pho?

Ndlelenhle : uMkhulu no Gog'Vee but Baba is here. He is combing Zothani's hair

Me : Good.

(Just the person I wanted to see. I go straight into their bedroom. I find them sitting on the floor. Zothani is sitting between his legs and he is busy combing her hair. Zibusiso is leaning against his back. She is playing a game on his phone)

Me : Baba ngihlangana kanjani mina nabantu bakwa Zungu?



(He lifts up his eyes. He is definitely not shocked to see me here.)

Nyathuko : Nkosana ka Baba

Me : Please stop Baba! Why igobongo lami kufanele ngilidlele kwa Zungu?

Nyathuko : Who told you to go and perform it kwa Zungu?

Me : I just know Baba. All the signs are there! Engifuna ukukwazi ukuthi why? Mhlampe khona uMah akutshela kona mayelana nobuhlobo enginabo nabantu bakwa Zungu?

Nyathuko : No

(Why is he so calm about this?)

Me : So why?

Nyathuko : I don't know.

Me : I need answers Baba!

Nyathuko : Princess hamba uthathe into yakho yokubopha ekhanda.

Zothani : Okay daddy.

Nyathuko : Siso go and help your twin look for it.

Zibusiso : Look for what Dad?

Nyathuko : She will tell you. Go

(The twins walk out.)

Nyathuko : Did you see Makhosazana downstairs?

Me : I did but....

Nyathuko : She is sick and your friend left her.

Me : What?

Nyathuko : Into ekufanele uzikhathaze ngayo ke leyo. Uyeke ukuvusana namadimoni ekade sawangcwaba.

Me : What do you mean Baba?

Nyathuko : Find Ndlalifa.

Me : But....

(He walks out. What demons is he talking about?)

Me : SEHRANMAGZINE.COMah!!!

(I punch the wall in frustration. I head to my room and open the drawer.)

Me : What the fuck?

(The bracelet is here.)

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## Chapter 13

(That was it. I lost all my temper. To cool myself down I drove to Phoenix and I found Fizisani sitting on the couch sipping wine. I walked in while speaking to my attorney over the phone.)

Me : I don't need a financial advisor.

Matshidiso : Just think about it and get back to me.

Me : Can we discuss this tomorrow when we meet?

Matshidiso : Fine. I'll send you the details.

(I hung up. Fisisani is already on her feet. She seems shocked to see me)

Fisisani : Zanoluhle

Me : Why are you drinking?

Fisisani : What are you doing here?

Me : What? I live here. This is my house.

Fizisani : But you said you....

Me : Why are you drinking?

(She puts the glass on the coffee table)

Fizisani : I didn't know you were coming back today.

Me : Shit happened.

(I head to the bedroom but she stops me)

Me : And now?

Fizisani : Please... I need to tell you something.

Me : I'm listening.

Fizisani : I think it's better you sit down.

Me : Yazi sthandwa sami I really don't have time. Kufanele ngiyobheka u Ndlalifa.

Fizisani : What happened to Ndlalifa?

Me : For now angazi. He just left. Washiya u Makhosazana yedwa e Machobeni

Fizisani : Hhaibo

Me : Ndlalifa is an asshole. Makhosazana is sick. Kuyimanje ulapha ekhaya and she can't even walk.



Fizisani : Where do you think he is?

(I don't know if I'm being too observant or what but Fizisani keeps glancing at the passage as we speak.)

Me : I don't know. I need to find him. Akanayo nefoni

(I sit down and she sits down next to me. She places her hand on my lap.)

Me : You wanted to talk.

(She swallows hard)

Fizisani : Yes

(She looks at the passage again. Now I'm suspicious. I raise my brow)

Me : What's going on?

(Her eyes well up with tears)

Me : Hey what's wrong?

Fizisani : I'm sorry Zano.

Me : Sorry about what?

Fizisani : I wanted to tell you. Please trust me.

Me : Tell me what?

(Hell no! Fizisani did not bring a man to my house! No!! I stand up immediately.)

Fizisani : Zanokuhle let me explain.

Me : No who is here?

(She holds my arm. I pull away and run to my bedroom. I open the door and look around. There is no one. I hear someone coughing in the guest room. Fizisani is standing at the doorstep with her arms over her head.)

Me : What is that?

Fizisani : My love please listen. I only wanted to give them a break

Me : Give who a break?

(I walk out. She blocks the guest room door. She shakes her head)

Fizisani : Please don't.

Me : Hey!! Suka emnyango!

Fizisani : No no baby!!

Me : Ngizokuhudula lapho! Suka Fizisani!

Fizisani : No

(She shakes her head. I push her away and open the door. I find 4 kids sleeping on the bed. One of them is probably 7 months old. I turn around and look at Fisisani)

Me : And now?

Fisisani : Zanoluhle I'm sorry I can explain.

Me : Ezikabani lezingane?

(She shakes her head)

Me : Talk!!!!

(I yell)

Fizisani : They are mine!! Izingane zami okay?! I'm sorry!! I'm sorry I wasn't honest with you. I...

(I can't hear the rest. Something is blocking my ears. My brain is frozen. The only thing I can see now is her explaining with her hands. She kneels down and puts her hands together. Tears are streaming down her face. I walk towards her and pull her up. I hold her hand as we walk out. I close the door and lead her to my bedroom. We sit on the bed)

Me : Start talking.

(She sniffs a couple of times)

Fizisani : Do you remember the first time we met?

Me : Yeah yeah. Khuluma Fiza.

Fizisani : Do you remember what I told you? Ngathi ngizo supporta ubhuti wami who was part of the school play. I lied Zanokuhle. I was there to support my son

(I can't even look at her right now)

Fizisani : Ukumukhokhela imali yokuba abe ingxenye yaloya mdlalo weskole iyona kuphela into engike ngakwazi ukumenzela yona selokhu azalwa. I've never done anything good for my first born. I was never there for him. Wathi eqeda nje ukuzalwa uGogo wakhe wafika ekhaya wangiphuca yena and when you ruined everything for him I got so angry.

(She sniffs)

Me : How old are you Fizisani?

Fizisani : 21.

Me : And your son?

Fizisani : He is 7 years old. Ngakhulelwa ingane yami yokuqala ngina 13 years old.

Me : You must be fucking kidding me.

Fizisani : I'm serious. I'm not going to lie and say someone raped me or whatsoever. No. I knew what I was doing. Ngaphuma nje endleleni ngimncane. After my mother's funeral I left home ngahamba ngayohlala nomngani wami. I blamed my brother for my mother's death. Ubhuti wami ubehlupha kakhulu. Ephuza utshwala

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ehambe ekhaya engabuyi. U Mah ehambe emcinga ubusuku bonke uma engabuyanga ekhaya. Sometimes emthole elele emgaqweni eshawe abantu.

(I look at her)

Fizisani : For years I heard my mother begging God ukuthi eyekise umfowethu utshwala. She used to say "uma kwenzeka ngifa ngiyobe ngibulawe u Sbusiso because what he is doing is going to kill me one day"



Me : Who is Sbusiso?

Fizisani : My brother. She loved him so much ukudlala thina sonke. u Sbu wayengasebenzi. Ebuye emini emsebenzini ethi "Ayangihlanyela lawamandiya" ewuyeke kanjalo umsebenzi. My mother was the only one working at home. Esebenze enike u Sbu imali. Emuthengele izingubo namateku. Bexabane noGogo uma uGogo emkhuya ukuthi wona u Sbu.

Me : Okay enough about Sbu. Tell about those kids ezilele kuloyambhede.

Fizisani : When my mother died I remembered her words ukuthi wathi uzobulawa u Sbu and I hated Sbu. I had so much anger. Ngabaleka ekhaya after my mother's funeral. Ngahamba ngayohlala kubo ka mngani wami and that's when I met Bandile. He was older than me but he loved me engihlonipha. I was young Zanokuhle and ngabona senginesisu esikhulu.

(I chuckle)

Fizisani : I went back home. u Gogo wangithatha sayobika isisu ka Bandile. Safika basivuma isisu kodwa wangala u Bandile. He finished his matric and went to varsity. Ngaleso skhathi I was only doing Grade 6 ngina 13. I dropped out ngoba isisu sasesibonakala and I got scared ukuthi ngizohlekwa. After I gave birth bafika abazali baka Bandile bezothatha ingane.

Me : And?

Fizisani : Life went on. I went back to school ngaze ngafika ka Grade 09. Kuthe sekubhalwa ama exams okuphela konyaka I found out that I was pregnant again.

(I rub my face. I can't believe this.)

Fizisani : Umfana engangijola naye ngaleso skhathi wayesengimithisile. I told him that I was pregnant and that was the last time I saw him. I never saw him again.

Me : How old are your kids?

Fizisani : Ngcebo is 7 years old. Malusi is 4 years old Sluleko is 5 and Sphetho is 6 months old. That's why bengingafuni uma ungikhumula u bra mesenza ucansi because I was scared of ubisi olusaphuma emabeleni ami namanje ngoba usancela u Sphetho.

( What the fuck? I can't speak. Right now I'm defeated.)

Fizisani : Zano angifundanga emaphutheni ami. Maybe my grandmother was too soft and I took advantage of that. Angikaze ngishawe mina ngoba kuthiwa ngikhulelwe or ngixoshwe ekhaya. My grandmother kept telling me it was going to be fine.

Me : Is it fine?

Fizisani : No I only realized after Sphetho that I fucked up my life.

Me : Where is Sphetho's father?

Fizisani : He was shot at the taxi rank and he died.

(I swallow)

Fizisani : I'm fucked up Zanokuhle. My life is fucked up. Anginayo impilo ngoba eyami impilo ngadlala ngayo.

Me : Yeah you did. Wadlala ngempilo yakho. Walandela izinto ezingenasdingo empilweni. Waletha emhlabeni izingane ezizokuxaka. And yazi yini enginyanyisa kakhulu? Ukuthi ubulala noskhotheni. Am I lying?

Fizisani : No

Me : But awufundanga lutho! Uphinde iphutha elifanayo 4 times. 4 times Fizisani!!

Fizisani : I'm sorry.

Me : No awudingi ukuxolisa kumina. You owe your kids an apology not me.

(She gulps)

Me : Why did you bring them here?

Fizisani : Because the situation is not good at home. u Sbu akaziphethe kahle izingane zami. Kuyimanje zifela izono zami. Sbusiso reminds them everyday ukuthi zizalwa isfebe. Nokuthi zalahlwa oBaba bazo. u Sbu uthanda u Ngcebo kuphela because Ngcebo's father is rich and he takes care of Ngcebo.

Me : Are they all from different fathers?

(She sighs)

Fizisani : U Sluleko no Sphetho bazalwa uBaba oyedwa.

(She stands up)

Fizisani : I'm tired. Indlela no Baba kaNgcebo aphethe ngayo izingane zami iyangibulala. You should see him when he gives them something. Ubalahlela phansi ethi becoshe. Uthi badla imali ka Ngcebo nokudla kuka Ngcebo. u Sboniso ubanga inzondo phakathi kwezingane zami.

(She looks at me)

Fizisani : I only wanted to give them a break from everything Zanokuhle. Bengingazi ukuthi uzobuya namhlanje. Bengithi ngizobayisa ekhaya ksasa ekseni. Ngicela ungixolele.

Me : What if Ngcebo's father comes here looking for his son?

Fizisani : No ngimucelile... Ngimucelile ukuthi ngihlale nengane yami.

Me : Does he know that he is here?

Fizisani : No.

(I sigh)

Me : Why ungifihleleli ukuthi unezingane?

Fizisani : Bengisaba futhi nginamahloni.

(I scratch my head.)

Fizisani : If you want us to break up I'll understand. Akekho umuntu weslisa oyophinda engithathe futhi engamukele nginezingane ezingaka. I'm a burden. I know I'm a burden. Ngiyabonga nje ngaleskhathi esincane esibe naso ndawonye. Ungikhombise uthando engingakaze ngilubone empilweni yami and maybe that's why I lied because I didn't want to lose you but that was selfish.

Me : It was selfish. I told you my plans and goals but you kept quiet. You should have told me that there are 4 more people that I needed to include in my plans but NO!! You fucking kept quiet!

(Her eyes widen)

Me : Ngineminyaka ewu 18 kodwa sengiyi step-father sezingane ezu 4. Not one not two and definitely not 3 but a step-father of 4!! Is that even fair?

(She shakes her head)

Fizisani : It's not fair.

Me : It's crazy because ngisakuthanda khona kunjalo. Ayikho neyodwa into eshintshayo!!

Fizisani : I'm sorry baby. It's my mother. Umama uyidlozi elibi kumina. She wants me to take ubizo lwakhe. She is fucking up my life Zanokuhle. Akafuni kube khona umuntu weslisa ohlalayo empilweni yami.



Me : Stop lying!!!

Fizisani : I swear.

(She tries to touch me)

Me : Don't touch me!!!!

(I stand up and walk out.)

## Chapter 14

(I drove straight to Machobeni. I didn't expect to find Ndlalifa here but here he is. He is sitting on a chair under the tree. He is smoking. When did he start smoking?. I get out of the car. I go and sit behind him quietly. I take a box of cigarettes and pull out one cigarette. I put the cigarette in my mouth and lit it. I take the first pull and cough. This is not for me. I throw it away)

Me : She is in Ballito

Ndlalifa : I know.

Me : How do you know? Uthe u Mah sikufihlele nje so who told you?

(He hands me a piece of paper. "E Ballito" that's what written on a piece of paper. )

Me : This is my father's handwriting.

Ndlalifa : He left the door open for me.

Me : Bloody snitch.

(I whisper)

Me : Where were you and when did you come back?

Ndlalifa : Is it going to kill her?

Me : What?

Ndlalifa : Ilumbo. Is it going to kill her?

(I sigh. I don't know)

Me : No.

Ndlalifa : Uvele wangidina nje and I left.

Me : Who? Makhosazana?

Ndlalifa : Yes. I don't know what happened.

Me : She is sick Ndlalifa. Uyakudinga

Ndlalifa : I know.

Me : Fisisani has 4 kids.

Ndlalifa : What?

(I shake my head while pulling out another cigarette.)

Me : The last born is 6 months old.

(He sighs)

Ndlalifa : So what are you going to do?

Me : I love her Ndlalifa. Kodwa zalo ngimuthanda kanjani umuntu onezingane ezingaka boy?

Ndlalifa : Then leave her. Muyeke ethole umuntu oyomuthanda nezingane zakhe. Umuntu ongeke ezibuze loyombuzo.

Me : Muphi umbuzo?

Ndlalifa : Umbuzo othi "ngimuthanda kanjani umuntu onezingane ezingaka?"

Me : Kodwa nginelungelo lokuzibuza kanjalo. What am I going to say to my parents? Uyamazi wena kahle u Sthabile?

Ndlalifa : Zanokuhle let her go. Awufuni ukukhulisa izingane ongazifuni boy. You are still young so find somebody with less burdens. Uma uzwa angathi u Fiza nezingane zakhe bawumthwalo bayeke.

Me : It's not that simple. I'm not young Ndlalifa physically yes but ngokomoya angathi kade ngafika kulomhlaba boy... What I mean is I'm not in control of my life. Mina eyami impilo ingiphoqa ukuthi ngenze izinto ngendlela. Izinto ezenziwa ontanga bami izinto mina engingakwazi ukuzenza. Soon I'll have to settle down. Ngibe nesigodlo ngisize abantu.

(He looks at me)

Me : That's something I cannot run away from. When that day comes ngifuna u Fizisani ebe seduze kwami.

Ndlalifa : Uma ukhetha u Fizisani ukhetha nezingane zakhe.

Me : This is not about what I want. Kunezinto esingaziqondi but eziyiqiniso.

Ndlalifa : Things like what?

Me : Ukuthi ubudlwelano esinabo nalabantu esithi siyabathanda obunye babo akubona nje ubudlwelano esisuke sizikhethela bona kodwa kukhona ubudlwelano la kuhlala khona idlozi phansi kube ilona elinihlanganisayo and I believe ukuthi mina no Fizisani sihlanganiswe idlozi lakithi nelakubo kwaMagwaza.

Ndlalifa : Do you really believe ezintweni ezinjalo?

Me : I strongly believe in such. Kunobudlwelano Ndlalifa ongasoze wabubalekela ngoba bukhethwe yidlozi.

(He swallows)

Me : I just hope that my parents will understand especially my mother.

Ndlalifa : You mean mina no Makhosazana kungenzeka nje ukube asihlanganiswanga idlozi.

Me : That's not what I'm saying. I'm talking about myself here.

Ndlalifa : Nami kuzomele bengihlanganise naye uma kukuthi abakakwenzi lokho.... (sighs) I owe her so much. I love her kade futhi ngamuthanda but nganginezinye izinhloso. The plan was to get rid of her mother kungene u Mah. Mina ke mase ngivala sonke isikhala sikamawakhe but my plans seems to be....worthless. Yonke imizamo yami nje isiphenduke ize. The killing sleepless night those nightmares engilwe nawo kangaka. For what?



(I don't know what he is talking about but I feel him.)

Me : Have some faith zalo.

Ndlalifa : How can I have faith when there is no hope huh?

(He shakes his head)

Ndlalifa : Ngangithi sengiqedile ngokubulala

Me : What?

Ndlalifa : But not when there are people who are still standing in her way. Everyone I love needs to be in a safe corner and after that.....

(I throw the cigarette away)

Me : Ndlalifa what are you up to?

Ndlalifa : Huh?

(I shake my head)

Me : Uyazizwa ukuthi uthini?

Ndlalifa : No

(He stands up)

Ndlalifa : Wena ngikubuze ngelumbo.

Me : I don't know. Ngidinga ukuqeda ngegobongo emuva kwalokho I'll know what I need to do. Wena ukhuluma ngani?

Ndlalifa : How do you do it?

Me : What?

Ndlalifa : Uthi wena ungajabulile kodwa ukwazi ukujabulisa abanye abantu?

(I smile)

Me : Yazi wathini u Baba wami u Nyathuko ngimubuza loyombuzo? Wathi " If you can't brighten up your day then the least you could do is brighten up someone else's day"

Ndlalifa : Your father is a good man.

Me : Yeah and.....

(I pause when I see someone standing at the gate. There is ihiya on their shoulder. I look at Ndlalifa but he is not looking at me)

Me : Ndlalifa?

Ndlalifa : What?

Me : Who is that?

Ndlalifa : Where?

Me : At the gate.

Ndlalifa : Where?

Me : Awumuboni?

(He looks confused)

Ndlalifa : There is no one there.

Me : But he is there. Look at him. He is calling me.

Ndlalifa : Zanoluhle akukho muntu lapha.

Me : No he is coming.

Ndlalifa : Zanokuhle!

(I close my eyes trying to process everything and I open them. There is no one at the gate. It was all in my head. I swallow)

Ndlalifa : Zanokuhle?

(He shakes my shoulder)

Me : No I'm fine. I thought someone was coming.

(He shakes his head)

Me : I need to go.

Ndlalifa : Wait

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Zanokuhle? Zano?

Me : Go home. Makhosazana is sick.

(I walk away. Things are getting out of hand.)

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(I can't stand the ocean. It scares the shit out of me but tonight here I am sitting on the sand watching the waves crashing into each other. I'm watching fearlessly. I finally stand up and get back into my car. I pull out my phone. There are 26 missed calls from Fizisani. I'll read her messages later. I dial her number)

Fizisani : Zanoluhle?

(She was waiting for this call judging by the tone of her voice.)

Me : Zanoluhle?

Fizisani : My love

Me : Sthandwa sami.

Fizisani : I've been trying to call....



Me : I love you Fizisani Magwaza.

Fizisani : Huh?.. I mean... do...

Me : I don't know what I'm doing but I'm willing to try. Ayikho Fizisani into engashintsha indlela engizizwa ngayo ngawe. I won't allow 4 strangers to come between our relationship and change how I feel about you. Fuck! Those 4 strangers are mine now and one day bazongibiza Baba...

Fizisani : Zano what are you saying? Uyamukela ukuthi nginezingane?

Me : Umbuzo wami ukuthi zona zizongamukela yini?

Fizisani : Yes! yes my love. Bazokwamukela. I know they will.

(I sigh)

Fizisani : You know you don't have to do this. Awuphoqwe ilutho ukuthi....

Me : I want to do this. Sengiyayeka manje izindaba zamadlozi and all that shit. I want to focus on us. Ngifuna ukuzifundisa ukuthi kuchazani ukuba uBaba kubafana abawu 4. Fizisani lento ayikho lula ngakho ngizocela ungiphe isikhathi.

Fizisani : No problem... no problem sthandwa sami. Take all the time you need. Ngifuna nje wazi ukuthi Ngiyakuthanda ngenhliziyo yami yonke.

(I've never thought "I love you" sounds this good. I want this moment to last forever.)

Me : Nami ngiyakuthanda.

(I hang up and sigh. I drove home.)

(It is just after 23h00. My father gets out of his car. He is wearing black overalls. He takes off the beanie from his head and runs inside the garage. There is something about him when he is wearing those overalls and that beanie. It screams "Darkness". 5 minutes later he walks out fixing his jeans. No more black overall. He found me here but he had no idea that I was inside the car. I get out. I want him to know that I saw him. He lifts up his head as I close the door.)

Me : Baba

(No reaction at all.)

Nyathuko : Nkosana kaBaba

(He says it like I didn't just catch him red- handed wearing those evil clothes.)

Me : Ubuyaphi Bhambatha?

Nyathuko : Work.

(He takes out the keys and opens the door. We walk inside the house.)

Me : At this time?

Nyathuko : Ndlalifa is here.

Me : I know. I told him to come here

Nyathuko : Good.

Me : Baba uphumaphi?

(He turns around.)

Nyathuko : Stop it mfan'wami.

(I sigh)

Me : Fine.

Nyathuko : u Ndlalifa uzokutshela ukuthi ngimushayile.

Me : You did what?

Nyathuko : I did. Someone had to remind him what it means to be a man who has a girlfriend. Ngeshwa ke yena uthande ukuthi ngimukhumbuze lokho ngezimpama ezimubalwa nje.

(I shake my head)

Me : Baba you had no right to hit Ndlalifa.

Nyathuko : Ndlalifa is one of my sons.

(I swallow)

Nyathuko : Food?

(I followed him into the kitchen. He washes his hands and opens the fridge. He takes out a bottle of water and takes it all down his throat.)

Me : I'm not hungry.

Nyathuko : Where are you coming from?

Me : Phoenix. Can we talk?

Nyathuko : Yeah.

Me : Bathini kini ufika ulethe umuntu onezingane zangaphandle uthi ufuna ukumushada?

(He frowns)

Nyathuko : What?

Me : Bathini Baba?

Nyathuko : I didn't tell them. Sthabile was mine from the very beginning. Kwakungeyena owabantu bakithi.

Me : Baba you know what I mean.

Nyathuko : I'm serious. I didn't need anyone's approval. Ngase ngimdala ngizimele. UBaba waluseka uthando lwethu ngaphandle kokucelwa yimi.

Me : Okay how was it? Ukuthandana nomuntu onamadodana amabili ekungewona awakho?

Nyathuko : Kwaba yinjabulo engingakaze ngibe nayo empilweni yami. u Nkulunkulu ngathola esengilungisele umndeni engangithi ngisazowuthandazela.

(I laugh)

Me : Baba yazi ngi serious.



