

# Unconditional love

1

MPHO

Second wife? What is that? In all the seven years we have been together he didn't think that he wanted a second wife? I can't get these words "second wife" out of my head. We have been together for 8 years. Married for seven years. And suddenly we are not compatible. I don't know where that is coming from. It's even stopping me from focusing on my work. And I have patients to attend to. But all I'm thinking about is this thing of taking a second wife. When I asked why he didn't need a second wife all these years he says it's because his brother was still alive. So now that he has died without

a wife and a child he is bothering him asking him to marry a wife for him so that he can bear him children. I know it happens but it's all lies coming from him. He's not really into these traditional things.

Now I'm on my lunch time. I take my wallet and walk to the door. When I open I'm welcomed by my husband at the door who's about to knock. I look at him trying to read what's in his mind.

Mohau:can we talk?

Me:couldn't it wait until I get home?

Mohau:no. You've been ignoring me.

Me:come in.

I go back to my chair and sit down. I look at him and he scratches his head.

Me:what's your brother saying this time? So you will go out and look for another woman even if you don't love her? Is it because we don't have kids? We agreed that we were going to try when we were ready.

Mohau:okay. Let's sit down so that I can tell you the truth.

Me:I don't think I can handle it. We will talk at home.

Mohau:I will try to come back early.

.....

I spent the whole day trying to get the second wife thing out of my mind. I didn't think it would be me going through this. That I would have to doubt myself as a wife. When I got home I took the smallest pan and cooked food for myself. After that I started to eat. Mohau came in when I had just finished eating.

Mohau:can I have my food now before we talk?

Me:you have hands. Or the second wife can cook. Can we talk now? Don't tell me about your dead brother. Couldn't you look for another lie instead of using the dead?

Mohau:let me just be honest with you. It was never about my brother. Me and you are not compatible. We are just not compatible. We are unequally yoked. We have to be on the same page for this marriage to work.

Me:unequally yoked? So for seven years why did you stay with someone who's not equally yoked to you? You were playing with me?

Mohau:the church put pressure on us to get married. We were still young. We were just 22 and 23.

Me:I thought you proposed because you loved me! Not this nonsense you're telling me.

Mohau:but we're on different paths.

Me:what do you mean by that? I love God! I go to church sunday.

Mohau:you only go to please me. We met at church because your parents forced you to go. Now I have found someone who is as involved in the Lord's work as I am. We both serve in the church. She supports me and we have the same dreams. We want to focus more on our ministry. But to you it's all about being a doctor. You haven't been playing your wife duties. I'm even afraid of asking for a baby because you will say you are busy at work.

We both turned and looked at the door. He got up and went to open the door. He came back with a heavily pregnant woman. She had the

nerve to come into my house? Such disrespect!

Me:wow. So miss eqaually yoked is already pregnant and about to give birth? So you have been cheating and hiding behind the Lord's name? Wena. I know you. O shenama le nna ko kerekeng kanti o nja direthe?(You smile at me at church why you're backstabbing me?)

Her:we didn't mean for this to happen. We didn't mean to hurt you.

Me:you call yourselves leaders at church. What are you teaching people when you do shit like this behind their backs? You tell me that I'm not committed to the Lord's work but you do this? Don't use His name in vein. You're both evil. And you, you should never call yourself a youth leader. This is not how a leader is supposed to

behave. You should just stop whatever ministry you're trying to build. You just made me hate church. People in that place are pretenders. Seven years? You want to marry her because she's pregnant and you don't want people's eyes in church when it gets out. You know what? Don't involve me in your mess. Count me out. I will talk to my lawyer and you will receive the divorce papers. You cheated and you're now blaming me. What wrong did I do? Does your mother even know?

Mohau:no. I was thinking that we will tell her together after we've agreed on a way forward?

Me:go on and tell her. I'm not getting involved. I'm leaving this marriage.

Her:Mpho we never meant to hurt you. We can



coexist. There's no need to leave.

Me:voetsek! You don't have the right to tell me that nonsense in my house. Get out! Both of you! Never come back here.

Mohau:this is our house.

Me:I'm the one who built it while you used your money to build your company. Now go and take every single thing of yours and get out of here. Wena go and wait outside. I don't want to see your flat ass here.

.....

Mohau came out with his bags. He put them

down and tried to touch Mpho. She roughly got up and slapped him. She walked off to the bedroom leaving him standing there. He took his bags and walked out.

The following day Mpho got up and took a long bath. She took out a beautiful dress and let her braids fall around her shoulders. She got into her car and drove to church. She looked around and saw Mohau. She looked for the second wife to be. She saw her on the other side and their eyes met. The service started and the time for offerings came and Mpho was called to the front to lead it.

Mpho:thank you for giving me this time. But I'm not going to talk about offerings today. I have something that I need to get off my chest. Even if I wasn't given this time I would have asked for

a chance to say this. I'd like to call my husband to come and join me. No. Come and join me.

Mohau got up and walked to the front. He stood next to her and squeezed her hand. She took it off.

Mpho:most of you might remember this. My husband and I met in this church. We started dating until we got married. He proposed to me right in this church. I was sitting there in the back. He left his seat and came to get me in the middle of the crowd. This church was so happy that day. So I thought it's only fair I let you know that we are getting a divorce. Your junior pastor here says he wants a second wife and I'm not going to stay for polygamy. He says it's because we are not equally yoked. That we are not compatible. All these days he has been

asking for a second wife and I didn't think it was because he already found her. I didn't think it's someone we know here. She's already pregnant and about to give birth. Matlhogonolo please come to the front. I want people to know the woman that broke my marriage. Both of them are responsible for this. Don't be ashamed. You were not shamed when you were sleeping with a married man. Mohau, you have my blessing. Congregation, I'm no longer Mrs Maphosa. There is the new Mrs Maphosa.

She got off stage and walked to the back. She stood in front of Matlhogonolo. She took her hand and forced her to stand up and walked to the stage.

Mpho:here is the new Mrs Maphosa. You have people here pretending to be all holy holy. She's

the youth leader. What's she teaching our young people? To sleep with married people? Then end up saying they were not equally yoked? Is that what you want your children to be taught? Matlhogonolo, today, I am leaving this marriage. I am not going to be in polygamy with you. Here is my ring. I wish you luck in your marriage. Our marriage was first announced here and our separation had to be announced here.

She took Matlhogonolo's hand and put the ring on her ring finger.

Mpho: ladies and gentlemen, I now introduce to you the new Mrs Maphosa. Me and this church, our journey ends here. If this is what happens in church and some of you knew and said nothing then I cannot be part of this church. Goodbye. I wish you all the best.

She got off stage and ran out. Mohau ran after her and his mother followed.

Ma:what was that? Who is that girl?

Mohau:Mpho did you have to do that in front of the people? Our services are broadcasted for the whole world to see! What are they going to think of me now?

Mpho:you will hear from our lawyers. Goodbye.

She got inside her car and drove off leaving them still standing there.

\*\*\*\*\*

Amelia's office opened and Willy walked in. He looked at her and noticed that she was sleeping. He went and stood behind her chair and bent down. She stirred in her sleep. She touched her neck opening her eyes. She turned and got up startled.

Amelia:what are you doing here?

Willy:you said you wanted to see me.

Amelia:what did you do to me?

Willy:nothing.

Amelia:I want you to get everything that

belongs to you in this company and get out.  
You are fired.

Willy:what for?

Amelia:last week when we closed that big deal you came here with food and juice. You said we are celebrating. All of a sudden I felt dizzy. I called my friend when you went to the bathroom. She arrived soon after you came out. I told her what was going on and she took me to the hospital. She's a doctor. She tested me and that juice. It was drugged. What did you put in there?

Willy:I didn't put anything. You can't fire me!

Amelia:then tell me why you drugged me?



Willy:why would I drug you when I love you? I wouldn't want to hurt you!

Amelia:all the more reason to drug me! You always asked if I'd ever move on one day and I told you no because I love my husband! You wanted to take advantage of me while I was intoxicated!

Willy:the guy might not come back for the next twenty years! Are you going to wait for him?

Amelia:even if he doesn't come back I will wait for him! What is it to you if he doesn't come back?

Willy:it's been three years! Just move on.

Amelia: this time if I find something in my system you're going down. I will get you arrested. Now get out of my office!

Willy: I'm not going anywhere. You're not my boss.

Amelia: my husband left this company in my hands. I can do whatever I want. Now get out!

.....

She drove home while calling Aaron. He's their family lawyer and he will know what to do.

Amelia: hey Aaron.

Aaron:Amelia. Is something wrong? You sound down.

Amelia:please come to my house. There's something that I need to show you.

Aaron:okay. I'll be there.

She drove into her house and parked the car. She walked to the house and Langa ran to her. His little sister ran behind him. She picked Langa then picked her daughter and kissed them.

Langa:I missed you mommy.

Amelia:I missed you too. Did you miss me Mihle?

Mihle:yes.

Langa:I'm not going to school tomorrow. I want daddy to take me.

Anelia:Langa, daddy won't be home tomorrow.

Panga:he was here. He'll take me to school tomorrow.

Amelia:Langa I always tell you that you are just things.

Langa:no!

He got off her and ran off to his grandmother.  
She walked to where they were.

MaKhumalo:what did you do to him?

Amelia:nothing. He's back to saying things that  
do not make sense. He says his father was here.  
But I went to see him yesterday.

MaKhumalo:he's just a child who misses his  
father. Just be patient with him.

Amelia:Aaron is here. I need to ask him  
something.

MaKhumalo:is something wrong?

Amelia:no. It's about the company.

MaKhumalo:okay.

She went to the door and opened for Aaron.  
They went to sit in the living room. She took out a USB and put it into her laptop and played the video.

Amelia:this is the cctv footage from my office.  
Willy tried to put something into me. I woke up fast. Last week he drugged my juice. Luckily I called Mpho and she came to fetch me.

Aaron:you have to get tested. In case he did something. I will deal with this.

Amelia:about my husband's case...

Aaron:don't stress. He's coming home soon.  
This month won't end. He's finally coming home.

Amelia:that's good news! Langa was starting to worry me. He just told me his father was here today. Mihle is better because she doesn't know him.

Aaron:you should relax now. He's coming home.

Amelia:that's what you said the last time. A year has passed now.

Aaron:this time I'm very sure of what I'm saying.

.....

Unconditional love

2

AMELIA

I'm in my bedroom watching my kids. I just finished bathing them. Langa has grown so much. He's six now. Emihle is three. When their father got arrested I was pregnant. She has never seen him. She always listen when Langa speaks about their father. It's as if it's someone she knows.

Langa:mommy I'm cold.



Me:oh sorry.

I dress them up and they sit on the bed.

Langa:I don't want to sleep. I want to watch tv.

Me:tomorrow we will go to work together.

Langa:really?!

He jumped on the bed excited. I sleep with them in my bedroom. He jumped off the bed and ran to the door. I have a smart son who hates school.

Me:Langa come back to bed.

I turn and look at him. I get up not believing what I'm seeing. Langa is in his father's arms and he's playing with his beard. I get off bed with my heart beating fast. I feel Emihle touching my hand. Sambulo puts Langa down and comes to hug me . I hug him for a long time. I haven't hugged him in three years. And seeing him here is like a dream come true. I can't explain how I really feel. He breaks the hug and looks behind me. Emihle is shy. She's hiding behind me. He really was here. He gave out his hand to Emihle and she walked to him.

Langa:Mihle, this is daddy.

Mihle:daddy.

Langa:yes!

Sambulo picked her up. He gave her a tight hug. Even shed tears. I understand how he must be feeling. He's seeing her for the first time since she was born. Langa got back on the bed and jumped up and down.

Me:Langa said you were here. I thought he was lying.

Sambulo:I did come here. I saw him and we talked. Then I went to meet with Aaron.

Me:so he knew you were out when he came here?

Sambulo:Yes. I missed you my wife. All those days you came to visit I wished to just break free and come back to my family.

Me:is the case really over?I don't want to celebrate for nothing. I missed you too.

Sambulo:I promise it's over.

My husband has been in jail for three years. The day that he made the guy who had been working on taking me down commit suicide someone saw him. They saw everything and a case was opened. These three years felt like forever.

Me:what happened?

Sambulo:they didn't have enough evidence.

Me:I'm not going to ask more. I'm just going to celebrate that you're back home. It was so hard without you.

I couldn't hold myself. I found myself crying sitting on the bed. Langa hugged me.

Langa:mama you're not happy because daddy is back?

Me:I am happy.

Langa:okay. Don't cry okay? Now I will go to school everyday.

Sambulo:he doesn't like school?

Me:sometimes he refuses to go because he wants you to take him.

The kids fell asleep and their father took them to their room. He locked the door when he came in.

Sambulo:you don't have to cry babe. I'm here. It's really me, your husband.

Me:I was scared that the kids were going to grow up without you. If I couldn't handle you being locked up then what about the kids? Every day I forced myself to wake up for them.

Sambulo:hey. I know it was hard for you.

He kissed me and at that moment I knew I wasn't dreaming. I knew it was real. My husband is back home. I put my hands around his neck as the kiss deepened. He picked me up and got into bed.

Sambulo:tonight I want to make love to my wife. I want us to make up for all those three years we were not together. I want to feel myself inside you.

.....

I woke up alone in bed. Yesterday's events played and I put on my night dress and went to

take a bath. I finished and got ready for work. I walked to mama's bedroom to say goodbye to her.

MaKhumalo:I heard a man's voice last night. Let me put it like this. I heard Sambulo's voice.

I smiled and hugged her.

Me:he's back mama. I thought I was dreaming. But when I felt his scent in my bedroom, saw his dirty clothes in the basket...i knew it was real. My husband is back.

MaKhumalo:that's great news. I'm coming.

I walked downstairs and it was all laughs and



cheers. Sambulo was feeding his children and chatting with them making them laugh. What made me more happy was how Emihle was blending in with her father.

Me:good morning family.

Langa:morning mommy. I'm going to school. Daddy is driving me.

Me:that's nice. Mihle good morning.

Mihle:good morning.

Me:hey baby.

Sambulo:your food is in the microwave. We will

drive Langa to school together then go to work. I heard you have keeping the company going in my absence.

Me:I had to resign at work so that I can focus on things at your company. I only go to my old workplace when there's a meeting because of Lethu's shares.

Sambulo:it's our company. And I'm proud of you. You kept this family going.

I took out my food and sat down and started to eat. Mama came in and her questions were answered. She saw that it was real. Her son was back. I'd hear her every night praying for him. She didn't stop believing that he would come back. She's the one who made me to be strong and not give up. Her prayers also helped

me.

Sambulo:I'm back mama.

MaKhumalo:you should stop whatever bad things you do. This family was not the same without you. Your children had no father. You left your wife pregnant. She cried a lot. We all missed you.

Sambulo:I promise I've changed mama. I'm not going to do something that will take me back there again.

MaKhumalo:good.

Langa:gogo, Mihle is going to work today. You

will be bored.

MaKhumalo:I will be fine.

Langa:my dad is taking ke to school.

MaKhumalo:it's good that you are back. He hated going to school. Now he's happy.

After the kids were done eating we all got into the car and drove to Langa's school. He was so happy. Even when his dad walked him in. He looked so excited. Then we drove to work. When we went in people were staring at my husband. They were surprised to see him. They were not expecting to see him anytime soon.

We got to my office and I unlocked it. But it wasn't locked. It surprised me because I locked when I left yesterday. So I don't know how it's unlocked. I opened the door and went in. The office was decorated. With my favourite flowers and also food.

Me:ah babe! This is beautiful. You even got food even though we had breakfast.

Sambulo:I did not do this.

The door opened and Willy walked in.

Willy:I hope you like the surprise...

Me:really? So you did this? What are you doing

here? I fired you yesterday!

Willy:Amelia I..

My husband cleared his throat. Willy turned and looked at him. I saw fear written all over his eyes.

Me:since you said I can't fire you because I'm not your boss, your boss is here now.

Sambulo:I will get someone to clean this shit out. I heard that you've been drugging my wife. Me and you need to have a little talk. You are so disrespectful. How do you express your feelings to another man's wife? And who told you I might be in jail for twenty years? Looks like you know more. Me and you are going to get out of

here, fetch your belongings in your office and take a drive.

Me:leave the spare key you used to open my office.

Willy:I'm sorry. It's not going to happen again.

Sambulo:it has happened already. And I need to fix that. Baby, I will be back soon. I love you.

Me:I love you more.

He kissed me then gave Mihle to me. I put her down and took out her toys and waited for someone to come and clean.

\*\*\*\*\*

MPHO

The following day when I got to work people were giving me stares. Did I care? No. Why would I? If it was a woman, or let me just say if it was me who was caught cheating I would be called a sfebe. But because it's a man it's not a big deal. They can stare at me all they like.

As soon as I knocked off I called Amelia. I just wanted to go out and get some air.

Me:are you free? I was thinking we go for a bite.

Amelia:I'd love to but I can't hey. My husband



just came out.

Me:what?! That's great news! We will go out when you are free. For now I understand you haven't seen him in years.

Amelia:I read about what happened. I'm so sorry.

Me:we will talk when we meet. Bye.

Amelia:sure.

I went to get myself junk food and drove home. What I found there I wasn't prepared for it. My living room was filled with my family members and Mohau's family members. He might have

invited them since he was also there. I don't know why he called them because I am not backing down. My decision is final and I am not going to change it.

Me:good evening.

Mom:good evening my daughter. Is everything okay between you and your husband?

Maybe my family hasn't heard about this because they no longer go to the same church as me. I hugged my mother and sat next to her.

Me:me and Mohau are getting a divorce.

Mom:why? I thought you two were fine. What

happened?

Me:you don't know what happened but you are here.

Mom:your husband just fetched me and said there is something we need to talk about.

Mohau:I called everyone here because she wants a divorce. I don't want us to divorce.

Uncle:ngwetsi ya rona, you don't just run to get a divorce. People sit down and fix their problems. You reach an agreement and make sure that whatever was making you fight does not happen again. You knew when you got married that in this family we don't sign up for divorce. We don't have that word in this family.

So how can we fix this?

Me:I have already sent him the papers. He just has to sign them and me and him will go our separate ways. I don't want to stay in this marriage.

Uncle:but every problem can be fixed.

Me:he said he wants a second wife. First he told me some unbelievable lie. He said since his brother died before marrying and having kids he is asking him to marry and make kids for him.

How would he have found out about that?

Motho o o tlhoile dingaka. So he saw that I caught him on his lies. That's when he told me the truth. He wants a second wife because he has been cheating with someone from church. He wants to marry her because she's pregnant.

He doesn't want her to give birth before getting married. What is that? Is that what you want me to stay for? If this could happen then it means the third one is on the way. He will impregnate someone else and want to marry them. He's using the Lord's name badly. God showed him that this woman is his wife? How's that possible when he's already married? He he he we are unequally yoked, he he he this and that. Didn't he see all these things before getting married to me? I remember you people suggested pre marital counseling. We went there. Why didn't he see that me and him are not meant to be that time? Mohau, you can have your pregnant mistress and focus on building your ministry as you said. It hurts. I will cry and get over it. But I'm going to be strong. I won't do anything stupid over an ungrateful person. Sign those papers. Or I will move on while we're still married and not even feel guilty about it.

Mohau:no one is getting a divorce here.

Me:then be prepared to see me move on with someone else. I understand you wanted a child. We both decided to wait. Why didn't you let me know that you were ready? You could have told me. But you looked outside. But to be honest, this was never about a child. You had an affair right in front of me. That girl used to laugh with me while she knew what was happening behind my back. Congratulations. You got yourself a new wife and a baby. Now, all of you must get out of here. We have nothing to discuss.

...

Mom:how are you really feeling?

Me:I'm hurt mama. I'm trying to act strong. But inside me I feel hurt. Why did he do this to me? I did not force him to marry me. But now this?

Mom:my baby this is life. You can't predict what will happen in future. A man can love you for so many years and decide to wake up one day and say he's no longer in love with you. That's life. But I'm glad you decided to walk away.

Me:you're not disappointed?

Mom:of what? Of my daughter choosing herself? That man doesn't love you. If he could treat you like that then it's possible he was still going to do more. You got out while it's still early. You will be fine. Just focus on yourself and healing.

Me:why don't you come and stay with me?

Mom:no. You should come and stay with me.

Me:people gossip there. And it's far from work.

Mom:I understand. I will spend a week with you here.

Me:thanks mama. I wish dad was alive. He would have taught him a lesson for messing with his daughter.

Mom:your brothers should not hear you speak like that. They will hurt him for real.



Me:if I had the strength I swear I would have dealt with him already. Why can't all men be like dad? He was such a good husband.

Mom:people are different. God will bring you a man who is only for you.

Me:if God could let this happen then why would he do something good for me?

Mom:don't give up on God and love because of this.

\*\*\*\*\*

ZELDA

Today is month end and Pule is coming to get the kids to take them shopping. I'm busy cleaning the house to make sure it's spotless. My husband is coming with his business people. They are having a meeting here. After we got married a year ago we got a bigger house.

The twins are moving all over the living room as I'm cleaning. I am already annoyed.

Me:Lethabo stop it!

Lethabo:it's not me. It's Thabang.

Me:I know it's you! Stop it! What are you trying to do?

Thabang:sorry mom. We are sitting down now.

I start to clean all over again.

Boitumelo:when is he getting here?

Me:he's on his way.

Lesedi:do we have to go? I love it when it's just my dad and us.

Me:why? I thought you love being at his place.

Boitumelo:yes. Things change when his girlfriend and their child arrive. I don't like her. Do you know she shouts at Lethabo? She says he must stop coming there and stay with his

father.

Me:Boitumelo you can't make these things up. That little girl is your sister. She's your father's daughter as well.

Boitumelo:she's not a problem when her mother is not there. It all starts when the mother arrives. She starts telling her to be mean to us. It's like we're unwanted visitors there. Uncle Lerumo loves us like we are his children. Why can't that woman do the same?

Me:I will talk to your dad about this. Go and get the boys ready.

I continued to clean and finished before he could arrive. When he arrived everyone was

ready and waiting.

Me:before you go, can we talk?

Pule:is everything fine?

Me:it's about the kids. They are not happy about what's happening at your place.

Pule:what is it that they are not happy about?

Me:your girlfriend.

Pule:I should have known that one day you would have a problem with her.

Me:I don't have a problem with her. Problems start when she mistreats my children.

Pule:when did she do that?

Me:Boitumelo says that...

Pule:stop it right there. If you didn't leave this wouldn't be happening. I'm trying to forget about you by moving on. But here you are, starting something.

Me:I'm happy for you that you have someone. But not at the expense of my children. I believe them. They wouldn't just lie about something like this. Lerumo treats them like his own children. But now I just found out that your girlfriend is always shouting at Lethabo saying

that he must stay with his father. Lerumo has never differentiated between Lethabo and Thabang. Even his family.

Pule:you said you don't want the boys to be separated. Anything I do for Thabang I also do for Lethabo. I agreed for my son to stay here. But now you have a problem?

Me:you know I don't have a problem with you. My problem is with your girlfriend shouting at my children. It's not just Lethabo. She shouts even at the girls. She tells her daughter to be mean to them.

Pule:children fight all the time. Stop involving yourself in their squabbles. If you don't want your son to come to my place just say so.

Me:just tell your girlfriend to stop what she's doing.

Pule:you better get used to her because me and her are getting married.

Me:congratulations. But I'm not backing down. She must stop what she's doing.

.....

Unconditional love

3

Pule drove his car inside his place. He parked the car and opened for the kids. They walked to



the house and he followed with their shopping bags. He walked to their bedroom and put them in there. His fiance followed him to the bedroom.

Pule:can I help you Thabile?

Thabi:where are Refilwe's things?

Pule:what are you talking about?

Thabi:you just came back from shopping and I don't see Refilwe's things.

Pule:how was I going to buy for Refilwe without her being present? I told you to come with her but you said she will come during the weekend.

When she comes I will take her shopping.

Thabi:oh okay. Food is ready.

Pule:I'm coming.

Thabile walked out and Pule followed after packing the kids stuff.

Pule:so guys why aren't you eating? I have to take you home after you're done.

Thabang:we will eat at home.

Pule:why?

Lethabo:Lesedi is refusing for us to eat.

Pule:Sedi why would you do that?

Lesedi:I don't want us to die. Mom will cook for us.

Pule:but you always eat here.

Boitumelo:dad we will eat at home. Your fiancé said she wishes she could poison us.

Thabi:you see what I mean when I say she doesn't like me? She's old. She should know better. She's feeding lies to these kids. She's the troublemaker out of all of them.

Pule:Boitumelo has aunty Thabile ever tried to poison you?

Boitumelo:no.

Pule:you see? You're teaching the kids bad matters. Go to the car. I will find you there.

They ran to the car and Thabile held Pule's hand.

Thabi:babe, not to sound somehow or anything, but do you think that Thabng is your son?

Pule:he's mine. DNA tests proved that.

Thabi:DNA can also lie. Identical twins form from a single egg/sperm combination. And that

means they cannot have different fathers. So why are the twins identical? The girls have a birthmark. Even Refilwe. The four of them look the same. But Thabang, he looks like Lethabo. I've never believed in this thing of twins sharing different fathers. Ba go tshwarisitse batjie. (they are making you raise another man's children.)

Pule: I'm out of here.

He got out of the house and went to his car and drove to Zelda's house. On his way he kept on thinking about what Thabile said. There was no way what she said was true. He chose the doctor himself. When he arrived there he took them in and found Zelda and Lerumo watching tv.

Pule:I brought the kids back.

Zelda:thank you.

Pule:guys can I talk to mommy?

The kids left and the parents were left to talk.

Pule:is Thabang my son?

Zelda:where is this coming from?

Pule:he doesn't have a birthmark like his siblings. And he doesn't look like me. All my children look like me.

Zelda:the twins look like me. What's wrong with that? Don't start. DNA tests don't lie.

Pule:I swear Zelda if you are making me raise another man's children...

Lerumo:what will you do? Didn't we test at your father's hospital? Why don't you go and ask him about this? My wife did nothing wrong. Stop asking the wrong person.

Pule:I always suspected this. There's no feature that suggests that he's mine. Even this thing of twins sharing different fathers I never understood it even once.

Lerumo:if you don't want Thabang just say so. I can take care of him just like I have been doing.

Pule:they are not supposed to look the same. They have to be fraternal twins. Do you know the money I've spent on this son of yours?! Do you know the investments I've made in his name? I thought I was building my legacy and he will keep it going! You two fooled me! You tempered with the results. Thabile was right!

Zelda:so it was your girlfriend?

Lerumo:look, if it's true that Thabang is mine then we have your father to blame. He's the one who explained everything to us and you suggested we do DNAs in his hospital! We can have a second opinion.

Pule:why didn't you realise that they are not



supposed to be identical?

Zelda:you know what Pule? Now I'm praying that when we get a second opinion the results come back saying my husband is the father. You have been difficult the whole time!

Pule:you do know that there's a possibility that they are both mine? Have you thought about that? And don't you dare think of tempering with the DNAs again! You better pray that he's mine . Or else you will pay for everything I've done for these boys.

Zelda:I don't understand you anymore. One moment he's yours and the next he's not yours and after that he's yours? Get your facts straight. You and Lerumo can go and do the DNAs again since I will temper with them.

Pule:I did my own research on my way here.  
And the only thing that came to mind is that  
either they are both mine or they are not mine.  
Tomorrow Lerumo meet me at the hospital. I  
will give you details. You two better pray that  
the boys are mine or else I'm going to sue you.

Zelda:sue your father who lies to his clients.  
Why did he lie? What was he expecting to gain?  
And I'm telling you if it turns out that he lied I'm  
going to sue him until he's broke. So that he can  
stop lying to people. Now leave my house!

Pule clicked his tongue and walked out.

Lerumo:calm down.

Zelda:he's accusing me. How would I know all of this? Am I a doctor? Did I study life sciences? Why is he blaming me for something that was done by his father?

Lerumo:baby, just forget about him. He's angry and will look for someone to blame.

\*\*\*\*\*

MPHO

I'm in my room sleeping when my phone rings. My mother is in the guest bedroom. My bedroom opens and Mohau comes in. I sit up right and look at whatever it is that he's looking for. He opens the closet and bangs it. Then he opens the bathroom and comes back angry.

Mohau:where is he? Where is the man that you want to move on with?!

Me:what are you talking about?

Mohau:you are cheating on me! That's the only explanation for you to not want us to continue with our marriage.

Me:you're losing it now.

My phone starts ringing and I take it. He grabs it and throws it against the wall.

Mohau:I knew it! This Amelia of yours is the one influencing you to leave! I've never liked her.

Ever since you became friends you started to change.

Me:where does Amelia enter in this? Get out of my house.

Mohau:she wants to introduce you to the friends of that criminal she calls a husband? You also want to be a wife to someone who's in jail? Is that it?

Me:Mohau you are losing it. Amelia did nothing. This is all your fault. She didn't tell you to cheat!

Mohau:I'm taking this phone with me. This is where your boyfriends call you. Nxla!

Me:what if they call me at work? Give me my phone!

Mohau if you want this phone you know what to do. Nxla! Seven years? All down the drain? I must be crazy if I let you go. I am not going to sign those papers.

Me:you're showing your true colours now. Go on. I'm not going to entertain you.

.....

After his little stunt last night Mohau ended up leaving. The way he was making noise he even woke my mother. She had to threaten to call the police. Now I'm left with a phone that has a cracked screen. And I'm the one who's

supposed to fix it.

After taking a shower and getting ready for work I was welcomed by women from church singing in my living room. I don't know how they gained access here. I greeted and they responded and kept on singing.

Me:bo mme, not to sound disrespectful but I have to go to work now.

One of the woman raised her hand as a form of telling them to stop. They stopped singing.

Woman:work can wait. We have important things to deal with. The devil is attacking this family. No evil formed against you and your husband shall prosper. We are here to help you

with prayer. We will pray for both of you. Don't let that little girl break your home. You can win this fight. Only if you are dedicated. Don't be lukewarm. Pray with everything in you. You need all the strength you can get to win this fight. It's a hard one.

Me:believe me, if you were giving me this advice for something different I would be happy to receive it. But not this. You're wasting your time.

Woman:ladies let us close our eyes so that we can pray for her.

They closed their eyes and started to pray. I went to say bye to mama and left them right there praying even in tongues.

.....



## Unconditional love

4

Sambulo drove into the bush then parked his car. He looked at Willy and shook his head laughing. Willy was even confused when he laughed hard. Why was he laughing like this? Had he gone mad? And what is he doing with him in the middle of nowhere? Was he planning on making him commit suicide like he did with that guy he was arrested for?

Willy:bushes have eyes. You don't want to go back to jail do you?

Sambulo:why would I go back? Because of you? You know, it's so funny how confident you felt

but now you're all scared. You were trying to be romantic to my wife. But it backfired.

Willy:it did not backfire. You cannot choose for her on who she wants to be with.