Nyathuko : Nami futhi ngokunjalo. Wena no Enzelwe nashintsha impilo yami.

Me : So ukufica uMah enezingane ezimbili akukaza kwakunika inkinga?

Nyathuko : Cha. Your mother is my definition of love. Mine. Not someone else's definition of love but mine. And that's all that matters. Ngamuthanda nakho konke ayikho ngoba nanamhlanje ngisamthanda. Ukuthi omunye umuntu uthini noma ucabangani akuhlangani nami nenhliziyo yami lokho. Ngazikhethela mina and I'm happy.

Me : I know.

Nyathuko : Why ungibuza?

Me : No I was just asking.

(His phone rings. He takes it out)

Nyathuko : Your mother. I need to go.... Baby I'm here I'm here.

(He is speaking to my mom while running up the steps. I laugh and shake my head. I want that with Fizisani. I'm done with ancestors gobongo and all that. I'm going to focus back on my life and Fizisani and the kids....oh and Ghetto Legacy. I need to meet up with my attorney tomorrow.)

(I sit on the couch and sigh. I close my eyes. The aim was to rest my eyes but I'm deeply falling asleep.)

(He walks in. I can see his hands but I can't see his face. He sits on the coffee table in front of me. He puts ishoba on his lap. I'm only realizing now that he has ishoba.)

Him : When you are told to do something over and over again wena ukhethe ukungayenzi leyonto izidalwa ziyafika zona mathupha zikukhombise ukuthi yini kahle kahle le eziyifuna kuwe.

Me : I don't want to do it.

Him : You have to do it. This is your calling. Ubizo lwakho.

Me : No

Him : Let's go.

Me : No what do you want from me?

Him : Come let's go.

(I stand up. He holds my hand and we walk out.)

(After we walked out I don't remember what happened but I just found myself standing in front of a very big river. The river seems deep very deep. I get in willingly. I walk into the middle of the river and I feel something wrapping itself around my feet to my legs and my body sinks down into the river.)

## Chapter 15

When I finally get the strength to try and open up my eyes the first thing I notice is the way I'm sitting. I'm sitting the way I was sitting in my mother's stomach before I was born. I can feel my knees against my chest. I'm wrapping my arms around my knees. It feels so warm and peaceful here but I suddenly feel like I'm falling from the world's greatest height. Someone is letting go of me. I'm starting to hear the noise and feeling chills on my skin. I try to open my eyes but I can't. I'm inside the water. I suddenly feel myself falling hard on the ground and I scream. I open my eyes and look around and there is a river in front of me. I'm naked and my body is wet. I don't know how I got here or how long I've been here. I find clothes neatly placed outside the river. I'm out of my mind. I don't even remember my name. I wear the clothes and begin walking. I don't even know where I am. I walk around barefooted. I'm literally walking with my eyes closed.)

(After I walked for probably 3 hours I heard a car parking next to me and after that I woke up in a rondavel. I'm sleeping on a grass mat. I open my eyes to find Khambule sitting next to me. I'm surrounded by the smoke of incense.)

Khambule : Dinangwe

(I get up)

Khambule : Bakulandile mfana wami.

(He takes a small a container)

Khambule : Ncinda la ujikijele ngemumva

(I fist my hands and he places umuthi. I lick and throw my hand. I do the same with the other hand)

Khambule : Bhema la.

(I take umbhemiso and sniff it. I sneeze)

Khambule : This will help you gain back your memory. Your father is on his way.

Me : How did I get here?

Khambule : Bangikhombisile ukuthi ukuphi. I've been looking for you for the past 2 days.

Me : What do you mean?

Khambule : Your father is here.

(After a few minutes. A man walks in. He puts his shoes on the floor and sits down. He pulls me into a tight hug.)

Khambule : Nondaba omkhulu

(I sneeze. This is Nyathuko Zondi. This my father)

Nyathuko : Nkosana ka Baba

(He pulls away and cups my face. He stares in my eyes and moves his gaze to Khambule.)

Nyathuko : Mzilankatha

(Khambule sighs)

Khambule : It could have been worse.

Nyathuko : Where did you find him?

Khambule : On the streets.

Nyathuko : Zanokuhle how are you feeling mfana wami?

(I shake my head. I don't know. I don't know how I feel. Lost maybe?)

Nyathuko : Siyithini lento Mzilankatha?

Khambule : Sekufanele eyothwasa.

(Nyathuko sighs and rubs his face)

Khambule : Bebengamugcina okudlula lokhu. Two days are nothing. Some people stay underwater for weeks and even months. Idlozi lenza kanjena ke uma ungalandeli izifiso abazifisa ngawe.



Nyathuko : So this is what we've been waiting for?

Khambule : This is what they want. Igobongo babonile nje ukuthi lizobabambezela and that's why kwenzeke konke lokhu okwenzekile.

Nyathuko : So what do we do now?

(Silence. My father looks at me and back at Khambule)

Nyathuko : Mzilankatha....

Khambule : Ngokosiko nangokwentwaso izinto zenzeke ngendlela ebukufanele zenzeke ngayo. Ubezophuma umfana emanzini ehambe eze efike layikhaya. Ubezofika eme lapha esangweni eqale ihubo emuva kwalokho ehlangatshezwe amathwasa amanye ala kwa Khambule. Ubezongena esegida kuze kukhuphuke uthuli olumnyama layikhaya. Egide eze equleke.

Nyathuko : If that is what was supposed to happen then why did you go and look for him? Why did you not wait for him to get here?

Khambule : Because I can't. I can't be his gobela. Isithunywa sakhe sikhulu ukudlula mina so I can't help him.

Nyathuko : Baba you have to help him. Anginayo omunye umuntu ongangisiza ngendodana yami. Amathongo amuthumele kuwe.

Khambule : Sengikhulumile namathongo akhe ngawatshela ukuthi ngeke ngikwazi.

Nyathuko : Mzilankatha ngiyakucela.

Khambule : I don't want to ruin things for this boy. Please find somebody else.

Nyathuko : But I don't know anyone else who can do this.

Khambule : I'm sorry Nondaba. Owami umsebenzi sengiwuphethile. They will show him the way as they always do.

(Khambule stands up and walks out. My father holds my hand and press his lips at the back of my hand)

Nyathuko : Let's go home my boy.

(I nod.)

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IN BALLITO

(By the time I got here I was starting to remember a lot of things. Ndlalifa Makhosazana Fisisani and my name. We walk in and my mother screams and hugs me.)

Sthabile : Ingane yami!!

Nyathuko : He is home Nana

Sthabile : Thukeh ingane yami!

(Tears stream down her face)

Sthabile : My baby! I thought you were dead.

Me : I'm okay Mama

(She starts praying with my father holding her in his arms. I sit down and sigh. As I sit down I remember that before anything before I left I was sitting on this couch. Zibusiso Zothani and Ndlelenhle are standing in front of me. They are not saying anything but they are just staring at me. They look confused. I clear my throat.)

Me : Ngibuyile

Zibusiso : Uphuma emanzini?

(I swallow)

Me : Where is Ndlalifa?

Ndlelenhle : They went back to their house.

Zothani : Your girlfriend is in your room. She is crying.

Me : What? Which girlfriend?

(I stand up)

Sthabile : Fizeani is here

(I ran upstairs immediately. I find Fizea lying on my bed sobbing.)

Me : Fizeani

(She lifts up her head and in a blink of an eye she's in my arms.)

Fizeani : Cisho ngafa Zanoluhle

Me : I'm sorry

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sthandwa sami.

(I hold her tightly. I don't want to let her go. It feels like I haven't seen her in years. I lift up her chin and kiss her. I'm getting lost in the feeling. I break the kiss and we sit down.)

Me : I don't know what happened.

(She sighs)

Fizisani : I'm glad you are safe. I was worried Zano. For the past two days I couldn't get hold of you and your father eventually answered my calls and he told me that you were missing. I lost my mind baby. I wanted to die Zanokuhle.

(Tears rain down her face. I wrap my arms around her)

Me : I'm sorry baby.

(She sniffs and wipe her tears)

Me : Where did you leave our kids?

(She smiles)

Fizisani : I left them with my grandmother.

Me : I want you guys to move in with me. Sihlale sonke e Phoenix.



(Her eyes widen)

Fizisani : What?

Me : Impilo yami angiyazi ukuthi ibhekephi kodwa wena nezingane zethu ngifuna ube nami.

Fizisani : But....

Me : I'll tell my parents about us. I'll tell them everything. Ukuthi bathini ngeke kube nandaba.

(The door opens)

Sthabile : I'm sorry to interrupt. Mfana wami ngicela sikhulume.

Me : Okay Mah.

(The door closes and she walks away)

Fizisani : Maybe I should go.

Me : No no. Ngizohamba nawe. Let me talk to her mase siyahamba

Fizisani : Do you think that's a good idea? Uqeda ukufika nje Zano.

Me : Sizolala lana ke.

(She shakes her head)

Fizisani : I don't think that will work.

Me : Ngoba? Fiza angiguli. Ngiphila saka. Yini usuyangisaba?

Fizisani : No of course not. Mhlampe kufanele ngikunike isikhathi nomndeni wakho.

Me : No

(I head out and turn around)

Me : Uke wakhuluma no Mah selokhu ufike la?

Fizisani : I did and I... I don't think she likes me.

(I'm not surprised at all)

Me : I'll talk to her.

(I walk out. I find my parents sitting in the living room)

Me : Mah I'm not sick.

Sthabile : Uyahamba uya kothwasa.

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Chapter 16

(I left my parents fighting back home. My plan is to stay here all day and just think. Fisisani went back home last night but I need her. What's more frustrating is her not picking up my calls. I've been trying to call her from the moment I woke up but she is not answering. I feel like there's a snake wrapped around my neck. I keep cracking up my neck. This house smells like goat kraal. I finished showering for the 10th time. It's late. It's three minutes after 20h00. My phone rings. It's my mother)

Me : Mah?

Sthabile : Ubuya nini?

Me : I'm not coming back. I'll sleep here nanamhlanje

Sthabile : Ungangidakelwa Zanokuhle!

(I sigh)

Me : I'm tired Mah. I'm tired of you and Baba fighting because of me.

Sthabile : We did not fight.

Me : Mah uBaba uqinisile. We need to wait

Sthabile : What for? Silinde lamadimoni akho ephinde futhi eyokugoya lapha emfuleni? Uze ufe?

Me : Izwa ke ukuthi uthini manje.

Sthabile : What do you all want from me kanti? Bengingayifuni lendaba yokuthwasa kwathiwa ngi selfish and now sengiyakweseka manje ukuthi uhambe uyothwasa kuthiwa ngi wrong! Nifunani kumina nino Baba wakho?

Me : I want you to understand that this is not a game Mah. Lento ayifani nje nalabo dokotela benu besilungu where you can move from one doctor to another. Lento idin...

Sthabile : There is no difference! Khambule said he can't help you! Ngahamba ngafuna omunye umuntu. u Baba u Magalela is the best sangoma I know. He will help you!

Me : Ayisebenzi kanjalo lento. Mah imina othwele lolubizo. Let me decide! Lento yakho no Baba of trying to control ubizo lwami is starting to piss me off.

Sthabile : I don't want to lose you Zanokuhle. I've lost 3 kids already. Namanje ngisathwele amanxeba abhibhayo so please do this. Do it for me.

(I sigh)

Sthabile : Don't worry about your father. I know he is against this but I'll talk to him. Ngizomenza eqonde ukubaluleka kwalento.

Me : Fine.

(I hung up but my phone rang again. It's Fisisani. I jump)

Me : Fiza

Baba? Zanoluhle? Is that you?

(A little voice asked.)

Me : Who is this?

Imina u Ngcebo

Me : Ngcebo hey. Where is your mother?

Ngcebo : Please come. Baba wants to kill Mah.

Me : What?



Ngcebo : Please he is.....

(Call cut. I'm losing it. I grab my car keys and run into my car. I almost knocked off the gate driving out. Shakaskraal feels like it is in another country. That's how desperate I want to get there. Cops will forgive me. I unfasten my seat belt and hit the accelerator. I drive better without a seat belt.)

(I arrived in Shakaskraal. Things are not as bad as Ngcebo sounded but everyone is angry. Sluleko runs to me and hides behind my legs. I don't know how he saw it was me. There is noise all over the house. )

Lesifebe lesi asifundi! Utshelwa into eyodwa njalo wena ukuthi hlukena namadoda ngoba unesinya esi weak. Uzala angathi uyahlanya!!

(As I walk in all eyes move to the door where I'm standing.)

Fizisani : Zanokuhle

Who is this?

(This must be the rich Ngcebo's father. His name is "Tyron". He is wearing eye lenses. Green ones)

Fizisani : Tyron please. Don't hurt him.

(I lift up Sluleko)

Tyron : I know this guy. Ngiyawazi lo lopholo

Me : I'm not here to fight.

(The other guy stands up. And that must be the one and only drunkard u Sbusiso.)

Fizisani : Sbu please sit down.

Sbu : No! Who is this? Ilengane olala nayo ke le?

(I sit down and put Sluleko on my lap. I don't see Gogo anywhere. )

Tyron : Yilomfana okuhlanyisayo Fiza? You left my son because of this boy?

(Fiza sniffs)

Sbu : Uzalela u Gogo phela u Fiza. She opens her legs falls pregnant and dumps her kids with my grandmother. UGogo uyafa i high-high ngenxa yalesfebe nalamavezandlebe aso anezisu ezinkulu!

(I clench my teeth. I don't like how her brother is talking to her. She is sitting a bit far away from me. I want to hold her in my arms.)

Tyron : Is this your new boyfriend?

Fizisani : Yes. Tyron I'm sorry. Ngiyaxolisa ukushiya u Ngcebo yedwa

Tyron : You are not sorry!! That's it. You will never see him again.

Fizisani : No! You can't do that

(Tears roll down her face)

Me : Tyron can I talk to you in private?

Sbu : Shut up wena shlama!!

(I look at Sbu and shake my head. He is not worth my energy. I stand up and Tyron follows me out. He takes out his cigarette and smokes.)

Me : I'm sorry. Ngiyaxolisa ukuthi u Fiza eshiye ingane yakho.

Tyron : I don't care who Fizisani sleeps with. u Fizisani isfebe esihamba silala. Isifebe esithwele i drop egoqwe ngengculazi ngaphezulu so I don't give a shit about what she does. Inkinga yami ukuthi ehambe efeba nengane yami.

Me : She is still the mother of your baby. She is my girlfriend and you will mention her name with respect.

(He chuckles and shakes his head.)

Tyron : You don't know Fizisani. She is a bitch.

Me : My bitch.

Tyron : Why don't you take her and her kids? Ngoba leziyazingane angizifuni eduze kwengane yami.

Me : Those kids are Ngcebo's brothers and lokho ngeke kushintshe! Who do you think you are uzofika la emzini womuntu omdala ushaye indodakazi yakhona?

Tyron : Who? Me? I didn't hit Fisisani. Ey Baba angihambe ngishaya yonke into mina. I don't hit women but uyabona wena....

Me : Ungangilokothi.

(He shakes his head and continue to smoke)

Me : Look Tyron. I'm not here to fight.

Tyron : Then why are you here?

Me : Your son called me.

(He throws away his cigarette)

Tyron : My son did what?

Me : Ngisho ungazibona ungcono kanjani ukuno Fisisani but the fact remains. She is your baby mama. Ukunike lo Ngcebo ozishaya isifuba ngaye namhlanje. Tyron you need to remember one thing that one day when you are gone Ngcebo will only have his brothers and who knows mhlampe nalo Fisisani omubiza isfebe uyena oyobe esesele nendodana yakho.

(He looks away)

Me : Those kids are Ngcebo's brothers and you are going to stop treating them like shit! Azilethanga lezingane emhlabeni kodwa zalethwa u Fiza ngakho azinacala. Lenzondo oyakha phakathi kwezingane ngelinye ilanga uyofa wena no Fiza zisale lezingane zingabhekani. Zizondane ngenxa yakho. Uwena odala umsindo layikhaya. You are giving Fiza's brother the power to abuse those kids. You are failing to stand up for them and that's why he is treating them like shit!

Tyron : You know nothing about this family. You know nothing about me!!

Me : I don't want to know anything. I want you to do better!

Tyron : You are just a kid!

Me : A kid who can teach you what it means to be a father.

(He shakes his head)

Tyron : I've been taking care of Ngcebo ever since he was born. Angikaze ngimuhlophe u Fisisani. Ngiyikhulise ngedwa leyangane so I won't allow you to stand here and disrespect me!

Me : I'm not trying to disrespect you. I'm asking you to work with me. I need you .



(He looks at me)

Me : Mina ngeke ngivumele i past ka Fizisani ukuthi ivimbe into enginayo naye njengamanje. I want to see her happy. I want to be a father to those kids. Ngifuna mina nawe sibe oBaba ezinganeni zakhe.

Tyron : How old are you?

Me : It doesn't matter. What matters is I'm going to be in Fizisani and those kids live for as long as I live. And if I say kids ngisho no Ngcebo.

Tyron : You have nothing .

(I have everything)

Me : Vuma sibambisane. I'm going away for a very long time. I want to know that I'm leaving Fizisani and my kids in good hands. I want to know that I can count on you.

Tyron : Where are you going?

(I sigh)

Me : Ngiyothwasa

(His eyes widen)

Me : I have a house in Westville. I want Fizisani to stay there. Yena nezingane. This place is not good for her. Look at Sbu. This is not life.

Tyron : Sbu.....

Me : Anginendaba no Sbu. You need to man up. We need each other.

(I leave him standing and walk back in. I go to Fizisani and kiss her cheek.)

Me : I'll see you tomorrow. Ngcebo

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Malusi Sluleko. Let's go

Fizisani : What?

Me : They are coming with me.

Sbu : Who do you think you are?

Me : Ngiyilomuntu ongafanele uzikhathaze ngaye empilweni yakho Sbusiso. Your beer is almost finished.

(I take out my wallet and throw R200 on the coffee table.)

Me : Go and buy yourself some more.

(He swallows)

Me : Let's go boys

Fizisani : Zanokuhle you can't...

(She pauses. Tyrone is standing on the doorstep)

Me : I'm taking the kids. You and Tyron need to sort out your shit. I have a lot of shit that I'm dealing with. He can't be one of them.

Fizisani : Zano...

Me : Fiza If I'm going to spend the rest of my life with you Tyron is going to be part of it whether I like it or not.. (sigh) Ngakho ke kuzomele eqine isende ngoba angathi liyantengantenga.

(I lift up Sluleko and walk past Tyron. Malusi and Ngcebo followed me.)

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Chapter 17

(From Shakaskraal I drove to my parents' house. I walk in with my squad. Sthabile and Nyathuko are sitting on the couch feeding each other ice-cream. They put the ice-cream away and my father stands up.)

Nyathuko : And now?

Me : Sanibona

(They don't respond. They are looking at these kids.)

Sthabile : Zanoluhle what is all this?

Me : By this you mean the kids?

Sthabile : Yes ezikabani lezingane?

Me : Oh this is Ngcebo Malusi and Sluleko.

Sthabile : I don't care who they are. Ezikabani?

Me : Can we all sit down and calm down? Please.

(My father shakes his head and sits down)

Me : Boys there are other kids upstairs. Nimemeze u Ndlelenhle and he is going to come out.

Ngcebo : Baba?

(Sthabile's eyes widen. Her nose starts growing some sweat. Hell is about to break)

Me : Up there. There are other kids. Hambani niye kubona

Ngcebo : Okay. Come Malusi

(He holds their hands and they go upstairs)

Sthabile : Kwangathi kuzonuka umsunu layindlini.

Me : I can explain.

Sthabile : Explain now!!

(She bangs the coffee table)



Sthabile : Uzele wena? Uzale nini? Where did you hide those kids?

Nyathuko : Baby calm down.

Me : Nyathuko I can't!! I won't calm down. I....

Nyathuko : Hey. Ngithe cha kanti yini ongayizwa lapho Sthah?

(My mother sighs)

Nyathuko : Wena hlala phansi.

(I think one person that I was hoping that he would be in my corner is also angry. I sit down and swallow.  
My mother looks at my father.)

Me : Ngiyamuthanda u Fizisani.

Sthabile : Hhaibo!!

Nyathuko : We know that.

Sthabile : We? Nami yini Thukeh?

Nyathuko : Sthabile.

(She raises her hand in surrender)

Me : Those are Fizisani's kids.

Sthabile : What? Leyangane inezingane ezingaka?

Me : Yes

(My father leans back and closes his eyes)

Sthabile : I knew it. I knew it!!! Mina uskhotheni ngimubona engena ngomnyango. Uyakhumbula ngikutshela Nyathuko? I warned you about that girl!

Me : Mah...

Sthabile : No!!! I don't want to hear it! Uzokufuhlela ngezingane zamanye amadoda? Yini? You told her that you are a millionaire?

Me : Mah!!

Sthabile : Zanoluhle usuyahlanya yini wena? Uzithwesa kanjani umthwalo ongaka? Baphi ontanga yakho? Usungasukela ugogo osehiphe amakhanda amathathu la ngaphansi ngoba kwenzenjani?

Me : Mah I love her. Ngiamuthanda u Fiza....

Sthabile : Shut up!!! Wazini wena ngothando? Zanoluhle why do you love attention? Ngoba ngithi sikunike lonke nje uthando mntanami pho yini wenza lezinto zakho? Yazi wenzisa okwengane.....

Me : Mah angiyona ingane! I have a right to.....

Sthabile : Don't tell me about your rights!!! Don't you dare tell me about that shit!! Right to do what? To sleep with older women? Amantombazane azele Zanoluhle!!!

(She hits me with the cushion. I take the cushion and place it next to me. )

Sthabile : Uyilahlephi ingqondo yakho? Just because Nqabayethu left you with a few hundred rands sekufanele sizwe ngawe? Uma sikutshela ukuthi u wrong you threaten to leave. Usuyindoda wena?

(I look at my father. His eyes are still closed)

Me : Cha Mah. Ngicela nje ungivumele ngenze into engijabulisayo. Mam'Zondi I love Fizisani. I love her the same way my father love.....

Sthabile : Yey!!! Keep my husband out of this! Ngiyakubona ukuthi usuyaphi nalenkulumo yakho. Usufuna ukungifundekela ngokuthi nami u Nyathuko wangithola nginezingane angithi?

Me : Cha. I want you to understand how far it took me to get here. Mah all my relationships I was struggling. Akekho noyedwa umuntu wesifazane obekwazi ukumelana nami. I lost women that I loved because of the things that I had no control over. Namhlanje sengithole umuntu engikwazi ukuthi elale nami ubusuku bonke. Umuntu engithi ngvuka ebe eseduze kwami. Umuntu engingathi silele ebe evale amakhala. Umuntu ongangitsheli phakathi kwamabili ukuthi useyagoduka because... (sigh) umuntu engingathi mengiqeda ukumuthinta ngesandla esami ehambe eyogeza.

(My father sits up)

Me : u Fizisani uyangithanda. Angikwazi Mah ukuthi ngivumele izinto ezenziwe u Fizisani kudala ukuthi zime phambi kwenjabulo yami. Uma kuyiphutha lokhu engikwenzayo ngicela ninginike ithuba lokuthi ngifunde emaphutheni ami.

Sthabile : Zanokuhle you can't do this. Usungibukanise nabantu kwanela.

Me : Ngikubukanise nabantu?

Sthabile : Uma kungelona lolubizo lwakho uwena ugijimisana nalamakhehla awo Mzet ayizigebengu. Nakhu namhlanje usungilethele intombazane ezele izingane ezintathu uthi uyayithanda. Why? Why are you doing this to me?

Me : I'm not.....

Nyathuko : Zanokuhle where is their father?

Me : Ukhona oyedwa. Omunye wabaleka kanti lona omunye washona kodwa.....

(My mother puts her hands over her head)

Sthabile : Angikuzwa Zanokuhle. Angikuzwa. Uthi oBaba balezingane bahlukene?

Me : Yes

Sthabile : I want those kids out of my house.

Nyathuko : Sthabile.....

Sthabile : Cha Nyathuko!!! Sekwanele! I've heard more than enough! Amadlebe ami angathi anezibonkolo imina ngilalele lamasimba ashiwo ilengane!

Nyathuko : Then let me listen to him. If you've heard enough hamba. Go to our room uhlale ukhona. Zanokuhle is my son too. I have a right....

Sthabile : Yey ngaze ngafa izingane zika Thabo Mbeki nama right!! Nyathuko ake ube uBaba for once. Ushaye lengane uyeke ukuyiphathisa okweqanda! Sikuleninga nje namhlanje because of you! Yonke into eyenziwe u Zanokuhle yinhle la kuwena. Ngisho u Zanokuhle engafika nengculazi uyothi kulungile kuhle!!! This is nonsense! Nyathuko this boy is only 18 years old. Yinindaba esefuna ukulahla impilo yakhe kangaka?

Nyathuko : Are you done?

Sthabile : Zanokuhle is.....

Nyathuko : Yes or no?

(She sighs)

Sthabile : Yes



Nyathuko : Zanoluhle do you understand what you are getting yourself into?

Me : I do.

Nyathuko : Mfan'wami ungaboni izinto ezenziwa mina. Ugenzi izinto ngoba ubona ukuthi nami ngazenza. I didn't marry your mother because she was beautiful

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uyeke ukuyiphathisa okweqanda! Sikuleninga nje namhlanje because of you! Yonke into eyenziwe u Zanoluhle yinhle la kuwena. Ngisho u Zanoluhle engafika nengculazi uyothi kulungile kuhle!!! This is nonsense! Nyathuko this boy is only 18 years old. Yinindaba esefuna ukulahla impilo yakhe kangaka?

Nyathuko : Are you done?

Sthabile : Zanoluhle is.....

Nyathuko : Yes or no?

(She sighs)

Sthabile : Yes

Nyathuko : Zanoluhle do you understand what you are getting yourself into?

Me : I do.

Nyathuko : Mfan'wami ungaboni izinto ezenziwa mina. Ungenzi izinto ngoba ubona ukuthi nami ngazenza. I didn't marry your mother because she was beautiful I didn't marry your mother because I found her single and hot. I didn't marry your mother ngoba ngimuthanda nje kuphela and I didn't marry her because I can keep my penis buried inside her all night. No. I married her because I saw a woman imbokodo eyayingavusa umuzi wami. I married her because wangenza ngazizwa ngiyindoda. I married her because together we make hell freeze. I married her because ukwazi ukuthatha usathane engingena naye layindlini emukhiphele emnyango. I married her because together we shame the devil. Ethu usathane esezibekile izinkinga wazimbonisa phambi kwethu sigibele phezu kwazo siphume sizishiye kanjalo. I married her because I knew she would always choose me and I would always choose her.

(I sigh)

Nyathuko : Ngifuna uyibheke Nkosana yami into oyenzayo ngoba angifuni eminyakeni emibili ezayo ukhalele isikhathi sakho osichithe nomuntu obengenandaba nawe kodwa enendaba nento oyiletha etafuleni. I'm not saying Fisisani is after your money but I need you to be careful.

Me : This is not about money.

Sthabile : It is!! Usefake wonke amazipho akhe kuwena because uyakubona ukuthi uyingane kodwa ingane engamenzela konke yena nezingane zakhe. Ubona kahle ukuthi uwine i lotto la kuwe. Uze umtshele ukuthi unyile! Not under my watch!

Me : Baba ngicela ninginike ithuba.

Sthabile : No!!! Ithuba lokunuka? Yazini? Ake uhambe uyothwasa mhlampe nengqondo yakho izothi ukuhlakazeka kancane.

Me : This has nothing to do with ukuthwasa!!! Why ningiphathisa okwengane? I am going to be with Fisisani nikuthanda lokho noma ningakuthandi. I will not listen to both of you telling me what to do!! I

love Fisisani and I'm going to spend the rest of my life with her nezingane zakhe. Okunye ke futhi azikho ntathu kodwa zine....

Nyathuko : What?

Me : Yes Baba and ngizomuthanda nazo. Meningakufuni lokho ningibulale.

(I stand up)

Me : Ngcebo!! Malusi!! Let's go!

Sthabile : Zanokuhle!!

Me : No!! Akuyona impilo yakho le eyami.

(Ngcebo ran down the steps with the rest of the kids including my siblings.)

Me : Let's go.

Zibusiso : Bafike nawe? Are they...

Me : Awungiyeke phansi wena.

(I lift up Sluleko. I don't have time for nonsense.)

(Tomorrow I'm going to the initiation school. I'm ready. I need to get this thing out of my way and move on with my life. I think Nyathuko managed to convince Sthabile because she was really nice earlier. She even spoke to Fizisani. Now I'm listening to Fizisani whining about Tyron. The kids are outside playing. )

Fizisani : Baby I know he won't do it. Tyron is a bitch! A criminal in a suit is what he is! Akanendaba nezingane zami. He hates my kids and I'm fine with that.

Me : Mhmmm

Fizisani : There were days where he would call Ngcebo and ask him where his brothers were mase ethi u Ngcebo akafake ifoni kwi speaker. Emutshela zonke izinto azomuthengela zona ezinhle whilst my kids were listening. Uyabona uma kade evakashile sekufanele ephindele emuva ku Baba wakhe bemubuze o Malusi ukuthi uzobuya nini Ngcebo. Bemubuze ukuthi kumnandi kangakanani kubo. I listened to Ngcebo bragging about his father ngikhale Zanokuhle. Ngikhale because izingane zami had nothing to say about their fathers. Ngikhale because izingane zami kungekho lapho ngingazivakashisa khona. Sometimes ngangifisa angabe I aborted them.

Me : No don't say that.

Fizisani : I'm the reason for their miserable life. Ngcebo is naturally a good boy kodwa inzondo uBaba wakhe amufida yona.. Wow.

Me : Yonke lento izodlula.

Fizisani : Ngeke. Tomorrow you are leaving and uzohamba isikhathi eside. Mhlazane ubuya angazi noma uyobe usangithanda yini.

Me : Fizisani ngiyobe ngisakuthanda.

Fizisani : I don't know Zanokuhle.

Me : Is this about Gugu? Ilento ayishilo?

Fizisani : u Gugu ukubeke kwacaca ukuthi angiyilutho. Uthe you don't love me but you feel sorry for me.

Me : Lokho akulona iqiniso. Look I want us to prove her wrong. Ngifuna simukhombise ukuthi uthando lwethu luqinile. I want us to show her something angasoze aba nayo.

(She sighs and shakes her head)

Me : Tomorrow you guys will be moving to Westville. Ksasa isiqalo esisha sezimpilo zethu. Mengibuya ukuyothwasa ngifuna ukubuyela ekhaya lethu.

(She smiles)

Me : Everything is going to be fine. My lawyer will ensure that you and our kids are fine. Mzet will ensure that you guys are taken care of. Uma kukuthi u Tyrone akayenzi lento engimucele yona then fine kodwa impilo izoqhubeka.

(She kisses my cheek)

Fizisani : What time are we going to Ballito?

(My parents are throwing a party for me since I'm leaving tomorrow.)

Me : Anytime you are ready.

Fizisani : I'm nervous.



(I laugh)

Me : Are you scared of my mother or father?

Fizisani : Your mother.

(She laughs and heads out)

Me : Njinji?

Fizisani : My love.

Me : I love you

Fizisani : I love you too baby.

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## Chapter 18

(The party is almost over. It's safe to say that everything went well. I like how my mother and Fizisani are getting along. Ndlalifa and Makhosazana are also here. You should see my mother when she is around Makhosazana. She smiles waya - waya. She really loves her.)

Me : But she is getting better

Ndlalifa : No she is getting worse. She is bleeding non-stop and lento seyiqala ukumshaya nasemzimbeni. Look at her boy

(He is right. Makhosazana is losing weight. How can I help her)

Me : Isinye uthi sesinjani?

Ndlalifa : Uthi sibuhlungu. Siya kudokotela ksasa

Me : You think the doctor could help?

Ndlalifa : I think so. Maybe they will give her something to stop the bleeding.

Me : Yeah.

Ndlalifa : Kusafanele ngikhuluma noBaba nje ngimucele ukuthi ngingene late ksasa

Me : No I'll ask him to give you a day off.

Ndlalifa : No Zano I'll....

Me : I'll talk to him.

(I squeeze his shoulder)

Ndlalifa : Thank you.

Me : She will be fine.

(He sighs)

Ndlalifa : I need her to be fine.

(We watch Makhosazana laughing with Fizisani Gog'Vee and my mother. Aunt Ntokozo and Sthenjisiwe walk out with their bottles of Savanna. They drink alcohol like water.)

Ndlalifa : Your grandfather is calling us.

(We go and join everyone. Makhosazana sits on Ndlalifa's lap. I smile looking at them. I want them to be fine. Makhosazana needs to be fine.)

Maxwell : Mfana wami siyakuthanda. Into leyo engingafuni uyikhohlwe. Lolu ubizo lwakho. Thina sakubona usemncane ukuthi unesipho.

(We laugh)

Maxwell : Ngikufisela inhlanhla Bhambatha.

(I laugh and shake my head)

Maxwell : Why are you laughing? Uwu Bhambatha wena. umzukulu wami. Abakhohlwe nje kwa Dlomo.

(I laugh)

Me : Ngiyabonga Mkhulu. Ngiyabonga kunina nonke. Ngiyanithanda kakhulu futhi ngizonikhumbula.  
Please look after my girlfriend and my kids

(Aunt Ntokozo raises her Savanna)

Ntokozo : We will my boy.

(I can't believe they still get this drunk at their age.)

Me : Ngiyabonga aunt wami.

Sthenjisiwe : Ubatshela lapha ukuthi wena u Mkhulu oHot

(We all laugh)

Nyathuko : I'm proud of you Nkosana ka Baba. We are proud of you.

Me : I know.

Sthabile : I love you my boy.

(I go and hug her)

Me : I'm going to miss you Mah

Sthabile : I'm going to miss you too. Kodwa ngizoza ngzokubona and I'll call you everyday my baby

Me : Okay

Sthabile : Uthe u Gogo noMapholoba bayaxolisa ukungafiki.

Me : No it's okay. I spoke to them on my way here... Mah bengifuna ukuya ethuneni lika Enzelwe before I go.

Sthabile : But it's late now.



Me : I know. Sengiyoya mengibuya

(She kisses my forehead)

Me : Okunye futhi ngicela nibheke u Ndlalifa no Makhosazana. If Makhosazana gets worse please ningazise.

Sthabile : We will.

Nyathuko : Baby?

(Nyathuko calls out for her)

Me : Nali iwele lakho selikufuna.

(We laugh and she walks away. I feel Fisisani wrapping her arms around me)

Fisisani : Are you okay baby?

(I smiles)

Me : Yes yes I'm okay sthandwa sami.

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DAY LATER

IN NXENXETHA

(The moment I set foot here this place felt heavy on me. Things weren't as I expected but maybe it's too soon to say anything. I mean I've only arrived yesterday. I've met the rest of amathwasa and all of them gave me a cold shoulder. My teacher "ugobela wami" doesn't seem like a friendly person. He seems cold but I hope he knows his job.)

(A black goat has been slaughtered for me. It was slaughtered this morning. I don't know which is right or wrong because I've never done this before so I just do as Baba says. Baba is isangoma u Magalela but we call him Baba as a sign of respect.)

Baba : We didn't slaughter this goat for nothing. Imbuzi le ngoba uyibonile nje imunyama bhuqe yingoba yimbuzi yokunqwambisa nokuhuqa ngodaka. Angithi uyawabona amathwasa alayikhaya agcobe umcako yingoba mina ngathwasa emanzini.

Me : Baba

(He puts white beads on my hair and he picks up goat skin)

Baba : Lena ke iminqwambo

(He puts the goat skin around my shoulders all the way to my back. He finishes and paints my face my legs and my arms with umcako.)

Baba : Ekuseni ke uzoqala uphalaze ngobulawu.

Me : Baba

Baba : Ikhanda leli lakho awulithinti. You are not allowed to cut your hair until your time here is up.

(Oh no wonder why most of amathwasa I see here have dreadlocks. They are not allowed to cut their hair. Shit! I don't like this)

Me : Kuzwakele.

Baba : Usungakhululeka

Me : Baba

(I clap my hands twice and stand up. I go to the rondavel where we all sleep. I found amathwasa sleeping. All of them. We all sleep here. Men and women. We sleep on the floor.)

Me : Aibo

(Somebody else is sleeping with my blanket. I go straight to him. I don't remember all their names)

Me : Uxolo but this is my blanket

Him : Did you come with a blanket?

Me : What? No but...

Him : Nothing. Uma ke ufike late ukuzolala ufika seabephelile o blanket. This is not your Gogo's house.

(I chuckle. I can't believe this. No he is probably joking.)

(2 hours later here I am sleeping on a grass mat without a blanket. My body is already in pain. I'm feeling really cold. That bastard wasn't joking. Damn! I miss my house. I take out my phone. Deep down I want to call Fisisani.)

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Awavuke amathwasa! Akukona koyihlo la enilala khona kungene ilanga endunu!! Wake up!!

(Baba shouts. I open my eyes and look around. Fuck! I'm the only one that is still sleeping. I immediately get up)

Me : Thokoza Baba

Baba : Do you know why you are here?

Me : Yes

(He shakes his head)

Baba : Give me your phone.

Me : What?

Baba : Angizwanga?

(I quickly gave him my phone. He holds my hand and caresses the back of it. )

Baba : I like you so much Dinangwe so please ungafuni mina nawe sixabane.

Me : Baba

(I bow my head)

Baba : Once you are here uyakhohlwa izinto zangaphandle. Ufuna ukuba isangoma angithi?

Me : Yes



Baba : Uzolalela mina ke.

Me : Baba

Baba : Others have gone to the river already. Follow them. Menibuya niyahamba niyogqula imithi. Usuyoqala ukuphalaza ksasa.

(He lets go of my hand. I clap twice and walk out. I took two buckets and went to the river. Amathwasa are sitting next to the river. I get there and they turn their heads and look at me. I clear my throat)

The rich boy is here

(One of them says)

Ubungoma must be a fashion nowadays. Everyone wants to be a sangoma

(They all laugh)

He just wants attention. His family doesn't know what to do with the money anymore

(I don't know who told them about money or how they know my family but I don't care. I walk towards the river. I start filling up the bucket but I see water becoming dirty like red mud. They are laughing. I lift up my head to one of them. He is standing right inside the river and he is playing with water with his feet. I clench my teeth. He then takes out his penis and pee in the water. I stand up. )

Akukona konyokolume la.

(He says and gets out of the river. I rub my face. What the hell is wrong with these people?)

## Chapter 19

(I can't describe how angry I am. I don't want to be here anymore. I want to go back home.)

Me : They don't want me here. They hate me Baba!!

(I say while dropping the empty buckets on the ground.)

Baba : Let's go inside

(We get inside his hut)

Baba : What happened?

Me : Angiwatholanga amanzi. Bawangcolisile

(He smiles. Why is he smiling?)

Me : Baba I don't know if I can stay here. Angizokwazi ukuphila kanje.

(His face changes. He doesn't like what I'm saying)

Baba : Uyigwala.

Me : I'm not a coward. I don't want problems.

Baba : Problem is what you are. Impilo yakho iyinkinga. Umphefumulo wakho uthwele izinkinga kanti nawe uphefumula izinkinga uqobo.

(I swallow)

Baba : Do you want to know why they hate you?

Me : Why?

Baba : Because you brought darkness kulelikhaya. Uthe ungena ngaleliyasango wangena nobumnyama.

Me : Darkness?

Baba : Kunemfihlo enkulu abazali bakho abakufihlele yona.

Me : Secret? Which secret?

Baba : Something happened when you were younger.

Me : Something like what?

(He shakes his head)

Baba : Uyabona wena akulona idlozi lakini leli elikungenile.

Me : What?

Baba : No akulona elakini futhi akulona elakonyokolume.

Me : Pho elaphi?

Baba : Lomphefumulo owaphuma uhleli kuwe.

Me : I don't understand.

Baba : Uke wazama ukwenza igobongo phambilini akunjalo?

Me : That's correct.

Baba : I see. Uyabona mfana wena uthwele idlozi elibi lakwa Zungu.

Me : Zungu?

Baba : Yes. Lomoya omubi ohamba nawo uzomosha yonke impilo yakho. Ayikho into ezokulungela. Noma usuphumile la ekhaya lika Magalela ngeke kubekhona mehluko.

(My heart is racing)

Me : Baba usho ukuthini? Lifunani idlozi lakwa Zungu kumina?

Baba : He wants to ruin your life.

Me : Who is he?

Baba : I can't tell you.

Me : Shuthi ukuba kwami lana ke akunamsebenzi walutho. Let me go back home.

(He holds my hand.)



Baba : No

Me : Cha kusho ukuthi nawe ngeke ukwazi ukungisiza. Lento ayihlangene nobungoma angithi?  
Nginedimoni nje engihamba nalo.

Baba : Idimoni engingalisusa kuwe.

(He says while brushing the back of my hand. This is rather uncomfortable. I look at his hand and up at his eyes)

Me : You mean you can help me?

Baba : Ngiwu Magalela mina inkunzi yehlathi umashiya inxeba endodeni. Abangaziyo bayazi ukuthi wonke amadimoni ayagoba la kimi.

Me : How can you help me?

(He smiles)

Baba : Do you really need help? Do you really want me to help you?

Me : Yes

Baba : I need you to be desperate for my help Dinangwe.. Are you desperate?

Me : Desperate I wouldn't say but I need help.

Baba : Are you willing to do anything I tell you to do?

(I swallow)

Me : Yeah... Yes.

Baba : Now this is what is going to happen. Uma sifuna ukususa lelidimoni elibi elikuwe. You need to distance yourself from the people of this world. When. I say people I mean your family friends girlfriends. Everything. Awuzovumeleka ukuthi uxhumane nabo noma ingayiphi indlela. So you are going to call your parents and everyone else ubatshele ukuthi awudingi muntu ozoza ezokubona la kanti futhi ubatshele ukuthi isithunywa sakho asisavumi ukuthi uxhumane nabo.

Me : Kodwa mina anginaso isithunywa nje.

Baba : We don't know that but we will find out.

Me : Why am I not going to be allowed to speak or see my family?

Baba : Because kunezinto okungazofanele bezazi.

Me : Things like what?

(He clears his throat)

Baba : Dinangwe ngeke sithi sizama ukususa idimoni kodwa siqhubeke sisondeze abantu abafika nemimoya engcolile ukuba basondele kuwe.

Me : No I understand.

(He smiles)

Baba : Don't worry

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I understand.

(He smiles)

Baba : Don't worry Baba is here now and he is going to help you.

Me : Baba

(I clap twice)

Baba : I don't want you to worry yourself ngalawa amanye amathwasa. Wena uze kulomngoma oyimina.  
You are not here for them.

Me : Baba

Baba : Usungakhululeka

(I do a sign of respect and walk out. I find the pot of porridge empty outside. They ate without me and finished everything. I want to kill them one by one. I scratch my hair in frustration. These people really hate me. I take igeja and head down the bush. I know which kind of herbs Baba needs so I'll get them for him. I found this one thwasa sitting on the ground. She is leaning against the tree.)

Me : Thokoza

(She quickly gets up)

Her : Oh it's you.

(She sits back down and relaxes)

Me : I'm not here to make friends you know. So ningangizonda noma ningangizondi I don't care.

Her : Who hates you?

Me : All of you.

Her : Here is your porridge. I knew you would come here so I kept some for you.

(Woah that was unexpected. I'm shocked. I take the plastic from her and untie the knot of the plastic. There is an enamel bowl inside.)

Her : Be careful it's hot.

(I smell the porridge. This is not porridge. It's pumpkin)

Her : Yini? Ucabanga ukuthi ngikufakele ushevu?

Me : What? No. Ithanga nje leli

Her : Oh rich boy. Isijingi leso

(She sighs)

Me : Oh.

Her : Sit down and eat. They will be here soon angifuni becabange ukuthi ngiyixoki.

(I sit down.)

Me : What is your name?

(She looks young and beautiful too.)



Her : Amahle

Me : Zanokuhle

Amahle : I know.

Me : Oh

Amahle : What did he say to you? Uthe unamadimoni angithi?

(She looks at me out of the corners of her eyes)

Me : Who?

Amahle : uBaba

(I sigh)

Me : Yes

(She shakes her head)

Me : What's wrong?

Amahle : Who told you to come here?

Me : Mhmmm my parents. Ikhona inkinga?

Amahle : Ubengekho omunye ugobela abangakuyisa kuyena?

Me : No ubengekho

(She sighs)

Amahle : Just be careful Zanokuhle.

(I stop eating and look at her)

Me : Why usho njalo?

Amahle : Because I care about you.

Me : Oh really?

Amahle : Ubona lento eyenziwa amathwasa? Zanoluhle that is something I have no control over.  
Ngafika kunje futhi ngiyohamba kunje. They are jealous because you are here to take their place.

(I'm now looking at her arm that is bleeding. She hides it away from me)

Me : What happened to your arm?

Amahle : Nothing

Me : No let me see.

Amahle : Leave it Zano!!! It's none of your business! Nxa

(She stands up and snatches her porridge away from me. What?)

Amahle : Sekubila lesijingi angithi? Ingakho nje usubona nezinto ezingakufuni. Nxa!!

(She clicks her tongue and walks away)

Me : Amahle? Amahle wait!!!

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## Chapter 20

(After a long day I finally fell asleep. It wasn't that long before I started having this beautiful dream. Here I see a little me. I'm at the beach and the ocean is so calm water so clear very clear that if there were no waves I wouldn't say this is an ocean. I'm playing and running around the sand with uncle Nqabayethu. There is just so much joy. Uncle Nqabayethu looks different though. He is wearing something like a dress like Muslim dresses. It's white very white and he has this white and red scarf wrapped around his head.

We are running around the beach and laughing. I fall and he comes and lifts me up. He holds me in his arms and we watch the ocean. Fresh breeze is all around us.)

Me : You came with the Ghetto King?

(He laughs)

Nqabayethu : No my boy. Lezo kwakuyizinto zasemhlabeni. Okomhlaba kusala nomhlaba. Wena are you still scared of the ocean?

Me : Me? No.

Nqabayethu : That's good.

(He puts me down and holds my hand)

Nqabayethu : You see my boy. This is where your strength is. Amandla akho ala.

(I look up to him)

Me : Where?

Nqabayethu : In this ocean.