Sambulo:so she should be with someone who drugged her? You did that because you knew you would never win. She will always choose me. So today I'm going to teach you a lesson. You see how long we've driven? I am not going to kill you. I wouldn't risk going back to jail and leave her to vultures like you.

Willy:what are you going to do?

Sambulo:it's good that you asked.

He got out of the car and went to Willy's side.  
He opened the door and pulled him out. He fell  
on the ground and whimpered.

Sambulo:I'm leaving you here. You will see your  
way home.

Willy:you can't leave me here cuffed!

Sambulo:you will work out how you're going to  
get on your feet and go home. Goodbye Willy  
Willy.

He got into his car and drove off home.

.....

AMELIA

Langa:did daddy leave again?

Me:no.

Mihle:he's coming back.

Langa:he told you that?

Mihle:yes.

Me:listen! I think that's his car parking.

They ran out of the bedroom and I walked out. I really thank God for moments like these. I

should pray everyday because God brought my husband back. We've been given a second with him and we are going to make it count.

Me:hey love.

He puts tge kids down and come to kiss me.

Me:why are they so happy?

Sambulo:I got them new toys. How was your day?

Me:it was good. I kept thinking about you. I still can't believe you are here.

Sambulo:I got lucky. And I will not do anything

to jeopardize this second chance.

Me:what happened with Willy?

Sambulo:I left him in the middle of nowhere. I want him to panick. I cuffed his hands. But he'll be able to walk. Let's forget about him.

Me:I think we should go out tomorrow.

Sambulo:so I was thinking. How about having our anniversary party? It's getting close.

Me:you're right.

Sambulo:we should celebrate our love. Out of everything that we have been through so much

together and we are still standing strong. Our love has been tested many times but it did not end. It only grew. And we ought to celebrate and be happy. Invite our friends and family and do something nice.

Me:yes that's the truth. We've been tried and tested. In some situations I never thought we would make it this far but here we are. Still together. And with our children and people who love and care for us.

Sambulo:that's all I've always wanted. Nothing more.

Me:I want to know. When are you coming back to work?

Sambulo:why? You don't like working there?

Me:it's not that. Not everyone likes me there. I only held on because I didn't want it to collapse.

Sambulo:not everyone is going to like you. You are doing well. Tomorrow I will pop in and see how everything is going. But I know you were good. If the clients are happy then everything is good.

\*\*\*\*\*

MPHO

when I came back home I found the prayer women having tea and scones. I laughed. Like



really laughed. So they haven't left all this time?

Me:good evening bo mme.

Woman:Mpho you left just like that. When we opened our eyes you were nowhere to be found.

Me:that should tell you that I'm not interested in whatever this is.

woman:we had to leave and come back again.

Me:you can leave now.

Woman:we are having a night vigil. We are going to fight this together. We won't throw in the towel.

Me:here's what I suggest you pray for. Pray for your children. They are in danger. Pray for them to not end up like their leader. Just leave me alone.

Woman:we can't do that.

Me:take these scones and leave. Or I will be forced to get you arrested for trespassing.

Woman:you would do that? We practically raised you.

Me:my parents raised me. Now get out and never come back again.

I opened the door and signaled for them to get out.

Me:take those scones with you. I can see that you really need them. That's why you keep on coming back. You're dying of humnger.

They all went out with one of them holding a bowl of scones and juice. I closed the door. I went to change then took a shower. I had a long day and came back to this. It just added to everything. I go to the kitchen and mom just finished cooking.

Mom:you know, I had just finished baking for you and those women came back and couldn't leave without seeing you. I had to give them those scones. Why did you leave while they were still praying?

We looked at each other and laughed. Those women don't listen.

Me:so mom, I have been invited to Amelia's six years wedding anniversary.

Mom:that's nice. When is it?

Me:month end. I get to have time to dress up and be beautiful. And enjoy myself at the same time.

\*You're not going there.\*

Me:what are you doing here?

Mohau:I'm back home. This house belongs to both of us. You bought it when we were together.

Me:we are married out of community of property.

Mohau:with accrual system. You know what that means? Whatever that was made when we were already married belongs to both of us. The money that you make from your job belongs to me also. I don't care about my company. It's not making anything much anyway. Everything that you have you accumulated it in this marriage. Cars. This house. I get half. So go on and divorce me.

Me:you're a snake who's hiding behind being a pastor.

Mohau:if we don't divorce then I won't take any of your things.

Me:now I see why my father left nothing in my name. He knew this would happen one day. That's why he put everything in my brothers' names so that they can manage it for me.

Ma:my daughter, don't beat yourself up about this. Get a lawyer. You have family that will take care of you. Give him whatever he wants. Give him that half of everything. Let's see where it will get him.

He walked past us and went to the bedroom. I called Amelia and luckily she answered.

Me:hey. Sorry to bother you. Can you please give me your lawyer's number?

Amelia:okay. I will send it now. Is Mohau giving you trouble with the divorce?

Me:yes. He wants half of everything. I don't want to use our lawyer because he's the one who got it.

Amelia:I'm sorry babe. I'll send the number now.

Me:thank you.

\*\*\*\*\*

ZELDA

Me:mama, when you had that dream of the twins,did you also dream that they would have different fathers?

Ma:no. I dreamt of them and I believed they are both Lerumo's. Why are you asking?

Zelda:it's just that I think Pule's father lied. But I don't know why he would lie about something like this.

Ma:trust your gut. Do a research on this matter and get the answers that you need.

I cut our call and thought of calling Pule's father. But I didn't want to alert him that we were thinking of doing another DNA. I didn't want him



to try his tricks again. Why would he lie though? What did he hope to get out of his lies? Those questions are running in my mind and they have no answers.

.....

Unconditional love

5

ZELDA

When my husband left to meet with Pule I drove to Pule's father's hospital. I wanted to ask him about all of this that is happening. If he really did lie to us then he is heartless. He was busy with a patient when I got there so I waited in his office. I was never going to leave until he came

back. He had to answer for what he did. Even if it means I have to stay here until darkness come I don't mind. These are my children and he's messing with them. What's going to happen when it turns out that he did temper with the tests and my son has to change his surname? He is going to be confused. He will ask himself why he has to change his surname.

The door opens and he walks in. I stare at him and he's smiling. I don't know why he's smiling. Is he smiling because of the evil that he has done?

Rra Pule:ngwetsi yarona.(Our daughter in law.)

Me:I'm no longer your daughter in law.

Rra Pule:things can change. You never know.  
How can I help you?

Me:we came to your hospital to do the tests on the twins. Your son suggested it because he trusted you. I believe you wouldn't want to break his trust.

Rra Pule :obviously. Is something wrong with Thabang?

Me:he's perfectly fine. I want to know why you did what you did.

Rra Pule :what are you talking about?

Me:you tempered with the results. Why would

you do that? It is just going to confuse my son!

Rra Pule:I did nothing like that.

Me:I did my own research. You fed us lies.

Rra Pule:I did what was right. Both of those boys are not Pule's. But with Thabang, you and Pule can do something so beautiful. You can take the Moletsane family to the next level.

Me:but he's not a Moletsane. Do you realise what you've done?

Rra Pule:I know exactly what I've done. You cheated on my son. What did you think was going to happen? You sleep with two men on

the same day and expect things to end peacefully? That's also considered cheating. You were still married.

Me:your son forced himself on me. I didn't cheat.

Rra Pule:you did. You should forgive and forget. You're even now. You both cheated. So why not fix things? You can even take Lethabo. Pule loves him just like his own.

Me:I can't believe it's you saying this. You want someone who doesn't have the same blood as you to inherit in your estate?

Rra Pule:my son only has girls and those girls will start their own families. What do you think

will happen to my legacy? It'll be dead. Just like that!

Me:I'm not going to let you get away with this.

Rra Pule:Pule can be responsible when he's with you. I won't let him get married to that evil girlfriend of his. Just one word and he will leave her. Just say yes. I will do anything for you. You will quit your job and work in the family business. You can have any amount of money you want. A house, cars, and so on

Me:if it was back then I would have said yes. But not now. I'm going to expose you.

Rra Pule:not fast. You're not going to say anything. You won't tell anyone. If this comes

out then you will see what will happen to those boys.

I got up and left his office. Maybe I should've just waited for the tests to come back. Coming here has made things worse. This man looks dangerous than I thought. I thought he was a good person. But I don't think so anymore. He's evil!

I got home and my husband and the boys were back. I found them playing in their room. I went to my husband and he was busy with his work.

Lerumo:aren't you supposed to be at work?

Me:I took a day off.

Lerumo:okay.

Me:I went to see Pule's father. I can't believe he'd do that. He really tempered with the results.

Lerumo:you shouldn't have gone to him.

Me:I just wanted the truth. He's now threatening me. He says if I tell someone...

Lerumo:you see what I mean?

Me:I couldn't just keep quiet. He wants to use our son to keep his legacy going. He says I should go back to Pule and he will give me everything I want. He's going to hurt the twins if this gets out. So what are we going to do?



Lerumo: this man sounds dangerous. I don't know but I'm not going to allow him do this to our sons.

\*\*\*\*\*

MPHO

I woke up very early in the morning and took a shower and got ready and put on my casual clothes. It's my day off. I am meeting with the lawyer. I have to get this sorted out quickly. I can't stand seeing Mohau here. What if his wife to be gives birth and then I have to pay maintenance? Pay another woman my money? It's like I'm saying thank you for sleeping with my husband. I'm not that foolish.

Mohau:where are you going?

Me:we have a little something at work. And I have to be there.

Mohau:I thought we could go out and do somethingnyana.

Me:I'm not in the mood to deal with you.

Mohau:when is your mother leaving? We can't even make love with her around here.

Me:make love with who? Me? I don't know what you drank. Bye.

I got into my car and drove to the lawyer's office.  
I couldn't wait to hear what he would say.

Me:good morning.

Aaron:morning. Welcome. You can take a seat.  
Amelia told me that you'd call.

Me:yes. I'm...

Aaron:Mpho. I know you.

Me:you know me?

Aaron:yes. From Amelia's place.

Me:oh. So I'm getting a divorce and I need your help.

Aaron:I'll be happy to help you. So what kind of marriage is it?

Me:out of community of property with accrual system.

Aaron:really? Why didn't you exclude tye accrual system too? You thought you two were going to be together forever?

Me:I didn't know anything about that during that time. We just signed to be married out of community of property. And that's because my dad mentioned it. Nothing about accrual was said.

Aaron:well, you and your partner should have included it in your ante-nuptial contract if you didn't want it to apply. And you could have expressed it between yourself. So tell me, who owns the most assets between you two?

Me:it's me.

Aaron:well,in this case your husband can claim against you because you have a larger accrual. He owns less than you. So all your assets that were accumulated in this marriage will be added, see what both of you own so that they can determine the difference. Let's say his entire estate is worth R20 000 and yours R40 000, then the difference is R20 000. You will have to share between that R20 000 and you both end up with R30 000.

Me:that means I get nothing from him!

Aaron:I'm sorry. That's how it is. At the end of the dissolution of the union both of you must have equal accruals. There's no running away from that.

Me:that's not good.

Aaron:there are a lot of things that are going to be considered. Like your joint accounts,..

Me:no! I'm the one who put a lot of money in there. Maybe I must accept that I can't divorce him. He's refusing to divorce me anyway. I'm going to lose everything!

Aaron:he won't succeed on what he's doing. He cheated. So you can argue your case on irretrievable breakdown. The court will have to prove that there's no way that this marriage will ever be normal again. He may fight against it but you have proof of him cheating. He brought a third party in your marriage. She's even pregnant. So you will get a divorce but you will have to share your estates.

Me:you've said a lot of things. Some of them I don't even understand.

Aaaron:it's fine. I will break down everything for you and you will understand. I will do everything I can to help you.

Me:thank you.

He gets up and takes a bottle of water and gives me.

Aaron:here. You look stressed. You have to calm down. Are you going to drive?

Me:I will be fine.

Aaron:I will get someone to drive you back home.

Me:no. I will drive myself.

Aaron:you looked scared when I mentioned getting someone to drive you. Does he abuse



you?

Me:no. He just gets angry. Like shouting and throwing my phone against the wall. I don't want him to be angry when he see someone driving me.

Aaron:hey, it's possible to start over. You will make everything you've lost again. Your life is precious. This is how it starts. He starts by shouting and getting angry. Then he puts his hand on you. And by that time it will be too late. I deal with cases like these most of the times. Your life is worth more than the money that you will lose.

Me:um...I will hear from you. Thank you.

I walked out of his office with my head spinning. Everything I've worked for! Gone just like that! Mohau only owns the company that's not even making much. And his car. I'm the one who has a lot to lose. He knew what he was doing when he cheated. Now I am in this predicament. I regret getting married young. Now these are the consequences.

.....

Unconditional love

6

She is standing in the middle of the living room watching Mohau sleep. She has an idea to strangle him and just bury him far away where no one can find him. Her hands are almost on

his neck and suddenly Someone holds her from behind. Mohau wakes up startled. She turns around and it's her brother holding her.

Sello:Mpho calm down.

Mohau:what's going on? You went and called your brother on me?

Sello:shut that big mouth of yours! Now here. Take these papers and sign them!

Mpho:I've already given him the papers.

Sello:these ones state that you all get half. My sister, you're smart. Mama did not give birth to a fool. Let this fool have what he wants! You

will work for these things again. You want to get out of here in a body bag?

Mohau:you think I'm going to kill her?

Sello:hey! Shut up! I'm not talking to you!

Mpho,pack what's yours and leave this house. If it's money you don't have to worry. I've already bought an apartment for you not far from work. You will be fine. Take it from your brother. We love you. That's why we are doing this.

Mpho:no! My money Sello! I worked hard for what I have. I wake up everyday going to work! I didn't work this hard only to lose everything to that woman! No! It's not happening. It's either I get everything or one of us is going to die!

Sello:Mohau sign the papers. You've won. Take the house. Even the car. You want everything right? Take it. It's yours now. Sign now before I make you.

Mohau:I'm not signing anything.

He let go of Mpho and grabbed Mohau pinning him down and put his leg on his chest.

Sello:I will kill you. Sign these papers!

Mohau:okay!

He got off him and Mohau took the papers and signed them coughing. He looked at Sello then gave the papers to him.

Sello:Mpho take off that ring. Mama has already packed your things. We are leaving. This house has been put on sale. You will both share the money. You will get your other share in due time. I hope all of this lasts for your whole life. Or else you will come back crying for her and by that time she will have long moved on with a better man. I don't want to see you near her. Here's my number. You will contact me regarding your share. You should also pack your things and get out of here.

Mpho couldn't stop crying. She even had hiccups. Everything you've worked for your whole life and you lose it in just a moment. Tears couldn't stop flowing. Sello went to take her bags and went with them to the car.

Mpho:is this what you wanted? To see me cry like this? I never thought you'd do me like this. Cheat on me then fight for my things. Is that what you've turned into? What kind of pastor are you? Is this what God wants you to be like? What are you teaching your congregants? To cheat and take people's things?

Mohau:I told you that we didn't have to divorce. If we didn't sign those papers you would still have your things.

Mpho:I won't say what others say. Wishing you luck and all those things. I wish you nothing but hell. May that money and everything you got from me make you miserable. May you suffer like you have never suffered before. Ba re pelo ke moloi. Ko go tshwara ka pelo. O ka se tswelle mo bophelong ba gago. May my tears

never fall in vain. They will fight for me. (They say the heart is a witch. You will never succeed in your life.) Goodbye.

She walked out and went to the car. Her brother was already waiting for her. She got into his car and started crying all over again. Sello sighed and held her hand.

Sello:believe me you just saved yourself from heartache. You are going to be fine. Take leave from work. Even if it's unpaid leave. Focus on yourself. Heal. Then you'll come back when you're refreshed. Don't cry for that bastard.

Mpho:let's go past the lawyer's office. I need to drop the papers to him.



Sello:you are going to be fine.

She put on the address and Sello drove to Aaron's office. Mpho went in when they arrived and found him busy.

Mpho:hey. I brought the papers.

Aaron:I didn't think you were going to file so fast.

Mpho:my brother did it. Thank you so much for everything. Send your invoice.

Aaron:how do you feel? You look like you have been crying.

She put her hands on her face crying. Aaron got off from his chair and went to hug her.

Mpho:everything I worked for is gone. I'm not crying because this marriage ended, I'm crying for my hardwork that just went down the drain. How am I going to move past this? How am I going to live knowing that I was a fool who worked for so many years only to have it all taken away?

Aaron broke off from the hug. He wiped her tears and looked at her.

Aaron:you should be proud of yourself. You have achieved a lot. You have a good job. No one can take that from you. If you are as smart as I think then you will get all of these things soon. Let your ex be. He didn't work for those

things. If he couldn't make his company work how do you think he's going to manage all these things from you? Be strong. Show him that he may have broken you but it's not the end of you.

Mpho:thanks for everything. Bye.

She walked out and found her brother outside the car. He got in when he saw her. They drove to the new apartment that he got for her. When they arrived he took her stuff inside. The apartment was beautiful but her heart still bled for all that she's lost.

She saw her mother and other brother. They got up and hugged her. Her brother held her hand and went to the garage with her. He opened the door and looked at her.

Andrew:it's yours. Even better than the one you had. And this house has everything you will need. We got it all for you. Not with your inheritance our father left you. With our own money. Because we love you and we wanted you out of that bad marriage. We want you safe. When you are here we will know that you are safe.

Mpho:thank you.

Sello:we love you.

Mpho:I love you too.

They had a group hug and their mother joined in. Only her sister was the one absent. But she

knew if she could she would be here.

\*\*\*\*\*

Sambulo parked his car and walked to the house. He walked straight in and found his friend waiting for him. He took a seat.

Sambulo:hey. How's everything?

Aaron:good. On your side?

Sambulo:good. It's good to be home.

Aaron:I hope you are not going to do anything stupid that will take you straight back to prison.

Sambulo:no. Not at all. But you see that Willy, he will never mess with my wife.

Aaron:what did you do? I'm working on getting him reported. Whatever you did better not jeopardize this case.

Sambulo:no. I drove him far away from this city. I kept him in the middle of the forest. It's safe but he doesn't know that.

They laughed.

Aaron:man you're bad. I'm sure he walked until he couldn't. He must have been scared.

Sambulo:and same goes for my wife. She must have been scared when he drugged her. If her friend didn't arrive fast I don't want to think about what he would have done.

Aaron:talking about her friend, she's so broken man. I don't think she's going to move on from this anytime soon.

Sambulo:what happened?

Aaron:the husband cheated and wanted to marry the pregnant side chick as a second wife. She asked for divorce and he's getting half of everything. She's the one who owns many things. He gets everything for free. The way she was crying broke my heart.

Sambulo:some men are just ungrateful. Why cheat on your wife and demand her things? If you don't want her just leave her in peace.

Aaron:life is something else.

Sambulo:when are you settling down? You're almost 40 and have no child and wife. Time is not waiting for any man.

Aaron:I'm fine with all these relationship things and kids for now. Even at 50 I can still have a child.

Sambulo:imagine if you were to die tomorrow. Who would you leave all of these things that you have with?



Aaron:I'd give them to relatives. Let's talk about something else.

\*\*\*\*\*

Today is the day that they get the results. Even though they knew what the results were going to say, Zelda and Lerumo didn't make it obvious to Pule. Pule and Lerumo fetched the results and drove to Lerumo's house.

Lerumo:whatever these results say it doesn't change anything.

Pule:stop with the speeches and open them.

Lerumo opened the envelope and took out the

paper. They all looked at it and Pule started to sweat. He turned around and gave Zelda a hot slap. She wasn't expecting it so she staggered back. Lerumo pinned him against the wall.

Lerumo:I respect you. Have you seen me put my hands on my wife? Don't make me do something I will regret. If you want a fight I can give it to you right now. Not with my wife. Don't ever put your filthy hands on her because you might not like what will happen after that.

He let go of him and he breathed loudly.

Pule:you see what you are doing? You're making little boys disrespect me! Why did you make me raise a child that's not mine? There's nothing I didn't do for Thabang. I did everything. I will bring all their things. I never want to see those

boys.

Zelda:you slapped me for something I know nothing about. Your father is the one to blame. He changed the results because he wanted you to have a son. So it's my fault now?

Pule:my father would never do that.

Zelda:here. Listen to that recording. I went to confront him and he spilled everything. I recorded him because I knew you were not going to believe me. Listen to everything he said. I am going to sue him. I won't leave it like this.

\*Daddy you're here to fetch us?\*

Thabang went to hug him but Pule pushed him and he fell on his butt. Lerumo picked him up.

Pule:I'm not your dad. Keep your bastards away from me.

He walked out and Thabang started crying.

A year later

.....

Unconditional love

7

A year later

AMELIA

Me:babe, please take care of things at work today. I'm not coming in.

Sambulo:why?

Me:I'm going to check on Mpho. It's not like her to just go quiet like this.

Sambulo:okay. I will see you during lunchtime.

Me:okay love. I will drop the kids at school.

Sambulo:I will do it. You know Langa won't like

it if you drive him to school.

Me:I don't know why he still prefers that you take him to school everyday.

Sambulo:in his mind he still thinks that I am going to leave again. So him seeing me take him to school makes him relax.

Me:you're right. But I understand though. Even me, sometimes I wake up at night and pat on your side just to feel if you are still there.

Sambulo:you know right now I'm focusing on my legit businesses. I've left that life of crime behind. So I am here forever. Being here with you and our family, it is a good feeling. It makes me always look forward to another day. I love

waking up next to you and taking care of you. I love you so much and I don't plan on losing that. And going to jail would make me lose everything. Which is why I decided to be a good law abiding citizen.

Me:and that makes me happy.

I put my hands around his waist. My husband is so tall. And I'm very short. And he always teases me about it.

Sambulo:you should go now. Or I will never let you out of here.

Me:mmh. Bye.

Sambulo:without giving me my kiss?

He picks me up and kisses me. I kiss back then smile.

Me:bye.

I run out before he catches me. I get into my car and drive to Mpho's place. I couldn't help but just think that something is wrong. She got so depressed after her divorce. She took leave to focus on herself. It was hard for her. I had to be there for her because she was also there for me when my husband was in jail. She's a good friend and it hurt me to see her like that.

When I get to her apartment the door is not locked. I walk in and the place looks messy. I



find her sleeping on the couch. I wake her up.

Me:what's wrong?

Mpho:my life is a mess. A month ago I lost my job. I've been going for interviews in other hospitals but not even one calls back. I decided to look for just anything. I went to drop cvs at companies. You know what happened? One of the companies I went to turned out to be Mohau's. How is he so successful while things are just not working for me? He arrived with his wife and their baby while I was talking to the receptionist. She's pregnant again. Now I believe there's nothing like karma. Why didn't it deal with him? He succeeded because of my money. Look where I am.

Me:your life is not over. You can start over. Yes

you studied to be a doctor but it doesn't mean that's the only job you can do. There must be something you're good at. Life doesn't end after divorce. Trust me on that. Look at me. I picked myself up after divorce. Now I'm more than happy. You can be too. You have money. You can start something for yourself. Don't feel sorry for yourself. While you are doing that Mohau is busy moving on.

Mpho:how do I get out of this? It's hard.

Me:go and take a bath. I will clean here and make a quick meal. Then after that we are going to come up with ideas on how you can make something of yourself. You will see, by the end of this day we will have something. You can't throw your life away just like that.

She got up and walked to the bathroom staggering. I went to her bedroom and cleaned there first. Then I put the dirty clothes in the washing machine then went to clean the living room and the kitchen. After that I made pap and canned beef for her. She needed to gain strength. She was so drunk when I got here.

She was taking a long time. I even finished cooking and she wasn't out. I went to check the bathroom and she was just there lying on the floor. I saw a container of pills. It was empty. I shook her and she wasn't responding. I poured water on her but still she wasn't waking up. I picked her up and went to my car. I was trying so hard not to panic. I went back for her phone so that I can call her mother.

When I got to the hospital they took her in and I

called her mother who promised to come as soon as she can. Then I had to call my husband and cancel our lunch plans.

Me:hey babe. Sorry I won't make it to lunch today. Mpho tried to kill herself.

Sambulo:what?!

Me:yes. She overdose on pills. We're at the hospital now.

Sambulo:it's fine. Be there for your friend. I will bring you something to eat.

Me:okay.

I waited for the doctor to come and tell me how she is. I saw a doctor coming to where I was sitting and got up.

Me:doctor how is Mpho?

Dr:we have drained the pills out. She's going to be fine. You can go and see her.

Me:thank you.

I walked to the ward and found her awake.

Me:Mpho why did you do that?

Nurse:if people are tired of living they should just throw themselves in front of a moving train.

Or shoot themselves.

Me: get out of here!

Nurse: I'm doing my job.

Me: is it part of your job to say that nonsense to your patients? You're so heartless.

Nurse: I'm not going to sugarcoat anything.  
What was she thinking will happen when she drank all those pills?

\*Get out.\*

I looked behind me and it was Arron.

Aaron:I brought you food. Your husband is still in a meeting. I also got something for her.

Me:thank you.

Aaron:how is she?

Me:she's not saying anything. The doctor said she's going to be fine.

Aaron:that's good.

Mpho:I want to go home.

Me:I called your mother. When you get

discharged she will take you with. You don't have to stay alone.

Mpho:you think I will try to kill myself again?

Aaron:you shouldn't be alone. You have to be around people where you cannot think much. In that way you will cope just fine and not think of doing this again.

Mpho:I'm not going to kill myself. Tell my mother not to come here. I'm fine.

Me:you're not fine. You need help. I'm sure the doctor is going to refer you to someone you can talk to. Now here's your food. Eat. You need the strength.



Aaron:I'm leaving. You will let me know how she is.

Me:okay.

I gave her the food and she sat up right and started to eat.

Mpho:why did you bring me here? I would be dead now and not have to think about everything that happened.

Me:what happened at work? Were you drinking?

Mpho:no. They said I'm not fit to work. They said they can't keep me because I'm not good for the patients. I am good at my job. I don't

know what went wrong. Actually, I did nothing wrong. Now what is this?

Me:it's not the end of the world. I am not going to watch you waste your life away. I am not going to let you throw everything away. I was serious when I said we're going to figure out how to get you back on your feet. For now you have to recover from this then we'll take it from there.

Mpho:what did I do to have a friend like you?

Me:you've been a good friend. Oh mama is here.

Ma:Mpho did you have to do this? If things became too hard for you you should have come home. You just switched off your phone and

became quiet. I came to your place multiple times and didn't find you. O batla go mpolaya ka pelo mara?(You want to kill me by a heart attack?)

Mpho:I'm sorry.

Ma:what happened to you?

Mpho:I lost my job. Nothing is working out mama. No matter what I try I'm just stuck in the same place. They fired me and I tried to apply for different jobs and still, nothing works. I ended up going to Mohau's company.

Ma:why would you do that?

Mpho:I didn't know it's his. The name and place changed. You should have seen him mama. He's successful and happy. While me who worked for everything he has am suffering.

Ma:I will move in with you until you're back to your feet. Don't let him get to you. You should focus on yourself. Focus on rebuilding yourself.

Me:friend, I will come and see you later.

Ma:thank you for helping her. I don't know what would have happened if you were not there.

Me:it's fine ma. I will be on my way now.

.....

## Unconditional love

8

Rra Pule:how long are you going to be angry at me? It's been a year now.

Pule:dad you don't how I feel. You made me raise bastards. I was happy that I finally had a son. Someone to make my surname grown. But you decided to play God with my life. You made me waste money on a child that's not mine. I invested money on his name. Only to find out that it was all your tricks.

Rra Pule:so you're going to marry that evil woman because you are angry?

Pule:dad, Thabile would never cheat on me. She loves me and my children.

Rra Pule:but they complain every time they visit us. Just because I pulled some strings for Zelda not to take the kids away from you doesn't mean that I don't see what's happening. Do the right thing. Or I'll be forced to take action.

Pule:Thabile is a good mother. Zelda is just making the kids to not like her. I've never seen her abuse them or shout at them.

Rra Pule:do you think she will do it in front of you? You don't know what happens when you are at work. If you don't believe me then one day you should surprise her and go home without telling her. You will see what your children go through.

Pule:dad just leave. You're trying to make me and my fiancé fighting. And you're not going to succeed.

Rra Pule:don't say I didn't warn you. If you don't do something you will lose these kids. Don't say I didn't warn you.

His father got up and walked out of the office. Pule packed his stuff and left. He was done for the day anyway. So he wouldn't be in trouble with his boss. So he drove home and found Zelda's car parked outside. He pressed the remote and the gate opened. Zepda followed behind him. They both parked and got out.

Pule:can I help you?

Zelda:I'm here to fetch the kids.

Pule:I was going to bring them tomorrow.

Zelda:Boitumelo called me because Gogontle was crying.

Pule:how is Gogontle your concern? Stop acting like a saint. Isn't it that you've pushed her mother out of this city?

Zelda:I did not do that. Nhlanhla is at school. She's doing her final year and she should focus on that. This child is in my care.

She followed behind Pule as he rushed leaving



her outside.

Lesedi:Gogontle mom is here. We are going home.

Zelda:Boitumelo, take your sisters to the car.

She gave her the car keys.

Pule:what are you trying to do? You hated Nhlanhla but now you're playing mother to her child.

Zelda:Nhlanhla is my sister. I forgave her. She left this child with me. Your fiancé is abusing the kids and you can't even do something about it. When I take action I'm labeled as a

bitter ex.

Pule:stop acting like a saint. If you think I'm my father and you're going to sue me then you thought wrong.

Thabile:hey babe I thought I heard your voice.

Zelda:Thabile why are you hitting Gogontle?  
What did she do to you?

Thabi:I did nothing like that. I was just reprimanding her.

Zelda:I thought you would have changed. These children are not going to steal your fiancé from you. Every time they complain when they come

back home. If you don't change your ways then they will never come here. Their father will only meet them away from here.

Thabi:why are you angry? When have I ever hit your children?

Zelda:Pule deal with this. Or you will never see them.

She left and Pule looked at her.

Pule:what did you do to Gogontle?

Thabi:nothing. You know she's always crying.

Pule:so you did not hurt her?

Thabile:why would i do that?

Pule left her there and went to the lounge. She found Refilwe eating.

Pule:nana, daddy has something to ask you. Did mommy hit Gogontle?

Fifi:yes. She wanted food and she slapped her on her back.

Pule:are you sure?

She nodded. Pule walked off angry.

Pule:you said you did not hit her.

Thabi:I thought we were over this.

Pule:Refilwe says you did. Why would she lie?

Thabi:I don't know.

Pule:I think we should take a break. You will come back here when you are ready to be a good stepmother. I am not going to lose my kids because you are abusive. Change your ways.

.....

Zelda:what happened there?

Boitumelo:she hit Gogontle. You know I'd never lie about something like this.

Zelda:I know. I am going to take care of this. I will get to the bottom of it.

\*\*\*\*\*

Mom:Mpho put that phone down. You've been staring at it the whole day.