(He picks up a stone)

Nqabayethu : Uyabona lelitshe? I'm going to throw it in there. Look carefully okay?

Me : Okay

(He throws the stone in the middle of the ocean.)

Nqabayethu : Did you see that?

Me : Phakathi olwandle?

Nqabayethu : Yes my boy. Phakathi olwandle.

(He lifts me up again)

Me : Wow.

Nqabayethu : Amandla akho ke alapha mfana wami. Wena lonke usizo lwakho oyoludinga ukusiza abantu uyoluthola phakathi kulolulwandle. You don't need herbs bones or izibani ngoba mina ngiyisibani sakho. Imina ithongo lakho.



Me : But we are not related. Awulona igazi lami.

(He smiles and shakes his head)

Nqabayethu : Let's sit here.

(We sit down and he puts me between his legs)

Nqabayethu : Can I tell you a story?

(I smile)

Me : Uh!

Nqabayethu : Long long time ago there was a man who had a sister. His sister had a calling. Ubizo.

Me : She had a calling like me?

Nqabayethu : No. Wena awukaze waba nobizo. You were not born with a calling but you were born with a gift. Isipho sokuboniswa izinto ngamaphupho. Lolo akulona ubizo kodwa kuyisipho owasifunjathiswa umdali.

Me : So I don't have a calling?

Nqabayethu : You have it now.

Me : How?

Nqabayethu : Let me continue with the story. Where were we?

Me : His sister had a calling.

Nqabayethu : Yes. His sister had a calling kodwa lolubizo washona engakalwamukeli. There was an accident and his sister died at the hands of him.

Me : Her brother killed her?

Nqabayethu : Yes. But remember it was an accident.

Me : Sorry.

(He smiles and shakes his head)

Nqabayethu : His sister died and he lived but one day there was another accident and a young boy killed him.

Me : A young boy?

Nqabayethu : Yes my boy. He died with so many regrets. Wathi uma efika kokhokho bakhe wafika bethukuthele.

Me : Were they angry about the accident that took his life?

Nqabayethu : No. But they were angry because he took his sister's life. Babedinwe ukuthi wathatha umphefumulo wesizukulwane sabo esasinobizo and ubizo lolo lwalungasenamuntu ozolamukela. So they didn't welcome him. Bathi ebuyele emuva emhlabeni eyofuna umuntu ozakwamukela ubizo lukadadewabo because his sister's soul was not at peace.

(I look at him)

Nqabayethu : You are different Zanokuhle and that's why he chose you ukuthi kube nguwe othatha ubizo okwakubusiswe ngalo udadewabo.

Me : Me?

Nqabayethu : Yes you. You are gifted and he knew that his sister's calling would be safe with you.

Me : Was she a Zungu?

(He brushes my head)

Nqabayethu : Yes

(I slightly shake my head.)

Me : It's you. Uwena owanginika lolubizo?

Nqabayethu : Yes.

(He kisses the top of my head.)

Me : Are you a demon?

(He laughs)

Nqabayethu : Cha. Umoya wami usazulazula nje emhlabeni ngoba okhokho bami abafuni ukungamukela.  
I need your help.

Me : What kind of help?

Nqabayethu : Kuzofanele ungixolisele emndenini wami .

Me : But...

Nqabayethu : Don't let them fool you

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my boy. Angilona idimoni kodwa ngiyithongo lakho elikuphathele ubizo lukadadewethu phezu kwesipho sakho. Isipho owasinikwa umdali. Umdali lo owadala ulwandle oluthwele amandla akho.

Me : I understand. But why did you leave?

Nqabayethu : It was time.

(He stands up.)

Me : Who killed you?

(He shakes his head.)

Nqabayethu : Come I want to show you something.

(I follow him.)

Nqabayethu : Kunento engakubekela yona lapha.

(He digs up the sand and takes out something. It looks like a necklace but it has teeth all around it.)

Nqabayethu : Lawa amazinyo....



Me : Amazinyo enyoka. Indlondlo.

(He smiles and brushes my head.)

Nqabayethu : You are a smart boy Zanokuhle.

(He puts it around my neck)

Nqabayethu : Yes Indlondlo. Indlondlo yolwandle.

Me : It's beautiful.

Nqabayethu : Come and take it. Once you have it then you can go back home. Ithwele amandla akho.

Me : Kodwa ugobela wami.....

Nqabayethu : You don't need him.

Me : Can I take it now?

Nqabayethu : This is in another life. Come and take it.

(I don't know what happened to the necklace but I'm now chasing him with a water gun. His scarf is now covering my eyes but I can still see him. I can see this deep wound on his forehead. I laugh while splashing water all over his face but the water on his face suddenly becomes blood. I scream trying to remove the scarf from my eyes)

Nqabayethu : It was you Zanokuhle but it's okay now. Go home Dinangwe. Go.

Me : No!!! Come back!!

(He is gone with the wind.)

Me : No!!!

Zanokuhle wake up!!!

(Someone shouts. I get up and look around. Amahle is holding my hand.)

Amahle : Vuka uyaphupha.

Me : I was dreaming.

(I sigh)

He needs to tell Baba.

(One of the wasas says)

Amahle : No Zingama!!

(She yells)

Zingama : Amaphupho ethu siwatshela u Baba. Kungani awakhe kufanele ewagcine kuye?

Amahle : Because....

Zingama : No!! Uwena futhi osuphula imithetho kaBaba?

(Amahle quickly shakes her head.)

Amahle : No.

Zingama : Take him to isigodlo.

Amahle : Come Zano.

(She sniffs and helps me up. I'm confused as fuck. We walk out and head to isigodlo but something shocks me. There is red smoke coming out of Baba's hut. It's pitch black out here but I can see that the smoke is red.)

Me : What is that?

Amahle : Wait we can't go in.

Me : Ngoba?

Amahle : Shut up Zanokuhle!

(I hear Baba groaning like a wild lion inside the hut. My heart is now pounding fast.)

Me : Let's go back.

Amahle : You can't.

(The smoke disappears and Baba walks out of the hut. He is busy pulling up his pants. He fixes ihiya that is wrapped around his waist.)

Me : Thokoza

Baba : What are you doing here?

(Amahle tightens my hand)

Amahle : Uphuphile Baba.

(Baba signals me to come closer. Amahle let go of my hand)

Amahle : Go.

(Baba and I walk into his hut. It smells terrible. I sit down with my knees up.)

Baba : Khuluma Dinangwe.

Me : I had a dream.

Baba : Yah.

(I explained the whole dream to him.)

Baba : He was lying. Akalona ithongo lakho. Uyidimoni nje. Dinangwe kunabantu abenza izinto ezimbi la emhlabeni and when they die baya kwelamathongo befike bengamukeleki and that's when they come back to earth. Imimoya yabo ihambe ke izula zula la emhlabeni ize ihlale kubantu abangenacala. Egule umuntu kuthiwe unobizo kanti cha akulona ubizo. Amadimoni nje ahleli kuye.

(He is making sense.)

Me : So he was lying to me?

Baba : Yes he lied.



Me : He told me to come and take something. Ucu lwasentanyeni lwamazinyo endlondlo.

(He smiles)

Baba : Really?

Me : Uthe luthwele amandla ami.

Baba : Uthe lukuphi lolucu?

Me : Eduze nolwandle. Ulwandle olucwebile.

Baba : Ulwandle olucwebile?

Me : Yes.

(His smile grows wider)

Baba : Did you go?

Me : No. Ukhulume njengomuntu obefuna ngize ngokwesiqu sami somzimba not ngokomoya.

Baba : Good. He was lying. Now go back to sleep.

Me : Baba

(I clap twice and head out)

Baba : Dinangwe?

Me : Baba

Baba : Uyisiqalo sempumelelo yami.

Me : Angiqondi.

Baba : Go to sleep.

(I bow my head and crawl out of his hut)

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(When we woke up Baba wasn't here but he is back now. Zingama is teaching me how to mix the herbs.)

Me : I still don't understand why I'm here. Yini vele ekufanele ngiyenze la?

Zingama : Are you saying Baba is fake?

Me : What? Of course not. Ukuthi nje sengifuna ukubuyela ekhaya.

(He glares at me)

Zingama : Uphoqiwe ukuthi uze la?

Me : Cha

Zingama : You need to be patient. These things take time.

(I sigh. Oh here is Baba coming. I wash my hands in clean water)

Baba : Ah Dinangwe. Thokozani bo Gogo no Mkhulu

Me : Thokozani Baba

Zingama : Thokoza

Baba : Uphalazile namhlanje?

(I lift up my head)

Me : Yes I...

(I pause. I know that. That around his neck I know it. It's the same necklace that I saw in my dreams. The same necklace that Nqabayethu told me to come and fetch from the ocean.)

Me : That.... I know that.

Baba : What?

(He touches it.)

Me : It's mine. Ucu lwami lolu.

(He shakes his head)

Baba : Wenza iphutha.

Me : Cha! I know what I'm talking about.

Baba : Zingama please excuse us.

(He knows what I'm talking about. I can see it in his eyes.)

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Chapter 21

Baba : Hey!! Shut up!

Me : Nol'm not going to shut up! Ungenze isilima kwangathi amaphupho ami yinto nje engekho kanti wena uyazi ukuthi uphezu kwani. Give me my phone!

Baba : Who do you think you are?

Me : Give me my phone!!

(I search around his hut for my phone.)

Me : Where is it?

Baba : Ufuna ukwenzani?

Me : I want to call my father ezongilanda. I want to go back home.



Baba : You can't. Awusafuni ukuba isangoma wena?

Me : Cha! Angisafuni. Uthathe amandla ami Baba u Magalela. Untshontsha amandla amathwasa akho. Umngoma onjani owenza lento oyenzayo?

Baba : Amandla akho aphephile la kimi.

Me : No!!!

(Amathwasa are now watching outside his hut.)

Me : Give me my phone. I want to go back home

(He stands up and heads out.)

Baba : Sukani nina la! Leave!!

(He chases them away. Here is my phone. Great. I switched it on. I have countless messages. I dial my father's number but he comes back and snatches the phone away from my ear.)

Baba : What do you think you are doing? Ufuna ukumosha impilo yami?

Me : Baba please. Sengiyakuncenga ngicela ukugoduka.

Baba : You can't go home! Uzothwasa wena layikhaya.

(I sigh)

Baba : My boy listen. You are safe here. Into engiyenzile ukuhamba nje ngiye lapha olwandle ngoba ngifuna ukubona ukuthi lelidimoni elihleli kuwe linamandla angakanani. When I found this necklace ngibonile ukuthi linamandla.

Me : Ngempela?

Baba : Yes. Listen Dinangwe. I want to help you futhi sengiyazi ukuthi ngizokwenza kanjani lokho.

Me : How?

Baba : Uyabona lolucu luthwele umoya wakho namandla akho. Wena uthwele amandla alelidimoni.

Me : What?

Baba : It's true.

Me : I need you to help me.

Baba : I want to do that. Uyabona manje sekuyisikhathi sokuthi ususe lelidimoni khona uzokwazi ukuqala umsebenzi wakho wokwethwasa.

Me : How are you going to do it?

(He takes a small old bag and opens it. He takes out a container.)

Baba : Bhema lokhu

Me : Okay.

(I take it and sniff it.)

Baba : Kuzothi uma sekuphume wonke lamadimoni lolucu luzobuyela kuwe.

(I'm starting to feel dizzy. I sneeze)

Baba : Good

Me : I'm not feeling well.

Baba : You are doing just fine. Phuza lokhu

(He pours some muthi in a mug and gives it to me. I drink)

Baba : This will make you feel better.

Me : Ngiyabonga Baba

Baba : Now tell me what is your name?

Me : Ngingowakho

(He smiles)

Baba : Perfect. Now take this phone and call your parents. Tell them you are fine.

Me : Baba

(He hands me my phone. I dial my father's number)

Nyathuko : Zanokuhle what's going on?

Me : Baba I'm fine.

Nyathuko : No I'm coming to fetch you.

Me : No

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no you can't. I'm fine. Senguqalile umsebenzi wami wokuthwasa

Nyathuko : So why are you not answering our calls? Sikhathazekile ngawe. Uyamazi umawakho ukuthi unenkinga yenhliziyo so why.....

Me : I'm sorry. Please tell her I'm fine. I'm really fine.

Nyathuko : I'm coming to see you. I'm on my way.

Me : You can't!!!

Nyathuko : What? Why?

Me : Because anginidingi la Baba. Ngicela ukwenza lento ngaphandle kokuphazamiseka.

Nyathuko : Zanokuhle are you okay?

Baba : Tell him ukuthi sekuyisikhathi sakho sokuxhumana nomoya ngakho awudingi abantu.

(He whispers to me and I shake my head)

Me : I'm connecting with amathongo Baba. Ngihlanganisa amadlozi ami and lokho akudingi ukuthi ngiphumele ngaphandle okanye ngibone abantu.



Nyathuko : Oh I understand.

Me : Uma kukhona engikudingayo. Okanye imbuzi engiyidingayo I'll let you know but for now ngicela ngingabe nisangifonela.

Nyathuko : Are you sure about this?

Me : Angikaze ngakuqambela amanga Bhambatha.

(He lets out a heavy sigh)

Nyathuko : I know. Ukuthi nje ngikhathazekile ngawe. Zanoluhle all my life I've been ensuring your safety futhi ngiyoze ngife ngenza lokho. I will die protecting you.

Me : I know. Kodwa ngi right.

Nyathuko : That's good. Makhosazana is....

Me : I need to go Baba.

Nyathuko : Oh. U busy lapho?

Me : Yes

Nyathuko : Usifonele phela Nkosana ka Baba.

Me : I will.

Nyathuko : Ngiyakuthanda mfana wami.

Me : I love you too.

(I hang up and give my phone back to Baba. He smiles)

Baba : You did well Dinangwe. I'm proud of you

(I smile)

Me : Baba

Baba : Now listen. Tonight you are going to sleep here with me. Ngifuna siqale umsebenzi wokususa lamadimoni angcolile akuwe.

Me : I'll be here.

Baba : Good. For now you can go.

Me : Baba ngicela ukuxolisa.

Baba : It's okay Dinangwe.

Me : It's not okay. I was angry and I took it out on you.

(He laughs)

Baba : I've been through worse. Ukuba umngoma akukho lula but this is my job. Ukusiza abantu.

Me : Ngiyabonga Baba.

(I say and walk out.)

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(We are washing the evening dishes. Amahle is not talking to me. She is crying that's all she's been doing.)

Me : Can you talk to me?

(She continues washing the dishes)

Me : Fine. Namhlanje ngeke ngilale emakhosini.

(She stops and looks at me)

Amahle : Uzolala esigodlweni?

Me : Yes. Maduzane ngizobe sengi....

Amahle : Ukubhemisile angithi?

Me : No

Amahle : He did! Uyayazi into ayenze kuwena?

Me : What are you talking about?

(She wipes her hands and walks away. What's wrong with Amahle? You know what? I'm sick of her and her drama. I'm done with her. I'm not here to make friends)

(I finished bathing and went into isigodlo. Baba will sleep on that side and I'll sleep on this side. I'm the kind of person who immediately starts dreaming the moment he falls asleep but not tonight. I'm actually struggling to sleep. I hear Baba walking in and I immediately feel nervous for no reason but my heart is pounding fast. It gets worse when I hear him getting under my blanket. I try to move away but he stops me.)

Baba : Don't be scared.

(I swallow hard)

Baba : This is the only way to get rid of these demons.

Me : Baba

Baba : Do you still want to get rid of them?

Me : Yes

Baba : Good.

(He gets up. I close my eyes but I open them when I hear this strange noise. The smell around the hut quickly changes. I get up and my eyes widen. I've never seen anything like this in my entire life. I don't know if this is an animal or what but it's definitely not a human being. Well it has a head and neck and eyes. The biggest eyes I've ever seen. They are red. This thing is short short.)

Baba : Khumula Dinangwe

Me : Angizwanga?

Baba : Khumula she will carry all your demons and you shall be free.



(Without any further questions I remove all of my clothes and this thing is now laid in front of me with its legs open. I don't know what to do next.)

Baba : Let her feel you. Give her all of you.

(I see what's going on here. I close my eyes. As I push myself in Baba groans. I swear my penis is burning. My whole body is burning. The hut is surrounded by red smoke. The pain is unbearable. I feel tears rolling down my cheeks.)

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## Chapter 22

Me : Mhmmm!

(I try to turn on the other side but I'm scared of the pain. My penis is painful. My testicles are swollen and heavy. My whole body is covered with sweat.)

Baba : It will get better. Don't go out sleep here.

Me : Okay

(He touches my forehead)

Baba : You will be fine Dinangwe. Lokhu kujwayelekile.

(I shake my head)

Me : Okay.

Baba : Ufuna lelidimoni liphume kuwe right?

Me : Yes.

Baba : Isiqalo ke lesi. Zonke lezinhlungu ozizwayo yingoba sekuphuma lona. Okay?

Me : Okay

Baba : Sleep my boy.

Me : Baba

(He walks out. I try to sit up but I fall back. I want to pee. I need to pee. I manage to sit up and remove the blanket. I take a glance at my penis and my throat close up. My penis is dark. Very dark I can't even recognize it as mine. It's swollen. My testicles look like one big ball. Tears flood down my face. I look around. I need to pee but I can't move my legs. I throw my head back on the pillow. I can't hold it anymore. I can't control my bladder.)

Me : Ahhhh!!

(I scream as I pee myself. Amahle walks in soon after that.)

Amahle : Zano? Zanoluhle are you okay?

(She asks with a shaky voice. I look away. She can't see me like this.)

Amahle : Uthe ngikubheke u Magalela

Me : I'm fine.

Amahle : You are crying.

Me : I'm not.

(I wipe away the tears)

Amahle : Are you hungry?

Me : Yes

(I'm actually starving)

Amahle : Okay I'm coming.

(She walked out and she immediately came back with a bowl of porridge)

Amahle : Here

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drink it.

(She helps me up and holds the bowl for me. I can feel the porridge sinking down my stomach and burning my stomach. Baba walks in)

Baba : No!!!!

(He yells and kicks the bowl of porridge away from Amahle's hand.)

Baba : What are you doing?

Amahle : He was hungry.

Baba : Ubani othe umnike iphalishi?

Amahle : There was nothing else to give him Mthini.

Baba : Fuseg!!! Get out!!

(He shouts and Amahle runs out of the hut)

Baba : Zanokuhle what did I say to you?

Me : Baba?

Baba : Angisho ukuthi ulalele umthetho wami?

Me : You did.

Baba : So?

Me : Ngiyaxolisa.

Baba : Dammit!!

(He goes to umsamo and comes back with a cup)

Baba : Here drink this. It will drain out everything.

Me : I didn't drink much....

Baba : Phuza!!!



(He shoves the cup in my mouth. I drink. My hands are trembling.)

Baba : Why is this blanket wet?

Me : U... uthelwe amanzi.

Baba : Oh. You are going to be fine. Qina! Uyindoda wena.

Me : Yebo.

Baba : I'm going out. Angifuni muntu kulesigodlo sami. Don't let anyone in. Do you understand me?

Me : I understand.

(He removes ihiya and puts on another one.)

Baba : Get some rest.

Me : I need water. Ngiyashiselwa

(He closes his eyes and his jaws tighten)

Baba : Mfana ka Dinangwe kanti ngithini kuwena?

Me : I....

Baba : No water!! No eating!!

Me : For how long?

Baba : Until I tell you ukuthi usukulungele ukudla okanye ukuphuza amanzi.

Me : Yebo.

(He fixes the necklace around his neck and walks out. My stomach is already rumbling. No my stomach is turning. I vomit. The vomit is choking me I can't breathe. I try to squeeze what is trying to come out of my ass but I can't. I mess up myself.)

Me : Amah....

(I sit up and I accidentally touch my penis. I scream while wiping the vomit that is all over my face.)

Me : Ngihawukele thongo lami.

(I say and drop my head back on the wet pillow. I close my eyes and I feel wind blowing up my face. The smell of the ocean fills up the hut. My face dries up.)

Me : Ngihawukele thongo lami.

(My body is shaking. I feel his hand on my forehead. He runs his finger from my forehead to my nose.)

Me : Manzini take me with you.

Nqabayethu : You can't die now.

Me : I want to die. Don't save me.

Nqabayethu : People need your help.

Me : Ngeke ngisakwazi ukubasiza. Help me.

Nqabayethu : I can't help you anymore. My strength is running out. Umoya wami usondela ngakuye.

Me : Usekuthathile kimi angithi? Untshontshe idlozi lami angithi? Ithongo lami?

Nqabayethu : Yes kodwa lolu ubizo lwakho Zanokuhle.

Me : I don't want it!! I don't want it anymore!! I want to go back home. Angisalufuni ubizo!

(I scream and I feel his spirit drifting away. The wind is slowly going away. The pain is coming back. He is gone.)

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## Chapter 23

(I slept with nothing in my stomach. My body was weak. I had to sleep in my own mess. I was feeling cold which made it difficult for me to sleep but I eventually did.)

(I'm seeing Zothani and Zibusiso walking around with white crosses in their hands. There are men carrying a white coffin following them. I can feel my soul leaving my body. I feel like I'm flying. My eyes shut open. Someone is dying back home.)

Sshh! It's me. Don't be scared

(It's Baba. I don't know when he got here. He is busy getting undressed. )

Me : Baba I need to go home. Someone has died.

(I whisper to him. I can't even raise my voice. I'm feeling weak and my body is shaking but nothing compares to the pain I'm feeling. I'm even scared of moving my finger because what if I hurt penis?)

Baba : What?

Me : Ngibonile.

Baba : Ubuphupha. Awuphilile Dinangwe and when you are sick uba namaphupho amabi. Come let me help you up.

Me : Please don't I'm scared.

Baba : I'm going to take care of you. I'll take away the pain.

(He brushes my stomach.)

Me : No please don't. Ngicela ukulala Baba. Ngiyakuncenga. Kubuhlungu

Baba : Usufuna ukuphila nalamadimoni asemzimbeni wakho? Awusafuni ukuba isangoma?

Me : I do.

Baba : Then let me help you. Guqa

Me : I ca.. I can't Baba. Kubuhlungu.



Baba : Kuzophela. Phenduka

(He helps me up and forces me to my knees.)

Me : Ngiyathunukala. Please stop.

Baba : Hey!!! Qina! Watetemisa okomfazi? Ungumfazi wena?

Me : Cha

(He pushes me down. I tighten my jaw. I feel his finger rubbing my anus.)

Baba : Amafutha lawa azokwenza ungabuzwa ubuhlungu. Akekho namhlanje so yimi ozokusiza sikiphe yonke lemimoya emibi ehleli emzimbeni wakho.

Me : Mhmm

Baba : Angizwanga?

Me : Baba

Baba : Good boy. Uyabona Dinangwe wena uzoba isangoma esikhulu ukudlula zonke. Mina u Magalela u Mthini ngizokusiza. You want my help right?

Me : Ye... Yes. Mhmmm!

(I groan in pain. I've never felt this kind of pain. Is God punishing me? Am I being punished because I accepted my calling? Does one have to suffer this much because of ubizo? What did I do wrong?)

Me : No!!!!

(I scream as his penis goes in and out of my anus. I can't hold my tears anymore. I break down. He is making all sorts of sounds. I bang the pillow)

Me : Please stop!!

(I scream)

Baba : Don't fight it Dinangwe. You will enjoy it.

Me : No no. Please stop

(I try to look at him but he slaps me.)

Baba : Stop it!!!

(I can't. I can't. I crawl away and fall on the floor.)

Baba : You are weak!! Uyisiyoyo sendoda! Awusoze waba isangoma wena unje. Look at you crying like a bloody woman! Amadoda angempela awakhali!

Me : Kubuhlungu Baba Kubuhlungu.

Baba : You are fighting it. Yingakho Kubuhlungu. You just need to relax your body. Ngeke ubuzwe ubuhlungu ngiyakuthembisa. Seliphumile igazi ngakho ngeke kusaba buhlungu.

Me : Cha...

(He stands up and kicks me.)

Baba : Mfazi ndini!!!

(He beats me and punches me all over my face. He drags me to sleep on my stomach. The pain on my penis is nothing anymore. I let him do as he pleases. He tightens his grip on my shoulder and groans louder. I see the smoke fill up the hut. He pulls out and leaves me lying on the floor. He wipes his penis with ihiya. He finishes and throws ihiya on my face. I can't move. He sleeps on his grass mat. He is still cursing. He releases a heavy sigh and after that there is silence. I close my eyes.)

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Zano? Zanokuhle?

(I try to open my eyes but I can't. I'm too weak)

Me : Amahle

(I whisper)

Amahle : Sekusile.

Me : Mhmmm

Amahle : Lala kahle.

Me : No

Amahle : Please

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Kubuhlungu.

Baba : You are fighting it. Yingakho Kubuhlungu. You just need to relax your body. Ngeke ubuzwe ubuhlungu ngiyakuthembisa. Seliphumile igazi ngakho ngeke kusaba buhlungu.

Me : Cha...

(He stands up and kicks me.)

Baba : Mfazi ndini!!!

(He beats me and punches me all over my face. He drags me to sleep on my stomach. The pain on my penis is nothing anymore. I let him do as he pleases. He tightens his grip on my shoulder and groans louder. I see the smoke fill up the hut. He pulls out and leaves me lying on the floor. He wipes his penis with ihiya. He finishes and throws ihiya on my face. I can't move. He sleeps on his grass mat. He is still cursing. He releases a heavy sigh and after that there is silence. I close my eyes.)

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Zano? Zanokuhle?

(I try to open my eyes but I can't. I'm too weak)

Me : Amahle

(I whisper)

Amahle : Sekusile.

Me : Mhmmm

Amahle : Lala kahle.



Me : No

Amahle : Please Ulele phansi. Kuyabanda.

Me : Where is he?

(I ask her with my eyes closed)

Amahle : He is not here. Kufike induna yahamba naye.

Me : He raped me.

Amahle : I know. Come open your mouth.

(I don't know what she is feeding me but it's food so I'll eat.)

Amahle : Please open your eyes. Uyangithusa Zanokuhle

Me : I want to die.

Amahle : Please don't say that. Come here

(She places my head on her thighs and covers my body with a blanket.)

Amahle : Where is your phone? I need to call your parents.

Me : Don't.

Amahle : He won't stop. u Magalela ngeke esakuyeka Zanokuhle. What happened last night kuzokwenzeka impilo yakho yonke.

(I shake my head)

Amahle : It's okay. It's okay. I know awuzenzi. I know what he did to you kodwa angifuni ukulahlekelwa nguwe. He can't kill you like he did kulaba abanye.

Me : Someone died back home. Do you think it's my mother?

Amahle : What?

Me : Ngibe nesibonakaliso. Khona umuntu oseshonile ekhaya

Amahle : Zanokuhle no.

Me : Mhlampe umawami. Ngibone amawele asekhaya ephethe iziphambano zamathuna ezimuhlophe.

Amahle : No no! Eat please eat.

(Tears run out of the corners of my eyes)

Amahle : Open your eyes. Please open your eyes.

Me : I can't. I'm tired.

(Her tears drop down on my face. She presses her lips on my forehead.)

Amahle : It's okay. It's okay.

(She keeps saying while planting pecks on my forehead. Her arm is wrapped around my chest. She is rocking her body back and forth. )

Amahle : It's okay. It's going to be alright.

(She sniffs between her words)

Amahle : Do you want to go outside and get some fresh air? Amathwasa awekho ayodlela imbuzi emfuleni so don't worry. Nobody will see you. Uyafuna? Huh?

(She sniffs)

Me : No.

Amahle : Okay sleep. Sleep Mkhabela.

Me : Ngomile

Amahle : Ufuna amanzi?

Me : I can't feel my body. I want water

(She grabs a pillow and places my head. She stands up)

Amahle : I'll be back now. Ngiyokulandela amanzi uyezwa?

Me : Okay.

(I hear her footsteps going all the way out. A few minutes later someone walks in.)

Me : Amahle?

Who was here?

(I open one eye. It's Baba. He is back.)

Me : No one

Baba : Are you lying to me?

(I shake my head. I feel his hands around my neck. He is strangling me. I try to push him away but I can't)

No!!!!

(Amahle screams while walking in. She hits Baba with Ukhamba. She continuously hits his head until ukhamba breaks into pieces.)

Me : Amahle No!!

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Chapter 24

(Amahle is losing her mind. I can't stop her. If Magalela gets up we are done.)

Amahle : The spear!!! Give me the spear!



Me : Amahle No!!

Amahle : Zanoluhle!!

(She screams. I crawl and before I take the spear it's too late. Magalela grabs my leg and climbs on top of me. He strangles me.)

Amahle : No! No! No!

(Amahle screams while stabbing Magalela with a spear. There are blood stains all over her face but she doesn't stop. She continuously stabs him on his back. Magalela's grip loosens up around my neck. His eyes are wide open. His head falls on my chest. My heart races. He is dead. Amahle's hands are trembling. I push Magalela away from me and try to get up but I can't.)

Me : Give it to me

(She is looking at Magalela with her eyes out)

Me : Nginike umkhonto Amahle

(Tears well up her eyes and they immediately roll down her cheeks)

Me : Amahle?

(She slowly hands me the spear that is full of blood)

Amahle : Run.

Me : What?

(She wipes her tears and gets up)

Amahle : Run.

Me : Run? Run to where? I can't leave you here.

( She takes the necklace from Magalela's neck and shove it on my chest)

Amahle : I said run!

Me : No

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no! I won't do that. Ngeke ngikushiye la nesidumbu.

Amahle : Uma amathwasa engabuya uselana uzofa. Akekho ozokholwa ukuthi imina obulale u Mthini. Bazothe uweni.

Me : But...

(She kneels in front of me and cups my face. She presses her forehead against mine)

Amahle : Olwakho ubizo lwasungulwa ngegazi futhi luphethe ngalo igazi. Aphuzile athokoza amathongo. Now go.

(She stands up)

Me : What do you mean?

Amahle : It's time for you to go home.

Me : Amahle....

Amahle : If you don't go now umzimba wakho uzophenduka idili. Igazi lakho lizochitheka.

Me : I'm in pain. Angikwazi uku....

Amahle : Ucu lwakho luzokunika wonke amandla owadingayo.

Me : What are...

Amahle : Leave!!!!

(She yells and pulls me up. She puts the necklace around my neck. I can suddenly smell the ocean. She wraps my arm around her neck and helps out of the hut. I look at her. Tears burn in my eyes.)

Amahle : Thokoza wena wethongo.

Me : Thokozani boGogo no Mkhulu.

(She signals me to go away. Tears are streaming down her face)

Me : We will meet again.

(I tell her and walk away. The pain is there but I'm wearing strength. My whole body is a mess. I smell like shit. I don't know where I'm going. I have nothing with me.)

(I walked until I couldn't feel my feet. I threw myself on my knees and passed out.)

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A MONTH LATER

Nqabayethu : You need to save her. You are the only one who can save her now.

Me : She was diagnosed with cancer. I won't be able to save her.

Nqabayethu : Akuwona umdlavuza ilumbo.

(I close my eyes)

Nqabayethu : Amandla akho asolwandle. Usizo lwakhe lulele khona

Me : I....

Nqabayethu : Ubizo lwakho luqala manje. Unawo wonke amandla.

Me : How am I going to help her?

Nqabayethu : Kunenja ebizwa ngenja yolwandle. Amandla ayo asebuchophweni bayo. Eat it and sleep with her.

(I lift up my face. I can't see him but I can hear his voice.)

Me : Sleep with her?

Nqabayethu : It's the only way. Ilumbo lizongena kuwe kodwa wena ngoba uyobe uthwele amandla enja yolwandle lelolumbo liyobe selishabalala kuwo.



Me : I can't. She is Ndlalifa's....

Nqabayethu : It's the only way.

Me : Kodwa...

Nqabayethu : Go home. Sekuphelelisiwe. Your journey begins now.

(I open my eyes. I'm inside the river. The snake that was wrapping itself around me slowly let go and I got up. I'm standing in the middle of a big river. I don't remember how I got here or how long I've been here. I see Khambule standing outside the river. I make my way out of the river. He holds my hand and helps me out. He puts a white and blue coat around my shoulders and he hands me ihawu. The small one)

Khambule : Thokoza wena wethongo

Me : Thokozani bantu abadala

(He takes out his phone and dial.)

Khambule : Nondaba it's time. He is coming home.

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Chapter 25

(Before I left something called "ukuphehlelwa" was supposed to be done but it was never done. There is a cow called "imvuma kufa" that was supposed to be slaughtered but it was never slaughtered. I was

supposed to do what we call "ukungqongqoza" when I arrived in Magalela's house but I didn't do it. My journey to intwaso was a disaster from the very beginning and so was my time ephehlweni. A lot was not done but luckily I have a different ancestral calling. Mine has not much to do with the slaughtering herbs and all that but it has everything to do with the ocean. Ubizo lwami changed me. Going to Magalela's house ruined me and I'll never be the same again. Amahle? I don't know what happened to her after I left. I owe her my life. Every moment I close my mouth I pray for her in silence. I hope she is still alive.)

(Today is the day of my graduation ceremony "Ukuphakanyiswa" . Everyone is wondering why my journey was so short. They are calling me a fake sangoma already. I have so much I'm dealing with to care about what these people are saying. Makhosazana is in hospital. She's been there for a whole month. They say it's cancer I know it's not cancer. I know what I need to do but I don't think I'll be able to do it. How am I expected to have sex with Ndlalifa's girlfriend? Ndlalifa is like my blood and Makhosazana is like a sister to me. So how can I sleep with my sister? Let's say I agree. How am I going to do it? This is crazy and I'm not going to tell anyone about what needs to be done and I'm not going to tell them about what happened while I was away. Khambule knows something but I don't know what. I saw how he was looking at me when he fetched from the ocean this morning. Yesterday ithongo lami instructed me to go and spend the night under the ocean and I did. It's hard to remember everything that happens underwater but what I can tell you is that a lot goes on in there. Is it scary? No not anymore.)

(It's good to see my family. Everyone is here. The Zondis Ngcobos Maphalalas and the Dlomos. Fizisani and our boys are here as well. Even Tyron is here. I laughed seeing a small rondavel that my father built for me as isigodlo.)

Me : Asizoboshwa kodwa Nondaba? Sengisho phela ngokwakha izindlu zamathongo la endaweni yondlebe zikhanya ilanga.

(My father laughs)

Nyathuko : Nkosana ka Baba umhlaba wethu lo. Ifa lethu esalishiyelwa oBaba mkhulu.

(I laugh and slightly shake my head)

Me : Ngiyabonga Bhambatha

(I say while looking around my small rondavel.)

Nyathuko : It's fancy huh?

Me : You have a gold touch Baba

(We both laugh. He sighs)

Nyathuko : I thought it was going to take longer than this. Kanti futhi bengizitshela ukuthi sizofonelwa wuye u Magalela mase kufanele ubuye. Kwenziwe izinto ngosiko uyabona?

(All this time they thought I was at Magalela's house. What they don't know is that my gobela lives underwater. Ithwasa lamanzi

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uyabona?

(All this time they thought I was at Magalela's house. What they don't know is that my gobela lives underwater. Ithwasa lamanzi insingizi yamanzi nolwandle. That's where I was supposed to go after Khambule said he wouldn't be able to help me and be my gobela. But he's been holding my hand all this time and I'm grateful.)

Me : I know.

Nyathuko : I'm not sure if this is how things are done. Sengisho phela ngoba nakhu ugobela wakho namathwasa akhe angibaboni la ngaphandle.

(Magalela is dead)

Me : Can we not talk about it? Ngiyacela Bhambatha. Angithi ukhona u Mzilankatha namathwasa akhe ngakho umsebenzi awuqhubeke.

(I say and look away.)

Nyathuko : Nkosana ka Baba yini le ongangitsheli yona? Ingabe inkinga ilesigodlo engisakhe la kwa Zondi?

Me : Ilokho okufunwa ithongo lami. Ukuthi umsebenzi ngiwenzele la ekhaya ka Zondi.

Nyathuko : Pho yini wangidukela kangaka? Is it about Khulu's death?

Me : Cha

(Khulu died and she was buried without me. Those visions I had in Magalela's house were real.)

Me : Kunento ekufanele ngikutshele yona Bhambatha.

Nyathuko : Yini leyo?

(I want to tell him that Magalela is dead. I want to tell him that Magalela raped me. I want to tell him about everything that happened to me. I want to tell him about the biggest problem that I'm facing but my throat burns.)

Nyathuko : Nkosana ka Baba?

(I blink the tears away and clear my throat)

Me : Idlozi elangingena akulona elakwa Dlomo okanye elakwa Ngcobo

(Definitely not what I wanted to tell him)

Nyathuko : What... What are you saying?

Me : Ngicela ungithembise ukuthi ngeke utshele muntu ngoba lokho kuzongidonsela amanzi mgomsele.

Nyathuko : Zanokuhle what do you mean? Uma kungelona idlozi lakini elikungenile noma elakomalume wakho pho elakephi? Ka Kheswa?

Me : Cha



Nyathuko : Elakuphi?

Me : Elakwa Zungu.

(His big eyes widened. He swallows hard)

Nyathuko : Ini?

Me : Umalume u Nqabayethu uyena ithongo lami.

Nyathuko : Who? Usho muphi u Nqabayethu?

Me : The Ghetto King.

(He rubs his face like a mad man)

Nyathuko : Wait wait. Awuyazi lento oyishoyo? Isigebengu esifana no Nqabayethu singena kanjani kuwena njengedlozi? Nqabayethu was my best friend. Awuhlobene wena Zanokuhle nabantu bakwa Zungu.

Me : Baba umalume u Nqabayethu uyithongo lami. Ungethwese ubizo lukadadewabo lo owa.....

Nyathuko : I know. I know all about it but it doesn't make sense. Ungenwa kanjani idlozi lakomunye umuzi ongesihlobo nakhona lihlale nje kuwena kuze kufike la?

Me : Kuzwakala njengempica badala kodwa sekwenzekile Bhambatha. I told Mzilankatha about it and uthe konke kuyakhanya and I have nothing to worry about.

Nyathuko : Kanjani? Ubizo luyadlulela. Lento ngelinye ilanga iyodlulela ezinganeni zakho.

Me : Cha. Lolu luyofa nami.

Nyathuko : You don't know that.

(He is pacing around)

Nyathuko : u Nqabayethu wangifunani ngempela ngendodana yami? Zanokuhle all your life I've been protecting you from things ezihlangene naye lo Nqabayethu. What was I fighting for uma sekunje?

Me : What do you mean?

Nyathuko : I'm just saying.

Me : Akaseyena lo Nqabayethu owawumazi. I see him and we talk. Unginqobele izimpi engi.... (I sigh)  
uyinqaba yami. Ithongo lami.

(He turns around and looks at me)

Nyathuko : Why you? Why did he choose you?

Me : Akusasho lutho lokho Bhambatha. Ngilamukele ubizo.

Nyathuko : Uyakukhombisa ukuthi wabulawa ubani?

Me : Cha. Lokho ikona kuphela angangicaciseli kona. Ufuna ngiyomenzela inhlambuluko kwa Zungu.

Nyathuko : With his father?

Me : Yes. I need to do it before he dies.

Nyathuko : Nkosana ka Baba you don't have to do this. I'm sure ikhona indlela esingagudluza ngayo lelidlozi lakwa Zungu ku.....

Me : Nondaba Ngiyacela. My life is going in the right direction. Ikona lokhu okwakudaliwe ngami.

(He sighs and his face lightens up)

Nyathuko : I'm proud of you Nkosana yami.

Me : Ngiyazi Nondaba and thank you. Ngiyabonga ngokuba ube uBaba kimi.

(He hugs me)

Nyathuko : Ngiyakuthanda mfana wami.

Me : Ngiyakuthanda nami Baba

Nyathuko : People are waiting for you outside.

Me : Nondaba

(I take isembatho sami and put it on. I fix the ucu around my neck and the beads on my wrists. I take ihawu. My father smiles and walks out. I sigh and look at the small shield in my hand. This is the day that the lord and amathongo have made. I can't believe how far it took me to get here. The days I got sick and almost died. My crazy love life. How I dropped out of school. Everything that happened in Magalela's house is still fresh in my mind. Tears well up in my eyes. I close my eyes and let them rain down my face.)

Me : Ngihawukele thongo lami.

(I whisper. Luyini ubizo? Ubizo is the most painful thing in life. The journey is hard and insane. When all has been said and done my strength remains unshakable. It is time to help my people. I open my eyes and walk out. Amathwasa kaKhambule are here. He is also here. Mzilankatha the man who held my hand this entire journey. My mother looks at me and smiles. Fizisani blows me a kiss with tears streaming down her face. I still love her like I did the first time I saw her. Today Ballito is covered with dust. Ayabubula amathongo.)

Sthenjisiwe : Gida Mkhulu oHot!!

(She screams in the crowd and everyone laughs. I feel umoya taking over my soul and mind. I'm about to deal with it through ukugida when I lift up my head and my eyes spot her in the crowd. Our eyes lock. She makes her way to me and I meet her half way. She stretches her hand and places her hand at the back of my head. I do the same. She presses her forehead against mine.)

Amahle : Thokoza wena wethongo

Me : Thokozani boGogo noMkhulu

(We met again. She is alive.)

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(I don't know where Amahle disappeared after the ceremony yesterday. I'm worried about her. I'm getting ready to go to isigodlo. I need to communicate with ithongo. My mother walks in.)

Sthabile : Zanokuhle

Me : Mah

Sthabile : I'm going to the mall. Do you need anything?

Me : No thanks.

Sthabile : Are you okay?



(I smile.)

Me : I'm fine Mah.

Sthabile : Manje kusho ukuthini ke konke lokhu? Kusho ukuthi sekuzofika abantu bezohlola layikhaya?

(I don't know how to answer her question.)

Me : Isizathu sobizo ikona lokho ukuthi ngisize abantu

(She chuckles and shakes her head.)

Sthabile : Mfana wami we stay in the suburbs. Who do you think will come here for consultation? White people? Lezigwili zabantu abamnyama ezihlala la?

(I sigh.)

Me : I don't know Mah.

Sthabile : Ngiyakuzwa.

Me : Mapholoba unenkinga nokusebenzela kwami la?

Sthabile : No I don't have a problem kodwa ukuthi angifuni ukukubona ungaphansi kwengcindezi. You are too young for this whole thing.

Me : I'll be fine.

Sthabile : u Thukeh usesibhedlela uyobona u Makhosi. Nami ngizophuma ngiye khona. Izingane zise Mhlanga nezingane zika Fisisani.

Me : Oh okay.

Sthabile : Yena ke imubekaphi yonke lento yobizo? She is your girlfriend kanti futhi uyakudinga.

Me : I know ukuthi uyangidinga. Kunezinto engisazenza ezingadingi ukuthi ngisondelane nomuntu wesifazane.

Sthabile : I see. And that girl? Who is she?

Me : Which girl?

Sthabile : Le ebenisho ukuqabulana nayo izolo.

Me : Oh Amahle?

Sthabile : Is her name Amahle?

Me : Yes.

Sthabile : Uyena ke lo owafonela u Thukeh ethi akaphuthume eNxenxetha.

Me : She did what?

Sthabile : You don't know?

Me : No wenzani?

Sthabile : She called your father ngefoni yakho kanti wena wawukuphi?

(I scratch my hair)

Me : No ngangikhona.

(I lie)

Sthabile : Uzogunda nini ikhanda?

Me : Ngizogunda

(She shakes her head)

Sthabile : UBaba wakho naye usethuli manje nemali yami.

Me : What money?

Sthabile : Wathatha imali yami la kade akha lo round osemnyango. Nalenkomo ebidliwa izolo uyithenge ngemali ka Ndlelenhle kodwa manje usethuli

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uthuli nje akasho lutho ke manje. Mina u Thukeh uyangidida sometimes. u busy manje ufaka amarimu amasha kuleyamoto yakhe ebomvu. Ngiyamubuka nje.

(This woman never ceases to amaze me. She is complaining about the money that was spent preparing for my graduation ceremony. I'm her son for crying out loud.)

Me : I'll pay back your money.

Sthabile : Ngoba kwenzenjani?

Me : Hawu Mah angithi ukhalaza ngemali yakho nje so I'll pay it back.

Sthabile : Ithathwe uwena imali noma ithathwe u Thukeh?

Me : Ubeyithathela ukusiza mina nje.

Sthabile : Uthini Zanokuhle? Ulwa nami manje?

(I laugh.)

Me : Ngilwa kanjani manje ngoba siyakhuluma .

Sthabile : Cha uyalwa phela mase uthi uzokhokha imali yami.

Me : Angilwi. Nginayo imali ngizoyikhokha.

Sthabile : noNyathuko unayo imali. Uthe ngimunike uzoyikhokha. Angikutsheli mina lento ngoba ngithi khokha imali yami. Bengikuxoxela nje njengengane yami kodwa ngiyabona ukuthi sengonile ngoba nakhu phela ngumama omubi. Ngiyaxolisa Zanokuhle bengingazi ukuthi sengonile.

Me : Usuwone ngani Mah? Aybo awukahle Mah.

Sthabile : Cha phela angazi noma senihlangene ngami yini nino Baba wakho ngoba nakhu phela nawe undikindiki nje angikutholi kahle selokhu ubuyile.

Me : I'm fine mina.

Sthabile : No you are not fine.

Me : Can I please go?



Sthabile : u Ndlalifa akafuni ukubuya esibhedlela. Uhleli lapha ugqolozele u Makhosi selokhu angeniswa esibhedlela.

Me : Aibo.

Sthabile : I'm telling you. It's bad.

Me : But he needs to come back. Ukuhlala kwakhe esibhedlela ngeke kusize u Makhosazana.

Sthabile : I know but akezwa mshini.

Me : I'll talk to him.

Sthabile : Please do mhlampe wena uzokulalela.

Me : I hope so.

(I sigh. I need to help Makhosazana without doing what I'm required to do. I'm sure there's another way.)

Sthabile : Let me get going. I'll call you.

Me : Okay

(She walks out.)

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(I went to isigodlo. I got the shock of my life. Amahle is here. She is sitting on the floor.)

Me : Amahle?

(She lifts up her head.)

Amahle : Thokoza wena wethongo

Me : Thokozani boGogo noMkhulu

( I sit down and face her)

Me : Yesterday uvele wahamba nje.

Amahle : I know. I had to leave.

Me : What happened?

Amahle : I need your help.

Me : Usizo lwami?