Mpho:I was checking my emails. Maybe someone offered me a job.

Mom:your friend is here.

Mpho:tell her to come in.

Her mother went out then Amelia walked in.

Mpho:hey.

Amelia:hi. How are you?

Mpho:I'm fine. Just bored. I need something to do. I can't stay without a job.

Amelia:that's why I'm here.

Mpho got discharged two days ago. She has been trying to look for a job but it seems as if the more she applies is the more they reject her.

Amelia:I've got something that you might like. They are hiring at Mahlangu Langa. So the moment I saw it I thought of you. They are looking for PAs, cleaners and drivers. You can try your luck there.

Mpho:imagine me driving. Or being a cleaner. From a doctor to a cleaner. I've hit rock bottom hey.

Amelia:it's something. And it's just temporary. Just until we come up with something you can start. For now let's just focus on you getting a job while we think of something. Soon you will be back on your feet.

Mpho:thank you for thinking of me. I will take



anything. Even if it's a cleaning job. It's better than nothing.

Amelia:now let's think of those ideas.

.....

Unconditional love

9

AARON

Today we are having interviews at my company that I own with Sambulo. If I'm not at the law firm I'm at this company. So I'm here today to check how everything is going. I'm always away and Sambulo is mostly at his company. The two

companies came because of my sweat and tears. I've dodged many bullets to be here. I've even been to the hospital because of trying to build my life. Me and Sambulo met in Columbia. Marko recruited me to go with him when he was leaving this country. He groomed me in his business and I joined. Me going to Columbia wasn't on my own will. He forced me. That's why I hate him so much. Then Sambulo arrived running away from his uncle. That's when we became friends. Marko acted like someone who was helping him. A good Samaritan. But had evil intentions on him. I remember the first time I got shot protecting him. He was not yet a pro on this gangsterism business. If I didn't protect him he would have died.

I get out of my office to get something to eat. I don't trust anyone I don't know with my food. I've been to the hospital because Marko

poisoned me. I hate that man with everything in me. So as I'm walking out I see some people coming in for interviews. I walk to the cafeteria and buy what I usually buy. After getting it I walk back to my office. As I'm passing I see Mpho sitting with those who are here for interviews. It's really bad what happened to her. I feel hurt like it happened to my sister. If I had a sister and this happened to her I swear I'd kill someone.

\*Hey stop staring.\*

Me:eish! Uyang'thusa man.(you're scaring me.)

Sambulo:why are you staring at her like that?

Me:nothing.

We walk into my office and take our seats.  
Sambulo came with his own food so we start eating.

Sambulo:do you like her?

Me:who?

Sambulo:stop acting dumb. I've never seen you look at a woman like that. Should I start looking for my best man suit?

Me:have I ever looked at a woman in that way?

Sambulo:no.

I've never been in a serious relationship. I did have women I used to sleep with but not get into a relationship. I just don't think it's for me. Not with the type of life I live. Yes I've left gangsterism but enemies will always be there. Imagine if I had a wife and kids then my enemy shows up out of the blue. They'd be in all of that. I don't want to put someone's daughter through that.

Me:you know I have never been in love. Even if I were to fall in love I won't act on it.

Sambulo:the reason I'm here, my wife is forcing me to hire her friend. She told her that we are hiring.

Me:I'm sure she will get the job.

Sambulo:okay. Are you sure you are fine?

Me:don't start. I'm fine. Soon you'll start asking about kids and wives.

Sambulo:what man doesn't want kids? I know you do. You're just scared. Just try to open your heart to this love thing and see what happens. You know Marko will never come here. I've dealt with him. He knows what will happen if he shows his face here.

Me:mmh mmh. I don't want to take the risk. I don't want to let my guard down then he arrives when I am not expecting him.

Sambulo:I promise you it won't happen. Even if

it's not Mpho. Just open your heart to love. It's not bad at all. I'm telling you.

Me:okay. I like her. Maybe more than like her. I feel sad seeing her hurting like this. It doesn't sit well with me seeing that I cannot do anything about it.

Sambulo:you can help by being there for her.

Me:I'll keep my distance. That's what I'm going to do.

\*\*\*\*\*

MPHO

Amelia: So tell me! How did it go?

Me: I'm cursed friend. I didn't get the job. Not even the cleaning one.

Amelia: no. That can't be. You have qualifications. You'd be a good PA.

Me: that's the problem. They said I'm overqualified.

Amelia: but that doesn't mean that they shouldn't hire you. Companies should be fighting for you.

Me: ot is what it is. But I won't give up.



Zelda:are you sure they rejected you? It doesn't sound right.

Amelia:exactly.

Zelda:I think something is going on here. I mean, you cannot just lose your job without doing anything wrong. Just think about it. Have you ever been fired at the hospital?

Me:no.

Zelda:something must have been done to block your life. If it is what I think then nothing will ever work out for you. Go and consult. Consult with someone who works with these types of things. I tell you now. After that person has done everything that needs to be done things

will start working.

Me:like ke loilwe? I'm cursed?(I've been bewitched?)

Zelda:yes. Don't take things lightly. Ke mo lefatsheng mo. People do despicable things to others for their own selfish reasons.

Amelia:she might be right hey. These things happen. Just don't relax while things fall apart.

Me:I will see.

.....

Me:mama do you think someone bewitched me?

Mom:now that you mention it...it's possible. Things cannot just start going from bad to worse.

Me:do you believe in these things?

Mom:yes. I mean, being a christian doesn't mean that you shouldn't consult. There are some healers who mix with christianity. I will take you to someone I know. We will go there first thing tomorrow morning.

Me:I don't know mom. I've never done that.

Mom:even pastors go to consult. They will lie to you and tell you that God is doing wonders for them. But you don't know what they are doing

on the side.

Me:tomorrow I have to drop cvs at some companies.

Mom:you see? Something really is not right. You're making excuses just so that you cannot go. You will drop off those cvs later. First thing in the morning we are going to see that woman.

.....

Unconditional love

10

MPHO

me:mama tlhe! It's so early.

Mom:we need to go there while it's still early. In that way you will come back and go and drop your cvs.

Me:I feel so tired.

Mom:go and take a bath. Wear a dress and headwrap. I will be waiting for you outside.

Me:shap.

I force myself to get out of bed and take a long shower. After I'm done i put on a dress and a doek then go to where my mother is waiting for me.

Mom:let's go. This woman will help you. You're going to be fine.

Me:I really hope so mom.

We get in the car and drive to my township. That's where the woman is at. On our way mom keeps on chatting with me just to keep me from being stressed. I've never felt the road to home so long. It suddenly became longer. And I am feeling impatient. As I am driving, the car start to make strange sounds. I don't know why because it's perfectly fine. It starts to become worse. I move to the other side and it stops completely. I wish my brothers were home. One of them would have come to get us.

Me:what are we going to do?

Mom:request.

Me:we are in the middle of nowhere. And I don't think bolt comes here.

Mom:just try.

I get on the app and try to request. All the cars are away from this place and it says it doesn't come this side. I try to call my friends and they are all at work. I call my lawyer. I am really desperate. He picks up.

Me:hey.

Aaron:hey. How are You?

Me:I'm fine. I'm stuck with my mom in the middle of nowhere. I tried to request but it's not possible. Can you please get someone to fetch us? I promise I will pay you.

Aaron:okay. Send the location then I will see what to do.

Me:thank you so much.

Aaron:it's nothing.

I cut the call and get into the car. I sigh relieved. I lock the doors of the car and just sit in the car.



Mom:you know, it hurts to see you struggling like this my child. Going through all of this because of a jealous person. If I knew that person I would go and face them and ask them what they gain from someone's misery.

Me:I didn't believe it at first. But the way things have been going wrong mom, I am starting to believe that someone really did something to me. And pelo yaka e botlhoko mama. Ke mo dirileng motho o? Ke eng se ke se dirileng gore dilo di nne yana?(And my heart is painful mom. What did I do to this person? What is it that I did for things to be like this?)

Mom:o kase itse gore motho o nagana yang. Le ge o sa dira sepe motho a ka go tlhoyela fela gore dilo tsa gago di tsamaya sentle. (You won't know how a person thinks. Even when you

didn't do anything they can hate you just because things are going well for you. )

Me:that's pure evil.

Mom:that's life my child. But everything will be fine. You will see.

After almost two hours Aaron arrived.

Me:thank you so much for coming.

Aaron:I will take you where you are going. This is Senzo. He will tow your car and have it fixed.

Mom:thank you for your help.

He opened the door for my mother then I went to the front seat and he drove off. All the way we were quiet. Just listening to music. Ever since I heard about being bewitched I'm so emotional. I always feel like crying.

We arrived at that woman's place and luckily there was no one that she was helping.

Aaron:you will find me waiting here for you.

Me:okay.

We walked in and greeted. She led us to her consulting room.

Her:let me go and prepare the water that you will bath with.

I looked around and nothing looked shady. Everything looked normal. She came back and sat facing us. She started to pray. That woman can pray. She prayed for a long time. Praying to be shown things about my life. Praid for my roads to open. By the time she finished she looked tired. She went out and came back with water in a bucket. She put it in a bathing basin and told me to steam.

Me:mama it's too hot.

Mom:it's not. Just do it. You will be fine. Okay let me steam with you.

We took off our clothes and sat next to the basin. She put some sort of a plastic on top of us and prayed. It was hot but there was no way out. She started to pray and when it was no longer hot she took the plastic off. Then she shared the water between the two of us and we bathed with it. We waited until we were dry then got dressed. We went back to the seats. She prayed again then she started to narrate what she was seeing.

Her:ke bona mona and le go kwata mo. Bophelo ba gago bo ne bo tsamaya sentle then ka bonako nyana dilo tsa semolla go senyega. Dilo ga di tsamai sentle ebile ge go sa baakanyiwi go tla nna thata. Go nale yo mongwe ga a elets gore o nnete le bophelo jo bontle. Ebile dilo tse ba di dirileng di tsamaya sentle.(I see jealousy and anger here. Your life was going very well and it suddenly started to collapse. Things are

not going well for you and if it's not fixed it will only get worse. There is someone who wants you to not live a good life. And they are succeeding at what they did. )

She prayed again. She repeated the same thing. Prayed then said something.

Her:motho o o dirisitse seaparo sa gago. Ke bona senepe le skhipa sa gago. O di berekile. Di bofile dilo mo bophelong ba gago.(the person used your cloth. I see your photo and t-shirt. This person worked on them. They are tying things in your life.)

I wiped my tears.

Her: se lle. O tlile mo lefelong le le siameng. Ke

tla go direla motogo. O tla o ja gone fa and ge o tsena gae o saya gope ka gonne o tlabe o berekisa toilet letsatsi lotlhe. Gompieno fela. O tle gape kamoso gore ke go ise ko nokeng, a se kgakala le fa. Ke tshwanetsi ke go tlhapise ko teng. Go tswa mo re tlabe re feditse. (don't cry. You've come to the right place. I am going to make soft porridge for you. You will eat it here and when you get home don't go anywhere because you'll be using the toilet the whole day. It's just for today. Then come back tomorrow so that I can take you to the river not far from here. I have to cleanse you there. Then we'll be done.)

Her:ga o tla kamoso reka dilo tse o tle ka tsone. O tla bona. Ha re fetsa tiro yotlhe ditsela tsa gago di tla bolela. Mmereko wa gago o tla o kerea gape. Bophelo bo tla tsamaya sentle.(when you come tomorrow buy these things and come with them. You will see. When

we are done with all the work your ways will open. You will get your job back. Your life will be well.)

Mom:re a leboga mme.(thank you ma.)

After eating the soft porridge we had to go home. Aaron drove us. I was so embarrassed because of how I smelt from the water. We didn't drive to my place because it's too far. What if the porridge starts working while we are on the way and I have to use the toilet?

Me:thank you for fetching us.

My mom walked to the yard leaving me.



Aaron:it's nothing. You will tell me when you're done with everything then I will fetch you.

Me:okay.

Aaron:have a good day.

Me:you too.

He hugged me for a little while.

Aaron:you will get your car when you come back.

He kissed my cheek then got into his car and drove off. I walked to the yard and went inside.

Mom:you're not going to eat anything until the evening. You will see. Things are going to be fine.

Me:I wish she mentioned names. I was going to confront that person. I almost killed myself because of them.

Mom:that's not a good idea. That's why she didn't tell you the name. That person will reveal themselves.

Me:there's no need to ask ourselves. Mohau is the only one capable of this. He's bitter because I left him. I don't know why he would do this because things are going well for him.

Mom:if it is indeed him then he will reveal himself.

.....

The following day we went to the river and she cleansed me. After that we went back to her house. She mixed everything that I bought. It was different kinds of drinks and some things that I didn't know what they were for. She filled them in a bottle and told me to drink the whole day until I finish them. Then we had to leave. We drove home first.

Mom:I wish I could come with you. But you will be fine.

Me:thank you mom. If you were not there with

me maybe I would have been more depressed.

Mom:that's what a mother is for. Call me everyday so that I know you're alright.

Me:okay mom. I love you.

Mom:I love you too.

I went back to Aaron and we drove off. We didn't go to my place first. We went to get something to eat. I actually didn't eat last night. The porridge only stopped working midnight.

Aaron:are you fine with that food? You can get more.

Me:I'm fine. If I'm still hungry I will get more.

Aaron:so how are you feeling now after the cleansing?

Me:I feel so light. I hope things will work out. It has to.

Aaron:it will. You will see.

Me:and you, how's work?

Aaron:work is work. A lot of it. But not bad. So yeah it's good.

Me:that's good. At least things are going well for one of us.

Cashier:it's on the house. The boss already paid for it.

Aaron:the boss? Who's that?

She pointed to a table and we looked there.

Me:keep this food. We don't want it anymore.

Mohau walked to where we were.

Mohau:hey Mpho.

Me:what do you want? If I knew you owned this place we wouldn't have come here.

Mohau:I thought you've moved on and no longer angry. It's not good for your health.

Me:cut the crap! You...

Aaron:calm down okay? Calm down. We will buy at another place.

Mohau:so you have moved on? I'm happy for you.

Me:do I have stupid written on my forehead?  
Enjoy these things you bought with my money while they last.

Mohau:Mpho, God blessed me with these

things. It's not too late for you to change. You can come back to the house of the LORD. You know that verse about the prodigal son...

Me:let's go before he starts preaching false things to us.

Aaron:go to the car. I will be there soon.

I take the keys and leave them.

.....

Unconditional love



AARON

Me:can we talk in your office?

Mohau:follow me.

I followed him to the office. I closed the door and locked it.

Mohau:so you're busy with my ex? Do you know that she can still come back to me? We've had problems before and fixed them.

Me:what's that got to do with me?

Mohau:I'm just telling you to stop signing up for pain. Mpho loves me. I'm the only guy she's ever

been with. I'm telling you. She still loves me.

Me:you're right. You're the only guy she's ever been with. But now, a man has arrived.

Someone who's man enough to do what you couldn't. And I hate people who mess with those I hold dear to my heart. If you ever try to harrass her all of this will end in a blink of an eye. Don't shit on me.

Mohau:you don't scare me. You're the one who should be scared. You're messing with what's mine and you're going to get hurt.

Me:get hurt? It shows that you don't know me. Stay away from Mpho. If you don't want trouble stay away from her.

Mohau:unfortunately I can't do that.

Me:this is not a threat but a promise. Do as I say. Stay away or me and you will have problems. You being a pastor doesn't scare me. I don't respect fake pastors.

Mohau:stop shitting on me.

I pushed him to the wall and put my hand on his neck and started to strangle him. I tightened my hand around his neck. He was unable to talk.

Me:stay away from Mpho. I won't repeat myself again. I don't want to see you next to her.

I let go of him and he fell and started to caught.

I gave him a few kicks then put my knee on his chest. I let go when he whimpered in pain.

Mohau:does she know that she's with a killer?  
You're a monster man!

Me:I don't hide what I am. I'm not like you. You see how you were not able to breath for some minutes? Next time I won't be so lenient on you. I'm warning you. Stay away.

I left him coughing there and went to the car.  
Mpho was staring at her phone.

Me :are you okay?

Mpho:I'll be fine.

Me:can you try to hold yourself whenever you see him? This anger you have inside you is not going to help.

Mpho:when I see him everything comes back. I don't know how to stop myself from saying something.

Me:just try okay? When he sees you getting amgry and shouting at him it makes him happy. That's what he wants. But after today he's not going to mess with you.

Mpho:what did you do?

Me:we just talked and he listened.

Mpho:I will make sure that I don't go to any places that he likes to go to. I don't know why but he just knows how to press my buttons.

Me:learn to stay calm in situations like these.

Mpho:I will try.

I drove to another restaurant and got us something to eat and we sat there and ate. After we were done I drove her home. I can't believe this is me. I even took a day off so that I can help her. I've never skipped work for a woman. This is something new.

Mpho:thank you for everything. I will send the money you used to pay the mechanic.

Me:no. I don't expect you to pay it back. I will see you around then.

I leaned in and kissed her next to her lips.

Me:have a good day.

Mpho:you too.

She smiled then got out and walked inside her place. I drove off to my house making a call.

Me:Raps.

Raps:eita.

Me:I have a job for you. I will send you an address. I want you to go and do something to that place. Something that will make the owner of that place's heart to beat faster than it normally does.

Raps:ke metsi a mannyane ao.(That's small water.)

Me:good. Just do it when there's no one there. I will send you your payment now. I trust you to do a good job.

Raps:as always.

\*\*\*\*\*



MPHO

When I got to my place I took that drink and poured it into a cup and drank it. Everything that happened at Mohau's restaurant came back. I don't know why I acted like that. All the anger and pain he caused me just came back. I was going to do something I would regret if Aaron wasn't there. I would have fought him. How does Mohau manage to have all these things while I'm going nowhere with life? Those things wouldn't have been possible without me. And he had the nerve to tell me that God blessed him with those things. God blessed him and made me go through problems. Does that make sense? My phone rang and it was Aaron.

Me:yey.

Aaron:hey. Senzo is at the gate. He brought your car.

Me:so fast? Thank you so much. You've really done a lot for me and I'll forever be grateful for that.

Aaron:I'm glad I could help. So what are you doing tomorrow?

Me:nothing. Some of us don't work.

He laughed.

Aaron:I was thinking we could go out. In that way you will not be bored.

Me:I can't say no to that. Or else I will just be sitting here doing nothing.

Aaron:it's a date. Eish I mean I will see you tomorrow.

Me:ok.

I left my phone and walked to the gate. I opened for Senzo then he drove in and I opened the garage and he parked it.

Senzo:I will be on my way now.

Me:thank you.

He gave me my keys and left. I went back inside.

My phone rang and it was an unknown one. I answered it and put it on loudspeaker and lay on the bed.

Voice:Mpho are you there?

Me:Mohau I told you to stay away from me.

Mohau:When did you start associating yourself with criminals?

Me:what are you talking about?

Mohau:your boyfriend is a gangster! His behaviour suggests that he is. Stay away from

him. He's dangerous.

Me:he's dangerous to you. Not me.

Mohau:so this is what you've turned into? It's been a year of you not coming to church and the first time I see you you're with a gangster. Is it that bad? Are you that desperate for love that you end up looking for it in all the bad places? I bet you're even drinking now.

Me:that's none of your business. You actually disturbed us. He's here in bed with me. You want to speak to him?

Mohau:you're signing up for heartache. I hope you are ready for it. Don't say I didn't warn you.

Ne:stop calling me with different numbers. I'm not interested in whatever you want to tell me. When I blocked you you should have taken that as a sign that I don't want you. Good bye again.

.....

SAMBULO

Today me and my brothers are supposed to be watching the videos that I got from Lazarus. We didn't watch them all those years. We were going to watch them but then I got arrested and I'm the only one who knows the passwords.

Sthe:can we watch and get over with it? I need to be somewhere.

Banele:you finally found a girlfriend?

We laughed. I've never seen him even once with a woman.

Sthe:not everything is about women. When are you going to stop teasing me about this topic?

Ntsikelelo:maybe you need help. We can give you some pointers.

Me:and you, why are you hiding your girlfriend?  
Is she scared of meeting the family?

Ntsikelelo:let's stop this topic and focus on what we are here for.

Sthe:you see?

I put the password and the video played. My father appeared on the screen. It showed that he wasn't fine. I think maybe it was before Lazarus suffocated him.

\*I need you to look for your brother. The one that your mother gave away. She doesn't know that I know. But if you do not find him then you won't be able to know the details of this video. I gave the man who raised him a letter. That letter has a password for the last video.\*

The screen went blank. People can just give you more work from the grave. What is this? How are we going to find this guy?



Banele:didn't your mother ever tell you about him?

Ntsikelelo:just his name. Nothing else. His name is Kgoši. That's all I know. I don't know his surname.

Sthe:this guy needs to be found. We stand to lose a lot if he isn't found.

Banele:for once I agree with you. We could lose the Langa inheritance. He must be found. Why did MaNkosi die without finding him? We wouldn't be in all this dilemma.

Sthe:I want to get my share so that I can live a soft life. As soon as I get it I'm quitting my job and traveling the world.

Me:you're not going to spend it recklessly. You will get a little portion every month. Until you're responsible. Or else you will finish it in a short period.

Ntsikelelo:another thing. Lazarus mistress is getting out on parole. We also have to deal with that.

Me:leave that to me. For now let's just focus on finding Kgoši. Amd that's all.

.....

Unconditional love

SAMBULO

Langa:dad you're home.

Me:yes. How was school?

Langa:good. But you didn't come to fetch me.

Me:daddy was working. But you know I always fetch you.

Langa:you were in a meeting?

Me:yes.

Langa:tomorrow I have soccer practice. You should come and watch me.

Me:of course. I will be there.

Langa:I can't wait. We should practice.

Me:we will practice during the weekend. Go and get your sister. Hey babe.

Amelia:hey. You don't look good.

Me:my father just placed more responsibilities on us. We have to find Kgoši. That's Mankosi's son. He's the one who has the password and doesn't even know. Why are we the ones who have to look for him? He's not even a Langa for

God's sake!

Amelia:babe, maybe there were reasons he wanted him found. You need to do this or else you won't know what's in the other video.

Me:I know. But where are we going to start? And on the other side Zoleka is getting out. I have that to deal with that too. I try hard to leave my old life behind but it looks like the devil is always throwing something at me.

Amelia:Zoleka?

Me:I know that look. Babe I'm never going to do anything behind your back again.

Amelia:it's not that. I just think that you should just leave her alone. She's paid for her crimes. Poking a snake in its hole is never a good thing.

Me:paid for her crimes? She should have stayed 12 years in there. But she only served 6.

Amelia:my love, leave her alone. Only do something if she tries something against this family. I have good news to share.

Me:something good for a change. What is it?

She gives me a gift bag. I open it and it has two baby tops. Blue and pink. I put it all down.

Me:baby are we...

Amelia:are we what?!

Me:pregnant? Don't play with me!

Amelia:you're going to be a daddy to another boy and girl.

Me:boy and girl?

Amelia:well I don't know the gender yet. But I want a boy and a girl.

Me:yes!

I pick her up from her seat and spin her around.

Me: this is really the best news! I'm going to be a father again.

There's a clap of hands behind us. It's Langa and Mihle.

Langa: here mommy. I took the video.

Amelia: good boy. You see now my love? The kids are always happy when you're home. And I want a present dad. Not someone who will be in jail. This time I want to have the entire experience with you when I go into labour. With Mihle if you weren't there. Please don't do anything that will make you go back to jail.

Me: I promise you that is not going to happen.



This time, I'm going to be there the whole way.

Amelia:I'm happy that our little family is growing.  
But, this is the last time right?

Me:of course. We've always agreed on having  
four kids. After this we're done. Does mama  
know?

Amelia:no. I found out when she was already at  
Banele's.

Me:these news made me so happy. Do you  
think you can help me post about Kgoši on  
facebook?

Amelia:yes. Just give me the details and I'll do

the rest.

Me:we should get a maid. You need all the rest you can get. You can't come back from work and do all the work.

Amelia:I don't like maids. But we can get one. I will ask my grandmother to help me look for someone. And don't forget, tomorrow you're driving us, me and the kids to Pretoria after Langa's practice.

Me:how can I forget when this boy keeps on reminding me?

\*\*\*\*\*

Zoleka:how is our plan coming Tinashe?

Tinashe:I don't think it's going to work. That girl is so hard.

Zoleka:she is exactly like her brother. I thought I could try my luck again but the last time...and I'm still in his bad books. If I try something then I might not even get this parole.

Tinashe:you know that girl, she's my only way in. But where? She's busy saying no sex before marriage. I've never even seen her naked. She's a hard nut to crack.

Zoleka:the only way for us to gain access to that family is through that girl. It's either you sleep with her even if she doesn't want to.

Tinashe:hey! I'm not a rapist!

Zoleka:that or marry her or inseminate her.  
That's the only way. There's no other way.

Tinashe:you're so heartless. You even suggest  
that I rape her. You're also a woman! Don't you  
feel any remorse?

Zoleka:then you have to marry her. Then get  
her pregnant.

Tinashe:I will make another plan. Not what you  
are suggesting.

....

Tinashe drove back to his place thinking about what Zoleka said. Maybe it wasn't a bad plan after all. He did a u-turn to the mall and looked for a ring. He smiled as he looked at the rings but the prices made him have a change of mind.

.....

Unconditional love

13

Tinashe drove through the gates of his place and parked his car. He walked inside and found her dancing and cooking. He walked to her and hugged her from behind.

Nokwanda:yoh! You scared me.

Tinashe:sorry. It smells delicious.

Nokwanda:I hope you enjoy it.

Tinashe:babe. You know we've been together for a while now. And we've grown closer and our love has grown. I love being with you and it makes me happy. So I'd love to be with you forever.

Nokwanda:what are you doing?

He went down on his knee and took out a ring.

Tinashe:will you marry me? Be my wife.

Nokwanda:I'm not ready for marriage. I'm sorry.

Tinashe:you're not ready? But you always speak about no sex before marriage and I thought you want us to get married.

Nokwanda:so you're marrying me for sex?Not because you love me? Awungboni struu! I don't want to get married. Not anytime soon. Go and look for someone to have sex with. Not me. I'm not ready. I'm leaving.

Tinashe:baby calm down. Where are you going to?

Nokwanda:home. I can't believe you'd marry me just for sex.

Tinashe:we don't have to rush. That came out wrong.

Nokwanda:I'm not going to get married until I'm in my 30s. If that's not fine with you then we are done.

Tinashe:you don't have to leave!

Nokwanda:I'm angry right now. I don't want to say things I will regret.

She closed the door and went to her car. She got in and screamed angry. Driving all the way to Morningside she couldn't stop crying. The time she got there she was just glad that her sister in law was home.



Amelia:what happened?

Nokwanda:I'm so heartbroken.

Amelia:something wrong?

Nokwanda:Tinashe doesn't love me. He only wants sex.

Amelia:why are you saying that?

Nokwanda:the other day he wanted to sleep with me and I said I'm not ready. That I'm waiting for marriage. And today he's proposing? He says because I kept saying no sex before marriage he thought he should propose.

Amelia:I'm sorry. But you're right. I don't think he loves you. If he did he would have no problem waiting for you

Nokwanda:I thought he was a good guy. He has been so nice to me and we enjoyed each other's company. Or maybe I fooled myself.

Amelia:he isn't. If he was a good guy he would understand and support you on your decision.

\*\*\*\*\*

Mpho looked at herself on the mirror and smiled. She hoped she looked good and her dress and denim jacket were good enough as he said "wear something you'll be comfortable

in. " Then she started asking herself if this was a date or not. He just told her that he was wondering if they could go out. Maybe it is a date. She will just hold onto that thought.

A text came into her phone. It was Aaron saying he's outside. She took her side handbag that had her things and walked out. She locked the door and walked toward his car. He got out as she approached and went to her. He hugged her then held her hand going to the passenger side. He opened the door for her, then went to his side after closing the door.

Aaron:you look beautiful.

Mpho:thank you. You don't look bad yourself.

He drove to his place. She looked at him when they got there. She thought they were going on a date. But now seeing that they were going to his place, she was confused.

Aaron:welcome to my home. This is where we are going to have our date.

He held her hand and walked inside the house. When they got to the lounge she looked at him. The couches were moved to the walls and in the middle there was food and drinks. Then where they were going to sit.

Mpho:it's beautiful.

Aaron:you think so?

Mpho:it is. You did this yourself?

Aaron:I asked my helper for help and she came through. Come and sit. I hope I did well for our first date.

Mpho:I like everything here.

There was a knock at the door and he groaned.  
Of all days he had to get visitors on this one?  
How did the person even pass the gate?

Aaron:I'm going to check who it is. You can eat so long.

He got up and went to the door. He opened and was pushed to the other side.

Aaron:who are you and what are you doing here?!

Man:just call me Fil. Marko sent me here.

Aaron:I don't know you and why you are here.  
So get out.

Fil walked through and Aaron ran to Mpho. He helped her get up and looked into her eyes.

Mpho:what's going on?

He held her face and kissed her. She kissed him back. He smiled when he stopped.

Aaron:I'm sorry our date has to come to an end so early. I promise I will make it up to you. Go to the bedroom. The first one. Lock yourself in and wait for me there.

He kissed her forehead. She nodded and walked to the bedroom.

Aaron:you're trespassing.

Fil:so what? Marko has been calling you and you're ignoring him.

Aaron:how long has it been? Seven years?

Fil:you know a debt never expires. So here's what is going to happen. Get Sambulo to

Marko's place tomorrow morning. Here's the address. You owe him. If you don't do this then it's war.

Aaron:you came here to disturb me for nothing?

Fil:you have a beautiful woman. I'm sure you wouldn't want anything to happen to her. Do as I said.

Aaron:go and tell Marko to leave South Africa. He's not welcome here. I'm not bringing Sambulo to him. Do as you wish.

Fil:are you sure you want to do this?

Aaron:you're still asking? Tell Marko I said he



should leave this country. Tomorrow he must be out of here. Now get out of my house.

Fil walked out and Aaron followed him to lock the gate. He locked it then came back and locked the house. He took out his phone and sent Sambulo a message.

Aaron took the food and drinks and went to his bedroom. He found Mpho sitting on the bed.

Aaron:I'm sorry about that. I came with the food.

Mpho:are you fine?

Aaron:yes. I am sorry our date was ruined. I am going to make it up to you. I promise.

Mpho:I understand.

.....

MPHO

I woke up in the morning alone in bed. I was in a t-shirt. I got up, went to shower then came back and put on my dress. I made the bed then went to the kitchen. I was hungry. There was groceries in the cupboards. I took what I needed and started to make breakfast. Aaron walked in while I was still busy with breakfast.

Aaron:you look beautiful so early in the morning.

Me:mmh. Where are you coming from? I woke up and you were nowhere to be found.

Aaron:I went to jog. I do that every morning before going to work.

Me:mmh okay. I'm making breakfast.