Amahle : Yes. Angiqedanga ukuthwasa

(I swallow.)

Amahle : Kuzofanele ungisize. Nami siyangidinga isigodi sangakithi

Me : Amahle amandla enginawo awangivumeli ukuthi ngibe ugobela. Angiyona inyanga.

Amahle : Uyikho konke.

Me : Kodwa angiyena ugobela.

(She lets out a sigh)

Amahle : Okay.

Me : I appreciate everything you did for me kodwa ngeke ngikwazi ukukusiza.

Amahle : I understand.

(She blinks a couple of times)

Me : Amahle what happened after I left?

Amahle : I don't know kodwa amathwasa asahamba.

Me : What happened to the body?

Amahle : I was confused. I didn't know what to do. Ngavala esigodlweni and I called your father. Ngamuchazela ukuthi kwenzekeni and he came.

Me : What?

Amahle : He came alone. Wafika sekushone ilanga. No one saw him kade engena esigodlweni. Wangitshela ukuthi ngiphume ngibuyele kwamanye amathwasa and I did. Angibuza amathwasa ukuthi wena ukuphi and I told them ukuthi u Mthini uhambe nawe.

Me : What happened after that? What did my father do?

Amahle : I don't know. Ngavuka ngakusasa ngayobheka esigodlweni ngafica angathi akukaze kwenzeke lutho. His body was gone uBaba wakho naye wayesehambile.

Me : Usho ukuthi uBaba wathatha umzimba ka Magalela?

Amahle : Yes. Sahlala namathwasa amasonto amabili. Emuva kwalokho sonke sabona ukuthi asigoduke. They realized that Magalela was not coming back so we left ephehlweni.

Me : Akekho owakusola?

Amahle : Cha. Akekho noyedwa. Bazitshela ukuthi u Magalela uphinde amanye nje amaqhinga akhe.

Me : Kodwa babemuthemba.

Amahle : Emehlweni abantu yes but ngaphakathi bayazi ukuthi u Magalela ubekhohlakele. Alikho ithwasa angakaze alale nalo.

(My heart races)

Me : Umkhovu wakhe wona? Wena wake walala nawo?

Amahle : What?

Me : Angisophinde ngikwazi ukulala nomuntu wesifazane. Awazi ukuthi nginjani la ngaphansi Amahle.

Amahle : What do you mean? Unani Zanokuhle?

(Tears burn in my eyes)

Me : Please leave.



Amahle : Zano....

Me : Please. I need some time alone.

(I look away as tears roll down my face)

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Chapter 27

(Today I have a meeting with my attorney. I'm currently doing my first consultation as owethongo. My first clients are Mr and Mrs Mngoma. They are coming all the way from Ensuze. Don't ask how they got here or who told them about me but they are here.)

Mngoma : Is this all?

(I laugh.)

Me : Yes.

Mngoma : Bengicabanga ukuthi ukubethela umuzi kuzodinga ukuthi ufike ekhaya.

Me : Cha. Angidingi ukufika mathupha ngizobethela umuzi wakho. This will protect you and your family. Amatshe lawa amane amatshe asolwandle. Uzombela itshe ngalinye emakhoneni amane omuzi wakho Baba. Lawa amanzi olwandle uzochela ngawo ekseni kanye nantambama. Ekuseni before sunrise nantambama uma sekushona ilanga.

Mrs Mngoma : Lokho is it going to chase away the bad spirits nalezinto ezigijima phezu kwendlu?

Me : Yes.

Mrs Mngoma : Kanjalo nje?

Me : Yes Mah. Nizongifonela ngizwe ngani ukuthi lemimoya emibi isafika yini.

Mngoma : We will call you.

Me : Thokozani

(They pack everything)

Mngoma : Isizoxhumana Dinangwe.

Me : Khongisa.

(He walks out and I sigh. I look up at the ceiling and smile. I did it. This is my new life and I'm proud of it. I get up and take off ingubo. I wash my hands and head into the main house. I find my father all over my mother's stomach kissing it. I knew Sthabile was pregnant.)

Nyathuko : Ngiyakuthanda uyezwa sthandwa sami?

Sthabile : I love you too Nana.

Nyathuko : Woza phela

(My mother giggles as my father lifts her up and kisses her. I clear my throat)

Me : Sanibona

Sthabile : Zano.

Nyathuko : Thokoza Nkosana ka Baba.

(I laugh)

Me : What are we eating here?

Sthabile : I was busy making breakfast kwafika u Thukena and... khuluma Nana. Uyena ongiphazamisile Zano.

(They both laugh.)

Me : Fine.

Nyathuko : I can fix you something quick.

Me : No no it's okay Baba. I have a meeting with Matshidiso. Ngizodla endleleni

Nyathuko : Oh okay.

Sthabile : When are you going to Phoenix?

Me : Mah please.

(My father looks at her and she shrugs. Ndlelenhle and the twins run down the steps.)

Zibusiso : Mommy please give us the biscuits.

Nyathuko : Hey! Come here. Anisezi kuBaba nina manje?

(They run to him. These kids give me a headache.)

Zothani : Daddy my hair is itching

Zibusiso : Daddy did we finish the biscuits?

Ndlelenhle : Mah? Mah? Mah look.

Me : Jesus.

(I whisper.)

Nyathuko : Sekugugile my princess. UBaba uzokuqaqa.

Sthabile : Hhaibo kade beluka last week?

Nyathuko : No Sthah. Buka kunjani sthandwa sami.

Zibusiso : Daddy!

Sthabile : Zibusiso no!! Ngeke nidle amakhekhe manje. It's still early for sugar

Zibusiso : You said the same thing yesterday

Sthabile : And I'm saying it again.

Zibusiso : Uyabona ke u Mah.

(Tears fill up Zibusiso's eyes.)



Nyathuko : No come here

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come here princess. UBaba uzokunika.

Sthabile : Thukeh I said no. Why wona lezingane? Ufuna zizonde mina angithi?

(My father chuckles)

Nyathuko : What? No. Kodwa nawe Sthah ulokhu uncisha izingane izinto kuze kube inini?

Sthabile : Uyabazi banjani mase bedle ushukela. U Ndlelenhle ubephalaza la izolo.

Me : Aw Mah kahle bo.

Sthabile : I'm serious. Ask him.

Me : No give them biscuits. Yazi Mah izingane ziyizingelosi. The time you give them something zijabula zibonga namadlozi ayajabula.

Sthabile : Oh don't start with that nonsense.

(I shake my head. It's true. Kids are so innocent that the ancestors live within them most of the time. When they are happy their happiness rubs on the ancestors. Don't ask me how. It's true)

Me : Let me leave you and your biscuit war.

(My father laughs. We fist bump and I walk away.)

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(My meeting with Matshidiso got delayed and we had to meet up later.)

Me : What do you mean?

Matshidiso : They may appeal. Zithulele said there is new evidence.

Me : Evidence?

Matshidiso : A recording where the late Miss Mhayise explains what really happened the night Mr Nqabayethu Zungu died.

Me : Really? Ten years later they discovered that recording?

Matshidiso : Yes. I asked him to send me the recording but he repudiated.

Me : Why?

Matshidiso : Apparently he envisioned it's better he hands it over to his attorney.

(She laughs and shakes her head.)

Me : But this is great right?

Matshidiso : It is (sighs) I just hope the recording is legit. It's time we put this case to rest.

Me : Exactly. The killers need to rot in jail and...

(I pause when I see my mother walking inside the restaurant with another man. They are laughing. That is definitely not my father.)

Matshidiso :..... Heads up because we can't predict the future.

Me : Mhmmm

Matshidiso : Are you okay?

(He pulls out a chair for her and she sits down with a wide smile on her face.)

Me : Yeah yeah I'm okay. Are we done here?

Matshidiso : Yes... Oh my baby!

(There is a muscular man standing next to us with a baby in his arms. Matshidiso jumps and grabs the baby with so much excitement)

Matshidiso : Hey baby girl

(She kisses the baby)

Matshidiso : You guys came. I told you I was going to be fine.

(My eyes are locked on that table where my mother is cheating.)

Matshidiso : Where are my manners? Baby this is my client. Zanoluhle the one I told you about?

Him : Uh!

Matshidiso : Yes my love. Mr Dlomo this is my fiance Naleli Mabalane.

(He is young like Matshidiso. But oh well)

Me : Mr Mabalane sir

Naleli : Hey

(He smiles as we exchange handshake)

Matshidiso : And this here is our angel Lebati.

Me : Hey baby girl.

(Their daughter is cute but I need to go. Her fiance is already all hands on her. I see he behaves like my father when he is around my mother.)

Matshidiso : I'll call you.

Me : Sure

Matshidiso : Please take care of yourself.

Me : Will do.

Naleli : Let me take her.



Matshidiso : Okay

(He gives him the baby and her bags. She wraps her hand around her fiance's arm. She is carrying nothing. Yey! women!! They will kill us one day. )

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(I decided to keep quiet and leave my mother. I drove back home. I found my father sitting on the steps. He immediately lifts up his head)

Nyathuko : Oh Nkosana ka Baba

(He sounds disappointed to see me)

Me : Ubuzitshela ukuthi u Mah.

(He shakes his head. Saying he looks like hell would be a lie. He looks worse than hell.)

Me : Baba uphi u Mah?

(I ask knowing exactly where I left her)

Nyathuko : I don't know. She is not answering her phone.

Me : What's going on?

(He blows out a sigh)

Nyathuko : It's time mfan'wami.

Me : Time to do what?

(He gulps)

Nyathuko : To let your mother go. She wants a divorce.

Me : Ini?

(My heart races. I swallow hard)

Nyathuko : Yeah.

Me : How? Why? I mean you guys were fine this morning. Kwenzekeni Baba? Ukwenzeni uMah?

Nyathuko : My past refuses to let me go so I need to let this go.

(He stands up and walks past me)

Me : Baba ungahambi. Tell me what's going on.

Nyathuko : I can't talk now.

Me : Umsangano yonke lento. She is pregnant Baba. Anikwazi ukuhlukana. Isukaphi ngempela yonke lento?

Nyathuko : Ngicela sibuye sikhulume Dinangwe.

Me : Baba ningayenzi lento kuthina.

(He shakes his head)

Me : Please don't go. Ngiyakudinga. Icala lika malume Nqabayethu lizovuka. Malume Mzet has a recording.

(His eyes move around)

Nyathuko : A recording?

Me : Yes. Echaza ngokwenzeka the day he died.

Nyathuko : Okay.

Me : Baba?

(He walks out just like that. He is dealing with something bigger than Nqabayethu's case. My mother can't do this.)

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## Chapter 28

(I slept in Phoenix. The situation back home was too hard to handle. For the whole night Fisisani was trying to touch me. I couldn't give her what she wanted and when she finally gave up she slept and I cried myself to sleep. We just woke up now. I know she is awake. She keeps sniffing)

Me : Sthandwa sami?

(She ignores me)

Me : Okay.

(I get up)

Fizisani : Is it her?

Me : Who?

Fizisani : u Amahle. Uyena lentombazane olala nayo?

Me : Don't be ridiculous.

Fizisani : It's her!!!!

(She yells and hit the pillow)

Fizisani : Wahamba la uthi uyephehlweni wafike wangifebela Zanokuhle!

Me : That's madness.

Fizisani : It isn't. Ulala khona angithi?

Me : Kephi?

Fizisani : e Westville. Ingakho umawakho athi ngibuye ngoba wayazi ukuthi kuzohlala wena nomakhwaphehi wakho!

Me : Why ikuphatha kabi kangaka lendaba yokuthi asihlali e Westville?



Fizisani : We made promises Zanokuhle!! Mina nawe bekufanele siqale izimpilo zethu kade uphuma ephehlweni kodwa cha! Ngoba vele umawakho uyangizonda ukhiphe mina kuleyandlu wafaka leliyaqhasha lakho lethwasa!

Me : Amahle doesn't stay in Westville.

Fizisani : Who do you think you are fooling?

Me : Ay angisazi ke Njinji ukuthi ufuna ngithini.

Fizisani : Ukuya kothwasa kwakho inhloso yakho bekuwukhluhanisa thina angithi? Lolubizo lwakho.....

Me : Manqondo Cha.

(I stop her before she goes further)

Fizisani : Zanokuhle ngiyakukhumbula. Ngikhumbule indoda yami. Umzimba wami udinga umuntu weslisa but you are pushing me away.

Me : Kunezinto engisazenza

Fizisani : Fuck that

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Cha.

(I stop her before she goes further)

Fizisani : Zanokuhle ngiyakukhumbula. Ngikhumbule indoda yami. Umzimba wami udinga umuntu weslisa but you are pushing me away.

Me : Kunezinto engisazenza

Fizisani : Fuck that Zano!! I need you.

(Tears roll down her cheeks. I can't. I walk out. I went straight to my car and drove to Machobeni.)

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(Ndlalifa is lying on the grass outside. His hands are covering his face. What is he doing outside so early?  
I park the car and get out.)

Me : Gcwabe

(He gets up)

Ndlalifa : Hey zalo

Me : Walala emnyango. Seziyakushiya yini?

(He shakes his head and rubs his eyes. He was crying. My heart breaks)

Me : Zalo what's wrong?

(I sit down next to him.)

Ndlalifa : I fucked up

Me : Where is Makhosi?

Ndlalifa : She is inside. Kade eqeda ukuphuza amaphilisi walala.

Me : And you? Why aren't you sleeping?

Ndlalifa : I can't sleep. The devil won't let me rest.

Me : Zalo....

Ndlalifa : Yazi usathane uyangihlebela ukuthi ayikho into ezolunga empilweni yami. Uyangitshela ukuthi yonke nje lento engiyifisa ngempilo yami iyize. Into engasoze yenzeka. I just ruined one thing obekuyiyona ebalulekile empilweni yami.

Me : Wenzeni?

(He shakes his head and lies down. I lie down too)

Me : Why impilo inzima kangaka?

Ndlalifa : I don't know but I need a break.

Me : Me too.

(I sigh.)

Me : Ndlalifa kuzofanele uqondise impilo yakho.

Ndlalifa : I know.

Me : u Mah no Baba bafuna usehlukaniso

Ndlalifa : Ini?

(He looks at me)

Me : Yah. Into engithusayo ukuthi no Baba ukulungele lokho.

(I sigh and rub my face.)

Ndlalifa : They can't. You need to stop them.

Me : As much as ngazi ukuthi my mother doesn't deserve my father but ngiyazi ukuthi ayikho indoda eyomelana no Sthabile. Only my father can handle her. Angathi babunjwa okhambeni olulodwa and now my mother wants to ruin that. Yini inkinga ka Sthabile?

Ndlalifa : Uzohamba. She will leave you ehambe eyoshada nenye indoda.

Me : Indoda engeke imumele! Yazi u Mah.

Ndlalifa : You don't want to lose your mother. Zalo everyday I miss my mother. Ngifisa angathi angabe ula eduze kwami ungisiza ngo Makhosazana. Lokho kungenza ngizibuze ukuthi u Makhosazana yena engabu....

Me : Wenzani?

(He shakes his head)

Ndlalifa : Nothing.



Me : I know what you did.

(He swallows. His forehead is sweaty)

Ndlalifa : I killed her.

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Chapter 29

(From the moment he came here I knew there was darkness hanging over him but this? This is nothing compared to what I imagined)

Me : You killed her?

Ndlalifa : For my mother yes I did. Loyamfazi ubengamufanele u Baba uMakhedama.

(We are now sitting in my car. This is deep. I close the windows.)

Me : You killed your girlfriend's mother ukuze umawakho ezothandana no Baba wentombi yakho?  
Ndlalifa uyahlanya?

Ndlalifa : I was angry okay?! She kept pushing me. Wangilandela ngiya emfuleni and she kept telling me how useless I am!

Me : You killed a woman! Your mother in law!

Ndlalifa : I did. I did!! Futhi angizisoli. I killed her and I killed my grandfather.

(I can't. I can't talk. Something big is stuck in my throat. What did Ndlalifa say?)

Ndlalifa : She kept telling me ukuthi ayikho into ezongilungela. Wathi angiyilutho ngiwuskhotheri owaphikwa uBaba. I drowned her. Ngamufaka ngekhandela emfuleni waze wafa and I left.

Me : You killed your grandfather?

Ndlalifa : Yes. Umngani ka Mah u MaNtuli told me ukuthi leyandoda tried to rape my mother so I went to the hospital ngamucindezela ngomcamelo waze wafa.

Me : Uyaphila wena kahle ekhanda?

Ndlalifa : I'll kill for my mother. Injabulo ka Mah injabulo yami. Her pain is mine!

Me : Get out of my car.

Ndlalifa : Ini?

Me : Phuma Zalo Phuma.

Ndlalifa : Wawufuna ngenzeni Zalo? Huh? Kwakufanele ngenzeni?

Me : Ndlalifa angifuni ukukhuluma nawe manje. Please get out.

Ndlalifa : Ngiyaxolisa

Me : Get out.

(He sighs and gets out. I hit my head against the steering wheel. What has Ndlalifa done? I sigh and get out of the car. I went inside to see Makhosazana. She is sitting on the bed like she's been sick for years. Her ankles are swollen. Her stomach is huge.)

Makhosazana : Zanokuhle

(She whispers my name. Her mouth is so dry. Ithongo believes I can help her but how?. I try to fight back my tears but I fail. They run down. I shake my head and walk out. I ran back into my car and drove away.)

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(I arrived in Ballito and parked my car in the garage. I undo my jeans and take a glance at my dick. My skin shivers.)

Me : Ahhh!!!

(I scream while banging the steering wheel. I break down. I should have been the one to take Magalela's life. I get out and head inside. I find Sthabile sitting on the couch. I don't know what she is squeezing out from her nipples.)

Me : Yini inkinga yakho wena?

Sthabile : Excuse me?

(She asks while inserting her breast under her shirt)

Me : Ngithi yini inkinga yakho Sthabile Zondi? Noma ngithini ngithi Ngcobo?

Sthabile : Are you talking to me?

Me : Yini ufebela uBaba wena?

Sthabile : weJesu wami ngicela uzongizwisa. Ngiyavivinywa. Yazi ngiyavivinywa ngisehlane.

Me : After everything Baba has done for you. After all the shit he had to put up with you wena wenza kanje?

Sthabile : we Zanokuhle ungangidakelwa.

Me : Why are you so ungrateful?

Sthabile : Ukhuluma ngani?

Me : Mah I know. I know ukuthi ufuna ukuhlukana no Baba and that shit is unfair Sthabile. Usicabangelile thina?

Sthabile : You don't know what.....

Me : No I know. You are selfish! You are toxic! u toxic wena Mah! Usebenzisa ukuthi uBaba uyakuthanda and you are using that against him!

Sthabile : Ubiza mina ngo toxic?

Me : Yes yes you!! Uswele umuntu ozokutshela. Mina angikusabi

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yes you!! Uswele umuntu ozokutshela. Mina angikusabi Sthabile so I will tell you for free. Ufuna uBaba ehlala ejabulisa wena kulomshado. Into endala nje leyo yakho. Ufuna ukujabula wena while u Baba ehlala efa i stress ngenxa yakho. What do you bring in this marriage? Nothing!! You bring nothing ngaphandle kwalezingane ezigcwele indlu and your stinking attitude.

Sthabile : Yey wengane ungangikhulumeli isikigi!



Me : Isikigi iyona ke lento oyifunza u Baba everyday. Uyasihlukumeza wena!

(She blinks a couple of times)

Sthabile : Oh Ngiyabona. Uthunyelwe usathane kimi.

(She stands up)

Sthabile : Lalela la. Awazi lutho wena ngomshado wami no Thukeh. Ufuna ukwazi ngo Baba wakho angithi? UBaba wakho isfebe. Isfebe engasithola siyisfebe futhi esiyoze sife sifeba. For years ngihleli kulomshado uThukeh engifebela engibuyela nezifo but I stayed. Zingifonela izifebe zakhe zingithuka zingithakatha but I stayed!! Ngahlala ngathatha yonke into ngayifaka phansi komcamelo ngoba ngenzela nina izingane zami. Ngawafihla amahlazo ami no Thukeh ngoba ngifuna ukujabulisa izingane zami kodwa namhlanje ingane inesibindi sokuma la phambi kwami ingitshele ukuthi ngi TOXIC!!!

(Tears rain down her face)

Sthabile : Zanokuhle bengihlala kuleliyagumbi eliphezulu ngilinde uyihlo esayofeba. Ngikhale ngize ngizithulise. You know what? I'm tired. I am tired!!!!

Me : You can't be tired. Not now Mah. I am dealing with so much. Ngicela ungayenzi lento kuthina. Ungayenzi lento kumina Mah. Ngiyakucela.

(She shakes her head)

Sthabile : I'm tired Zanokuhle.

Me : He loves you Mah.

Sthabile : He does but not enough to make me his one and only. u Zip weblukwe lika Thukeh uyoze ebe ixhegu uxega. uNyathuko uyawathanda amathanga.

Me : You drive him away. Mah uwena owenza u Baba ehambe ebheka amanye amathanga.

Sthabile : Sekuyimi futhi manje?

Me : It's you... It's....

(I can't talk anymore. I break down and walk away.)

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Chapter 30

(After a dream I had I woke up and drove to Mzinyathi. I left Fizisani thinking I was going out to cheat on her. Women are really something else.)

Khambule : Ngena Dinangwe

(I release a sigh and walk in. I throw myself on a grass mat)

Me : Mzilankatha ngiyaxolisa Baba ukukufikela ngesikabhadakazi.

Khambule : No it's okay. Is everything alright?

Me : No

Khambule : Kuphambana kuphi nendawo?

Me : Kufanele ngilale nentombi ka mfowethu ukuze ngizokhipha lelilumbo ngilitshale kimi.

Khambule : Yah. Yah .

(He shakes his head continuously. He understands what I'm talking about.)

Me : How am I going to do it? Obami ubudoda phela bashabalala kade u Magalela engiphoqa ukuthi ngilale nomkhovu wakhe.

(He swallows)

Me : Ngasha Mzilankatha. Ngasha kakhulu.

Khambule : I know. I was there when you got out of the river and I welcomed you. Kwawena wawungaboni ukuthi....

Me : I know so how am I supposed to do this? Ithongo lithi ngilale kanjani naye?

(He stretches out his legs and grabs ishoba)

Khambule : weDinangwe? Kunento ongayiqondi la wena wethongo. Wena awuseyena umuntukazana nje wasemhlabeni. Wena ungumntwana wethongo which means you don't get to do things like any other man. Do you ever wonder why most of your relationships didn't work?

Me : Because kwakufanele ngamukele ubizo.

(He shakes his head)

Khambule : No ngoba elakho ithongo lifuna inono. Elakho ithongo lalingafuni ukuhlala kumuntu ohamba elala nje nanoma yimuphi umuntu wesifazane. Umzimba ohleli ithongo uyahlonishwa. Uma ungakwazi ukuwuhlonipha wena liyazenzela lona ukuthi uwuhloniphe.

Me : Ngiyakwazi lokho.

Khambule : Uyabona intombazane le esempilweni yakho njengamanje? She is the one. Uyena lo ofunwa ithongo lakho kodwa wena amathongo akhe awakufuni.

(I sigh)

Khambule : Kuzoba kuwena mfana wami. Singalishadisa ithongo lakhe nelakho. Sakhe ukuthula noxolo.