Aaron:I can't wait to taste it. I'm going to take a shower now.

Me:I'll be done when you finish showering.

He jogged to the bedroom. I continued what I was doing then someone walked in.

Me:you keep on walking in here. What do you

want?

Fil:lady, I'm not here for you.

His accent sounded sounded somehow.

Fil:go and call your boyfriend.

Me:wait for him here. He's taking a shower.

Fil:I said go and call him.

He raised his t-shirt. I saw a gun and ran out of the kitchen. I didn't even feel the stairs the way I was scared. I got in the bedroom and the shower was still running. I took my things and walked back to the kitchen. I switched off the

stove and this scary man didn't stop looking at me.

Fil:and?

Me:he said he's coming.

I left and took out my phone and requested bolt and went to wait for it outside. Seeing that gun scared me. Was Mohau right? Is it really true that Aaron is a criminal?

The car arrived and Aaron appeared calling me. I got inside the car and closed the door.

Me:drive.

Aaron:babe come on. You can't just leave!

Me:drive.

Aaron:I'll pay you double what she was supposed to pay. Don't drive.

This guy stopped then Aaron opened the door. I got out.

Aaron:why did you leave?

He paid then held my hand and we went back to the house.

Aaron:why did you leave? I thought you were happy to be here.

Me:your friend was here. The one from last night.

Aaron:Fil was here?

Me:isn't he here? I didn't see him get out.

Aaron:shit!

Me:I don't want trouble Aaron. If you are involved with dangerous people please stay away from me. That man showed me a gun and said I must call you. A gun! Do you know how scared I was? I'm scared of guns. And seeing it so close to me...I can't handle that.

Aaron:I promise I'm not involved with dangerous people.

Me:then why was he here with a gun?

Aaron:I won't let anything happen to you. I will drop you at home when I go to work.

I looked at him and I could see that he was lying. As soon as he drops me at my place I'm blocking his number and just forget about him.

.....

Unconditional love



MPHO

After we had breakfast I washed the dishes and went back to where Aaron was. He didn't look like someone who was going to work. He was relaxed. I sat next to him and he took my hand.

Me:aren't you going to work anymore?

Aaron:no. They will call if they need me.

Me:okay. You can take me home.

Aaron:I'm feeling like I'm losing you before we even begin. I know you're going to ignore me when you leave here.

Me:Aaron I...

Aaron:no. I'm not going to let your ex stop me from pursuing you. I love you.

I looked at the other side. I don't think I can be with someone who has people who just come in whenever they want and show me guns.

Aaron:and I would like to be with you.

Me:I do feel something for you but this...guns and everything, I don't want to find myself in that.

Aaron:so you chose to believe your ex when he said I'm a criminal? You're not even going to

listen to my side of story? Is it fair that you don't give me a chance to explain?

Me:I didn't believe him. I knew that he was going to say anything and even lie so that I can stay away from you. But when that man showed me a gun, I got scared. I don't like seeing guns close to me. You know, I am not judging you or what you do. But I don't think I want to go through the trauma caused by guns again. My dad died because of a gun. One day we were sitting together as a family watching tv and a man just came in and shot at my dad. Two days later he died. Now you understand why that man scared me?

Aaron:I'm not gking to put your life in danger. Yes I used to live a dangerous life. I have no family. My grandmother is my only family. My

mother died before she could introduce me to my father. He actually didn't want me because if his wife found out his marriage would be over. So after my mother died my grandmother raised me. When I was 17 a man called Marko took me from my home. More like abducted me as he took me without my permission. He took me to Columbia with him where he groomed me to join his gangsterism. So years later I managed to get out of that life. Since then I have left that life behind. And now Marko is here. He wants me to get Sambulo to him. I can't do that. That's why that man came back today. I promise you you won't be involved in any of this mess. I will put you first and make sure that you're always safe.

Me:that man scared me.

Aaron:hey. Look at me. He's not going to come back here again. I will make sure of that. Just trust me.

Me:if...

Aaron:let's stop being negative. And please, stop listening to your ex. He's going to feed you lies because he only has one goal. That's for you to not move on. He doesn't want to see you happy and moving on with your life. He wants to see you be alone. That's what makes him happy.

Me:I know.

Aaron:so do we agree that we're going to forget about all those things and focus on us?

Me:yes.

His phone rang and he looked at it then at me.  
He got up and went to his bedroom then came  
back a few minutes later.

Aaron:we have to go. I have something I need to  
discuss with Sambulo.

Me:you can leave me at my place.

Aaron:we're going together.

.....

When we got to Amelia's place they left us and I  
couldn't help but think. Whatever they were

going to discuss had something to do with this Marko guy. If that man could come in and out of Aaron's house as he please then that means this Marko is very dangerous. I just hope that he stays true to his word and make sure that none of this come to me. I don't think I'm capable of dodging bullets.

Amelia:you're too quiet. What's wrong?

Me:it's nothing.

Amelia:you and Aaron arrived together. Are you two dating?

Me:yes. We started today.

Amelia:that's wonderful news. Congratulations.  
He's a good guy. He'll treat you well.

Me:do you know Marko? I know it's none of my  
business but I have to ask.

Amelia:I don't know him. But I only hear my  
husband talking about him. If you're afraid that  
he will do something to you then you should  
relax. Aaron is going to protect you. Marko will  
never come here. He's been threatening this  
family for years but nothing has happened.  
Don't let Marko steal your happiness. But I have  
a suggestion.

Me:okay.

Amelia:you should go for therapy. Talk to



someone. You never dealt with your divorce matter. Deal with it. Get rid of this anger you have inside of you. If you do this you will see. Your relationship will work out just fine. You won't compare your current partner to your ex or be angry at the wrong person.

Me:you're right. I should admit. I am still angry. I am angry at Mohau for all of my things that he got. And I don't think I will forget about it. I don't think I can get rid of this anger.

Amelia:you don't have to forget. But work on your anger. Work on yourself. So that this doesn't mess up your relationships.

Me:I will look for someone.

Amelia:I'm so happy for you. You deserve this.  
And I hope that it all works well.

.....

NARRATED

After what he was doing at Sambulo's house he drove Mpho to her house. He parked his car next to the gate.

Mpho:good night.

Aaron:let me walk you in. It's not safe. It's late now.

He turned the car off and they got out. She

unlocked the gate and they walked in. They went to the house and unlocked the door.

Aaron:thank you for a wonderful day.

Mpho:I enjoyed being with you.

He pulled her to him and smiled.

Aaron:can I see you again tomorrow?

Mpho:why not?

\*Finally you're home.\*

Mpho turned startled. She moved back as he

walked close to her.

Mpho:how did you get in my house?

Mohau:I need to talk to you. Can this criminal get out of here?

Mpho:where does your wife think you are at this time?

Mohau:did he tell you what he did to my restaurant?

Mpho:what are you talking about?

Mohau:this one destroyed my restaurant last night. You told me to stay away and now this

happens? Mpho if you don't leave this guy he's going to destroy you.

Mpho:Mohau I don't know what you want from me. I was with him since yesterday and I'm only coming back now. Please stop this. It's not funny anymore.

Mohau:do you know how much I lost fixing that place?

Mpho:what were you expecting when you broke in here? You thought I was going to come back alone? You know, forgetting what you did to me is hard. But I am trying. But how will I completely forget when you do this? What's your mission with my life? You want to finish me off? Well I'm not going to let that happen. You will never win. Tomorrow first thing in the

morning I'm going to get a restraining order against you. I've been playing far away from you. But you are making that hard. Why can't you just give up already? I'm moving on with my life. Let me live my life peacefully. Now get out. Expect to see the police at your house tomorrow.

.....

Unconditional love

15

A month later

Aaron

It's been a month of my relationship with Mpho. It's been so much joy being with her. I always look forward to seeing her. Every time we have to meet I always have this big smile on my face. She makes me happy. And I think she might be the one. And that fool Mohau has been quiet. She served him with a restraining order and he's been quiet. And that's a good thing for me. And for him too. Because if he tries something again this time I will do worse to him.

Me:so, are you ready to meet my grandmother?

Mpho:why did you have to introduce me to her on her birthday? What if she doesn't like me? That will ruin her day.

Me:who wouldn't like you babe? She's going to love you. Just like I do.

Mpho:I love you too.

If I wasn't driving I would be dancing right now.  
She finally said the important words! I took her  
hand and kissed it.

Mpho:I get more nervous as we are so close to  
arriving.

Me:we're just one street away now.

Mpho:eish...

Me:just relax. She will love you.



I turned to our street and Sambulo's car was already by the gate. I parked behind him and got out and unlocked the gate and drove in. Sambulo followed and we all got out.

Langa:we were the fastest! We got here first.

He cheered jumping up and down. I've never seen a boy who loves fast cars like him.

Langa:you know you owe me.

Me:you're a little businessman hey.

Langa:I'm making money.

Sambulo:you love money too much.

Langa:me and my siater need new toys. You should get us new toys.

He ran off to the gate as my grandmother wlked through it. He walked to where we were with her. I went to hug her.

Grandma:go and get chairs. Why are you keeping our guests on their feet?

Me:dumela koko. (Greetings grandma.)

Grandma:I waited for you yesterday and you didn't come. We'll talk properly when we're both sitting down.

I went to take chairs and we all sat down.

Me:koko, this is Sambula, my friend. This is his wife and their kids.

Grandma:it's nice to finally meet you. My grandson is always talking about you.

Sambulo:it's a pleasure to meet you gogo.

Me:and this right here next to me, is Mpho. She's my woman.

Grandma:your woman? And I'm only finding out now? You should have brought her home already. You wait until my eyes start to not see very well.

Me:there's nothing wrong with your eyes koko.

Grandma:I'm happy to meet you my child. It's a good feeling to know that ny grandson has someone in his life. You're welcome to our home.

Mpho:thank you grandma. I'm happy to meet you too.

Me:We're here to celebrate your birthday with you. Let me get the groceries out of the car.

Grabdma:I'm always bored alone here. Today I have company.

Me:that's because you refuse to stay with me.

Grandma:I'm not used to the city. I love it here.

Sambulo and I went to take out the groceries.  
We took them inside then took out the meat  
and went to braai it while the ladies were  
cooking.

Sambulo:is your grandmother alright? She can't  
stop looking at me.

Me:she is fine. She's like that when she meets  
people for the first time.

Sambulo:okay. So you grew up here?

Me:yes. This is where my grandmother raised me. It was just the two of us. I have good childhood memories here. That was until I was taken without permission. But I'm happy that now I'm back where I should be.

Sambulo:I know how you feel. Me running away from Lazarus and leaving my mother behind was heartbreaking. But what can I say? If I didn't do it maybe I would be dead right now.

Me:but here we are. We turned out well.

Sambulo:that is true.

.....

Spending time with my grandmother was so good. Seeing her smiling and happy made my heart happy. I wish I could stay with her but every time I suggest it her answer is always the same. She doesn't want to leave this place.

Grandma:thank you my children for coming to spend the day with me. And for bringing makoti home. This is the happiest day of my life.

Me:we will come back again.

Grandma:Sambulo, where are you from?

Sambulo:I'm from Eastern Cape. But we stay in Joburg now.

Grandma:who is your father?

Sambulo:Langa.

Grandma:is that his name or surname?

Sambulo:it's his name and also surname. Langa Langa. I know it's not usual.

Grandma:where is he now?

Sambulo:he passed on many years ago.

Grandma:this has been eating me since you arrived here. Do you know a man called Lazarus?



Me:koko I think we should not talk about that.

Sambulo:I know him but he's done a lot of bad things to my family so I'd like it if we don't talk about him.

Grandma:so he is also bad to his family? I am sorry about that. I will never forget that man. Such a bad man! It doesn't even show that you're related to him the way you're so nice.

Sambulo:gogo, did he do something to you?

Grandma:that man was having an affair with my daughter. My only child. When she fell pregnant he tossed her aside like she was nothing. He didn't want the child because his wife would leave him.

Me:he e koko. That can't be. Is that my mother you're talking about? It can't be.

Grandma:it's true. He is your father. I remember the last day he came here. Your mother died with a painful heart. The last day he came here it was almost your 17th birthday. I was asking him to support you or else I would tell his family. He arrived here and started making threats. Threatening to kill me if I said anything.

Me:17th birthday?

Grandma:yes. And a few months later you disappeared. I even thought maybe he took you and killed you. Then you came back.

Me:koko we have to go. I promise I will be back soon.

Grandma:go well my son.

.....

Sambulo:give it a rest with that alcohol.

Ever since we came back from my grandmother's I just can't keep calm. Me being Lazarus son? No!

Me:I can't be that man's son! To hell with him!

Sambulo:you know, it all makes sense now.

Me:what?

Sambulo:how you got to Columbia. That bastard already knew Marko. He's the one who told Marko to take you so that his wife wouldn't find out about you.

Me:now the dots are connecting. The way Marko didn't want you anywhere close to me, he was doing his friend a favour.

Sambulo:and me ending up in Columbia and Marko not wanting me to leave. It was all their plans.

Me:I can't believe I'm related to that evil man. I have his blood running through my veins!

Sambulo:that alcohol is not going to change anything. But, there's one good thing about this.

Me:what is that? It can't be good having an evil man for a father.

Sambulo:what's good is that I've gained a brother. Me and you are brothers now. I know we've been brothers ever since we met but now finding out that we are of the same blood...

Me:you're right about that. We've been brothers all this while and we didn't know. But I'm happy that bastard is dead. If he was alive he was going to pay for every bad thing he did to my mother. He should thank his lucky stars wherever he is. Right now I need to focus on

Marko. He will pay for his friend's sins.

Sambulo:don't forget you have a woman now.  
You have to think about her and your  
grandmother. If you go into war with Marko he's  
going to come after them.

Me:Marko was in this country making threats.  
He can't get away with everything. What I am  
going to do to him, he will wish he died with his  
friend. If he set foot in this country he will regret  
it.

.....

Unconditional love

Langa:do we have a party gogo?

MaKhumalo:no. You love parties.

Langa:I love eating a lot of food. Let me sit.

Nokwanda:Langa stop disturbing me.

Langa:no. I want to sit with you auntie. Did you hear people outside? They want to come in.

Nokwanda:so because you heard people outside you think they want to come in?

Langa:yes. For the party. It's your birthday?

Nokwanda:ay. Langa if you want food or Cake tell me and I'll get it for you in the fridge. Right now you're disturbing. There's no party here.

Langa:listen to those people.

Nokwanda got out and went outside with Langa following her. She stood still and listened. She clicked her tongue and went back in. She tried to call Tinashe but his phone was off.

Langa:I'm going to wake my mother.

Nokwanda:don't do that. She's resting.

Langa:no. She's not.



Nokwanda: Listen, those people are no longer making noise. Sit down. I will go and make you something to eat.

Langa: thank you auntie.

MaKhumalo: who were those people?

Nokwanda: my ex's family.

MaKhumalo: I didn't know they already asked for your hand in marriage.

Nokwanda: I don't know what he's trying to do. I dumped him but he doesn't listen. I haven't seen him in a month but still he sends his

people.

MaKhumalo:did he do something wrong?

Nokwanda:I said no sex before marriage. A few days later he's proposing. He wants to sleep with me. I don't know what's the rush. I am not ready.

MaKhumalo:did he say that's the reason he proposed?

Nokwanda:yes. He literally said it to my face.

MaKhumalo:then you shouldn't say yes. He might divorce you after you sleep together. You should be patient my child. The right one will

come for you.

Nokwanda:I'm going to make something to eat for this boy. Or he'll keep on reminding me of it.

\*\*\*\*\*

MPHO

Ever since we came back from work Aaron's grandmother Aaron has been in a mood of his own. I can say a bad mood. So I decided to give him time to deal with what he is going through. I wanted to be there for him. But when I'm at his place he's always busy on his laptop. But I don't blame him. At almost age 40 you find out about your father and he was making your life hell all along. I'd react like he is doing. I don't think I'd

forgive him. Finding out that your father was the reason you went through all the bad things that happened to you. That must be hard. I don't know if I was going to be able to deal with it.

Life is something else. The people that you hate end up meaning something more to you. So when I look at Aaron's situation, I get it. I get why he is acting like this. It hurts to hear that your mother died with a painful heart because of a man. A man who continued and hurt you too.

As I'm busy checking my emails, I see one from the hospital. I quickly click on it so that I can read it. My heart beats so fast when I see that they are asking me to meet them. The email was sent yesterday. And the meeting is today. At least I still have time. So I take my toiletries

and walk to the bathroom. I take off all my clothes and start to take a shower. I am so happy. I think I am going to get my job back. That's what I've always been praying for. I had given up on prayer but after coming back from that woman's place I started praying again. And now it's paying off.

After taking a shower I go to my bedroom and start getting dressed. I tie my braids and look at myself on the mirror. This dress is so beautiful. Aaron chose it for me when I dragged him shopping the other day. I take a picture and send it to him with a message. \*The people from the hospital want to see me. I think they are going to give me my job back.\*

I put my phone down after sending the message. Then check my handbag if it has

everything that I need. I take out my car keys and walk out. As I'm walking I see someone sitting on the couch. I walk back slowly trying to not make noise.

Mohau:where are you going?

Me:I don't want trouble. Leave.

I take out my phone but he takes it from me.

Mohau:you want to call the police? Oh Lover boy is calling.

Me:please leave. I promise I won't report you.

Mohau:do I look like a fool to you? Huh?

Me:I'm sorry.

I reversed back until I was trapped by the couch.  
I started to be scared as he took off the belt  
from his pants.

Me:Mohau please don't hit me. Ka go kopa tlhe!

He throws the first whip and I scream.

Mohau:get up.

Me:Mohau I'm sorry! Please forgive me.

He throws another one.

Mohau:I tell you to stay away from men but what do you do? Get up! Get up now!

I get up and move to the other side.

Mohau:all these years we were fine. Did you even love me? At the first sight of trouble you rush to divorce me. We could have taken my child and raise him since you didn't want children!

I take the chance to run to the door as he's looking at the other side. I try to open the door but it's locked and the keys are not there. I feel him grabbing me from behind with my hair. I let go of the door crying from the pain.



Mohau:today you will know what I'm made of.  
You took my love for granted! I loved you and  
you paid me with bullshit!

He pushed me and I fell. He continued to whip  
me with the belt. I gave up thinking of escaping  
because I didn't even have the power to get up.  
The last kick he gave me on my head just made  
everything worse.

\*\*\*\*\*

AARON

Me:please ask Amelia if she has spoken to  
Mpho today.

Sambulo:she says she hasn't.

Me:she sent me a message saying they want to see her at the hospital. I called her but she dropped the call. Three times.

Sambulo:why don't you go to her house and look for her?

Me:I think something is wrong. Let me go and look for her.

I take my car keys then run to my car after locking the house. I get in and drive out in speed. On my way I'm busy thinking about why she's ignoring my calls. When I get there I find the gate locked and her car is not in sight. I knock at the neighbours gate and a woman

comes

Me:good day. Do you know if Mpho is here or she left?

Her:I don't know hey. I heard screams there and then a man rushed out. He looked so angry when he left. I saw him by the gate.

Me:thank you.

I go back to Mpho's gate and climb it. I run to her house and try to open it. It's locked. I kick the door until it opens. I search for her with my eyes and I see her lying on the floor. I rush to her and try to get her up. She's not responsive. I check her pulse and it's still there. Just faint. I search her handbag and take out the keys ,pick

her up and walk out with her. I press the remote and the gate opens and I put her at the back then lock the gate and drive to the hospital.

.....

After dropping her at the hospital I drove to Mohau's place. This guy doesn't listen. I told him to stay away but he did not listen. Now I am going to do something that will make him regret even thinking about my woman. How do you do that to a woman? The state I found her in is not something I'd wish even on my enemy's daughter. Her face was bruised and there was blood on the floor.

When I get to his place I get in and find his wife playing with her baby. I sit down and look at her.

Her:can I help you?

Me:where's your husband?

Her:he's out of town on business. You can leave a message.

Me:when is he coming back?

Her:tomorrow.

Me:so you use a man's wallet?

Her:oh that. He forgot it. Are you his friend?

Me:something like that. I will come back tomorrow. Or you can tell me where he went.

Her:I just know that he's out of town. I will let him know you were here when he calls. I don't want to disturb his meeting.

Me:I'll be back.

.....

Unconditional love

17

AARON

I've been sitting in my car three blocks away. I know that fool is around. There's no way that he's going to not come back to fetch his wallet if he forgets it. He must be in there. He has to be. I will stay here and watch their yard like a hawk.

My phone rings and it's the hospital. I asked one of the nurses to call me if there are any changes.

Nurse:hello sir. She has woken up.

Me:okay. Thanks. I'm on my way.

I start the car and drive to the hospital. That womam beater better not think I've forgotten about him. I'm still going to deal with him. Just

that my woman comes first and right now I have to go to her.

When I get to the hospital I walk to her ward and she's up and staring at the ceiling.

Me:dr, how is she?

Dr:a few broken ribs, a hard hit on the head. That's all and these bruises. She'll experience migranes because of the hard fall. But with time she will be fine. What happened to her? She's refusing to talk.

Me:thank you for your help doctor. I will talk to her. Babe, how are you feeling?



Mpho:did you find him?

Me:no. His wife said he's out on business.

Mpho:I want to report him.

Me:leave it to me. I will deal with everything.  
When you leave this place you're going to stay  
with me.

Mpho:I...

Me:relax. If you talk too much you're going to  
hurt yourself. I got you something to eat.

Mpho:why did he do this to me? I thought me  
leaving him alone was the right thing to do. That

I would live in peace. How did he even get in my house because I locked the gate and the door?

Me:I don't know. I am going to find him.

Mpho:I was supposed to go to the hospital.  
Now I've lost that chance.

Me:look, I will report him to the police. In that way there will be proof that you didn't just miss the meeting. But I'm still going to teach him a lesson even if he's in jail. I'm coming. I'm going to use the bathroom.

.....

Mpho continued to eat the food food that Aaron

brought for her. Someone cleared their throat and she looked at the entrance scared. She put the food down shaking.

Mpho:Aaron is here. Get out.

Mohau:I saw him leave. Did you think I would let you report me? Now just try. You will see.

Mpho:you want to finish me? You broke my ribs. I have bruises on my body because of you. I don't care what you do to me. I'm going to report you. You're going to pay

Mohau:shh. Don't make noise. Me and you are going to get out of here. With no one making noise or acting strange. You see this? If I inject you right now you'll be paralyzed. So you follow

me or I do it the hard way.

\*What are you doing here?\*

Mohau:nothing. I'm just here to see how she is.

Aaron:and who told you that she's here?

Mohau:I went to look for her at her house. Her neighbor told me you took her to the hospital. I assumed it's this one since it's the nearest one. I was on my way to a meeting and I went back home because I forgot my wallet. My wife told me you were there. That's why I went to Mpho's house to tell her to tell you to stop coming to my hpuse.

Aaron:the police are here. You will tell that to them. And believe me, a sentence is not the only thing you will get. Since you are a woman beater, you will pay for it. I will deal with you from the outside.

Mohau:I did nothing!

The police came in and he started to feel scared.

Police:Mohau, You are under arrest for...

Mohau:you don't have to draw eyes to me. I will come with you. I have nothing to hide. I am innocent.

He walked out followed by the police. Mpho burst out crying. Aaron went to the bed and held her.

Aaron:I'm sorry I wasn't there for you. I should have known that something was wrong when my calls kept being dropped. I should have come to check on you. If I came to your place then this wouldn't be happening.

He stayed with her until she fell asleep. He first went to her place and packed for her. He found the police there and opened for them. He waited until they were done then went to pack her clothes and went out. He put the bag in the car then drove to his place.

....

Sambulo:so what have you decided to do about him?

Aaron:I called the police. I had no choice but to do it. Mpho needs proof to show that she didn't miss the meeting intentionally. I want her to get her job back. She loves being a doctor. And if she loses this chance it's going to break her. This is her last chance.

Sambulo:so what are you going to do when she's discharged?

Aaron:I packed her things. She will move in with me. Until that bastard has been locked up for sure she is not going back to her place.

Sambulo:you should have realised that he was going to do this. The way he was acting,finding him inside her house, that should have told you he's going to do something worse.

Aaron:I blame myself. I should have noticed.

....

Zoleka parked outside the school gate and stared inside the school yard. Her son had grown. Almost seven years without seeing him and now that she's seeing him her heart breaks. By the looks of things it looked as if the school is a private school. And he looked well taken care of. She watched as other learners walked to their transport. Her son was sitting down and eating. When he raised his head up and looked at the gate a lone tear fell. The little boy got up



and put his lunchbox inside his backpack. He ran to a car that just arrived. She watched as the car drove off.

She drove behind the car. She wanted to see where her son was staying. Was it even possible for her to get him back? That's the only thing she's always wanted. To get her boy back when she gets out of jail. That's the most important thing that she wanted.

The car slowed down then drove inside the yard. She parked her car and walked in. The boy walked inside the house and Zoleka followed. The little boy hugged the woman who was sitting on the couch greeting her then walked away.

Zoleka: good day mama.

Ma:good day. Can I help you?

Zoleka:I don't know if you know me. I'm  
Siyabonga's mother.

Ma:Siyabonga? I don't know anyone with that  
name.

Zoleka:the boy who just walked in.

Ma:that's Philasande. So you are his mother?  
Sit down.

She sat diwn and looked at the woman.

Zoleka:I am out of jail now. I'd like to have him back.

Ma:I raised this boy. What pushed you to sleep with a married man? One who's old enough to be your father? And commit crimes while at that.

Zoleka:I am sorry mama. I know what I did was not a good thing. I regret it.

Ma:that's not going to make you get your son back. He doesn't know you. He knows me as his mother.

Zoleka:I am very grateful that you took care of him. But I am back. I'm his mother and I'd like to have him back.

Ma:here he comes. Explain to him why you are here. Why you didn't raise him until now.

Zoleka:why don't you explain to him since you are the one who raised him?

Ma:the man that you slept with is dead. Maybe he'd explain better. Now here's what you are going to do. You are going to get out of here. Come back when you know what to say.

Zoleka:hi Siyabonga. You've grown so much. It's me. Your mother. I meant Phila.

Phila:hi.

Ma:I'm not going to to refuse with him. He

knows where he wants to be.

Zoleka:it's me. Your mother.

Phila:here's my mother. Mama I'm going for my swimming classes.

Ma:enjoy.

Zoleka watched as the boy walked out of the house.

Ma:as I said, if he wants you I won't fight. It's all up to him who he wants.

She got up and left heartbroken.

.....

Unconditional love

18

Zoleka:that old hag fed my son shit! She's making it hard for him to know that I'm his mother.

Tinashe:in this little time I've known you, I know not to believe that. What did you do?

Zoleka:I got there and asked her to tell him that I'm his mother. She said why don't I do it myself? I just said it there and then that I'm his mother. He said she's his mother and just left.

Tinashe:I knew it. That was not the right approach. You slept with this woman's husband. You stole her time with her husband. If he was spending more time with you who do you think was with her? This woman found out about an illegitimate son after her cheating husband died. She took your son in and raised him for you. Do you know what six years is? You didn't even contribute anything. But you go there with an attitude thinking they will help you. Why didn't you approach her properly so that you can find a way to tell him? She'd never refuse with your son. He's yours.

Zokela:well she did say that she won't refuse with him if he wants to be with me.

Tinashe:you see? This old hag as you call her,is

a good woman. But you went to her with attitude. Did you apologize for what you did with her husband? Did you ask for forgiveness? The poor woman might still be hurting from everything you did with her husband. She had to raise a mistress' child. How do you think that felt?

Zoleka:she even changed his name!

Tinashe:that's because you didn't tell them his name. Did you try to call them so that you can tell them things about him? Did you reach out to her so that your son can visit you? And you rushed to get him while you have no place to stay. Where were you going to stay with him because you stay with me? It's only one room here. Were you going to sleep with him on the couch or make me give up my room for you two?



Get your things in order. Go to that woman and humble yourself. Ask for forgiveness. Then look for a place to stay. Then you can work on getting your son. Imagine taking him from his comfortable bed to come and sleep on a couch. You must be joking.

Zoleka:where am I going to find a job with a criminal record? My son had a father. He's a Langa. His inheritance will take care of me and him.

Tinashe:wake up from that dream. Didn't you say his father was keeping him a secret? That he left you money and even built a company for you? He knew that when he dies your son was not going to get anything from his things because that would mean they find out about him. But you failed to run that company and the

money finished. Don't cry for things that are not yours. What inheritance?

Zoleka:why do you have to make sense?

Tinashe:I know all about this situation. Living in a home where you're an illegitimate child. It's not nice. And seeing what the wife is going through. So I know what that woman is going through.

Zoleka:let's just focus on our plan of bringing that bastard down. I will deal with the Philasande thing later.

There was a knock on the door. Tinashe got up and went to open. He didn't know what to do. She pushed him and walked in.

Nokwanda:I'm here to fetch my stuff.

Tinashe: can we talk about this? We don't have to break up. I am sorry for how I proposed. But I really love you and I mean it. We can stay as boyfriend and girlfriend if that's what you want. I won't pressurize you into sleeping with me. I beg you.

Nokwanda:I don't know what I saw in you. I thought I had found a good man but I fooled myself. And that stunt you pulled of sending your family didn't work. Stop crowding my brother's house with your people.

Tinashe:that's not what I was trying to do.

Nokwanda:sorry for disturbing you. I see you were with someone.

Tinashe:I'm alone.

Nokwanda:you have two phones now? And what's my surname doing on this paper? What's this mindmap for? If you're thinking of doing something to me forget. My brother is with me.

Nokwanda walked to his bedroom. Sthembiso walked in with boxes and sat on the couch

Sthe:my sister did well by leaving you. It hasn't been a week since you sent people for my sister's hand in marriage and already there's a woman here.

Tinashe:there's no woman here.

Sthe:the perfume says it all. Anyway, good riddance to bad rubbish. Where's my sister so I can give her these boxes? I don't even know why she has her things here!

He said that looking through the papers on the table. He read everything then looked at Tinashe.

Sthe:ey what a chancer. You thought you could taste the Langa money. It's not for people like you. You will never taste it.

Tinashe:people like me?

Sthe:yes. Those who are not a Langa. Or you're one? I see this is what you do. You target women so you can scam them. Not this time. It ends here. Go and work a real job like other men and stop scamming people.

Nokwanda:what's that home wrecker doing here? Are you working with her?

Tinashe:it's not what you think.

Nokwanda:not what I think? You wanted to marry me. Yet you're staying with someone who wanted to destroy my family. Just wait until my brother hears about this. So you were helping her by being with me. I hate you Tinashe. You're evil. You used my love for your own gain.

Tinashe:I love you for real. This is not what it looks like. I'm just helping her with a place to stay.

Nokwanda:then why hide her?

Zoleka:I was not hiding.

Sthe:you succeeded on Lazarus and even gave him a bonus child. But you failed with my brother. Do you think this time you will win? I see you want to go back to jail.

Zoleka:your brother owes me. And my son is a Langa. He deserves a share in all your inheritance.

Nokwanda: this woman is funny. Is your son Langa Langa's child or Lazarus Langa's child? Did Lazarus help my dad work for his money? Don't be stupid. We don't owe him anything. Lazarus' wife is taking care of him. If you want inheritance go and ask her. Not us. Maybe your sugar daddy left him something there, not in our family. We don't associate ourselves with chancers like you. You know what Tinashe? You two deserve each other.

She took the boxes and went to put her things and Sthembiso went to help her carry them then they left.

Zoleka: so you love her for real now or you're just perfect at acting? You deserve an award for that.



Tinashe:who said I was acting?

Zoleka:so you love her? You're ruining our plans!

Tinashe:the plan was for me to help you get your money from that guy then go our seperate ways. I would have gotten my cut and keep my child and wife. That money would have helped me. You're actually the one who ruined the plan. You forced to stay here. And now I have lost her. So blame yourself.

\*\*\*\*\*

MPHO

I'm getting discharged and I'm packing my

things. Aaron is on his way to fetch me. I am finally going home. This place can be lonely. Now that I'm the one who's a patient I can see it. It's very lonely. Sometimes you wake up at night and talk to yourself. But I'm glad that I got helped and am feeling better. I may feel better but the pain inside is still there. I remember just lying there while he hit and kick me. Like I was nothing. Like he was kicking an animal. The bruises on my body are proof of what he did to me. I will never forget it. What did I even do to deserve this? Is being happy a sin? I find someone who makes me happy and he does this to me. He's actually an animal.

\*Hi.\*

Me: what are you doing here?

Matlhogonolo:I am here to plead with you to drop the charges.

Me:wa bona gore ke rorogile yang mo sefatlhegong? Ke monna wa gago. Did you plead with him to not do this to me?(do you see how swollen I am on my face? It's your husband. )

Matlhogonolo:if I knew he was going to do this I would have stopped him.

Me:I hope he rots in jail. Because when he gets out it will be you next. If he could do this to me what will stop him from doing it to you?I hope you run while it's still early for you.

Matlhogonolo:you want me to run from my

marriage like you? I'm not a failure like you.

Me:yet you're asking this failure to drop the charges.

Matlhogonolo:I don't want my children to grow up without their father.

Me:so was it right for him to try and kill me so that my mother can live without her daughter? I'm not dropping any charges.

Matlhogonolo:I've never begged you for anything. But here I am. I know I never apologised for hurting you. I am sorry for all of that. Please drop the charges.

Me:your husband hit me like an animal just because I moved on. I stayed away from you but he came back and didn't like seeing me move on with my life. If he stayed away from me we wouldn't be here. If he sent you here go and tell him his plan failed.

\*Love are you ready to go?\*

Me:hey baby. I'm done. We can leave.

Aaron:let me hold that for you.

I gave it to him and walked out of the ward leaving her there. Does she think I'm stupid? What kind of a fool would I be to drop the charges so that he can and hit me again?

Aaron:was she there to ask you to drop the charges?

Me:yeah. But I'm not doing it. She tried to use her kids but I won't fall for that trick. I am not dropping charges.

Aaron:that's a good decision. Now you should focus on getting well. Then after that you will go to the hospital and talk to them. Then you will get your job back.

Me:do you think so? I mean, I missed the meeting. They must think that I'm not interested.

Aaron:you didn't miss it on purpose. So you have nothing to worry about.

.....

When we got to his place there was a fleece on the couch. I sat down and he put the fleece on me and sat next to me.

Aaron:it's cold. If you need anything I'll get it for you. And this is for you.

Me:aren't you eating?

Aaron:I am.

Me:I need to call mom and tell her that I'm out of the hospital. She promised to come amd see me again when she was there yesterday.

Aaron:I called your brother. He will let her know.

I laughed. I can just imagine him speaking to my brother.

Aaron:why are you laughing?

Me:weren't you scared speaking to my brother?

Aaron:just a bit. He had a lot of questions for me. But I handled it very well.

Me:thank you for being by my side.

Arron:I'm always going to be by your side. I love you so much Mpho and there's nothing I wouldn't do for you.



Me:I love you more. I thought after my divorce I was done with men. That I wouldn't get into another relationship. But then I met you.

Aaron: do you see yourself getting married again?

Me:yeah. I am not going to let one bad experience stop me from fully experiencing love. I won't let it win. If someone genuinely loves me then I'd consider getting married again.

He nodded his head and pulled me into his arms.

....

## Unconditional love

19

MPHO

After I recovered I went to the hospital to ask if we could have the meeting again. When I got there they just told me that I should come back to work the following week on Monday. I was so happy that day. I wasn't expecting them to just tell me to come back without even having a meeting. I can't wait to go back to work. I actually can't wait for tomorrow. This will also make Aaron to go back to work. He hasn't been to work all this time. He had taken days off so that he could take care of me. He was really there by my side just like he promised. And I'm forever grateful for that.

He went back to work today. I told the helper that she could have a day off. I cooked something delicious for us. When I hear his car drive in I take the food and put it on the dining table and everything we'll need. The door opens and he walks in.

Me:hey babe. Welcome home.

Aaron:hey. I missed you so much.

Me:I missed you too. So I cooked for us.

Aaron:mmh. Nice. Let me go and put these things down.

Me:give them here. I will take them to the bedroom.

Aaron:I'm treated like a king today. I lije it.

I smile. I take his workcase and blazer and take them to the bedroom. I come back and find him washing his hands. I dish up for him them for myself.

Me:I just wanted to thank you for your support and for taking me in. I am grateful for it. You helped me big time.

Aaron:I love having you here. And it keeps my mind at ease that I know that you're safe and not at risk of something being done to you.

Me:I also love being here with you.

We had our dinner chatting and laughing. It was good to sit around the table and have our dinner. After we were done I cleared the table then washed the dishes. As I was putting them in the cupboards I felt hands around my waste. I put the plates then closed the cupboards. He kissed me on my neck. He sucked there. It was making my blood rush. Aaron and I haven't been intimate yet. We do kiss but that's where it ends. I love that he wasn't putting pressure on me. He understood that I was not ready yet.

I turned around and looked at him. He at me with eyes filled with love and adoration. When he gives me that look I get assurance that he really loves me and his love for me is genuine. I kiss him. As I continue to kiss him he picked me

up and walked to the bedroom. In an instant speed I was only left with my underwear and bra. He put me on the bed and got on top of me. I put my hands under his vest after he took off his shirt. I took off the vest then sat up and unbuckled his belt. He pushed me to lie down after taking off my bra. I held his face and kissed him. He moved to my neck and kissed it. He sucked on my neck moving down all the way to my belly button. He licked on it and it felt ticklish. He took off my underwear with his tooth and.....#Removed

.....

Me:aahh...Aaron...

I opened my eyes and found him moving on top of me. He gives me a few strokes then we cum

and he gets off. He puts his hand on top of my head and smile.

Aaron:I'm already so addicted to you. I love my newfound home.

I put my my face on his chest. He makes me to look at him. He smiles and kisses me. I kiss back.

Aaron:good morning.

Me:good morning.

Aaron:how did you sleep?

Me:good. I slept under the arms of my man. So

it was a good night.

Aaron:will you marry me? I'd love waking up next to you every day of my life.

He said that as a joke. But his face suddenly changed and became serious.

Aaron:I mean it. I know I don't have a ring with me to propose with it. But I'm serious. I want to be your husband, and you my wife. So what do you say? Would you love to be my wife?

Me:yes. I mean, I love you. You make me happy and I love being with you.

Aaron:I promise to be the best husband.



Me:I promise to be the best wife.

Aaron:I can't wait for you to be Mrs Mahlangu.

Me:I can't wait to be your wife.

He kissed me then pulled me for a warm embrace. I love this man.

\*\*\*\*\*

AARON

I just drop Mpho at the hospital. She was so happy when I left her there. When we were still

at home she couldn't stop looking at herself on the mirror. She was in her scrubs. She looked beautiful. It made me happy to see her happy. She was so happy and free. I promised her that I'd come and fetch her when she knocks off.

Sambulo: what's on your mind?

Me: I asked Mpho to marry me.

Sambulo: what did she say?

Me: I had no ring. But she said yes.

Sambulo: congratulations. This is great news. So how do you feel?

Me:happy. I never thought I'd be happy about marriage and starting a family.

Sambulo:I told you. Now look you're so in love.

Me:I thought she'd say no because it's still early. And considering everything that happened. She surprised me when she said yes. Now I have to look for people who will represent me at her family.

Sambulo:I'm here. Look, I know you hated Lazarus. I did too. But we have uncles who'd be very happy to represent you. If you want I can talk to them for you.

Me:talk to them. I mean, it can't just be you. You must have someone to do everything with you.

Sambulo:another thing, the lobola money must go to Mohau's family. She was married to him first and he paid lobola for her. So the lobola must go back to his family.

Me:give my money to that bastard? I'd rather die.

Sambulo:it's tradition. It has to go back to him. If you want to have your wife then you must be prepared to lay the lobola to his family.

\*\*\*

After work Mpho walked to Aaron's car so excited. He got out and opened the door for her then went back to his side. He drove out of the hospital stressed about what Sambilo

mentioned earlie. He decided not to tell her so that she doesn't overreact. When they got home they found her mother sicking woth her grandddaughter.

Mpho:hello mom.

Mom:hello my child. How are you Aaron? Its good to see you.

Aaron:I'm fine mama. It's good to see you too.

Mpho:mama, Aaron asked me to marry him. And I said yes.

Mom:congratulations. But before you get married you should get marriage counseling.

That will benefit both of you. And the lobola will have to go to Mohau's family.

Mpho:why?

Mom:he was married to you. So the lobola has to go there.

Mpho:no mom. That can't happen. Give Mohau more money? That is not going to happen. He just keeps on taking everything. I'd rather we just have the wedding only.

Mom:if you love your husband to be then you will have to let this happen. Just think about it.

.....

Please excuse the errors. I will let you know when I've posted the removed.

Unconditional love

20

NARRATED

Aaron:babe, money is nothing.

Mpho:I know that. But not when it comes to Mohau. Why must he get all this money? The lobola that he paid is less than what he got from me. He should be happy with that.

Aaron:babe, look at it like this. Take this as me

paying lobola for you. It's just that it will go to his family. They will calculate everything and only give them what he paid. The remaining balance will go to your family.

Mom:he's right. Let this be done so that you can finally be done with this man. You will have nothing tying you to him. Set yourself free.

Mpho:I don't like this mama.

Mom:I know. But you have to do this.

Mpho:okay. I hope nothing more to do with him will be expected of me.

Mom:no. I will talk to your uncles and they will



know what to do.

.....

Aaron:babe don't be sad. When this is all over we can move on with our lives freely without Mohau demanding to have his lobola back.

She looked at him then nodded. But why is tradition like this? It's not like she did nothing for the man when they were still married. If this is how it is then this means that this man was only in her life for money. After he saw that she was making enough he started his cheating. Then after that got half of everything. But she's not going to let him get in the way of her happiness. She will let her fiancé pay that money. They will make it back. More even. As long as Mohau is out of her life and she gets to

live peacefully with her husband. That's all she wishes for.

Aaron:I got a guard to look after you. Don't be scared. As soon as we are done I will come home.

Mpho:where are you going?

Aaron:to Sambulo's place. The uncles have arrived so we have to ask them if they can represent me at your home.

Mpho:okay.

Aaron drove to Sambulo's house. He was going to meet with the uncles so that he can ask them

if they could represent him. When he got there he found them eating and they asked that he should join them.

Siseko:so who are you?

Muzi:you heard that he's Lazarus son. That's why we are here.

Siseko:we can't just take his word for it.

Muzi:do you have to be negative all the time?

Siseko:he doesn't look like my brother.

Muzi:really? Look at his eyes and big ears. They look like his father's. Even tests can prove that.

Siseko:I will only believe it when I see the tests.  
If you wasted my time by calling me here don't  
ever call me for anything else.

Sambulo:if it will make you happy he can do the  
tests. It's not that hard.

Siseko:even if they come back positive, we are  
not going to represent him. Our family does not  
know him. He still has to be introduced to the  
ancestors and get welcomed as a Langa. We  
will be going to the girl's family to represent a  
Langa. If he changes his surname to Langa then  
he has our full support.

Aaron:I want nothing to do with your brother's  
name. I am a Mahlangu.

Siseko:then go and ask Mahlangu people to represent you. Why do you need our help?

Aaron:you cannot force me to be introduced to your ancestors. Your brother didn't want me. He had me abused. I almost died because of him. He didn't pay damages. So why do you want to claim me as yours?

Siseko:he is not here to answer for himself. So we will not know if what you are saying is true or not. If you really are a Langa then you won't have a problem doing this.

Muzi:look,even if you don't want to change your surname you have to be introduced to your ancestors. They will protect you.

Aaron:your brother couldn't protect me when he was alive. How is he going to protect me now from the grave?

Muzi:the ancestors will protect you and also your wife will be recognised as a daughter in law of this family. Your union will be protected.

Siseko:but on this I'm not backing down. Do the DNA tests. Then we'll take it from there.

Aaron:how are we going to do this?

Muzi:we'll get one of your father's children and test.

Aaron:eish. What about his wife? This is going to hurt her. Her husband's illegitimate children are just popping out of nowhere after his death and he's not even there to explain to her. Imagine how she is going to feel.

Siseko:you should be happy. If you are really his son then you're the rightful heir. You're the first born son. You will be the one in charge of everything he left.

Aaron:I don't want anything. Let his children keep everything. I have my own things. I work. So there's no need for that.

Muzi:if there's nothing else then we'll see you tomorrow. It's getting late and I need to sleep.

The uncles went to the rooms that were prepared for them to sleep.

Sambulo:don't mind uncle Siseko. He's like that to everyone.

Aaron:I didn't take him to head. I'm just not comfortable with changing my surname.

Sambulo:no one can force you if you don't want to. Forget what Siseko said.

\*\*\*\*\*

Zoleka parked her car and went inside the yard. She knocked and the door got opened. The helper was the one who opened for her.



Zoleka:good morning.

Helper:morning.

Zoleka:can I please see Mrs Langa?

Helper:come through.

She walked with her to the living room and sat there. Mrs Langa was sitting with her daughter.

Mrs Langa:what can I do for you today?

Zoleka:I am here to apologise.

Mrs Langa:Nokubonga go and call your brother.

Zoleka:I'm sure I can speak to you.

Mrs Langa:he has to be present. I'm Philasande's guardian but my son is the one taking care of us.

Nokubonga went to call her brother and came back with him.

Mrs Langa:this is my son Lunga. Lunga this is Zoleka, Philasande's mother.

Lunga:I can't say it's nice to meet you. You drove our father out of this house. So seeing you here only disgust me because of the pain

you and my father caused my mother. So what do you want?

Zoleka:I understand. I came to apologise for the way I spoke to you the other day ma. It was uncalled for and I am really sorry.

Mrs Langa:it's fine. As I told you, I'm not going to refuse with your son. If he wants to be with his biological mother then it's fine. He's at school now. Come back at around 2pm. He'll be around. We'll both talk to him. Tell him why you didn't raise him. You will also tell him why I raised him. Explain properly. Not what you did last time.

Zoleka:thank you. Also, I'd like to talk about how I'm going to take care of him. I'm sure his father mentioned him in his will.

Nokubonga:I knew it was coming to that. Good luck next time hey. There's no inheritance here.

Zoleka:there's no way he didn't leave anything for his son.

Lunga:let me explain something to you. When your lover died, he was no longer fully staying in this yard. A whole five years he was always away. Only came two or three times a month. Or when there's a function in the family. I believe he was with you.

Zoleka:I didn't force him to come to me.

Lunga:the only good thing he did was building a house for the family back in the village and

taking us to school. As you're here about what he left for your son, your lover had nothing. Nothing to his name. The money that he was using to charm you was his brother's money. The money that he was using on you was his brother's. You should have saved for yourself because he had nothing. He was a fool because he didn't change it to his name. He left nothing for us. I bought this house for my family. I work and take care of this family. Don't see all these fancy things here and think it all belonged to him. Don't see my mother looking this good and think this is his money. It's all my money. Me and my brother work for this family and take our sister to school. And we also make sure that Phila goes to sleep with a full stomach, goes to the best school ever, gets everything he needs and doesn't lack anything. We do that because he is our blood. We are not going to abandon him because of his father's sins. We will never let him suffer for that.

Zoleka:why can't I believe that?

Lunga:let me give you his lawyer's contact details. You will talk to him and he will tell you if that man left anything or not.

Zoleka:I need my son. You can take care of him while he's with me. The money that you used on him you can send it to me.

Lung:that's not a problem. Every month we will take him, buy clothes for him and everything he may need. We will pay school fees for him. He already has a driver who takes him to and from school, and to his swimming classes. We will buy groceries for him. We know his favourites. And if it's not enough he has a phone. He will

tell us what he needs. He'll be sorted.

Zoleka:I didn't hear you mention rent.

Lunga:I am not going to take care of a slay queen. I also have kids and a wife. Get up and do what other women are doing. Go to work. I am not going to pay for rent. You will see what to do. We're going to do everything for him. But it's up to you how you will pay rebt. We're doing you a favour because you'll also eat the food we're buying for him. You want us to do everything for you? My father took care of you. And now I must continue with his job? Look for a job. Or another sugar daddy. If that's all, then come back around two pm so we can talk to him.

Zoleka:I've been trying to get a job but with a

criminal record it's hard!

Lunga:I didn't send you to commit a crime. We're actually doing you a favour by doing all of the things I mentioned. We should be going 50/50. Even if you take us to court we won't have to do any of this because he's not our child. We are taking care of him because we love him. I saw you came with a car. Why don't you sell that car and pay rent? Maybe you could also start a business. You were a businesswoman after all. The internet is full of your motivational talks. Get them to use. Now use your own advice and start a business.

.....

Unconditional love



## NARRATED

Zoleka:you should have heard the way that guy spoke to me. I felt so embarrassed. Apparently Lazarus was no longer staying with his family. He was with me most of the time.

Tinashe:you see? These people are hurt. But you're just not considering how they are feeling.

Zoleka:Lazarus left nothing for his family. The money that he used to impress me belonged to his brother. Now his sons are the ones working for their mother. I thought I was going to get something. They were my plan B.

Tinashe: this is a sign that you should look for a job.

Zoleka: Lunga said he can do anything for Siya. But I have to pay rent. Why can't he do that?

Tinashe: you're living in dreamland. Wake up. This is real life. Stop acting like you're entitled to their things. They work for it and you just want to come in and eat everything? That's absurd.

Zoleka: our plans have to work.

Tinashe: you're right. But for now I am going back home. You will find the key on the doormat when you come back.

Zoleka:I'm not going anywhere.

Tinashe:didn't they say you should go back at 2pm? This is your chance to have your child.

Zoleka:even if I go there where will I stay with him?

Tinashe:just for him to know that his mother is alive and loves him, that's more than enough. Sell that car and get a place if you are really serious.

Zoleka:after I get my money from Sambulo then I will get him and those Lazarus children can keep their two cents.

Tinashe:count me out. I no longer need that money. As you knew, I needed that money to help me look for my siblings. So my father just called me and told me that my siblings came looking for me. So there's no need for me to go on with this plan of yours. Now, I can work on getting Nokwanda back.

Zoleka:so you are saying you won't regret it?

Tinashe:you take over paying rent here. Sell your car and then you will have money to pay rent.

Zoleka:I hope you don't come back to me crying. I will not have mercy on you shame.

Tinasge:I don't think I will come back to this

place.

Zoleka:so you're going back to the village? Mmh.  
It looks like you're the one who's going to have  
to sell their car.

Tinashe:I don't care. Goodluck with everything  
hey.

Tinashe got out and went to his car. He got in  
and looked at the address. He drove off to the  
address that his father sent him.

It's been a while of him looking for his siblings  
and finally he's meeting them. When he got to  
the address he spent a bit of time in his car  
before pressing the gate intercom. The gate  
opened and he walked in. He walked to the

house and the door opened.

Nokwanda:you also found me here?

Tinashe:what are you doing here?

Nokwanda:I should be asking you what you are doing at my home.

Tinashe:your home? Is this your brothers' plan to get me here?

Sambulo:oh you must be Kgoši. Come in.

Nokwanda:Kgoši? No bhuti. This is Tinashe.

Tinashe walked in and Nokwanda followed them angry.

Sthe:what's this chancer doing here?

Sambulo:Sthembiso you don't even know him. So behave.

Sthe:this is the fool that is working with Zoleka to bring this family down. He's the one who wanted to marry Nokwanda just so that he can sleep with her, make her pregnant and use that to get money from this family.

Tinashe:I'm leaving.

Sambulo:sit down. I want to hear your story. So

are you really Kgoši?

Tinashe:yes. That's the name my father gave me. Tinashe is from the man who raised me.

Ntsikelelo:how do we know you're not lying?

Tinashe: I have this letter. My father said I should give it to you. It will be proof that I am who you are looking for.

He gave it to Sambulo and he put it on the table.

Sambulo:so how do you know our sister?

Tinashe:if I knew she's my sister I wouldn't have dated her. I didn't know her. That's it.



Ntsikelelo:and Zoleka?

Tinashe:I used to work as a warden. That's how I met her. She proposed an idea to me and I was happy to be part of her plan. She said someone owes her money. She needed help. I was to sleep with Nokwanda, make her pregnant and after that she was going to pay me my cut and we go our seperate ways. I was never going to play you Nokwanda. I genuinely love...loved you. I am glad that you kept on refusing to sleep with me. A lot would hve been ruined.

Nokwanda:I don't care whether you are my long lost brother or not. I hate you and it's never going to change!

Sambulo:she will come around. But what I want to know is why were you using my sister? Couldn't you have found a better plan? I am sure your partner in crime told you who I am, what I do to people who cross me.

Tinashe:I only wanted money to look for my siblings. That's all.

Sambulo:count yourself lucky because you're my siblings' brother. Or else I would teach you a lesson you would never forget.

Sambulo read the letter then passed it around.

Ntsikelelo:so where to from here?

Tinashe:I need to see my mother's grave then leave. Home is calling my name. I had hoped that she'd answer the questions I have for her but now that she's dead there's nothing keeping me here. I had a reason to stay but now it's impossible. Maybe if my mother didn't abandon me I wouldn't have fallen in love with my own sister. It's her fault that I'm in this situation. But I will move on from it. Far away from this city.

Sambulo:wait a bit. In the letter it says that you must be present when we watch the video. So why not do it now?

Banele:before we get there, can we trust him? Remember he was working with our enemy. He might feed her information when he gets out of here.

Tinashe:I have nothing tying me to her. I've cut ties with her. But if you don't trust me it's fine. I don't have to be here for this video.

Sambulo:you breath a word to your partner you're dead. It's not a threat. It's a promise.

He pressed play and his father's face appeared.

Father:If you are watching this video then it means I'm no longer alive. This is the last part of my will. Lazarus is after me. He's trying to kill me for everything that I own because he's lazy to work for himself. Watch out for him. I leave everything to all my children. Look after my daughter. My only girl. She's the only girl so I expect everyone to take care of her and don't be hard on her. There's a white house. I leave you Sambulo in charge of everything in there. It's

like a holiday house. You will move everything to a safe place. You will know how to share everything between everyone. I've lived a bad life and I don't want any of you to follow in my footsteps. That's why I've work very hard. If you have received a letter Sambulo, it has everything you need. Look at the back and you will see the passwords to everything. Everything that no one but you can access. It's my hardwork for all of my children. Take care of your mothers. Be united just like you have always been. Look after each other. Another thing, I've found out about the child that MaNkosi sent away. I want both of you to give him 2% of all the shares that you will get. In total it will be 10%. His mother is your mother so it makes him family. Then give all the farms in the village to your uncles. Don't forget. Look after each other. Take care of the family Sambulo.

\*\*\*\*\*

Zelda:hey boys. It's time to eat. Come on!

Thabang:I'm still busy with my homework.

Lethabo:you're lying. Let's go and eat please.  
I'm very hungry.

Lethabo:no!

Lerumo:guys go to the table. I will talk to him.

They all walked to the table and Lerumo sat  
next to Thabang. He watched him draw on his

book. He felt bad about what the little boy was going through. He felt like somehow it was his fault. He should have known that something was fishy. Why would Pule's father do the tests? He should have known that something was going on.

Lerumo:big boy, what's wrong?

Thabang:are you really my father?

Lerumo:of course.

Thabang:why don't I look like you?

Lerumo:does Lethabo look like me?

Thabang:no. He looks like me.

Lerumo:you see? You both look like mommy.  
You're all my sons.

Thabang:I don't want a bad father.

Lerumo:am I bad to you? Is daddy bad to you?

Thabang:no. But uncle Pule was bad to me.

Something that happened so long ago is still in  
his mind? Indeed kids never forget.

Lerumo:I will never be bad to you. I am always  
going to be good to you. I am your father okay?  
I love you.



Thabang:I love you too dad.

Lerumo:let's go and eat.

He picked him up and walked to the table.

Lethabo:who's a little baby?

Lesedi:Thabang!

Thabang:no. You are!

Lethabo:now we can eat. I'm so hungry.

They ate their dinner then Zelda cleared the

table,washed the dishes and they all went to bed.

Zelda:what was wrong with Thabang?

Lerumo:what Pule did affected him. He thought I was going to be like him. Be bad and not treat him right. That man traumatised our son and we didn't notice the whole time.

Zelda:I feel bad. I thought he was fine.

Lerumo:he looked fine to me too. But he was just keeping it to himself and today he was reacting to it.

Zelda:I've been a bad mother.

Lerumo:don't blame yourself baby. Now we know and we can do better. You're a good mom baby.

Zelda:you think so?

Lerumo:I know it baby.

Zelda:thank you. You always know how to make me feel better.

Lerumo:I love you.

Zoleka:I love you more.

.....

Unconditional love

22

NARRATED

Zoleka:I knew you would come back. So are you ready for us to work partner?

Tinashe:no. I'm here to meet with the landlord. I need to terminate the lease or they will keep charging the rent to my name.

Zoleka:I thought you were giving this place me.

Tinashe:I am. I just need the lease to be put in your name. That's all. That way they will only charge you.

Zoleka:you can't go back to the village.

Tinashe:I will think of something.

Zoleka:Tinashe you are going to regret this. You think you will win Nokwanda back? Think again.

Tinashe:oh the landlord is here.

Landlord:so let's get to it.

Tinashe:I've deposited the terminating fee.

Landlord:that's good. So that's it. Just sign here.

Tinashe:this lady would like to stay in this unit.

Landlord:that's not a problem.

Tinashe signed and left.

.....

Tinashe:hi...

Nokwanda:oh it's you again.

Tinashe:can we talk?

Nokwanda:what's there to talk about?

Tinashe:I'm sorry about what I did. It was wrong of me. Please forgive me?

Nokwanda:I'm choosing to forget about it. Let's just keep in mind that we are brother and sister and not cross that line.

Tinashe:I'd love for us to start on a new slate.

Nokwanda:as I said, I'm going to forget about everything. Anyway, sign here. You're lucky neh? You failed to scam me and now our brothers, the same ones you wanted to scam, are giving you a car and a house on top. Which sangoma did you use? And I have to take 2% of my shares

and give them to you. Congratulations. Your ancestors are hard at work.

Tinashe:I didn't ask for this.

Nokwanda:I know. My father was a good man. If it was our mother, she wouldn't have done this. She cheated on dad and had you. Then she stole my father's first wife's son and acted like he was hers. As if that wasn't enough she mistreated him. You see? Our mother wouldn't have given you all of this. She would have done everything to keep you a secret. Maybe it's a good thing that you never met her.

Tinashe:I didn't...

Nokwanda:lastly, I hope you are genuine. Don't



betray this family if you want to live a peaceful life. My big brother, Sambulo, shot Ntsikelelo for kidnapping his wife. So you see what you are dealing with? Don't have any ideas. Be grateful and don't betray us then you'll live comfortably. Anyway, here's your keys. The car just got delivered before you got in. It's blue. You will see it. It's next to mine.

Tinashe:thank you for forgiving me.

Nokwanda:I don't hold grudges against family. If you were not family I was never going to forgive you. And here's your address and keys for the house. It used to be Ntsikelelo's. So he's giving it to you.

Tinashe:thank you.

He took both the keys and walked out. He went to where the car was and almost screamed with happiness. He never imagined he'd live like this. He was going to give his old car to his father. The man raised him after his biological father passed on so he was not going to forget him now that his life has changed for the better. His phone rang.

Tinashe:papa.

Dad:I saw the money. R2000? Did you find another job?

Tinashe:no. You know, it's like God is on my side. My siblings welcomed me. It was so surprising. They even gave me a car and a

house. Their father instructed each of them to give me 2% from their shares.

Dad:you see? You should be happy. I will ask you for one thing. Don't be greedy and start turning against them. Be a good brother. Always show gratitude.

Tinashe:dad I promise I won't change. I am grateful that they did all of this for me.

Dad:I know but people change when they see things working out for them. They start thinking they deserve more.

Tinashe:I will never do that dad.

Dad:good.

Tinashe:when I start making good money I will continue where I left off with building the house.

Dad:don't rush things. Wait for some time until you're stable in your job. Then you can continue building. And also remember the importance of saving.

Tinashe:yes. Thank you for always advising me to go on the right path.

\*\*\*\*\*

Zelda:I don't see people wearing their uniforms here.

The boys whispered to each other then burst out laughing.

Zelda:why are you laughing at me guys?

Thabang:mommy it's Saturday. We're not going to school.

Zelda:oh I forgot.

They continued to laugh at her.

Zelda:these who are laughing at me are not going out with us.

Thabang:I'm not laughing. Lethabo you will be left here on your own.

Lethabo:I'm not laughing.

Zelda:good. Dad is taking us out. We are going to eat whatever we want. Then go and see grandma.

Thabang:we're going to kasi?

Zelda:yes.

Lethabo:I want lots of meat.

Zelda:go to the car. Daddy is Waitingfor you.

Zelda closed the windows then went to take her handbag and went out. She locked the door and went to the car. Pule's car drove through and she sighed defeated. She waited for him to get out. He walked to her.

Zelda:good morning.

Pule:morning. How are you?

Zelda:I'm fine. How are you?

Pule:I'm good. Thabile is going shopping for her wedding dress. So I came to fetch the girls so that they can also get their dresses.

Zelda:Pule you knew I'm having them this weekend. You should have called me yesterday to let me know. Not just come here and tell me you want them. We made plans to go out with them.

Pule:can't you go some time?

Zelda:I've already promised them. And their grandmother is expecting them.

Pule:what grandmother are you talking about because my mother is not expecting them? Listen here. That woman will never be their grandmother. So now you're going to refuse with my kids?

Zelda:you should have told me your plans



yesterday then I would have made a plan.