Me : I love Fisisani I love her so much kodwa ngithe ngiphuma lapha emanzini ngaphuma kwanezinto ezishintshile ngami. I don't think I need a woman in my life.

Khambule : Is it because of....

Me : Cha Cha. Akuhlangene nobudoda bami.

Khambule : I respect that.

Me : So my life is no longer mine?

Khambule : No. Wena sekuphila ithongo kuwe. Nokukhipha ilumbo akuwena ozokwenza kodwa ithongo eliphila kuwe.

Me : What do you mean? Usho ukuthi akumina ozolala no Makhosazana kodwa uNqaba....

Khambule : He is no longer Nqabayethu to you. Usewumoya okanye ithongo.

Me : That's what I meant. So umoya iwona ozolala no Makhosazana?

Khambule : Yes. Kanjalo nomuntu wesifazane osempilweni yakho uma sekuza kwinkonzo yasekamelweni akuwena oyolala naye kodwa ithongo lakho so you don't have to worry about what happened to you ephehlweni. Okwenzeka kufana nokwakudalwe yilo ithongo. Wena wethongo you have nothing to worry about. There's a way forward.



(Now I understand. Everything is clear now. I'm ready to help Makhosazana.)

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(From uMzinyathi I went to Umhlanga Beach. I watched the ocean till late and after that I drove to Emachobeni to see Ndlalifa and Makhosazana.)

Ndlalifa : What do you mean mawuthi uzolala noMakhosi?

(I'm looking at this girl that I found here. I'm only realizing now that there's a stranger in this house and Makhosazana is crying.)

Ndlalifa : Hey! Hey! Zanokuhle buka mina. Ngila mina. Buka mina!

(He pulls my chin and forces me to look at him)

Me : Yah yah.

Makhosazana : Yah what? Zano uphuzile?

Me : Can this woman leave?

Ndlalifa : Usaqhunsule um'bombo la wena!! I said leave! Hamba Linda!

(She pushes her out. She tries to protest but Ndlalifa is stronger than her so he manages to get her out and he locks the door. In a blink of an eye my neck is tightened in his hand. He is strangling me)

Ndlalifa : Are you sleeping with my girlfriend?

Makhosazana : Ndlalifa stop it!! Mudedele.

Ndlalifa : Iyona ndlela osikhokhisa ngayo le ngokuhlala la kini? Ukuthi wena ulale nentombi yami? Huh?

(He is enraged. I can't speak. He is strangling me.)

Makhosazana : Mumbo ngiyacela yeka lento oyenzayo. Hawu Ndlalifa awusangidabukeli ngigula kanje kodwa. Please leave Zanokuhle alone.

Ndlalifa : No No!!!

Me : I....

(I knock his stomach with my knee. He let go of me)

Me : Usuyahlanya?

(I cough)

Ndlalifa : Uwena ohlanyayo!

Me : Do you think I want to do this? Ucabanga ukuthi mina ngingafuna ukulala nentombi ka bafo?  
Ndlalifa you are my brother!! Angisoze ngafuna ukukuzwisa ubuhlungu but I have to do this. I have to do it for you and her!

Ndlalifa : Uyahlanya!

Me : Awufuni kuphume lelilumbo eligcwele isisu sika Makhosi?

(They look at each other)

Me : Akuwona umdlavuza lo. Ilumbo.

(Gulps)

Me : Ilumbo engingakwazi ukuthi ngilikhiphe.

Ndlalifa : Ey fakof!! Ulikhiphe ngokulala nentombi yami? Ungavele uyeke! Yeka

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Zanokuhle!

Makhosazana : Ndlalifa is right. I....

Me : You are going to die.

Ndlalifa : Stop threatening my girlfriend! Ulokhu umsabisa la ngoba ufuna ukulala naye. Get out! Phuma Zanokuhle.

Me : Bafo

(He punches me.)

Ndlalifa : I said get out!!!

Me : Okay

Ndlalifa : Wait thatha nemali kamawakho futhi. We don't need it. Where is it Makhosi?

Makhosazana : Ingaphansi komcamelo

Ndlalifa : Ngilinde la. Uyithathe.

(I shake my head. I walk out go into my car and drive home. Maybe this was too soon.)

BALLITO

(I feel so drained. I don't want to fight with Ndlalifa. That is the last thing I need in my life. I feel depressed. I park the car and drag myself inside the house. I bump into my father walking down the steps with two suitcases. My mother is following him with a bag. They don't seem happy. They are not. I know my parents.)

Nyathuko : I'll pick up the rest tomorrow.

Sthabile : Okay.

Me : What's going on here?

Nyathuko : Nkosana ka Baba.

Me : No! What's going on here? Uyaphi Baba?

Sthabile : Ngicela ukhulumele phansi. Uzovusa izingane.

Me : I don't care! Uyaphi uBaba?

Nyathuko : I'm leaving.

Me : Why?



Sthabile : Wazibuzisa manje. Angithi uyazi ukuthi Thukeh and I are getting a divorce.

Me : No no!!!

Sthabile : Zanokuhle ngicela ungenzi izinto zibe nzima. Sesiqedile ukukhuluma ngalento

(I grab my father's hand)

Me : Baba please. Please don't go. Ungahambi Baba wami ngiyakucela. Ngiyakucela Baba ungangishiyi.

Nyathuko : I have to do this my boy.

Me : No no Ngiyakucela.

Nyathuko : Nizongivakashela noma inini. You are still my son. Ngiyanithanda wena no....

Me : You can't leave!! Don't do this to us. Ningayenzi lento kuthina.

Sthabile : Zanokuhle please. Awukahle ukuzenza ingane.

Me : Shut up Sthabile!!

Nyathuko : Zanokuhle!!

(He glares at me. My mother's phone rings. )

Nyathuko : That's enough!

Sthabile : Wandile?

(She answers)

Sthabile : Slow down slow down. Uthi kwenzenjani?

(We are both looking at her)

Sthabile : Ini? Fisisani did what?

(Her eyes widen)

Sthabile : Hhaibo!!!

Me : What's going on?

Sthabile : Okay okay.

(She hung up)

Sthabile : Kuyasha e Westville. Fisisani has burned down your house.

(What the hell?)

Me : Wenzeni?

Sthabile : Iyasha indlu yakho. I told you ukuthi iyahlanya lentombazane!

(My father takes his bag from Sthabile)

Sthabile : Nyathuko uyezwa kodwa ukuthi kwenzekani e Westville?

Nyathuko : Yes

Sthabile : Uzohamba kodwa?

Nyathuko : What do you want me to do?

Sthabile : Usho....

Nyathuko : Sthabile akuseyona inkinga yami le. Bye Zano.

(He says and drags out his suitcases. I can't believe this is happening. He is done with us. What has Fizisani done? What is happening?. I'm losing my mind.)

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## Chapter 31

(I drove to Westville where I found my house on fire. I just sat down. The firefighters took their time but they finally arrived.)

Fizisani : Call the police. Ngibophise ke Zanokuhle!!!

( I shake my head)

Fizisani : Angithi uhlala nalesfebe sakho la. What was I supposed to do?

(My mother's car pulls off. She gets out)

Sthabile : Jesu Mariya Josefa. Fizisani what have you done?

Me : Mah? Mah it's okay.

Sthabile : Nothing is okay! Lentombazane iyenza kanjani into enje? Uyasangana Fizisani?

Fizisani : Mhlampe ngiyasangana.

Sthabile : I warned Zanokuhle about you.

Fizisani : Vele awungifuni and that's why you brought that bitch to come and stay here.

Me : Fizisani....

Fizisani : No leave me alone. Umawakho ungijezisela ukuthi ngizele.

Me : Vele uzele! Uzele izingane okungezona ezika Zanokuhle. You want to destroy my son's life. Buka wenzeni.

Fizisani : And I'm not sorry! Yini? Uwena okhethela u Zanokuhle ukuthi ejole nobani?

Me : I'm his mother!

Fizisani : You are the one who's destroying his life. Wonke amantombazane ashiya u Zanokuhle ngenxa yakho. Ufuna elale nawe yini?



Me : Fisisani that's enough!!!

(Sthabile throws a hard slap across her face)

Sthabile : Uyangidakelwa wena ngane! Zanokuhle call the police.

Me : Mah please.

Sthabile : Ushise indlu yakho. She deserves to go to jail!

Fisisani : I don't care!!

(I didn't know Fisisani was this crazy.)

Fizisani : Angilisabi ijeli mina!

(I can't do this. I get inside the car and drive off. If they want to kill each other then I'll leave them to it.)

(I'm still on my way to Emachobeni when my phone rings. It's Mzet)

Me : Malume

Mzet : Ey boy. How are you?

Me : I'm fine

Mzet : Good. Look we need to talk.

Me : Yeah?

Mzet : Yes. Where are you?

Me : No it's okay. We can talk now.

Mzet : I need to see you. Angifuni sikhulume efonini.

Me : Oh okay.

Mzet : Yes. Are you available tomorrow?

Me : Yeah sure. Is this about the business?

Mzet : Something like that.

Me : Eish. Ummeli wami angazi noma uzobe ekhona yini ksasa.

Mzet : No

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sure. Is this about the business?

Mzet : Something like that.

Me : Eish. Ummeli wami angazi noma uzobe ekhona yini ksasa.

Mzet : No no no. No lawyers.

Me : Oh.

Mzet : I want this to stay between you and I.

Me : Okay.

Mzet : I need you to come alone kanti futhi no Thukeh ungamutsheli lutho. Sengisho ngomuhlangano esizoba nawo.

Me : Alright.

Mzet : Good boy.

Me : Asibonane ksasa.

Mzet : Zanokuhle?

Me : Malume

Mzet : No Thukeh no lawyers. Is that clear?

(I frown)

Me : Yeah yeah. Clear.

Mzet : Good.

(He hung up. I look at my phone and shake my head. This guy is drunk. I dial Mkhulu's number.)

Me : Mkhulu

Maxwell : Boy how are you holding up?

Me : Not good.

Maxwell : What's going on?

Me : Is Baba there?

Maxwell : Nyathuko? No. Kwenzenjani?

Me : He left. Yena no Mah bahlukene

(He laughs)

Me : Ngiqinisile Mkhulu. This time it's serious.

Maxwell : I know my son futhi ngiyazi ukuthi akasoze aphila ngaphandle kuka Sthabile.

Me : You don't understand. Uthe akasenandaba nathi.

Maxwell : They fight all the time. He was probably angry. Uzobuya. Uthini yena u Sthabile?

Me : Uyamazi uMah.

Maxwell : Mfan'wami ungazikhathazi. Everything is going to be fine. They love each other. Umshado unezingqinamba kanti lokhu okwenzekayo ezinye zazo.

Me : I'll never survive without my father.



Maxwell : Your father will come back home. Look why don't you come over and.....

Me : I won't be able to make it today. How about tomorrow?

Maxwell : Kusasa kulungile.

Me : Ngiyabonga Mkhulu

Maxwell : Ufike noNdlalifa.

(I sigh)

Me : Okay.

Maxwell : Take care of yourself my boy. Umkhulu uyakuthanda

Me : I love you too Mkhulu.

(I hung up and proceeded with my journey to Emachobeni.)

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(Fizisani followed me all the way to Emachobeni. She smashed my car and broke the window of the house. I think I've had enough.)

Fizisani : Kusho ukuthi awuzokhuluma nami.

Me : No I don't want to talk.

Fizisani : Zanoluhle where are you hiding her?

Me : Fiza please. Angifuni ukulwa nawe.

Fizisani : Ngithe ngiyaxolisa

Me : And I forgive you.

Fizisani : Akubukeki kanjalo.

Me : Ngicela uthenge lezinto ozidingayo sigoduke siye ekhaya.

Fizisani : Fine

(I open the door for her and she gets out. I watch her walk away and shake my head. She is more crazy than I thought and I don't think I could handle this.)

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## Chapter 32

Nqabayethu : She is running out of time wena wethongo.

Me : I can't help her. Akulona ilumbo leli

(He picks up a stone and looks at me. He smiles and throws the stone inside the ocean)

Nqabayethu : Kunento okufanele uyiqonde. Uyabona ilumbo lakhe selizishintshile lazenza umdlavuza. Uzokwendela kwelamathongo uma wena ungakwazi ukumusiza.

Me : They won't let me help her.

Nqabayethu : Unamandla adlula lamazwi owaphimisa ngomlomo wakho.

Me : He is like a brother to me.

Nqabayethu : And that's why amathongo ekhethe wena ukuthi umsize. Ukuhlangana kwenu emfuleni kwakungeyona impazamo.

Me : I want to help him.

Nqabayethu : And you will. Aqalile amathongo afuna uwanike indlebe ekhulume nawe. Listen listen wena wethongo. Listen.

(I immediately sat up. Dammit! Another dream. Wait there is something in my ears. I touch my ears and ants start coming out of my ears. I jumped out of bed.)

Fizisani : What's wrong? Zanoluhle what's wrong?

Me : I....

Fizisani : Aibo izintuthwane.

(I run inside the shower. I run water and press my forehead against the wall.)

Fizisani : Baby are you okay?

(I exhale)

Me : I'm fine. Go back to bed.

Fizisani : No I don't want to sleep

(She opens the door)

Fizisani : Why ugeza ugqokile?

Me : Fizisani ngicela ungiyeke.

Fizisani : Are your ancestors angry about what I did? Ingakho izintuthwane zi.....

Me : Please excuse me

(I walk past her.)

Fizisani : Zanokuhle kwenzenjani?

Me : Nothing. I'm going to my parents' house.

Fizisani : At this time?

Me : Ey Fizisani ngiyanqena ukukhuluma.

(I head out)

Fizisani : Uzohamba umanzi kanjalo?



Me : Yes

(I walk out and go straight to my car)

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(I arrived in Ballito. My mother is already awake. She is drinking wine already. There is an envelope next to her)

Me : UBaba ephuma nje layikhaya usuzinikele otshwaleni. I thought they said alcohol is not good for you nenhliziyoyakho

Sthabile : Where is Fizisani?

Me : u Fizisani akayona inkinga yakho.

Sthabile : Ufake zonke izingane zakhe ezikoleni zabelungu. Uyayazi kahle lento oyenzayo?

Me : Yes I know what I'm doing. Imali yami angithi?

Sthabile : Imali ezophela. Zanokuhle awushadile wena no Fizisani. You can't take her kids to fancy schools

Me : Inkinga yakho unehaba. Are those the forms from school?

Sthabile : No it's divorce papers. Alethwe ummeli izolo

Me : What?

Sthabile : Yes. UBaba wakho uthi akafuni ukuphuma nalutho kulomshado. He is leaving everything for us.

(She gulps down her wine)

Sthabile : He is acting like a victim. Yazi uNyathuko ave ezenza u clever. Usegijime waya kwa-Mashu eyobatshela ukuthi mina ngiqomile.

Me : I'm glad he did. Angithi nami ngakubona uhamba nendoda

Sthabile : So what? Yazi nina niyangihlekisa ngoba uNyathuko nimenza ungawe ngawe. Your father was cheating on me throughout out marriage. Ngimubambe nalesfebe ehlukane naso ethole esinye. He kept doing the same thing over and over again. Ayke uthe engangibona nendoda eyodwa nje engingathandani nokuthandana nayo wahlanya. Akahlanye ngeke mina ngimuncenge.

Me : Sthabile what happened ngempela?

Sthabile : It doesn't matter. I'm going to sign the papers. Iyodwa kuphela into engizocela engisize ngayo ukuthi nje ngingamulandeli ngesondlo sezingane zakhe.

Me : Mah

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Me : What?

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Me : Mah please don't do this. Ngicela nihlale phansi noBhambatha nilungise izinto.

Sthabile : Are you wet?

(She looks at me from head to toe)

Me : Uyangizwa kodwa ukuthi ngithini?

Sthabile : Okungapheli kuyahlola Zanokuhle. Nyathuko and I are over. Get used to it.

(Zibusiso run down the steps)

Zibusiso : Daddy is not in bed again.

Sthabile : Yes my princess. UBaba akekho uyofeba.

(She takes the envelope and walks away)

Zibusiso : Bhuti?

Me : Come here Princess.

(I lift her up)

Me : It's going to be okay alright? Baba will...

(My phone vibrates. It's a message from Mzet)

Message : Tonight 20h00. I'll send you the location. Remember no Thukeh no lawyers.

(I finish reading the message and take a deep breath)

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## Chapter 33

(I wonder where Amahle is. I really need somebody to talk to and she is that person. Right now I feel like I have no one. Maybe I shouldn't have accepted my calling. My life is falling apart and I blame ubizo. Sthabile knocks on my door. I open for her)

Sthabile : Usuzolala kushone ilanga ngempela?

Me : Akumina okuhlukanise no Baba

Sthabile : Angizwanga?



Me : Don't take out your frustrations on me.

Sthabile : I don't have time for this.

Me : Yini le?

Sthabile : This was delivered for you

Me : From?

Sthabile : I don't know. Open it

(Ndlelenhle screams for her)

Sthabile : Jesu ave ngizozibulala izingane zika Nyathuko. Niyothi ngasho

(I laugh)

Sthabile : I'll be back now. Open it.

Me : Okay

(She walks away. I open the door and open the box. Wow this is from Mr and Mrs Mngoma. The married couple who came to see me? Yes. They are thanking me for helping them. I smile)

Me : I helped them. I did!

(I sigh in relief. This has to be the best day of my life. They even gave me a beautiful beaded bracelet.)

Me : Thokozani Mathongo.

(I put on the bracelet. I wish my father was here. He was going to be so proud of me. I pick up my phone and dial his number. He is not answering. Am I disappointed? Yes I am. Sthabile walks back in.)

Sthabile : What is it?

Me : Ubuhlalu. Umndeni wakwa Mngoma ubungibonga for helping them.

Sthabile : Really?

Me : Yes Mah.

Sthabile : Kusho ukuthi ngempela uyisangoma. Usukwazi ukusiza abantu?

(I sigh)

Me : Yes. Ngifisa angabe uBaba ubekhona nje ukubona konke lokhu

Sthabile : Usho uNkazimulo?

Me : Cha Mah ngisho uBaba wami u Nyathuko.

(She shakes her head)

Sthabile : My boy listen. u Nyathuko uzikhethele indlela afuna ukuyihamba. Asikwazi ukumuvimba

Me : Kodwa uyakuthanda

Sthabile : Maybe. u Thukeh uyisoka isoka lamanyala. Ukungithanda kona uyangithanda futhi angikungabazi lokho kodwa uthando analo ngami aluyiqedi inkanuko anayo.

Me : Kodwa nawe you are always accusing him ngezinto angazenzanga

Sthabile : Asiyiyeke yonke lento. Zanokuhle I'm proud of you. Ngyazi ukuthi bengilungabaza ubizo lwakho kodwa manje sengiyabona ukuthi lukhona futhi luyasebenza. I'm proud of you boy boy.

(I rub my forehead)

Me : Kuningi Mah. They want me to help Makhosazana

Sthabile : Then help her.

Me : Bafuna ngilale naye.

(She narrows her eyes)

Sthabile : What?

Me : Exactly! Ngingayenza kanjani kodwa into enjalo ku Ndlalifa?

Sthabile : You need to have sex with her?

Me : Yes ukuze kuzophuma ilumbo.

Sthabile : Wow. That... That is insane.

Me : I know.

Sthabile : Are you sure ukuthi yinto efunwa ilabantu bakho leyo or uwena nje mntanami uzihalelela u Makhosazana?

Me : Mah!

(She raises her hands)

Sthabile : I'm just asking.

Me : Ungibuza kanjani into enjalo?

Sthabile : What are you going to do?

Me : I don't know. Please excuse me. Kufanele ngiyohlangana no Mzet

Sthabile : Uzolala la?

Me : I don't know.

Sthabile : Uphi u Fisisani?

Me : Usendlini.

Sthabile : You need to break up with her. She is not good for you.

(She says and walks out. I throw myself on my bed. Why is my life so complicated?)

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(Mzet sent me the location. I found one of his friends who told me to leave my car and we used his. He drove to some place that I've never seen before.)

Me : Kwamunyama kangaka la?

(He ignores. Something wrong is going on here. I can feel it in my blood.)

Me : What's going on here?

Him : Follow me

(I followed him. We find Mzet standing next to a grave. I'll say grave because that's what it looks like. It's a deep hole and there are shovels next to it. Mzet is smoking but he throws away his cigarette)

Mzet : Uh! Zanoluhle. The big guy. Umfana owenza izimangaliso

Me : Mzet what's going on here? Ngizonzani la?

Mzet : It's up to you. Singaxoxisana

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unginike lento engifunayo or we could....

Me : What are you talking about?

Mzet : Where is the recording?

Me : What recording?

(I'm confused now)

Mzet : The recording that you stole from me!!! Where is it?

Me : I don't know what you are talking about.

(He slaps me. I see stars)

Me : Jesus!

Mzet : You are about to meet him.

Me : Wh....

Mzet : The recording!! Give me the fucking recording!!

Me : Anginayo leyonto!

Mzet : Ucabanga ukuthi kusiniswa izangoma la ngiyabona. Zanokuhle do you know what you did?

Me : I don't know and I don't know about the recording.

Mzet : Stop lying!!!

Me : I'm not lying! Ngitshele ukuthi iyiphi leyo recording!!

(He punches me and I fall on the ground. He kicks me)

Mzet : Uyabona lelingcwaba elakho mfana. I'm going to kill you. Where is the recording?!!

(He yells while kicking me)

Me : I'm sorry. Malume ngiyaxolisa.

Mzet : Give me the recording!! Where is the laptop? Huh?

Here it is.

(Someone says out of nowhere. I lift my head up but I immediately hear gunshots. I cover my ears until there was silence)

Nkosana ka Baba

(I can't believe my ears.)

Me : Baba?

(I sit up. He takes my hand and lifts me up. Mzet is groaning in pain on the ground. Nyathuko shot him but he is still alive. His friend too.)

Mzet : Thukeh? Thukeh?

(I'm sweating.)

Nyathuko : Thukeh? Thukeh? Amasimba.

Mzet : Let's talk about this.

Nyathuko : I don't talk!!

Mzet : No. Nyathuko listen!!

(He lifts up Mzet and puts him inside the grave. He does the same thing with the guy who brought me here.)

Mzet : Wakithi don't do this.

Nyathuko : Owakini unyoko.

(There's a backpack on my father's shoulder. He grabs it and throws it into the grave as well)

Nyathuko : That is the recording you are looking for. You can listen to it in hell.

(He takes the shovel)

Me : Baba!!!

(He is burying them alive. This feels like a nightmare. No this is not Nyathuko. This is not my father. Mzet screams until his voice disappears to the ground. There's only one sound now. The sound of the shovel digging up the soil.)

Nyathuko : If you touch my kids you touch me. Uma umbela izingane zami igodi usuke umbela mina uqobo. Mina ke angimbelwa igodi ngisaphila.

Me : Baba

(I whisper. My whole body is literally shaking. This shit is not happening. No this is probably another bad dream.)

Nyathuko : I will die protecting my kids. Elami isende ngiyolifela wakithi.



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## Chapter 34

(I'm still trying to make sense of what happened back there. My own father killed two men right in front of me. He buried them alive. He didn't just bury any other men but one of them was his best friend. Never in my life have I ever thought that my father Nyathuko Zondi was capable of killing.)