Pule:you always say my fiancé is not good with the kids but now that she's trying you don't want to cooperate. What more do you want from me?

Zelda:how about she go then she will take the girls tomorrow? Please. We already have plans and they are so happy.

Pule:I'll fetch them tomorrow. Don't ship them to their so called grandmother because I'm telling you now that I will come and fetch them.

Zelda:sure.

.....

## Unconditional love

23

Sambulo finished cooking and took everything to the table. He was improving in his cooking skills. Having a wife who loves cooking made him to end up growing more interested too. Even her, it wasn't her passion. She just grew to like it. He put everything on the table then went to fetch the water to wash their hands. Amelia walked in and smiled when she saw the food on the table. She took a seat and waited. He walked in with a bowl of water and gave it to her. She washed her hands then wiped them. He put the bowl down then kissed her.

Sambulo:how was your day?

Amelia:it was good. My grandmother had a good time. She enjoyed her birthday. And Nathi is back. He's not going back to the States.

Sambulo:I know that makes you happy.

Amelia:very happy.

Sambulo:where are the kids?

Amelia:I left them at my grandparents' place.

Sambulo:Langa?

Amelia:I was surprised too. He didn't cry. I think

it has finally registered in his mind that you are not going anywhere. So how was your week? Did you finally find Kgoši?

Sambulo:we found him in Lebowakgomo. We actually found his father and he gave him our address. He came to meet with us. He calls himself Tinashe.

Amelia:Nokwanda's ex?!

Sambulo:you knew and didn't tell me?

Amelia:I promised not to say anything. Thank God they never went as far as sleeping together. Imagine if...yoh I don't even want to think about it.

Sambulo:another thing. He was working with Zoleka. But it's going to work on our favor. I will ask him what her plan was.

Amelia:I just hope he's honest. I don't want to find myself dealing with that woman again.

Sambulo:that won't happen. And we got the passwords and watched the video. My father instructed that we take 2% from our shares and give him. So that means he owns 10%. So 2% is also going to be deducted from your shares.

Amelia:it's not a problem.

Sambulo:are you sure you're fine?

Amelia:my grandmother is sick. That's why even Nathi and Lethu came back. I feel like that was her saying goodbye. She tried her all to enjoy her birthday but you could see she was in pain.

Sambulo:I am sorry. I know how much you love her. I can drive you tomorrow so you can be there with her.

Amelia:but she has lived hey. She even saw her great grandkids.

Sambulo:she hasn't reached 100. She can still live.

Amelia:if one of the babies is a girl I'm going to name her after her. Mila. Beautiful name right?

Sambulo:you can't just give our baby any name.  
What does it mean?

Amelia:I don't know. My grandmother is a  
coloured. I think she was named after her  
grandmother.

Sambulo:what kind of person was she?

Amelia:I don't know her. Why?

Sambulo:a name is something very important.  
Sometimes you name a child after someone  
and they end up being like that person. Some  
turn out good and some bad. It goes with the  
character of that person.

Amelia:so you want to say my grandmother or her grandmother was a bad person? Is that what you are trying to say?

Sambulo:I did not say that.

Amelia:so because your dad did some bad things my son is going to be a bad person?

Sambulo:baby that's not what I'm saying.

Amelia:I'm going to bed.

Sambulo:you're not going to do that. Sit down and eat. You're not going to be angry for something so small.



Amelia:if you don't want me to name this baby after my grandmother just say so instead of trying to find bad things about her. My grandmother is not a bad person.

Sambulo:so this is what's making you cry like this?

Amelia:my grandmother is sick and you talk so bad of her!

Sambulo:eish pregnant women. Baby I'm sorry. We can name our baby after her. It's not a problem.

Amelia:really?

Sambulo:yes. I'm sorry. I know you're hungry.  
Eat.

She wiped her tears and looked at him. He  
laughed shaking his head. They finished eating  
and he then cleared the table.

Sambulo:do you need anything before we eat?

Amelia:my cake.

Sambulo:it's finished. I will get it tomorrow.

Amelia:future life? Don't tell me it's finished too?

Sambulo:baby you're full. Future life is just going to make things worse. You'll have it in the morning.

Amelia:who ate my cake?

Sambulo:Buhle was here.

Amelia:babe that's my cake. There's always two different cakes in the fridge.

Sambulo:I finished the other one.

Amelia:yoh. First thing tomorrow morning get me my things.

Sambulo:let's go and sleep before you cry. We'll

go and do groceries before I drive you to grandma's place.

They headed to their bedroom then changed into their sleepwear.

Sambulo:good night.

Amelia:I need to call Nathi first and hear if the kids are fine.

Sambulo:babe they are fine. If something happened they will call.

Amelia:you're right.

.....

MPHO

I'm about to leave work. I really missed doing this. Helping people. When I do what I love I feel happy. When you do what you love you will be happy. My phone beeps and I check. It's a text from an unknown number.

\*Please forgive me. I know I have wronged you and there's no excuse for that. I'd like to talk to you. Please send a text on this number then I will call you. And lastly, read these verses. 1 Corinthians 7:10-12 then 17. I hope it makes things clear to you.\*

lyoh! He e. This fake pastor always has tricks. I sit down and get into the bible app. I go the

verses and start to read. I laugh even before I finish reading. Wa ntlwaela o.

\*1 Corinthians 7:10-11,17

[10]But for those who are married, I have a command that comes not from me, but from the Lord. A wife must not leave her husband.

[11]But if she does leave him, let her remain single or else be reconciled to him. And the husband must not leave his wife.

[17]Each of you should continue to live in whatever situation the Lord has placed you, and remain as you were when God first called you.\*

I typed and sent the text.

\*Rot in that hell. Read this verse. ( 1 Corinthians 7:21

[21]Are you a slave? Don't let that worry you—but if you get a chance to be free, take it.)\*

I blocked the number after sending the text. I took my things and walked to the parking lot. Aaron was already waiting for me.

Me:hey babe. How was work?

Aaron:good. How are you?

Me:I'm good. Look at this.

I give the phone to him and he reads the text.

Aaron:why is he sending this to you?

I go to the bible app and he reads and laugh.

Aaron:so he thinks these verses are going to make you go back to him? He's trying to make you feel guilty.

Me:I blocked that number. Is it even allowed to have a phone in jail? If he can send me texts like this then he's as good as being out. He's free to do whatever he wants.

Aaron:I will search about it. I'll talk to someone that I know.



When we got home I started cooking. Aaron was acting weird. I don't know what was going on but it was making him uneasy. He got up from the couch and went to the study making a call. I followed him to the study and listened.

Aaron:no. He sent her a text. Check for me if he is still there. If he is then I'll have to deal with him while he's there. He's making the woman that I love uneasy even from a distance. Whether he escaped or not check for me. If he did escape I'm going to hunt him and kill...

I walked away and went back to cooking. I didn't want to hear more of that conversation. I would be finally free if Mohau died but I don't want his blood in Aaron's hands. I will feel guilty.

.....

## Unconditional love

24

MPHO

Aaron just left. We finished having dinner and he said he'll be back soon. I went to shower then prepared for bed. As I came back to the bedroom I saw someone sitting on the bed giving me their back. No matter what, I know Mohau. This looked like him. I took my phone and called Aaron.

Aaron:babe I'm downstairs. I just arrived.

Me:Mohau what are you doing here?

I put the phone down without dropping the call.

Mohau:I'm out. And I came to visit you.

Me:my fiancé is coming. Get out of here!

Mohau:I was serious about the text I sent you.  
Husband and wife can reconcile and fix things.

Me:not when the ex wife has fallen in love with another men and is going to get married to him. I love Aaron. I thought I would never love someone like I loved you. I thought wrong. I love Aaron more than I loved you. And I'm not scared of what you are going to do to me just because I told you I love another man. I love him and that's that.

Mohau:is it the money?

Me:no. I work now. I'm making my own money and I'm content with what I have. I love him because of how he is. He loves and cares about me. Seven full years I was with you you never loved me like the way he has loved me in less than a year.

Mohau:Mpho mind your words!

Me:I'm tired of you thinking you have a hold over me. I love him. If this time you're going to hit me because I love him then you're wrong. This time I'm ready for you. I will fight back.

Mohau:I'm not going to hit you. I just want to

know. Why didn't you want us to have kids?

Me:don't put the blame on me. We decided together not to have kids.We were going to wait until we were both ready. But you changed your mind without even telling me.

Mohau:so this fiancé of yours, are you going to have kids with him?

Me:I am ready. If he wants us to have kids then I'd gladly give him as much as we agree on. What me and you had is over. I'm happy now.

Mohau:so I was the fool for seven years?  
Youreally played me hey. This is not over. I'm not leaving without you.

\*man, what did you think was going to happen when you came here?\*

Mohau:I came here to get my wife.

Aaron:isn't it disrespectful of you to come into my bedroom and talk to my woman like this?

Mohau:wasn't it disrespectful when you took my wife? Acting as if you were a concerned lawyer but had your eyes on her.

Aaron:her and I started long after you were divorced. I don't have to answer shit to you. Gents, come in and get him.

Two guys walked in and took Mohau.

Mohau:babe, I will be back for you. That's a promise.

Aaron:make sure he doesn't escape.

Guy:sure boss.

They got out and Aaron closed the door. I got to breath. I was really holding my breath. I threw myself at him.

Me:I was so scared.

Aaron:I told you I would be back soon. I'm always going to be there when you need me. I promised to protect you and I won't break that

promise.

Me:I love you.

Aaron:I love you. Let's sleep. What you just went through with that guy was a lot. You must be scared.

Me:I felt so relieved when you said you were downstairs.

I got under the covers while he changed. Then he came to bed.

Me:what are you going to do to him?

Aaron:I don't want you getting involved in this.



This guy has terrorized you and it's enough.  
How I deal with him, it's up to me.

Me:as long as you don't end up in jail.

.....

The following morning I woke up late. I wasn't going to work. So I did spring cleaning. While I was cleaning, my phone rang. It was an unknown number.

Me:hello?

Voice:Mpho where is my husband?

Me:oh. Did your husband escape from jail?

Voice:he was let go because there wasn't enough evidence. Where is he?

Me:I don't know.

Matlhogonolo:he said he's coming to your house to ask you to forgive him. What did you do to him?

Me:I don't know. I was with my fiancé. So look for your husband somewhere else.

Matlhogonolo:fiancé?

Me:bye.

Matlhogonolo:not so fast. Tell me what you did to my husband. I've heard stories about your man.

Me:don't start.

Matlhogonolo:tell him to let my husband go or you'll be trending on facebook my sister.

Me:trending for what?

Matlhogonolo:I have your nudes here. Anything can happen from now. Bring my husband back.

Me:nice try. I don't take those kind of pictures.

Matlhogonolo:mmh. Well, I have your naked

pictures here.

Me:oh so your husband used to take naked pictures of me while I was unaware, without my permission?

Matlhogonolo:do the right thing. I'm giving you three hours.

I stop cleaning and take my keys and run to the car. I drive out of the yard in speed. If it's really true then I am screwed. Imagine my naked pictures put out there for the whole world to see! What is my family going to say? My reputation as a doctor? I call Aaron and thankfully he answers.

Me:I'm driving to your work. Are you there?

Aaron:yes. What's wrong?

I cut the call and increase the speed. Soon I find myself parking at the parking lot. I lock the car and run to the building.

Rec:ma'am can I help you?

Me:I'm here to see Mr Mahlangu.

Rec:did you make an appointment?

Me:he's waiting for me.

I move past her. I feel like the lift is taking time

so I run up the stairs. I get to his office and he's busy with some papers. My phone indicates a text coming in. I view it and it's a picture of me naked. I shake my head in disbelief. I thought she was bluffing.

Aaron:love?

Me:Mohau's wife has naked pictures of me. She's going to post them online.

Aaron:naked pictures?

Me:yes. I didn't know about them. It looks like Mohau used to take naked pictures of me while I was unaware. So now his wife has them and is threatening to post them if her husband doesn't come back.

He makes a calls and I sit down scared.

Aaron:Portia cancel all my meetings for the day.  
I'm leaving now.

I got up and went to him.

Me:where are you going?

Aaron:to deal with that woman. I need to get  
those pictures deleted.

I hug him. I don't know what I would do without  
him.

.....

Unconditional love

25

AARON

Me:remain in the car. I will deal with everything.

Mpho:I want to see her delete them.

Me:delete that one in your phone. Right now I'm going to deal with that woman. I'm serious.  
Don't follow me.

I get out and walk to the house. I knock and the



wife opens the door. I get in and sit on the couch.

Me:nice house. My fiancé really made you people hey. All of this. It belongs to her.

Matlhogonolo:my husband and I worked hard for all of this. How can I help you?

Me:I heard you're looking for your husband. I know where he is.

Matlhogonolo:I knew it! You have him.

Me:can I use the bathroom?

Matlhogonolo:I need to know where my

husband is!

Me:I need to relieve myself first. Then you will talk to him.

Matlhogonolo:go down the passage. You will see it.

I got up and left her standing there. I first walked to the master bedroom. I looked for a laptop until I found it. I put a stick that was going to delete everything there. After I was satisfied I walked to the study and did the same with the other laptops. Then I went back to her.

Me:I'm back.

Matlhogonolo:now tell me. Where is he?

Me:first I need you to delete my fiance's nudes.

Matlhogonolo:I don't know what you're talking about.

Me:I'm not here to play. I know the people who have your husband. And they can kill him.

Matlhogonolo:okay. Let me delete them.

She selected everything then showed me and deleted.

Matlhogonolo:happy now?

Me:give me your phone.

Matlhogonolo:tell me where my husband is.

Me:do you also want to go to jail? I know you are a witch. Your husband told me that you took my fiance's t-shirt and photo then went to a witch doctor to bewitch her. If I tell Mpho about this she's going straight to the police.

Matlhogonolo:Mohau knows nothing. How did he find out about that?

Me:you're really a witch. All of this because of jealousy? Some women are dangerous. Now give me that phone.

She gave it to me and I went to recycle bin and deleted it then went to back up and all the places where she could hide them. Then I took the other phone that was on the table. It looked like it belonged to her husband. I deleted everything in there.

Me:your husband will be out in a few hours. I will make sure of it.

I walked back to my car.

Mpho:did she do it?

Me:yes. When she checks the laptops if she also saved there she will find everything gone.

Mpho:thank you.

Me:I promised that her husband will be back.

Mpho:you're letting him go?

Me:yes. But he will never mess with you again. I made sure of that.

Mpho:I'm just happy that he won't ever bother me.

Me:there's something else. Don't overreact and go and confront her.

Mpho:what is it?

Me:she's the one who was bewitching you. I lied to her and said her husband told me. She asked how he found out. It seems she's the one who was doing this to you. She admitted.

Mpho:wow. Women are enemies of other women shame. She did this for someone that I didn't want anymore? Thankfully I'm free from her spell now.

Me:yes. And that's what matters. Let's go home.

.....

When we got home I dropped her and drove off

to Sambulo's house. I received the tests and they came back positive. At least now we can continue with the negotiations. I got to Sambulo's house and he was alone.

Me:where's everyone?

Sambulo:my wife's grandmother has been taken to the hospital so she went to see her. And the kids are at their grandmother's in Pretoria.

Me:okay. So the results came out as positive. Now we can continue with the negotiations.

Sambulo:do you think you are doing the right thing? Don't make the poor woman a fool man. She has been hurt before. You don't want her to



go through that again, do you?

Me:you know, after what I heard last night, there's no doubt that she's the one. She loves me just as much as I love her. I've never been in love before and it's a beautiful feeling. I look forward to being her husband and be a father. All that comes with marriage.

Sambulo:but not so long ago you were considering going after Marko. You told me last night that Marko got her ex out of prison and you're going after him. Who will be with her while you're running after Marko? You want her to wait for you? You know it can take months. Even a year.

Me:I am doing this. I'm going forward with the negotiations. And a month after that we are

having our wedding. Then I will see how it will go with the Marko thing. Whether you help me or not I'm still going to do it.

Sambulo:I can help you. But from here. I can't leave my wife on her own. Why don't we lure him here then strike?

Me:he's a danger to our women when he's here.

Sambulo:who knows? Maybe he's still in the country. And you left your woman alone.

Me:Someone is watching her. She's safe. One way or another, I am going after Marko. I want to kill him myself. Even if it means leaving my wife here. It's for her safety. I'm doing this for us.

Sambulo:so you're going to marry her and leave her alone in this country?

Me:if that's what it takes to kill that man.

\*\*\*\*\*

MPHO

I'm sitting on the couch watching tv when I get a call. I answer it and judging by the voice I can hear that it's Mohau's mother. I cut ties with this family for a reason. I don't know why they still try to contact me.

Me:hello ma.

Ma:hello my child. How are you?

Me:I'm fine and you ma?

Ma:I'm not fine. Not at all. Mohau was in an accident.

Me: What happened?

Ma:I don't know. He got out from jail. Can you please help us? You are a good doctor and...

Me:mama Mohau hit me and you never called me. You never called to find out how I am. You stood by him after everything he did to me. Now he's out. You want me to help a monster that

can finish me at any time?

Ma:we beg you my child. We are very desperate.

Me:he has money. He can get the best doctors ever. Ones that are better than me.

Ma:he doesn't have money. His company has started to lose clients. His money is tied up in investments. And the restaurant is not doing well.

Me:I don't want to involve myself with your family anymore.

Ma:after how good this family has been to you?  
This is how you treat us?

Me:your son did me bad. I will never help him.  
God will forgive me. I'm not going to help him.  
Good luck mama.

After talking to Mohau's mother I saw a missed call from my mother. I called her.

Mom:Mpho I have good news.

Me:I could do with some good news mom.

Mom:the date for lobola has been set. It's this coming Saturday.

Me:that's really good news!

Mom:I'm so happy for you my baby.

Me:I can't wait for my wedding day.

Mom:don't forget about your premarital counseling. You're starting in two days.

Me:yes mom. I know how important it is.

Mom:on Thursday you should come home so that we can prepare.

Me:okay mom. I will come. Bye.

.....

Hey guys. Today I have airtime problems. But I managed to post this for you. We'll meet maybe in the afternoon.

Unconditional love

26

Aaron:don't look at me like that.

Sambulo:how did I look at you?

Aaron:I've changed my mind. I'm not leaving anymore.

Sambulo:that's a good decision.



Aaron:yes. I thought about it. Leaving just after we got married would be bad. It would hurt her and I don't want that.

Sambulo:now that's what I want to hear.

Aaron:what's taking so long?

Sambulo:relax. I'm sure it's going very well. That family is desperate for that money. They will want everything to go fast. They won't refuse because they want that money for their son's hospital bills.

Aaron:do you think I rushed things? I'm starting to feel nervous. What if she realises that she made a mistake and I'm not what she wants?

Sambulo:it's not even the wedding day but already you're nervous. You just told me that she poured her heart out about her love for you. Now what would make her change her mind? Let me text my wife and hear how everything is going.

Aaron:eish I don't know why I'm starting to panick.

He moved up and down looking inside the yard. He suddenly started to feel hot. Sambulo opened the car and took out a bottle of water and gave him. He drank it breathing in and out. Sambulo looked at him and laughed. He remembered the day he was getting married to his wife. How nervous he was. But it was never like this. It looked like what he was seeing was worse.

Sambulo:don't stress man. Take a deep breath. Everything is going well. Soon you'll be walking out of here a married man. That's the most exciting thing. You will feel it. Knowing that she's yours. That you're not just staying with her without doing right by her.

Aaron:you're right. I should just relax. Can't you call or text Amelia and find out how it's going?

Sambulo:that's a good idea.

Sambulo took out his phone and dialed his wife. Her phone kept on ringing and ringing. He cut the call then turned to Aaron.

Sambulo:she's not picking up. They might be

busy. We've been here for a long time. Knowing our uncles, let me say Siseko, he might be giving them a hard time in there.

Aaron:he must not dare and cost me my wife. He must not do that.

Sambulo:I think they are done. My wife is coming.

Aaron got up and looked nervously as Amelia came. She got to where they were then hugged her husband.

Aaron:how's everything in there?

Amelia:everything went well. They just finished

right now. You can go in. They are about to serve everyone.

Aaron:I thought maybe they refused for her to marry me.

Amelia:I can see how scared you were judging by your face.

Sambulo:he almost cried. He wasn't breathing properly.

They laughed.

Amelia:but relax. Your wife almost cried inside there. Uncle Siseko was being his usual self.

Sambulo:I told you.

Aaron:I'm going before it turns into a dream.

They all walked to the yard and Sambulo and Aaron went to join other men.

Amelia:so how are you feeling Mrs?

Mpho:I'm so happy! I can't believe this just happened. I can't wait to start my life with my man as husband and wife.

Amelia:so where to from here?

Mpho:we're going to his grandmother's place. That's where the celebration is going to take

place.

Amelia:congratulations!

Mpho:I didn't just get myself a husband today. My best friend is turning into my sister. Thank you so much. If it wasn't for you maybe I would still be depressed now. God should keep you for me. You've been there in all my troubles. There's no friend like you. You're literally the best.

Amelia:mmh mmh. You're making me cry. I love you.

Mpho:I love you more.

Amelia:you look so beautiful.

.....

People started arriving at the Mahlangu home. Everything was beautifully decorated and organised. They had put a stretch tent in the middle of the street. Friends and family were invited to celebrate with their children. The car that had Aaron and Mpho drove through inside the yard. Women ululated and men reciting their clan names. It was such a joyful time. They planned to have the traditional wedding the following day after lobola negotiations.

Aaron:my wife.

Mpho:my husband.



He leaned in and kissed her. Then he looked into her eyes smiling. Then they got out of the car and went to the tent. They went to sit on their chairs. Sthembiso took the mic and went to do his work of being an mc.

Sambulo:I'll be back baby.

He kissed her forehead and walked out making a call.

Sambulo:there are uninvited people here. Get here now. I'm going to deal with them. When you get here just keep watching this place.

He cut the call and walked to the car that had just parked.

Sambulo:Filipe what are you doing here?

Filipe:a friend of my friend is my friend. So I came to celebrate with you.

Sambulo:I heard last time you said Marko wants me at his place. Leave now. After the wedding celebrations are over I will call him. I will call him and hear what he wants.

Filipe:good. Here's his number.

He gave Sambulo a piece of paper and drove off. Sambulo walked back inside the tent.

Zoleka looked at the pictures on facebook. She

kept on scrolling but one caught her eye. She shook her head not wanting to believe that he would betray her. She dialed his number and he picked up.

Tinashe:what can I do for you?

Zoleka:I don't want to think that you'd betray me. Why am I seeing you in wedding pictures? The wedding of our enemy's friend!

Tinashe:my friend invited me. I had to tag along with him. It's not a big deal. Is it? And he's your enemy. Not mine.

Zoleka:we have to meet.

Tinashe:send me the details.

\*\*\*\*\*

The following day Sambulo got up early and showered then took his car keys.

Amelia:babe, I still have two hours. I'm not going to work now.

Sambulo:I'm going to fix something. I'll be back before your time to go to work. Go back to sleep.

Amelia:okay. Don't forget my breakfast.

Sambulo:your...okay. I will get it.

He left the bedroom and went to his car. He didn't want to even ask what the breakfast was. She was going to complain and it would take long for him to leave the house. He got in his car and put in the address that Tinashe gave him. He drove to the location and found Zoleka waiting.

Sambulo:we meet again.

Zoleka:long time no see.

Sambulo:indeed.

Zoleka:the last time we saw each other things were not good between us.

Sambulo:do you mind if I sit with you?

Zoleka:no. I was waiting for someone but it looks like he's not coming.

Sambulo:this guy?

Zoleka:how do you know Tinashe?

Sambulo:he's my step brother. I'm here to warn you for the last time. Stay away from my family. I know about your plan. This time when I send you to jail you won't come out.

Zoleka:he's your brother?

Sambulo:yes. And I'm watching you. You don't want me to report you. I thought one of the parole conditions was that you don't go anywhere near the people you've wrong.

Zoleka:did I come anywhere close to you or you're the one who did?

He got up and went to stand behind her chair. He bent down to her face.

Sambulo:keep doing what you're doing if you miss jail. I will make the dream of you going back come true. Mark my words.

\*\*\*\*\*

After Sambulo left Zoleka requested an ubber then went to it after it arrived. It drove her to her destination and when she arrived she put on a hoodie hat and walked in. She scanned her fingerprints and it declined. She called and someone opened for her.

She walked in staring at the place. Nothing had changed since the last time she was there. She walked through without telling the helper for what she was looking for. She knocked at the door and then walked in.

\*Long time.\*

Zoleka:Marko. You've been so quiet.

Marko:I told you to contact me when you get



out of jail. Did you think I was going to abandon my friend's lover? Of course not.

Zoleka:I had nothing. I had to sell my car.

Marko:you should have come here. My good friend and I were very close. I wouldn't let you suffer just because he died. So what do you want?

Zoleka:I have nowhere to stay and I can't stay with my son unless I have a house.

Marko:that's easy. You can look for any place you want. I will pay rent.

Zoleka:what is in it for you?

Marko:I want you to tell me about Aaron and Sambulo. Their lives ever since they came back to this country.

Zoleka:well they are married.

Marko:even Aaron?

Zoleka:he got married yesterday.

Marko:nice.

Zoleka:what are you planning?

Marko:that's for me to know. And for you to find

out. Look for that place and contact me.

.....

Unconditional love

27

Aaron:you love your ring?

Mpho:so much. I can't believe you got me an engagement ring.

Aaron:I had to. You deserve it. So tell me, where would you like to go?

Mpho:for our honeymoon? We'll decide before

the white wedding.

Aaron:it's not our honeymoon. Just a vacation.  
For you and Amelia for this week. You're still on  
free until next week. Ask Amelia if she's free.

Mpho:mmh. How about Mpumalanga? I'd love  
to explore some places there.

Aaron:consider it done.

Mpho:you can also come with us.

Aaron:I have work. I just don't want you to be  
bored. I will be more busy.

Mpho:let me call Amelia and ask her. Thank you

dear husband.

Aaron:it's a pleasure my wife.

Mpho:you deserve a prize for that.

Aaron got out to make a call. He didn't want her to hear what he was talking about.

Aaron:my wife agreed to go to a trip. She will call your wife soon.

Sambulo:okay. I will convince her to take a week off.

Aaron:good. We need to attack while he's not expecting us.

Sambulo:after dealing with him we will live our lives peacefully. I know you wanted to tell her why you want her to go away. Don't tell her. Keep it to yourself. Maybe tell her after everything is done and it's safe to come home. This fight is way more dangerous than we think. That's why I've taken my mother and the kids to the village. Even my siblings. I have someone watching them. You don't want your wife caught up in all of this.

Aaron:you're right. When I am done with this, I will live my life peacefully without being scared. And knowing that my wife is safe will give me comfort.

Sambulo:yes. We're doing this for our family. So don't tell her now.

Aaron:so how are we going to do this?

Sambulo:I already got into their system. I gave all the domestic workers there a leave. They think it's their boss. So tomorrow they won't be coming in.

Aaron:good idea. Let me prepare for our mission then.

He cut the call and went back inside. He found her packing her clothes. He stared at her. He noticed how happy she was. He wanted that happiness to last and what he was about to do was the only way to make sure that she is indeed happy.

After she was done he took her bag to the car then came back. He looked at her then smiled. He walked closer to her and gave her a tight hug. He held her tight and let go after a while. They walked to his car hand in hand. He opened the door for her then went to his side and drove to Sambulo's house.

.....

Amelia:I think this trip is so sudden. I'm going to miss you.

Sambulo:babe, this is a free trip. Just go and enjoy yourselves.

Amelia:why don't you come? I will enjoy myself more with you there.



She smiled with her hands put together begging.

Sambulo:okay. How about I join you after I'm done with my meetings for this week? I will try to have them done before the end of the week.

Amelia:you promise?

Sambulo:you know I never break my promises. This week won't end without me joining you.

Amelia:okay. We can go now.

Sambulo:mmh. My kiss please. I won't even get my kisses the whole week.

Amelia:you said three days.

Sambulo:if I'm able to have all of my meetings.

Amelia:okay.

She put her hamds around his neck and kissed him.

Sambulo:now we can go. I will call you everyday.

Amelia:I love you.

Sambulo:I love you more.

\*\*\*\*\*

Zoleka knocked at Lazarus house and Lunga opened. She went in and sat on the couch.

Lunga:you're back.

Zoleka:yes. Is he around?

Lunga:yes. Have you found a place to stay?

Zoleka:yes. I've found it.

Lunga:when he agrees to stay with you my sister will go with you to town so that Philasande can get what he needs.

Her phone rang and she asked to be excused.  
She walked out to answer it.

Zoleka:Marko. I'm in the middle of something important.

Marko:more important than you getting this money to pay your rent?

Zoleka:I'm on my way.

She looked at the house then ran to her car and drove off.

Lunga waited and waited and she never came back inside. He went to look for her car outside and it was no longer there. He clicked his

tongue and went inside the house.

Zoleka:I'm on the way.

Marko:good. I have a task for you. It's nothing much. Send me your banking details so that I can send the money now.

Zoleka:okay.

Marko:after getting that money I need you to do something for me. I put in extra.

Zoleka:what do you need me to do?

Marko:go to Sambulo's wife's work. Find out when she will have any meeting outside town.

Also, tell me if she's there and what time she's going to Knock off.

Zoleka:consider it done.

\*\*\*\*\*

She parked her rental car and walked inside the building. She went straight to Amelia's old office and was welcomed by a different person.

Zoleka:hi. Did Amelia change offices?

Woman:I don't know who that is.

Zoleka:do you know Zelda? I'm her friend.

Womn:she's in her office.

Zoleka:thank you.

Zoleka went out and knocked in Zelda's office.  
It was still as she remembered it.

Zelda:leave while you're still there. Criminals are  
not welcome here.

Zoleka:you don't know what I want.

Zelda:what is it?

Zoleka:do you know where I can find Amelia?

Zelda:she doesn't work here anymore.

Zoleka:I mean no harm. There's no need to lie. I just want to apologize for everything I've done to her.

Zelda:she doesn't work here anymore.

Zoleka:where does she work?

Zelda:she's a housewife. Now get out of here. I don't have information for you. I don't know where she works.

Zoleka:but she's your friend.



Zelda:so?

Zoleka:you're so useless. I came here for nothing. Mxm.

She left and Zelda closed her office.

.....

Unconditional love

28

Sambulo picked up his office phone as it has been ringing.

Sambulo:Sambulo Langa hello?

Zelda:hey it's Zelda. I got your number on your company webside. I tried to call Amelia but her phone is not going through.

Sambulo:oh. I will tell her you called.

Zelda:I wanted to tell her that Zoleka was here...

Sambulo:what did she want?

Zepda:she said she wants to apologize to Amelia. She asked me where she works and I said I don't know. Nothing is ever as it seems with that woman. She might be lying.

Sambulo:thank you so much for letting me

know.

Zelda:okay. Bye.

Sambulo put the phone down and closed his laptop and left.

Sambulo:Aaron, Zoleka was asking where my wife is. I think we will have to start with our plan early. Right now I'm going to deal with her. Then we will only focus on Marko.

Aaron:that's a good idea. Let me know how it all goes.

Sambulo:sure.

He drove to Zoleka's place and managed to get in. He walked to where the rental car was and opened it. The alarm didn't make a noise. He put the drugs that he had under the seat then walked away.

He got into his car and drove off. That was easy. He didn't want to do that. But she kept on pushing him. If she had behaved herself none of this would have happened. If she was obedient and didn't seek revenge or threaten his wife he wouldn't have done what he did. Ever since he came back from jail he has been trying to live an honest life. She came and ruined it by trying to hurt his family. For that he'd do anything.

Sambulo:is there a roadblock?

Aaron:yes. She won't pass there. They will

definitely get her.

Sambulo:good. Now we move to the next one. Be prepared. I'm going to deal with the guards in that place and then you will go after him.

Aaron:I'm on my way there.

He put the phone down and drove to Marko's place. This was it. It was finally happening. All the time he abused them and they couldn't do anything about it, forcing them to do what they did not want, he was going to pay for it. But mostly for all the trauma that he caused them. The trauma that he brought into their lives.

When he got there he looked at his device and saw all the places where the guards were. He

first started at the gate. He electro shocked the first one then went in. He walked to the next spot and did the same to three guards who were there. He proceeded to walk in until all the guards were down.

\*I didn't know I was going to have unwanted visitors. \*

He heard a gun being cocked on his head. He turned and looked back. He came face to face with Filipe.

Filipe:put that gun down.

Filipe fell down and Sambulo looked at the entrance. Aaron walked to where they were.

Sambulo:thank you so much. That was so close.

Aaron:I got you. Now I'm going to look for Marko.

Sambulo:I'll make sure there's no one here.

Aaron walked inside the house and found Marko sitting on his big chair. He turned it to face him.

Aaron:long time.

Marko:what are you doing here?

Aaron:you were looking for me and Sambulo. We are here now. I thought I was going to

torture you before your death. But I changed my mind. Say hello to my evil father. Your friend Lazarus.

He put his gun that had a silencer on his forehead. He pulled the trigger and Marko fell down. He ran back to his car and came back with a 5l of petrol. He started to pour it around the yard. He went to Sambulo and they all left the yard. He lit a match stick and threw it inside the yard and it blew up in flames. They both got into their cars and drove off.

.....

Sambulo:It's over.

Aaron:thank you. I wouldn't have done it alone.



Sambulo:you would have done the same for me.  
How long with Zoleka?

Aaron:as soon as she steps out they will arrest  
her.

Sambulo:now we have to drive to venda. We  
need to get cleansed. Then after two or three  
days we can join our wives.

Aaron:I can't wait to see her. This bastard is no  
more. He had made my life very hard. Now I can  
forget about him and move on.

\*\*\*\*\*

She drove out of her house to Marko's place since his phone was not going through. She wanted to talk to him about Amelia. So if he wasn't answering his phone, going there was the only option for her. As she was driving, she noticed that there was a roadblock. She slowed down as they stopped her. She parked on the side and rolled down her window. She looked around as other cars passed. She took out her licence and gave it to the officer. They asked her to get out.

Zoleka:what's going on?

Officer:we are just doing our job.

She got out and stood next to the door as the officer searched her car.

Officer:what's thi?

Zoleka:I don't know. This is a rental car.

Officer:it's drugs. Are you selling drugs ma'am?

Zoleka:I'm not a drug dealer. What's going on?

Officer:you will have to come with us to the station.

Zoleka::this is not mine!

Officer:we don't know that. We found it in your car.

\*\*\*\*\*

Pule drove into his home with his parents. His wedding date was approaching and lobola hasn't been paid. So he wanted to talk to them before writing the letter himself and submit it to Thabile's family.

Mom:why are we here?

Pule:I need to talk to you about lobola. Did you speak to the uncles dad?

Dad:why should I do that? This marriage is not happening.

Pule:I thought I told you that I'm marrying Thabile.

Dad:you don't love her.

Mom:you can't marry her if you don't love her. It's not going to work.

Pule:we can make it work. We have a child together.

Mom:why are you doing this?

Pule:mom, it's time I accept that the only woman that I love is married to another man. She is in love with him. If I wait for her I will do that until I die.

Mom:which is why you shouldn't get married.  
You and Thabile can still be in a relationship  
until you're sure that this is what you want.  
Work on forgetting Zelda. Then you will see.  
You will get married for the rights reasons. Not  
to forget someone.

.....

Unconditional love

29

AMELIA

It's been four days and my husband hasn't  
called. I've been so worried about him. Even

Aaron hasn't called Mpho. So I know wherever they are they are together. Right now we are having breakfast and Mpho just can't stop eating while I'm here worried.

Me:aren't you worried that they haven't called?

Mpho:no. They will definitely be here today. My husband said they will come today. I believe him.

Me:if you say so. Did you see Zoleka has been arrested again?

Amelia:no. What happened?

Me:drug dealing.

Amelia:God is good. She's never coming out.  
She violated her parole.

Me:minus one problem. She won't bother me  
again.

Amelia:yes. She was already starting to be a  
thorn in your life.

Me:let me try calling Sambulo again. He better  
answer this time.

I dial his number and it rings. The moment he  
answers I'm ready to shout. But he beats me to  
it.



Sambulo:love you should relax. We're at reception signing in.

Me:I was just worried. I'm happy that you're fine.

Sambulo:which side are you at?

Me:we're having breakfast. You can come and join us. We have a lot of food.

Sambulo:okay. Come to your room after you are done.

I cut the call and breath out. I got to relax. Now that I know he is here it's better.

Me:they are here.

Mpho:you see? I told you.

After we finished eating we went back to our room. Mpho took her things and went to the room that Aaron and Sambulo booked.

Sambulo:come here baby. I missed you.

Me:did you manage to go to all of your meetings?

Sambulo:yes. Even though I'm a day late. At least I'm here.

Me:was Zoleka one of those meetings?

Sambulo:there's no need for me to hide it from you. I planted those drugs in her car.

Me:am I evil for being happy that she's back in jail?

Sambulo:you're not. That woman has put you through a lot. She knew about your kidnapping and didn't even report it or at least tell me. So you're not evil. Marko is dead.

Me:what?!

Sambulo:yes. It's all over the news. He burnt in his place. Don't give me that look. I wouldn't risk my freedom like that.

Me:mmh. Good. Because we don't want you to kill or do something that will land you back in jail, right?

Sambulo:right. Let me answer this. Oh it's mama. Hello ma.

Vouce:it's me.

Sambulo:mfana wam.(my boy.)

Langa:I miss you. When are we coming home?

Sambulo:on sunday. Where's your sister?

Langa:she's here. She misses you too.

Sambulo:Mihle, how are you?

Mihle:I'm fine. Where are you daddy?

Sambulo:I'm at home with mommy. You want to talk to her?

Langa:yes!

He gave the phone to me and I talked to them. I missed them but this time away did me very good. Away from everything and just to have some fresh air.

Me:mommy misses you too.

Langa:get us nice things when we come back.

Me:no. Tell grandma to get me nice things.

Langa:okay mom. We love you.

Me:love you too. Bye.

I gave him his phone. I stared at him. Even after all these years my husband still looks good. And our love is still as strong as ever. I thought being in jail would change him. But it didn't.

Sambulo:Why are you looking at me like that?

Me:I'm just admiring my husband.

Sambulo:let's go out for some fresh air.

Me:I like going to places like these with you. It's like we're on some adventure.

Sambulo:how about we go on a real adventure my love? We get someone to be in charge of the company and go somewhere. Let's choose a place that we both would like to go to. Just the two of us.

Me:the kids are coming back.

Sambulo:we'll go next weekend.

Me:that's fine.

Sambulo:let's go for that fresh air.

I put on my flops and we walked out hand in hand. We went to sit by the pool. There was really fresh air. I slept on my back on those chairs they put next to the pool. Sambulo leaned over and kissed my belly.

Sambulo:how are my girls doing?

Me:girls?

Sambulo:yes. Langa is going to be the one to look after our three girls.

Me:I want it to be balanced. Two girls and two



boys.

Sambulo:like Langa always says, he's the only brother.

Me:he says he's Buhle and Emihle's brother. I think he enjoys being the only boy.

\*Amy. Wow! You look so beautiful!\*

Me:Thinus. What are you doing here?

Thinus:same thing as you. I came here to relax and get away from work.

Me:that's not what I'm here for. I'm here on a holiday with my husband.

Thinus:husband? Lucky guy. So when am I meeting him? You could be lying fir all we know.

Me:is he invisible?

Thinus:this is your husband? A bit old but not bad.

Me:Thinus stop being a fool. I see you haven't changed. Keep walking.

Thinus:I was thinking we could go out for a drink. We have a lot to catch up on. You could invite your friend. She's welcome to join us.

Me:I have no business to catch up on with you.

Just like you've been warned before, stay away from me. I'm not your friend.

Thinus:I see you're still filled with hate. Why should children inherit their parents' hate?  
Come on.

Me:you're disturbing us.

Thinus:see you around. Do you still live in Pretoria?

Me:voetsek Thinus! Get away from here!

Thinus:easy princess. I'm leaving. Say hi to Nathi.

Me:Nathi is married. Nxa!

Sambulo holds my hand until I calm down.

Sambulo:what's twrong?

Me:I'm fine now.

Sambulo:who's he?

Me:remember the story about how my father went to jail? The woman who falsely accused him is his mother. I don't know why he even came to speak to me because we don't talk to each other.

Sambulo:don't let him upset you. One would

swear he's an ex who broke your heart.

Me:even if I was allowed to date back then I'd never date him. He's racist. Just like his grandparents. Did you see how he acted like you're not here?

Sambulo:you should get rid of this hate you have for him. He's a non factor in your life.

Me:no. That's not true. My dad almost spent years in jail because of his mother. I won't forget about it.

Sambulo:but it wasn't his fault but his mother's.

Me:you don't get it. Let's forget about that fool

and focus on us.

Sambulo:the way he made you angry...

Me:babe I said what I said. I don't like him. An apple doesn't fall far from the tree. He's a bad person just like his mother.

\*\*\*\*\*

MPHO

Me:when we get back home I want to go and pay the woman who helped me.

Aaron:you should do that. Look how fast you got your job back.

Me:yeah. I will never forget her. She really came through for me.

Aaron:and there's no more Marko on my back. No more fear. We will live our lives freely.

Me:what happened to him?

Aaron:he burnt in his house.

Me:what a painful way to die.

Aaron:he deserves it. He has done so many bad things to people. And he knew he's not welcome in South Africa. The reason he left in the beginning was because of the enemies that

he made. So did he think they forgot about him and came back?

Me:yeah coming back was a mistake. Obviously they were waiting for him.

I looked at his eyes. This Marko guy really put my husband through a lot. Just a mention of his name makes his face change. Now no more talking about him.

Aaron:so my love, when are we going to start trying for a baby?

I've really been praying that we never visit this topic. That if we were to have a baby it would happen by surprise. What if I have a problem? What if I can't have kids? I mean, Mohau has



children. Sometimes I'd forget to get contraceptives but never fall pregnant.

Aaron:if it's still too early we can wait.

Me:no. It's not that. I'd love to have children. But I'm scared. What if I have a problem? There were times I'd forget to take a pill but never fell pregnant. What if I can't have kids?

Aaron:there's nothing to be scared of. When we get home we will go for a check up. You will see. You don't have fertility problems.

Me:I really hope so.

.....

## Unconditional love

30

After our time away we went home. It was nice to spend time and not have problems. Just for once. It's so nice to have peace. No worries, no problems to solve, just living life to the fullest. I actually miss the lodge we went to. When I was there I got to focus on what was surrounding me and enjoying nature. But now it's back to work.

Langa:mommy is it a good thing that you go on vacation without your children? I'm still sad.

Me:sorry. When it's school holidays we will go together.

Langa:you owe me mom. I won't forget this.

Me:I will buy you lunch after school. I will fetch you and take you out after school.

Langa:I want to come to your work.

Me:you disturb people every time you're there.

Langa:I will be a good boy.

Me:okay my little prince. Let's go to school now. Or they will leave us.

I take his backpack and go out. He's walking in

front of me. We get into the car and Sambulo drives to Langa's school first.

Langa:bye Mihle. I love you.

Mihle:bye. I love you too.

He gets out,takes his backpack and go inside the school.

Sambulo:what about us?

Me:he's angry because we went to a "without" him. Now after school I have to fetch him so that he can play in my office while I work.

Sambulo:he likes acting like he's angry even

when he's not.

Me:you will see him when I fetch him from school. He'll be all smiles like he knows what happens at work. When he's old he'll no longer want to go to work.

Sambulo:no child of mine will stay at home and not work. Even with all the money that I'm making for them I'll teach them responsibility. To be responsible and work for themselves.

Me:you're right.

Sambulo:today I'm working at LM. You will take care of things at our company.

Me:you like putting me in some uncomfortable situations.

Sambulo:they must get used to you being the boss. If you don't stand your ground how are you going to get used to the pressure?

Me:I'll try.

.....

Today was full of meetings. I was moving up and down attending all those meetings. But I am glad that it was meetings with clients. Not with the company employees. Those are some of the people who don't like me working here."You are not cool to work with like Mr Langa." That's what most of them say. But I am

learning not to take it to heart. If I do that I might end up quitting my job.

Right now I'm driving to fetch the kids from school. I start by Emihle and I find her still inside her class. When I get in she runs to me and I hug her.

Me:where's your bag?

She points to it. I greet the teacher and take it then sign her out.

Teacher:good day. I'd like to talk to you.

Me:okay. Is she still doing well?

Teacher:that's what I want to talk about. She's doing very well. Why did you bring her to school late? She should be doing grade R.

Me:last year I couldn't take her to a daycare. We had some things to deal with.

Teacher:she's so smart. She can even write her name and surname very well.And she can read some things. Here we are just wasting her time. And she seems to love school.

Me:well, that's a relief. I thought she'd take after her brother who doesn't want to go to school if his dad is not taking him.

Teacher:I can relate. So continue doing what you're doing with this one. She's doing very well.



Me:thank you. Bye.

I hold her hand and we walk to the car chatting.

Me:did you have a good time?

Mihle:I always have a good time.

Me:that's nice. You know what I'm going to get you?

Mihle:a treat?

Me:yes! But we're going to fetch your brother first then we can go and get it. Are you excited?

Mihle:yes.

I put her bag inside then buckle her and drive to Langa's school. I find him sitting outside with Phila and Buhle.

Me:hey guys. Let's go. Do you have swimming classes today?

Phila:no.

Me:okay. I will call your mother and tell her that I took you.

Phila:okay.

Mihle:we're getting a treat.

Langa:I love treats.

Me:do you have homework?

Buhle:I do.

Langa:I don't.

Me:I'm going to check your books. While I work, you will be doing your homework. You too Phila.

Phila:I don't have homework.

Me:I will check. There's no way you have no

homework.

I drove to get them food first then went back to work. I still had some work to finish. When we got there I checked their books while they were eating.

\*Hey Amy.\*

Me:oh God! What is it now?

Thinus:I'm sorry for just coming to your office without making an appointment.

Me:how can I help you?

Thinus:I lied that day at the lodge. I was

following you.

Me:you were following me?

Thinus:yes. I wanted to talk to you but your husband was there.

Me:what did you want?

Thinus:I need your help. My mother is at the hospital and I can't afford her treatment.

Me:so you want me to pay for it?

Thinus:yes. I really need your help. Please talk to your father. I know he never says no to you.

Me:so you want to take advantage of that?

Thinus:I had no one to ask. Please. If you think I'm lying we can go to the hospital and see her. I just got a new job and haven't been paid. As soon as I get my first pay I will pay you back. We can even draw a contract.

Me:where's your father when you need him? Why don't you ask him? You're disturbing. My kids are eating and need to do their schoolwork. Please leave.

Thinus:here is my number. Call me if you change your mind.

\*\*\*\*\*

MPHO

I waited for Aaron after my shift. We were going for a check up but in this hospital where I work. My office door opened and my husband walked in with a bag of takeaways.

Aaron:I brought something to eat before we have the check up.

Me:I'm nervous. I will eat after.

Aaron:there's nothing to be nervous about. Let's eat. I know you're hungry. Come on.

Me:do I eat a lot? I think I gained a bit. I need to

join a gym. I want to fit in my wedding dress. I don't want to be fat.

Aaron:you're not fat. And what dress? You haven't even found that dress yet. So there's no need to worry about sizes. Let's eat.

Me:let's go. The doctor is Waiting for us.

Aaron:I can't wait to meet our baby.

Me:baby?

Aaron:yes. I asked my grandmother about how you've been behaving and she says there's someone on the way. Soon we'll have a little girl or boy running around the house. Exciting, isn't



it?

Me:uh...yeah it is.

Aaron:let's go.

My phone rings and it's the hospital.

Me:let me take it. It's work. I haven't even left but already they're calling.

I answer and listen. They say they need my help and I can't say no.

Me:babe, they need my help. Wait for me here. I will ask the doctor if we can move our appointment.

.....

By the time I'm done it's already late. I find Aaron waiting for me in the office.

Me:babe I'm sorry. We just finished now.

Aaron:I understand. You look tired.

Me:I've been on my feet all that time. Let's go.

Aaron:we will go to the doctor tomorrow.

Me:okay.

He took my things and we left. All the way he couldn't stop talking about the baby. I didn't say anything. What if I am not pregnant? What if it's just a false alarm?

When we got home grandma came and hugged me. Aaron said he fetched her during the day.

Granny:you're really pregnant. Look at your eyes.

Me:dumela koko. How was your trip?

Granny:good. I am here to stay with you and help you. You don't have to do hard work while I'm still alive. You see your husband? I raised him all on my own.

Me:we are happy to have you here kolo. But we haven't confirmed if I'm really pregnant. We'll do it tomorrow.

Granny:confirming is just for you to know. But I know you're pregnant. From now on I will cook and clean. You just tell me what you love and I'll do the rest.

Me:thank you koko.

.....

Unconditional love

31

AMELIA

Me:baby Thinus came to work. I told you that guy is up to something. How did he know where I work?

Sambulo:can we just stop talking about this idiot for once? Ever since we came back all I'm hearing is his name.

Me:will you say that when he does something to me? I'm just a woman. He's stronger than me. I can't fight against him.

Sambulo:he wants to fight you?

Me:he said he was following me. That's why he was at the lodge. He wants my help.

Sambulo:he was following you?

Me:now you're interested? Let's stop talking about him. You've heard enough of his name anyway

Sambulo:no. Tell me.

Me:I said let's leave it.

Sambulo:baby this sounds serious. Tell me.

Me:he followed me. He says he needs my help to pay for his mother's treatment. She's sick. Do you know what he might do? Since I refused he might even kidnap me so that he can force me

to pay. His mother was a dangerous woman. She stole money from the family company with his father. Millions. Even kidnapped my mother and left Thinus with her so that the police find her with him so that she could be arrested for kidnapping him. I'm dealing with a dangerous family here. Now he says since my father never says no to me I must ask him to pay.

Sambulo:he won't do anything to you. From now on we'll be working together. We'll go to work together and come back together. If he comes to the office again I will handle him.

Me:he gave me his number. He said I should call him if I change my mind. But I threw it away. I'm going to call dad. He will know how to deal with this.

Sambulo:I will deal with it.

Langa:mama your phone is ringing.

Me:Langa why do you have my phone?

Langa:daddy gave it to me so we can play games.

I look at him and he raises his hands. I take the phone and it's my brother.

Me:hey big brother.

Nkosi:Amy what is this I hear about you wanting to pay Melanie's treatment? Are you out of your mind?!



Me:calm down please. Who told you?

Nkosi:so it is true? Thinus called me.

Me:that guy is crazy. I told him to stay away from me. He said I must ask dad to pay and I refused.

Nkosi:why are you even in contact with him?

Me:he is following me. I don't know how he found me.

Nkosi:Amelia, I know first hand what his mother and father did to our family. They don't deserve our help. Stay away from them. And if you still

want to live in peace with your husband tell that fool to play away from you.

Me:okay.

Nkosi:give your husband the phone. I need to talk to him.

Me:here. He wants to talk to you.

I give him the phone and go our bedroom. I go with Mihle and Langa following behind me. He must have seen the food that I have. I sit on the bed and he takes a fleece and put it on the floor in my bedroom and sit with Mihle. I put the plate in front of them and they smile and start eating.

Langa:thank you mommy. I'm so happy today.

Me:why?

Langa:I'm done with my homeworks. Now I can play until I get tired.

Me:you love playing.

Langa:when I grow up I want a car like that.

He points outside the door that leads to the balcony and I check. It's a very nice car parked by our gate. I close the door.

Me:I'm coming okay.

I walk downstairs to my husband. He's still talking to my brother. Then he gives the phone to me when they are done.

Me:there's a car outside.

Sambulo:whose car?

Me:I don't know. It is parked next to our gate.

Sambulo:I will go and check.

Me:okay.

I go back to the bedroom and Mihle is sitting

alone and eating.

Me:did your brother go to the bathroom?

Mihle:he went out with you.

How come I didn't see him? I take Mihle and go outside. We bump into my husband and Langa at the door. Langa is looking sad.

Me:what's wrong?

Sambulo:I found him at the gate talking to the owner of the car. They drove off when they saw me.

Me:what? Langa why did you get out of the

house so late? You know you're not supposed to go out alone when it's this late!

Sambulo :baby don't shout.

Langa:I wanted to see that car.

Me:I'm sorry my boy. But don't go out on your own or you will get kidnapped. Who is going to be mommy's boy if you're kidnapped? You want me to be sad?

Langa:I'm sorry mommy. It won't happen again.

Me:it's fine. Just don't do it again.

He starts crying.

Me:don't cry. I'm sorry. Come and give me a hug.  
I'm sorry.

I hug him. I wonder if that was Thinus. Why would a person park their car and speak to a child? Why don't they call the elders or just alert us that they are at the gate if they need something?

\*\*\*\*\*

MPHO

We just got to my neighbourhood. I am going to pay the woman who helped me. If I were to just forget her and not thank her for everything she has done for me that would be bad of me. That

would be ungrateful of me. I mean, my life was blocked and she did everything for me to be fine. We passed by at home to fetch my mother so that we could go together.

We arrived there and she was still busy helping someone. We waited for her in the car until she was done. Then she asked us to come in. We went in. All of us.

Mom:dumela mme.

Her:agee.

Mom:we are gere to thank you for everything that you have done for my daughter. If it was not for you I don't know what state she would be in now.



Her:I'm glad I could help.

I took out R5000 and put it on the floor. She took it and counted.

Her:this is too much.

Me:it's nothing compared to how you helped me mama. I got my job back and my life is going so well. And it's all thanks to you.

Her:may God bless you my child. Things will go well. You will be fruitful. Everything you do will multiply. May God bless you with anything you want.

Me:thank you ma.

We get back to the car and drop mom at home then we go to a doctor. Aaron is so happy. He looks like someone who can't wait to hear what the doctor will say. Apparently old women can tell these things. So he believes that grandma is right. We walk in and the doctor is waiting for us.

Aaron:good morning doctor.

Dr:good morning. Let's get to it. Would you like us to do a test or we can just do a scan?

Me:a scan is fine.

I get on the bed and pull up my top. Aaron holds my hand. The doctor does his thing and we look at the screen. The heartbeat is so strong. I look at my husband and I just feel so emotional. Tears fall. I really had this thought in my mind that maybe something is wrong with me.

Dr:congratulations. You're three weeks pregnant.

Aaron:so everything is fine?

Dr:yes. But you need to come for check ups. You are a doctor yourself so you know how it goes.

Aaron:thank you doctor. Baby we're pregnant. We're going to have a baby!

Me:I still can't believe it. I'm going to be a mom.

I looked at him. I still can't believe that I really am going to be a mother.

.....

Aaron:I never thought this day would come. I didn't want to be a father.

Me:why?

Aaron:my life was always in danger. If I had a child then that child and its mother would also be in danger. But after I met you, I wanted it all. A family, wife and children. I was ready to take

that risk. I felt that I was ready for anything. That I would face whatever that might come. As long as I have you. And with Marko and him making threats, it made it almost impossible for me to have a family. But now that he's no more, I will enjoy my life as a family man to the fullest.

.....

Unconditional love

32

NARRATED

Mohau's mother and his wife walked in to the hospital. It was almost visiting hours.

Matlhogonolo:mama, I don't know what I'm going to do. The doctor said he's paralyzed. What if he never walks again?

M.mom:I know you're not like Mpho. You don't run when things are hard.

Matlhogonolo:I won't run. But this is hard. The restaurant is starting to do well. But as for the company, it's not going well. I know nothing about running a company. He's the only one who knows what to do.

M.mom:you will see. Everything will be back on track. You don't have to worry.

Matlhogonolo:back on track how? When clients are leaving?

M.mom:leave everything to God. He always answers our prayers.

Matlhogonolo:i don't want to be a failer like Mpho. If I don't do a good job at keeping the business going....

M.mom:Mpho aired her dirty laundry for the whole world to see. Who does that? She took private matters and made them public. That's not someone who is suitable to be a wife.

Matlhogonolo:she was angry.

M.mom:let's stop talking about her. We got the money for the hospital bills.

Matlhogonolo:where did you get it?

M.mom:Mpho is married again. So her lobola money came to our family. For once she was useful. It's because of her that my son will be helped.

Matlhogonolo:Mpho is married? How?

M.mom:she's married to a lawyer. This is good. Don't you see? She will stop running after you and your husband. You will finally live a peaceful life. But I don't think that marriage is going to last. Which man can stay with a barren woman?

Matlhogonolo:does she work in this hospital?



M.mom:no. Forget about her. Focus on your husband and children. Especially the one that's coming soon.

Matlhogonolo:yes ma.

They walked inside the ward and found Mohau sleeping on his back with his legs bandaged.

Matlhogonolo:hey babe. How are you feeling today?

Mohau:still in pain but better. Today they are going to take off the bandages.

Matlhogonolo:that's better. Mama found the

money for the hospital bills.

Mohau:where did you get it mom?

M.mom:it was from...

Matlhogonolo:they had to sell some things. You see how much your family loves you? Please get well. For us. We love you so much.

Mohau:I love you too. This accident just showed me that life is really short. We should focus on the things that are important. Which is family.

After visiting hours were over Matlhogonolo and her mother in law left.

M.mom:he's so positive. He's going to be fine.  
At least there's a chance of him walking.

Matlhogonolo:yes. Which is why we have to  
keep the fact that this money comes from  
Mpho's lobola and that she's now married. We  
don't want to stress him.

M.mom:you're right.

She dropped her mother in law at home and  
drove off. How was Mpho married? She was  
sure that she will never get married again. It  
would only go as far as her getting engaged.  
But now she's already married!

She drove through a yard and parked her car.

She got out and walked to the house. She took her shoes off at the door. She went in and found her aunty sitting on the couch.

Aunty:you don't look good.

Matlhogonolo:Mpho is married.

Auntie:what?!

Matlhogonolo:your things did not work. How come she is now married?

Auntie:she must have gotten help from someone. You told me that her life was falling apart. It was working. Maybe someone helped her.

Matlhogonolo:can't you help me again?

Auntie:Matlhogonolo stop this. You have the man. She won't bother you again. Focus on your family.

Matlhogonolo:our company is losing clients.

Auntie:you did not pay me for how I strengthened your businesses. This is the last time I'm going to help you. If you don't lay then I won't be responsible for what might happen.

Matlhogonolo:I promise auntie.

Auntie:tell me here. Are you two married in

community of property?

Matlhogonolo:no. Out of community of property without accrual system. Auntie I don't want you to kill my husband. I love him so much.

Auntie:does he love you?

Matlhogonolo:he does. I never used anything to get him. He noticed my beautiful and fell for me. Let's leave it like that.

Auntie:he's smart. He saw that you have nothing and made sure you get married out of community of property without accrual system. He did not want to lose his things if you divorce. Do you see what he did there? He has doubts about this marriage. He has thoughts of

divorcing you. At least your children will get something.

Matlhogonolo:don't plant things in my mind.  
When will you come to strengthen the company?

Auntie:tonight I will be there. Pay me my money  
or everything will vanish.

\*\*\*\*\*

Thinus:if she doesn't budge let's leave it.

T.dad:leave it? I need this money.

Thinus:you need the momey? That's not why I  
asked her for the money! I asked her to help pay

for my mother's treatment. You failed to take care of us. Now you want to use me? I won't rob her for you. I'm genuinely asking her to help my mother. If she says yes I will tell her to pay directly to the hospital. And stop following her. Why did you send people to her house?

T.dad:what's up with that family?! First it was your mother and now it's you! You're falling for this girl and forgetting the plan!

Thinus:I am not falling for her. I see her as my sister. I have a wife. You should be grateful their money took care of me. My mother was wise enough to invest the money she got from them and took me to school and raised me. All you've ever done for me was being a sperm donor. All you know is demanding things. I'm broke because of you. I am no longer going to give



you anything.

T.dad:don't forget I have nothing to lose. I am going to kill Masego. If not her then maybe one of her grandchildren. That little boy is an easy target. It wouldn't be hard to get him.

Thinus:don't do anything stupid. I will report you.

T.dad:get me what I want or else it's game on. And you know I'm not playing.

Thinus:dad stop this.

T.dad:help me get access to her company and I'll do the rest. I'll even pay for your mother's treatment.

Thinus:dad why are you even doing this? Those people don't owe you.

T.dad:you don't know what those people cost me. That man took your mother from me. Only to play her. Let her even before the year ended. Your mother lied and said you're that man's son just because he had money and I had nothing. Do you know how it feels to be cheated on? Do you? Then I found a way to pay myself. That wife of his found out and had me arrested. I have a criminal record because of that family. If your mother did not cheat we wouldn't be here. I wouldn't be going after these people. So don't blame me for what I'm about to do.

Thinus:for your sake I hope you stop whatever plan you have.

.....

Unconditional love

33

AMELIA

Langa was playing outside with his little sister. Their father went inside the house for a little while. When Langa heard a bell he looked at the gate then held his sister's hand and ran inside the house. The car that was by the gate drove off. Inside the house, the two ran until they got to where their mother was.

Langa:mama the car is here!

Amelia:what car?

Langa:my favourite car!

Amelia:did they talk to you?

Langa:no. I took Mihle's hand and ran when I saw it.

Amelia:good. Sit down. I will go and fill your little pool with water so that you can swim okay? We will sit together outside.

Langa:okay. It's so hot today. Ice cream could do.

Amelia laughs at what he said.

Amelia:stop taking chances. Let me go and take the pool.

Amelia went to her bedroom and looked in the shopping bags and took the kids' swimwear. The toilet got flushed and Sambulo got out of the bathroom.

Amelia:babe please take out the kids' pool. I'll be sitting outside with them.