(He is driving me home now. He is driving in silence)

Me : Baba kwenzekeni? Yini le eyenzeke lapha?

Nyathuko : Nothing happened.

Me : But you.....

Nyathuko : Zanokuhle fakof!!!

(He swears at me for the very first time in my life.)

Nyathuko : I did what I had to do! I did what any father would have done to protect his son. Ngiphilela izingane zami mina and I'm not going to apologize for it.

(He explains while digging inside his jacket pocket. He takes out his phone and dials. He puts the phone on his ear.)

Nyathuko : Yah Mah ukephi? Where are you?

(He is talking to my mother. I hope he is not going to tell her about what happened. I stare at him with my lips quivering. My body is still shaken but he seems unbothered. I thought I knew this man but I clearly didn't.)

Nyathuko : Okay. Woza ungilande

(Fetch him? Where are they going?)

Nyathuko : Sho

(I sit up as he ends the call)

Me : I thought we were going home. Niyaphi no Sthabile?

Nyathuko : I need you to go straight home mawusuka la.

Me : Baba after what happened tonight ngiyanidinga. I know ukuthi nani ninezinto zenu ekufanele nizilungise but namhlanje ngicela ngingayi ndawo ngoba ngiyanidinga.

Nyathuko : I'm sorry.

Me : So awusahambi nami?

(He parks the car on the side of the road and switches off the engine.)

Nyathuko : Call me when you get home okay?

Me : I need answers Baba. I need to know what that was all about.

Nyathuko : You are a man now.

(He taps my shoulder and climbs out of my car. His car is already here.)

Me : uMah olethe imoto yakho?

Nyathuko : Uhhh.....

(The door of his car opens and a woman gets out. She is not Sthabile. That is not my mother. Her skin is too white. She is coloured.)

Me : Who is that

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Baba?

Nyathuko : Go home Nkosana ka Baba.

(He says and makes his way towards the woman. I can't believe it. She hugs him and kisses his cheek. Nyathuko takes off his jacket and gives it to her. She throws the jacket in the back seat of the car while my father holds the door for her. She is saying something and they both laugh. They get inside the car and take off. This is it. This time it's really over. The loving family I knew and grew up into is dead.)

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(How I got home without causing an accident is God's mercy. Sthabile opens the door for me)

Sthabile : Zanoluhle sesilele. Where have you been?

I'm battling to speak.

Sthabile : Have you been drinking?

Me : I want to sleep.

Sthabile : Uphumaphi ungcole kanje?

Me : Ngizolala esigodlweni

Sthabile : Uphumaphi?!

(She shouts.)

Sthabile : Ubusuthathwe yidlozi futhi lakudukisa?

(Tears fill up my eyes)

Sthabile : Uyabona ke into engingeke ngiyimele iyona le. Lento yalolubizo ntoni ntoni yakho izongihlula. Yini inkinga? Why are you crying? Ukhaliswa yidlozi?

Me : No

Sthabile : So what the hell is wrong with you?!!

(She screams and her loud scream stabs my heart. I run out of the door and straight to my rondavel. I throw myself on a grass mat. My phone rings.)

Me : Hello?

Zanokuhle hey. It's Tyron.

Me : Oh Sboniso Hi.



He laughs. I don't know what's funny about his Zulu name.

Tyron : Did I wake you up?

Me : What can I do for you?

Tyron : Ngicela intwana yami ingivakashele.

Me : He is your son. You don't need my permission to see him.

Tyron : I do. Usungu Baba nawe kuyena. Can you believe that he told me to speak to you if I want him to visit me?

(He laughs. I wish I could laugh too but I can't)

Me : Akunankinga

Tyron : Zanoluhle I respect you. I know mhlampe usukubonile ukuhlanya kuka Fiza but I want to thank you for being his boyfriend. Ukubakhona kwakho empilweni yakhe kumenze waba umama engingakaze ngacabanga ukuthi uyoba uyena ezinganeni zakhe. Thank you for encouraging her to be a better mother.

Me : I don't know what to say. Bengingazi ukuthi sengenze umsebenzi ongaka.

Tyron : You did bafo. Thank you for taking care of my son. Into oyenzayo akuyona into engenziwe yinoma ubani especially ezinganeni ezinhlanu that are not even his.

Me : Thanks.

Tyron : I'll see you tomorrow.

Me : Yah yah.

Tyron : Is everything okay?

Me : Yes. I just want to sleep.

Tyron : Okay. I'm sorry for waking you up.

Me : It's okay.

(I hung up. I don't want to talk.)

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## Chapter 35

(After a dream I had last night I was expecting Ndlalifa to come and see me. He is here)

Ndlalifa : Uphi u Mah?

Me : She is at work.

Ndlalifa : Oh yah.

(He stares up at the sky and releases a sigh)

Me : Yah.

(I want to tell him about what happened last night but I don't think he is interested)

Ndlalifa : UBaba yena uvukile?

Me : I don't know.

(He looks at me)

Ndlalifa : What do you mean?

Me : Ndlalifa I don't know ukuthi kwenzekani kulomuzi.

Ndlalifa : I see.

Me : Asingene

Ndlalifa : Can I please have some water?

(He is hungry. I know he is.)

Me : Yeah.

(We walk inside)

Ndlalifa : Itakalani isesikoleni?

Me : Yeah. Ngiphuma ukuyobashiya nje. What would you like to eat?

Ndlalifa : I'm not hungry. Ngicela amanzi

Me : Oh.

(I give him a bottle of water.)

Ndlalifa : Thanks.

(I sit down. He is playing with a bottle of water.)

Ndlalifa : Ngiyaxolisa

(I didn't expect that)

Me : You don't have to.

Ndlalifa : No I'm sorry about the way I treated you recently.

Me : I understand.

Ndlalifa : Can you really help her?

Me : Makhosazana?

Ndlalifa : Yes

Me : I believe I can.

Ndlalifa : Ngicela umsize.



Me : What changed?

Ndlalifa : She is dying. Angisakwazi ukumubuka ebulawa izinhlungu. I want her to get better khona sizokhubeka nempilo. She is the only person I have Zanokuhle. Ngifuna impilo naye. I want us to be better kodwa lokugula kwakhe kusibuyisela emuva.

Me : That's true.

Ndlalifa : Akuwona amazwi engifuna ukuwezwa ephuma kuwe lawo. I want you to promise me ukuthi kuzokwenzeka lokho. Ngithembise ukuthi emuva kwayo yonke lento ngeke ngabuya nembande yesikhova.

(His Zulu is so deep that I get lost sometimes)

Ndlalifa : Ungangisengeli ophondweni bafo. I love Makhosazana. Uyimpilo yami.

Me : I just want to help. You have nothing to worry about.

Ndlalifa : How is Fisisani?

Me : She is fine.

Ndlalifa : Did you tell her about this?

Me : Not yet. Bafo ayikho lula yonke lento.

Ndlalifa : But kuzofanele uyenze khona sizodlula kuyona yonke lenyakanyaka.

Me : Okay.

Ndlalifa : Kade kukhona u Mah eMachobeni kodwa ke uhambe ngesikabhadakazi.

Me : Ubefikile?

Ndlalifa : Yes but she left. u Maka Ndlalifa izingane zakhe azisho lutho kuye.

Me : It can't be that bad.

Ndlalifa : It is. And that is enough to make you understand why Makhosazana is so important to me.

Me : I'll never betray you.

(He smiles)

Ndlalifa : Good. I need to go now

Me : Aw ngokushesha okungaka?

Ndlalifa : Makhosazana is alone. Uyangidinga

Me : How is she?

Ndlalifa : Uzomenza ebengcono.

Me : I hope so.

(He stands up and walks out. This whole thing still upset him)

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(It's time to face Fisisani. She deserves to know the truth.)

Fisisani : What do you mean you have to sleep with her?

Me : To get rid of ilumbo

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ayikho lula yonke lento.

Ndlalifa : But kuzofanele uyenze khona sizodlula kuyona yonke lenyakanyaka.

Me : Okay.

Ndlalifa : Kade kukhona u Mah eMachobeni kodwa ke uhambe ngesikabhadakazi.

Me : Ubefikile?

Ndlalifa : Yes but she left. u Maka Ndlalifa izingane zakhe azisho lutho kuye.

Me : It can't be that bad.

Ndlalifa : It is. And that is enough to make you understand why Makhosazana is so important to me.

Me : I'll never betray you.

(He smiles)

Ndlalifa : Good. I need to go now

Me : Aw ngokushesha okungaka?

Ndlalifa : Makhosazana is alone. Uyangidinga

Me : How is she?

Ndlalifa : Uzomenza ebengcono.

Me : I hope so.

(He stands up and walks out. This whole thing still upset him)

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(It's time to face Fizisani. She deserves to know the truth.)

Fizisani : What do you mean you have to sleep with her?

Me : To get rid of ilumbo yes I have to sleep with her.

(She snorts)

Fizisani : You must be fucking kidding me right now.

Me : I have to do this. Fizisani lena yenye yezinto eyenza ngamukela ubizo. Ukusiza abantu



Fizisani : Wow

(She claps once and gets up)

Me : Where are you going?

Fizisani : Far away from you.

(She heads to the door but she stops and turns around with her hands fisted)

Fizisani : It's quite surprising isn't it?

Me : What is surprising?

Fizisani : Ukuthi mase kufanele ukhiphe amalumbo ngokulala namanye amantombazane awubi nezinkinga kodwa uma kufanele ulale nami intombi YAKHO Zanokuhle ulala ubheke le kube angathi awunalo ipipi.

Me : Fiza....

Fizisani : Enza noma yini Zanokuhle. I knew this was too good to be true. Bengilindeleni ngempela? That I'll find a man who would love me with my four kids from different fathers? That was crazy.

(She walks out with tears running down her cheeks.)

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Chapter 36

(The sooner we get this done the better. What will help Makhosazana is inside this ocean. The time is 23h45. I'm going in at 00h00. Bab'Khambule is here as always. May the heavens bless this man.)

Me : I don't kodwa ubehamba endaweni eyihlane eyedwa. Ehamba ze.

Khambule : Mhmm! Mhmm!

(He nods while shaking his head)

Me : I keep having the same vision every night before I sleep for the past 2 days.

Khambule : Uyaboniswa umhlangabeza?

Me : Yes but konke kuphela lapho. Angisiboni isiphetho.

Khambule : Amathongo akhuluma nawe.

Me : I know.

Khambule : Something else is bothering you. What is it?

(I sigh)

Me : My parents. Bayahlukana.

(His head falls back)

Me : That is something I have no control over isn't it?

Khambule : Ngiyaxolisa Dinangwe.

(I shake my head. I give him my shield and fix isembatho sami.)

Me : It's time.

Khambule : Amathongo akwembathe Dinangwe.

Me : Mzilankatha.

(I get inside the ocean and make my way forward until the ocean buries me inside it.)

(I lost consciousness. My strength ran out and ithongo took over. I felt my hand inside its mouth. There was a pain on my wrist. I endured until my hand was free. I grabbed it by the neck and 4 hours later the ocean spat me out.)

Khambule : There's a mark on your wrist.

(I look at my wrist. Khambule's eyes are wide open)

Me : Ngilunywe yiyo le inja yolwandle. Igazi lami li.....

(He smiles while shaking my shoulder)

Khambule : Ungumntwana wethongo ngempela.

(We both smile)

Me : No woman for me.

Khambule : No woman for you Dinangwe.

(I look at inja yolwandle that is lying on the sand unconsciously. I laugh and shake my head before I lift it up)

Me : Let's go home Mzilankatha.

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(Khambule and I are inside my rondavel)

Khambule : Ubuchopho bayo ke inja yolwandle lobu.

(He hands me an enamel bowl.)

Me : It's white.

Khambule : I know. And now?

Me : I'll eat it. Yibona lobu okufanele bungene ku Makhosazana khona ezosizakala.

Khambule : Wena wethongo.

Me : Uma ke eseluleme I'll take the dog back to the ocean.

Khambule : Thokozani.

Me : Thokoza.

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(The situation is tense. Especially now that I have told Fizisani that I'll never be able to meet her sexual needs again. I told her what happened ephehlweni but I couldn't show her my penis. She's been crying ever since. Makhosazana and Ndlalifa are sitting in the other room. I am sitting with Fizisani in my room. We are both sitting on the bed with our backs facing each other. Sthabile is with the kids downstairs.)

Fizisani : Why didn't you tell me earlier?

(She sniffs)

Me : It's not an easy thing to talk about. I'm also in the process of healing.

Fizisani : Bayazi abazali bakho?

Me : They don't have to know.

Fizisani : None of this is your fault. You were raped Zanokuhle.

Me : Mhlampe kwakufanele kwenzeke. Amathongo angiyekelela ngamabomu.

Fizisani : How are you feeling now? Akusekho buhlungu?

(I smile)

Me : I feel alive. My life begins today.

Fizisani : What about my life Zanokuhle? What about lempilo ewubukhazikhazi osuyifundise izingane zami kanye nami uqobo? How am I supposed to move on? Ukhona kodwa omunye umuntu weslisa ongathanda mina?

Me : I'm not going anywhere. Ngizohlala ngikhona futhi I'll continue to take care of you and our kids. Lokhu akukona ukuma kwempilo. Just allow me to give you my blessings okuthi uthole umuntu wesilisa ozokujabulisa. Ngizoqhubeka ngibe nawe nabafana bethu until impilo yakho iba yilokhu okufisayo.

Fizisani : Zanokuhle your....

Me : Don't worry about my parents. They are dealing with their own problems.

Fizisani : I'll never stop loving you.

Me : Kanti nami angisoze futhi ngayeka ukukuthanda.

Fizisani : Amadlozi awalivumanga uthando lwethu.

(She sniffs)

Me : This is not about our ancestors. It's not about you.

Fizisani : So what is this?

Me : I'm different

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Fizisani.

(I smile with tears making their way inside my mouth. These are tears of joy. I've finally found my purpose.)

(Sthabile walks in carrying Sphetho in her arms. I wipe the tears and clear my throat.)

Sthabile : Uselele.

Fizisani : Oh thank you Mah.

(Fizisani fixes the bed and takes Sphetho from my mother)

Sthabile : Honey can you please excuse us? I need to speak to my son.

(I'm glad to see that she is warming up to Fizisani)

Fizisani : No problem Mah. I'll be cooking downstairs.

Sthabile : Thank you baby.

(Fizisani walks out and closes the door.)

Sthabile : How are you feeling?

Me : I'm worried about her. Uyangithanda Mah.

Sthabile : Do you love her?

Me : Not in that way anymore. I don't need a woman in my life.

Sthabile : I don't understand.

Me : Angisho kanjalo. What I'm trying to say is that lomuntu esinguwuye manje akadalelwe ukuba nomuntu wesifazane.

Sthabile : Awudalelwe ukujola?

Me : Ngingasho kanjalo.

Sthabile : Mina angiyiqondi yonke lento.

Me : You don't have to understand it. Angifuni ukulahlekelwa u Fizisani. The relationship that I have built with her sons I don't want to lose it.

Sthabile : Nihlele ukuyenza kanjani yonke lento?

Me : Uzoqhubeka ebe ingxenye yempilo yami.

(She sighs)

Sthabile : Whatever you decide to do ngizokweseka.

(I raise my head in disbelief)

Me : Mah?

Sthabile : Lento enizoyenza no Fizisani angiyazi ukuthi ibizwa ngani kodwa ngizoyeseka. I love her kids so....

Me : Are you okay?

(She laughs)

Sthabile : Zanokuhle angisona lesilwane ongenza sona mfan'wami. Uyindodana yami. Wena no Enzelwe ngazibona ngani ukuthi ngiyinzala bantu. I love you boy boy.



Me : I love you too mama. And thank you.

(She sighs)

Sthabile : It's okay. Yena u Fiza uyithatha kanjani yonke lento?

Me : I don't know. Uzojwayela.

Sthabile : Yah.

Me : Uke wakhuluma no Baba?

Sthabile : No. Why?

Me : Nothing. Bengithi uzoza

Sthabile : Akuwona phela umcimbi lo Zanokuhle. Awumdingi u Nyathuko.

Me : So it's really over.

Sthabile : I'm afraid it is. Kodwa impilo iyaqhubeka.

(I shake my head)

Me : Izingane ngeke ziyijwayele yonke lento.

Sthabile : Sizolokhu sincenga nje kancane kancane until they get used to it.

Me : Why kodwa Mah?

Sthabile : It doesn't matter anymore. I need you to focus on yourself nasekusizeni abantu. Uyisangoma angithi wena?

Me : I'm more than that.

Sthabile : Yeah?

Me : This is different. Abafana nami abakazalwa. Ngiyisiqalo sesizukulwane esisha.

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Chapter 37

(May I never have to go through something like this ever again amathongo engisize. I can't begin to think what Ndlalifa is going through. My head is buried in her breast. I lift it up and pull out. I get out of bed.)

Me : I'll tell you when it's time ukuthi siyogeza olwandle.

Makhosazana : Okay.

(I stand up. My head is spinning. I stumble a few times)

Makhosazana : Zanokuhle? Zanokuhle are you okay?

Me : I'm fine.

(I felt it. I felt ithongo in this room. It wasn't me who was having sex with Makhosazana but ithongo that lives within me did. My body is still heavy.)

Me : I'll be fine. Get some rest.

(I take my clothes and open the door. I head to my bedroom. I lock the door and throw myself in my bed naked as the dizziness gets worse.)

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(I fell asleep and when I got up it was dark. The twins are knocking on my door)

Zibusiso : Zano? Zano ufile?

Zothani : Don't say that Siso. I'll tell Baba.

Zibusiso : He is not here. Mama said he is not coming back.

Zothani : You are lying!

Zibusiso : Why are you hitting me?

(I'll let them argue for now and hit each other if they want)

Zothani : You are lying! Baba is coming back.

Zibusiso : His clothes are not here.

Zothani : I saw them.

Zibusiso : You are lying. I'll tell grandpa that you are a liar.

(I get up. I want to take a shower but I can't. Makhosazana and I need to take a bath in the ocean. I wrap the towel around my waist and open the door)

Me : Nifunani la?

Zibusiso : Besithi ufile. Kusho u Mah.

Me : I'm not dead now go.

Zothani : Ndlalifa was crying.

Me : Where is he?

(She shrugs. I step out and close the door. Makhosazana is still sleeping in the guest room.)

Zibusiso : Is she dead?

(I close the guest room door)

Me : No.

Zibusiso : So nobody died?

(I ignore her. They are following me on our way downstairs. Only my mother and Ndlelenhle are here)

Me : Baphi abanye?

Sthabile : Zanoluhle you weren't expecting them to sit here while you were having sex with Makhosazana. Ndlalifa is still her boyfriend kanti no Fizisani uyakuthanda.



Me : Baye kuphi?

(She looks at the towel that is wrapped around me)

Sthabile : What if they were here?

Me : What?

Zibusiso : Mommy when are you going to give us?

Sthabile : Awkahle kancane Zibusiso. Ufike la ubhince amathawula angathi lento ekade uyenza no Makhosazana yinhle

Me : Hawu Mah

Sthabile : Kau Mah ini

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Zano. Wena angathi ususikhohliwe isizathu sokuthi yini ulale nentombi ka Ndlalifa.

Me : Ngiyaxolisa.

(She sighs)

Sthabile : Ndlalifa left. I don't know where he is. u Fizisani went to Phoenix nezingane

Me : Where is Ndlelenhle?

Sthabile : Somewhere on the streets. How is Makhosazana?

Me : She will be fine. Usalele but she needs to wake up now. Siyogeza.

Sthabile : Do you think it worked?

Me : I believe so.

(I tell her and go back to my room. My phone rings)

Me : Miss Bella

Matshidiso : Mr Dlomo can we talk?

Me : Yes

Matshidiso : I wanted to update you about the case.

Me : Yes?

Matshidiso : It has been thrown out of court. There's no evidence.

(I sigh)

Me : So they are sticking to the old evidence?

Matshidiso : Precisely. It's the only valid evidence in hand.

Me : Any news about Zithulele?

Matshidiso : What about him?

(Oh shit)

Me : I... what... Akakaze efone?

Matshidiso : No

Me : Okay. Thank you for letting me know.

Matshidiso : No problem. Keep well.

Me : Thanks.

(I hung up. Nqabayethu's death will never make sense to me but I guess the person who killed him was Nomzamo Mhayise. That's the only thing that makes sense.)

(Later we were in the ocean for cleansing. It worked. I can feel it in my bones. Makhosazana is going to be fine. She looks better already)

Makhosazana : Yazi izinyawo zami seziqala ukubangcono.

(I smile)

Me : You'll be fine in no time.

(She sighs)

Makhosazana : I'm worried about Ndlalifa.

Me : Ndlalifa is going to be fine.

Makhosazana : Unesikhwele

Me : Wonke umuntu unesikhwele ngomuntu amuthandayo.

Makhosazana : I love him so much. Ngifisa angathi engakholwa nje ukuthi angisoze ngamuzwisa ubuhlungu.

Me : Uthando lwakho luyaxolela?

Makhosazana : What do you mean?

Me : Ngisho kungathiwa u Ndlalifa wenzeni uyokwazi ukumuxolela?

Makhosazana : Into efana nani?

(Like finding out that she killed your mother?)

Me : Nanoma yini edalelwe ukuhlukanisa abantu ababili abathandanayo.

Makhosazana : Angiyiboni into eyongihlukanisa no Ndlalifa.

Me : That's good. He is not perfect Makhosi. Impilo yakhe ayikho lula kodwa wena uyingqaba yakhe.

Makhosazana : I know. Nami uwukuphila kwami



Me : Here take this ukhunge nalu ulwandle.

(I give her R1. She laughs and throws it in the ocean)

Makhosazana : We are done.

Me : It's all done.

Makhosazana : Manje ke sengiyolwela uthando lwami noNdlalifa. Izimpilo zethu kufanele zibengcono.  
We deserve that.

Me : You do.

Makhosazana : Wena? Zithini ezakho izinhlelo?

Me : I'm expecting someone to come for my help.

Makhosazana : Who?

Me : Amahle. I'm expecting her to come ezothwasa and I know uzoza. I've been having visions and now they all make sense. I'm ready now I'm ready to help her.

Makhosazana : I am proud of you.

(I smile and sigh)

Me : Ngifisa angabe bengikwazi ukusindisa umshado wabazali bami.

Makhosazana : Is it really over?

Me : It is. Ngithemba ukuthi bobabili bayayazi lento abayenzayo.

Makhosazana : Badala.

Me : They are futhi ngiyazi ukuthi uBaba akasoze asilahla.

Makhosazana : He is a good man.

Me : He is. I wish my mother was different.

Makhosazana : How?

Me : It doesn't matter. I'm just going to focus on myself lomuntu esengiwuye. Ngibe u Baba ezinganeni zika Fiza and a brother to my siblings.

Makhosazana : Are you happy?

(My lips stretch to a wild smile)

Me : More than I've ever been. I know abanye abantu ngeke beqonde but this is my life this is who I am.  
I'm not just anyone ngingowethongo and I'm happy.

Makhosazana : We are blessed to have you.

(I smile)

Makhosazana : Ngiyabonga wena wethongo.

Me : Thokoza.

ZANOKUHLE- HIS HEIR (OWETHONGO)

By Nomfundo Mbhele.

The End

(Thanks for reading. Blessings to you)

His Definition Final Season coming next.

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