Sambulo:they want to swim?

Amelia:yes. It's hot. That car was back. It drove off when the kids ran inside the house.

Sambulo:I will check the cameras and see who it is.

Amelia walked out and went to take the kids. They went outside after the kids changed. They sat down and Amelia continued to read her book while the kids had ice cream. After their father filled the pool they went inside the pool.

Sambulo:look how happy they are. I don't know who would want to disturb this happiness. Some people just don't want to see others enjoy their lives. Just when I turn my life around and tell myself that I'm not going to kill again this happens. I don't know what I'm going to do. I don't want to kill someone because something bad might happen to my family. I want a peaceful life.

Amelia:I don't know what I did wrong to Thinus. Why use our kids to intimidate me? As if it's my fault that his mother is sick. What about his father or grandparents? Why don't they help?

Sambulo:do you think it's him? He is harmless. He must be working for someone. That's the only way.

Amelia:don't you think I should tell my father about this?

Sambulo:you want your parents to think that I cannot take care of my family?

Amelia:babs,uncle Thapelo will know what to do. He will get these people off our backs. Look, we

let go of the guard because we thought we were safe. At least let's get him to come back. He will look after me and the kids if ever you're not around. I don't want anything happening to any of us.

Sambulo:I will see what to do. Don't call your father.

Amelia:this is no time to be stubborn. Sometimes we have to ask for help. We can't do everything ourselves. If we can't handle something we must ask for help. It's better than regretting ourselves when we're already in trouble. Just let me call my father. I know my brother said the parents must not know about this. But this is our lives. And we have to do something.



Sambulo:am I a coward? I can't even protect my family.

Amelia:babe, you took us out of some of the bad things. You saved me when I was kidnapped. You always protect us. That's not someone who's a coward. You know when Langa says daddy is my hero? He's right. You're our hero. All of us here. But that doesn't mean you should do everything on your own every time.

Sambulo:I said I will see what to do.

...

Amelia:no. It's not just him. I think he's working with someone. Maybe his dad.

Musa:isn't he in jail?

Amelia:I think he's out. Thinus wouldn't do this on his own.

Musa:I will see what to do. You should have just told me when he started to follow you. I would have dealt with all of this before it got worse.

Amelia:I know. Now I'm scared. He's even coming here. The other day a car came and the person spoke to Langa. You know how Langa is. He speaks to anyone he just meets. To him everyone is a good person. That car came back again today.

Musa:that's dangerous. I will look into it.

Amelia:uh dad we will talk. I will call tomorrow.

She cut the call and looked at her husband.

Sambulo:I asked you not to call your father. I was going to take care of it!

Amelia:it's not a sin to ask for help.

Sambulo:I was going to take care of it.

Amelia:I'm sorry! I had to. Where are you going?

Sambulo:don't wait for me.

Amelia:what's that supposed to mean?

Sambulo:it means I'm going to take care of the mess your friend and his father are creating.

He took his car keys and walked out. She sighed holding her head and sat on the bed.

\*\*\*\*\*

Auntie:we are done with the company. All the clients that you lost will come back.

Matlhogonolo:I promise auntie I'm going to pay you all your money.

Auntie:now onto the next phase. Make up your

mind. Be sure that this is really what you want because there's no turning back from this. Once I open this mirror there's no turning back.

Matlhogonolo:there's no turning back. I know. Let's do it.

Her auntie laughed. Matlhogonolo looked at her confused. Why would she laugh at a time like this?

Auntie:a pastor's wife is doing all of this. I never thought you would turn into something like this. Mmamoruti tota? Wonders shall never end! You stand in front of the youth and preach but behind their backs you do this. Now I see why it wasn't hard to tempt this man.

Matlhogonolo:you don't have to remind me. I need to do this to live my life in peace. Just do it.

Her auntie took out a mirror and looked at it. She shook her head. Matlhogonolo looked at her confused.

Matlhogonolo:what's wrong?

Auntie:how come I never saw this? It can't be.

Matlhogonolo:what is it?

Auntie:she's pregnant!

Matlhogonolo:no! I thought she was barren.

That's why she couldn't have kids with Mohau.

Auntie:did she tell you that?

Matlhogonolo:they were together for 8 years,  
married for seven and had no kids.

Auntie:so what do you want me to do about this?

Matlhogonolo:she can't give birth to this baby!  
Not ever.

Auntie:I can make that happen. She will give  
birth to a stillbirth. Is this what you really want?

Matlhogonolo:yes.

Auntie:then we have to forget about the original plan. Take this needle and poke on her belly.

Matlhogonolo:but it doesn't show that she's pregnant.

Auntie:are you doubting me now?

Matlhogonolo:no.

She takes the needle and starts to poke on Mpho's belly. She watches smiling as Mpho moves in her sleep. She continues to do what she's doing until her auntie tells her to stop.

Auntie:we will do this little by little. I will come



back when we have to do it again.

Matlhogonolo:about my husband...

Auntie:take this. Massage his feet with it. He will heal fast and will walk. Remember, my payment by month end or everything will be a mess. Don't try to play me. I can be more dangerous. More dangerous than you think. I'm leaving now. Next time I come here you must have her cloth for me. We will have to go somewhere to do our final stage on blocking everything in her life.

She packed her stuff and walked out of the house.

.....

## Unconditional love

34

NARRATED

Aaron:koko please do something. She's moaning in her sleep! I don't know what is wrong.

Granny:I've prayed for her. God will protect this baby. Whatever was happening will not succeed. She's going to be fine. But take her to the hospital to find out if the baby is fine.

Aaron:I really hope so. Our baby can't die.

Granny:she's going to be fine. Take her to the hospital now.

He picks her up and takes her to the car. He drives out and to the hospital. The whole way he keeps on checking on her. He only takes a deep breath when he gets there and they admit her. He follows the doctor and refuses when they tell him to get out.

Aaron:I said work on her while I'm here! I'm not going anywhere! Every minute you're wasting on me you could be doing something useful.

The doctor sighs and does his thing and Aaron watched him as he worked. After he was done he sighed and looked at Aaron.

Dr:she's fine now.

Aaron:no. Let's do the scan. I want to hear our baby's heartbeat.

Mpho:baby I'm fine.

Aaron:no my love. I need to hear the heartbeat.

Dr:okay then. We can do it. But I assure you that there's nothing wrong. The baby is fine.

The doctor did the ultrasound and the baby's heartbeat played.

Aaron:thank God. You scared me baby.

Mpho:I was in so much pain.

Dr:you can take her home. She is fine.

Aaron:thank you.

He helped her get off bed and went out. He drove home and when they arrived there grandma was still awake.

Granny:what happened?

Aaron:the doctor said she's fine.

Granmy:that was not just any pain. It's

something spiritually. You see you need me here? I'm going to pray for you everyday. Before you leave for work I Will pray for you. Anything you eat you must pray for it. When you go to work you must go with a 2l water bottle. I will pray for that water. We are going to fight this together and win this fight.

Aaron:thank you koko.

Granny:I could hear that there's something wrong in this house. It felt somehow. But I prayed when you were gone. You are going to sleep well. Go to sleep now.

Mpho:good night.

They went to their bedroom and lay on bed just

quiet. That scared them. It all happened so quickly and unexpectedly since the doctor had said that everything is fine.

Mpho:baby Matlhogonolo wa nloya.

Aaron:baby please stop crying.

Mpho:I'm serious baby. That time I was in pain it was like someone was poking me with a knife. She's bewitching me. She hasn't stopped. If I don't confront her I will die.

Aaron:baby calm down. You heard what grandma. She is going to pray for us. I don't know how to pray but you do. You have to pray with her. So that our baby can make it.

Matlhogonolo will die of shame when she sees

that you are fine.

Mpho:what if my baby...

Aaron:no. Our baby is going to be fine. I'm here.  
Grandma is here. All our friends are here for us.  
We will be fine.

Mpho:you promise?

Aaron:I promise.

\*\*\*\*\*

MPHO



That pain really had me panicking. I don't know why but I believe Matlhogonolo is doing something to me. It's just my instinct saying so. And I believe this. After grandma Prayed for me again I slept well. There was nothing wrong. In the morning we were having breakfast when koko came to join us. We got a helper but koko will stay with us.

Granny:good morning.

Me:good morning.

Granny:is this your water?

Me:yes. You said you will pray for it.

Granny:yes. Don't forget to pray for anything you eat. How did you sleep?

Me:I slept very well.

Aaron:there was no problem at all. Your prayer worked. Tonight before we go to sleep we are joining you in prayer. We don't want last night to repeat itself.

Granny:that's good.

Me:so if I suspect someone of bewitching me is it a good idea to confront them?

Granny:no. Sometimes they reveal themselves.

Me:mmh.

After koko pprayed for my water my husband drove me to work. He dropped me off and I went to my office. I got in and drank water then started to check how busy I was. My office door opened and Matlhogonolo walked in.

Me:who let you in?

Matlhogonolo:I'm sorry for just coming in. I'm here to apologise.

Me:apologise for what?

Matlhogonolo:for accusing you of taking my husband. And also to say thank you for helping

us pay for my husband's hospital bills. Your lobola money really helped.

Me:that's what you came here for? Stop being stupid. He got that money so that he can leave me the hell alone. Now get out!

Matlhogonolo:I'm really sorry.

She got up and left.

Me:hey. Stop right there.

I walked to her and held her hand. I took my hair band from her.

Me:I think this belongs to me. Thank you.

I close the door and go back to my seat.

\*\*\*\*\*

Sambulo is sitting in a club and having his drink when a woman approaches him. She stands next to him brushing his hand.

Sambulo:voetsek! Do I look like one of your easy targets? Get away from me! Nxla!

Her:easy tiger. Let's have some fun. People come here to have fun. What happens in this club stays in this club.

Sambulo:voetsek!

He left his drink on the table and walked out. He walked to his car. Just as he was about to get inside his car bullets started flying around. There was a shootout. He screamed as he got shot on the leg. He limped to his car and got in and locked himself in. Thank God for bulletproof cars. He took out his phone and called Banele.

Sambulo: please come and fetch me. I'm at a club.

Banele: a club? What are you doing there? You want your wife to leave you? This time I won't feel sorry for you.

Sambulo: I got shot! I'm losing a lot of blood!

Just come! You will see my car on the parking lot.

....

Unconditional love

35

NARRATED

Banele arrives and gets into Sambulo's car fast. He looked at his brother abd saw that he was in pain. He drove out and Sambulo couldn't stop screaming.

Sambulo:take me to the house that dad left for the family.

Banele:you need to get to the hospital.

Sambulo:take me there. My doctor will come and work on me. Please. I will never put you through something like this again.

Banele:do you know that mama will be on my case when I get home late? Zimasa is better because she was there when you called. Mama is going to freak out!

Sambulo:you're not telling anyone where I am until I'm fine. Only you know that I'm here. Aaron is going through something. His wife is sick so he has to be there for her.

Banele:this better be the last time.



He drove to the house in silent. He was angry that his brother woke him up at night but there's nothing he wouldn't do for him. Which is the reason he came to help him. They arrive at the gate and Sambulo takes out his phone and asks Banele to call doctor.

Banele:your wife has been calling.

Sambulo:ignore that. I need to get treated first. She will freak out if she sees me like this.

Banele:do you know you're just applying for trouble? I don't know how but that woman is going to find you. Mark my words. You can never hide from her. It's like she senses these things. I thought you knew her by this time.

Sambulo:just call the doctor.

Sambulo put the password on the gate.

Banele:why does everything need a password?

Sambulo:it's just for safety reasons.

Banele:here's the doctor. Talk to him.

He gave the phone to Sambulo then drove further in. He got out of the car and went to the door with him. Sambulo put his hand on the screen and the door opened. He went and laid on the couch.

Sambulo:when the doctor gets here just press on that green thing.

Banele:you are in pain. Don't you think I should take you to the hospital?

Sambulo:my doctor is on her way.

Banele:her? Let me keep quiet. What were you even doing at a club?

Sambulo:I was going after someone who's harassing my family. Then there was a shootout at the club. I think that man called his people to come and shoot me.

Banele:so who's with your wife and kids?

Sambulo:I have someone watching them.

Banele:I will go and check if they are fine tomorrow morning.

Sambulo:you will make Amelia suspicious.

Banele:your doctor is here.

Banele walked to the door and opened for her. He looked at her then back at Sambulo. He made way for her to pass.

Banele:so you even come to your patients at night? You're a good doctor.

Dr:hey Sam.

Banele:uSambulo lo.

Dr:what happened?

Sambulo:I got shot. Please remove the bullet.  
I'm in so much pain.

Dr:let me see what I can do.

Banele:don't forget, this man us married. Keep  
that in that tiny head of yours.

Sambulo:Banele that's...

Banele:no. I just want her to know and keep her distance. I saw how she smiled at you when she came in. Maybe you two had something back then but now it's over. You're happily married. Sisi, you're just here because he can't go to the hospital and he needs help. Otherwise he wouldn't have even called you. I'm leaving. I will come with food tomorrow. Call your wife or I will tell her where you are. I'm not playing. I will do it. I'm giving you until tomorrow to call her.

Sambulo:you think I would call someone I was once involved with to come and help me? I'm not that stupid.

Banele left.

Dr:your brother loves your wife hey?

Sambulo:he cares about her. Just like everyone in my family.

Dr:you should be careful. The way he speaks about her,feelings develop from those types of situations.

Sambulo:Jasmine, not everyone is like your ex husband. My brother wouldn't sleep with my wife. When you see him like that it's because my wife has done a lot for him. She has helped my siblings in an amazing way. You would never understand. So they care about her and her wellbeing. That's why he's so overprotective.

Dr:even the ex husband who happens to be your brother? Don't you think there's still something

there?

Sambulo:my wife loves me only. Maybe my brother might still love her but she doesn't see him like that anymore. So stop filling my head with nonsense. Do what you're here for and leave.

Dr:he was her first. Most women never forget those.

Sambulo:maybe you. Not my wife.

His phone rang and he sighed seeing that it's his wife.

Dr:answer her. She's not going to stop.



Sambulo:my love?

He put it on loudspeaker.

Langa:daddy come home! We want to sleep.

Sambulo:boy...

Langa:please daddy. I want you to read the story for me and Mihle.

Sambulo:you will see me tomorrow when you wake up.

Langa:you're going again.

Sambulo:I'm not going anywhere. Is that Mihle crying?

Langa:yes. She wants you to read the story for us.

Sambulo:uh! Hhm give the phone to mama.

Amelia:Sambulo I know you're angry at me for asking my father for help. But don't do this to the kids. They are crying here and I don't know what to do. Come back for them at least. Then after getting them in bed you can go back to wherever you want to go.

She cut the call and he got up limping.

Dr:I'm not done.

Sambulo:the bullet is out. Thank you. My family needs me. You can leave now.

He went to open for her and she left. He called Banele to come back.

.....

Sambulo:I'm sorry for overreacting earlier. It's just that I felt like a coward and useless.

Amelia:have you ever heard me say you're a coward or useless? We appreciate everything you do for us. But you're only human. You can't

do everything yourself. I don't expect that of you.

Sambulo:I'm sorry.

Amelia:it's fine. Please attend to the kids. Mihle can't stop crying. You know they are used to going to sleep after you read the story for them. Everyday you make sure that you're home before dinner. I don't know what happened today.

Sambulo walked to the stairs and when he got there he balanced with the wall and walked up. Amelia rushed after him.

Amelia:what happened to you?

Sambulo:we'll talk when they fall asleep.

Amelia:they are in our bedroom.

Langa ran to his father when he saw him coming in. He held his hand and walked to the bed. He picked a crying Mihle and calmed her down.

Sambulo:daddy is here. I am not going anywhere okay?

Mihle:I want to sleep here.

Sambulo:okay. Let me read the story for you guys so that we can sleep.

He put her on the bed and Langa joined. He read the story for them and before he could finish they were already sleeping. He got off from the bed and walked out with Amelia following him.

Sambulo:I got shot.

Amelia:shot? Are you fine?

Sambulo:I'll be fine. A doctor checked me.

Amelia:who shot you?

Sambulo:I was following Thinus and his father. We ended up at a club. Then when I was about to leave there was a shootout. And I got shot on

my leg. It's nothing. I'll be fine.

Amelia:you can't say it's nothing when you're walking like that. Sit down. I'm going to warm up your food then I'll give you painkillers after you're done eating.

Sambulo:thank you for not being angry.

Amelia:why would I be angry? You were trying to protect us but babe you shouldn't have just gone there without a plan. Look at you now. Can you please let dad deal with this? We don't want anything more happening to you.

Sambulo:I know. This guy just made me angry. I wanted to deal with him once and for all. But they got to me when I wasn't expecting it.

Amelia:it's fine. You're going to be fine. But baby I want you to know one thing. You being unable to deal with Thinus and his father does not mean you are a failure. You are not a failure. And don't worry about Thinus. He will stop whatever he's doing. I'm not going to pay for his mother's treatment. And his father's beef is with my father. I don't know why he's directing it at us. But my father will deal with him because he's the one he wants. Not us. So can we just stop worrying about them? They will not bother us anymore. Trust me.

.....

Unconditional love



AMELIA

I finish bathing Emihle and dress her then she leaves the bedroom. I like bathing them in the basin. I don't use the bathroom for them. Langa uses the bathroom when he's bathing with his father.

Langa:mama I had a nice dream.

Me:what happened in the dream?

Langa:I was with my grandfather. Langa.

He giggles after saying that.

Me:your grandfather Langa? What did he say?

He doesn't even know him so it's confusing. I also don't know the man!

Langa:he said mfana wami...Mom,is that why daddy loves calling me mfana wami? His father told him?

Me:you're his boy.

Langa:okay. He said mfana wami ungasabi. I was not scared. Then he said he will protect us from bad things. I told him about my favourite car. He said I should not talk to them again.

Me:you should listen to your grandfather okay?

Langa:I can't wait to go to sleep so that I can talk to him again.

Yoh. My son is happy to be talking to dead people? He's even smiling while at it. I finish bathing him and dress him in his uniform.

Langa:I'm going to tell him to protect Emihle and the twins from bad people.

Me:okay mfana wami.

Hey! When he hear me say that he can't stop smiling. He takes his backpack and leaves the room. I take a shower then go down for breakfast. I find their father putting their lunchboxes in their backpacks.

Me:baby I told you not to move around a lot.  
You are putting pressure on your leg.

Sambulo:I'm fine my love.

Langa:I told dad about my dream.

Sambulo:it's a nice dream right love?

Me:yes it is.

Yoh. That just fuels his excitement. My son is so happy. We sit down and have breakfast. Today Langa even finished his food. After washing the dishes we all leave. Sambulo doesn't want to stay home and heal. I don't

know why he wants to act all tough while he knows that he's in pain.

After dropping the kids at school I drove to work. I didn't have much to do for a change. I would even be able to leave early.

Me:did you see how confident your son looked at school?

Sambulo:don't remind me. It's like he was walking with my father on his side. I'm telling you. Everyone in the family will know about that dream. The way he's so happy about it, he can't even wait to go to bed. No. This is not on.

Me:he's really happy.

There's a knock on the door so I'm surprised because I asked not to be disturbed.

Sambulo:there goes my idea of an office quickie.

Me:babe behave. You're hurt.

Sambulo:this is nothing. Babe I can make you scream even like this. Or you want me to show you.

Me:stop please.

Sambulo:I can't wait to leave. Then I can show you what I'm capable of.

Me:come in!

Sambulo:saved by that person.

The door opened and a woman walked in.

Her:I knew I'd find you at work. You never rest even when you're hurt.

Sambulo:dr Jasmine. I don't remember calling you to come and check on me. The pills you recommended are just fine. Baby this is Jasmine, the doctor that helped me when I got shot. Dr, this is my lovely wife MaLanga.

Me:nice to meet you Jasmine.

Jasmine:nice to finally put a face to the famous Amelia.

Me:famous?

Jasmine:mmh. His brother couldn't stop praising you. Even your husband. You're always on his tongue.

I looked at my husband and laughed.

Me:how can we help you?

Jasmine:I'm here to check on his wound. He left before I could finish my job the night he was shot.



I looked at him and he looked to the other side.

Me:the night he was shot?

Jamsine:yes. He doesn't listen. He's actually stubborn. I told him I wasn't done but after hearing your daughter cry in the phone it's like everything stopped. He just wanted to get to her. It's good that you're wearing a short. That way I can check on your wound properly.

Sambulo:I'm sure it's not bad.

Jasmine:let me see.

I watch her as she takes his leg and put it on top of her lap. She rubs it then stares for a while.

Jasmine:you need to go to the hospital before it gets an infection. Before it gets worse.

She says that and continues to rub it.

Sambulo:that's enough now.

He takes it off and she clears her throat.

Jasmine:please convince him to go to the hospital. I know how stubborn he can be.

Sambulo:I'm here. I'm sure you saw what you were here for. You can leave now.

Jasmine:I will call to see how you're doing.

Me:Jasmine thank you for everything. But you can leave now.

Jasmine:okay. Let me know if you need anything.

Me:Dr, lose my husband's number. He won't be needing your services anymore.

Jasmine:did I do something wrong?

Me:I'll poke those eyes out with my nails if you keep looking at him with those eyes. Behave yourself. It's embarrassing.

Jasmine:what did I do?

Me:you're still here? Get out!

She rushed out and Sambulo laughed.

Sambulo:I didn't know you were like that.

Me:she must play far away. You're my husband.  
And you're mine alone. Rubbing your leg and  
those eyes?

Sambulo:you scared the poor doctor.

Me:maybe she should just get a man and stop  
lusting on other women's husbands.

Sambulo:her husband cheated and she left him.  
I used to work with him.

Me:so she wants to do to other women what  
her husband did to her? No. She must go back  
to him. They are all the same.

Sambulo:now that she's out how about that  
office quickie?

Me:babe I have to take you to the hospital.

Sambulo:only if you promise me an office ...

Me:after you have recovered. Let me pack my  
things so we can leave.

\*\*\*\*\*

NARRATED

Mpho:babe, I forgot to tell you. Waitsi  
Matlhogonolo ke moloji straight.(you know  
Matlhogonolo is really a witch.)

Aaron:why are you saying that?

Mpho:she came to my office. Telling me about  
apologising and thanking me. I told her to leave.  
Then she took my hair band. Luckily I saw her  
and took it from her.

Aaron:you see you didn't even have to confront

her? She's slipping now. She's making it obvious that she has been bewitching you. But she's not going to win

Mpho:I'm no longer leaving my stuff in my office. Who knows? She might break in and do something.

Aaron:yeah. So how was your day? No pain at all?

Mpho:no. I'm fine. Nothing happened. I'm happy and hope it stays like that. That pain is unbearable.

Aaron:I saw the state you were in and I don't want to see you like that again.

Mpho:I'm fine now babe.

Aaron:you know, I don't know what I'd do if something happened to you my love. Actually I don't want to find out. So I'm going to keep my hope that everything will go smoothly.

Mpho:Mphonyana is going to be fine. You will see.

Aaron:Mphonyana? This is my boy. We can even bet on it.

Mpho:this is mommy's girl.

Aaron:whatever you say mommy.



He parks the car and they walk to the house.  
They find Langa standing by the door.

Aaron:sure boy.

He keeps quiet folding his arms.

Aaron:I have something for you.

He takes out a gift bag and gives him.

Langa:it's our toys. Thank you uncle.

He hugs him then runs inside the house.

Mpho:he wasn't going to talk to you if you didn't

come with them.

Aaron:the last time I was here he was angry. So I had to get them. I'm going to the study. Call me if you need me.

Aaron walked to the study after greeting Amelia. He found Sambulo busy with some paperwork.

Aaron:I see you're busy.

Sambulo:it's nothing. Just making sure that everything is in the right condition.

Aaron:how did those bastards manage to shoot you?

Sambulo:they outnumbered me. I followed them to a club not knowing that there are people waiting for me there. But I'm getting better now. Jasmine came to check on me the night I got shot. And I went to the hospital today.

Aaron:Jasmine? Dr Jasmine?

Sambulo:don't do that. Banele already gave me the lecture.

Aaron:I hope you get another doctor. We can all see she wants you but only you can't see it. You want to go back to the time when your wife was mad at you? If you keep this woman as your doctor you will end up giving in to temptation with the way she's always acting.

Sambulo:I'm not a cheater. But don't worry. Amelia told her off. I couldn't believe it when she talked to her. She literally scared her.

Aaron:she did good. Or something would have happened. Even if you say you're not a cheater women use muti to get what they want.

Sambulo:let me tell you something about me. Muti does not work on me. That I am sure of. That man who helped me made sure that no one succeeds when they try to feed me muti. If I ever cheated on my wife just know that it's not muti. It would be for my selfish reasons. I will never cheat on my wife. I don't want to put her through that again. I saw what cheating did to her when she was with Ntsikelelo. And I wouldn't want her to go through that again. You know, the love I have for that woman, it's out of

this world. I love her more than anything. And I don't even dream of entertaining other women.

Aaron:it's good to hear that.

.....

Unconditional love

37

NARRATED

Sambulo walked around the shop limping just a bit. He was checking out the flowers that he wanted to get for his wife and mother. He was planning a surprise for her. It's been a while since he surprised her. And since his father in

law dealt with Thinus' father they could relax without thinking of someone attacking them. He thought of the adventure that he promised his wife to go on. This was the perfect time for them to go. It wasn't too busy at work and it was school holidays. They could all go together with the kids, his mother and their helper. It would be fun to spend time together.

He stopped at her favourite flowers. He smiled. He took them and went to pay.

Sambulo:I'm surprising my wife today. I'm thinking of something but I just can't find it.

Cashier:why don't you put money on these flowers like they do these days?

Sambulo:you think she will like that? She's one of those independent ones that like using their own money. Whenever I give her money she just puts it into an account.

Cashier:you have a good one there. Hold onto her. But you can still put money on them. It's the thought that counts. She will appreciate it. You know that she doesn't use that money but you still give it to her. She will see that you do it because you love her.

Sambulo:you're right. I'll do that.

He pays and takes the flowers.

Cashier:good luck sir. I hope she likes the surprise.

He walked to the bank and withdrew money and went to his car and wrapped the money around the flowers and left them in the car. Then he walked back to the shops and got snacks for the kids, flowers for his daughter and his wife's favourite chocolate. After that he got tickets for the family to fly to Cape Town.

\*hey. It's so nice to see you.\*

Sambulo:Jasmine.

Jasmine:who are those flowers for?

Sambulo:my daughter. She did so well at daycare.



Jasmine:at daycare? And you get her flowers and put money on them?

Sambulo:yes. This is to encourage her to continue doing well. It starts as early. And as she grows up she will continue doing so well. It will make her happy. And who will do it if I don't do it for her? I will do anything to make her happy for as long as I'm alive.

Jasmine:you're a good father. Your wife is lucky to have you.

Sambulo:I'm the lucky one.

He walked to pay then went out.

Sambulo:are you following me? I blocked your number and now you're following me.

Jasmine:why did you block me? Are you scared that you won't handle your feelings for me? Or I read wrong?

Sambulo:then you don't know how to read. Can we sit down and talk?

He led her to the chairs and they sat down.

Sambulo:I got another doctor so there's no need to follow me around. I blocked you for a reason.

Jasmine:so your wife is that insecure that she doesn't trust you around other women and got you another doctor? I bet it's a man. Interesting.

Sambulo:I don't have to explain anything to you but my wife is not insecure. It was my decision to cut ties with you. What did you think you were doing flirting with me and touching me in her presence?

Jasmine:so I can do it now because she's not here?

She moves close to him and he gives her an intimidating look and she moves back smiling.

Sambulo:let me tell you something. Your husband cheated on you. Have you asked

yourself why he did that and fix yourself for the next guy that will be interested in you? Maybe you were doing something that pushed him to cheat. Because judging by your behaviour I don't think you were innocent at all. You know the pain of being cheated on but you want another woman to feel it too? You have no shame. You should learn some manners. I am not going to cheat on my wife with you or anyone else. You should stop this and play far away. I don't love you and I never will. Next time try and be professional with your clients.

Jasmine:no need to be that deep. What's love got to do with this? She doesn't have to know. What she doesn't know won't hurt her. Simple as that.

Sambulo:you are really hurt you. Now you're

selling yourself cheap. Behave yourself. You will find someone who will love you and only you. You won't have to fight for his attention or make yourself a fool like you're doing now. I have to go. My wife is waiting for me.

\*\*\*\*\*

AMELIA

My husband left in the morning and said he'll be back soon. Now it's 11am and he's not back. Langa is sad. He's not speaking to anyone because I told him he's going to the village for holidays. He's close to crying now.

MaKhumalo:stop making my grandson sad.

Langa:gogo you're also going to the village?

MaKhumalo:no.

Langa:I'm staying here with you. Don't let them take me to the village. I don't like it there.

MaKhumalo:that's because you don't have friends there.

Langa:they don't want to play with me but they play with my toys. Why?

Me:you should learn to share. You have so many toys. If you share with them they will love you.

Langa:but I'm not going there.

Me:I'm just joking. Daddy has a surprise for us.

Langa:he's here. I promise I'm not going to cry.  
Gogo did I tell you about my dream?

MaKhumalo:no. You can tell me now.

He starts telling her again. He already told her the moment she got back but he just want to talk about it again.

\*Princess. Come to daddy.\*

Mihle walks to her father smiling. My girl loves her dad so much. The way she always smiles

when he gets in through the door and it's so priceless. She hugs his legs and he bends down.

Sambulo: this is for you my beautiful princess.  
For being smart like daddy.

Mihle: and the money is mine?

Sambulo: yes. So what are you going to do with it?

Mihle: mommy what will I do with my money?

Me: you can spoil me.

Mihle: no. I will buy my brother's birthday present.



Langa:yes!

Sambulo:mom this is For you.

MaKhumalo:thank you my son.

Sambulo:my love, this is for you. Thank you for being the best wife.

I looked at the flowers and the money. Then the chocolate.

Me:thank you so much babe.

Sambulo:and this is for my boy.

He gave him snacks and Mihle sat next to him.

Smbulo:you remember I promised you to go for a trip? Tomorrow morning we're all going to Cape Town. All of us here. So you should start packing and let the helper know too. You can also ask Zimasa to bring Buhle.

Me:oh my God babe! This is so exciting. I can't wait for our adventure.

Sambulo:don't forget. We're going for the whole week.

MaKhumalo:I never thought you would also count me in.

Sambulo:and who would I leave you with?

He sat next to her and put his hand around her shoulder.

Sambulo:you see, you're my mother and it's my duty to do all of this for you. I'm making up for all those years I missed out on. And if I can't do this for you who will? You deserve everything and more that I do for you. I love you MaKhumalo.

MaKhumalo:I love you too.

I took my flowers and Mihle followed me. I put mine in water in a vas then took Mihle's and did the same and we took them to her room. My

phone beeped and I looked at it. It was a picture of my husband sitting with that doctor. I noticed that it was taken today because of the flowers.

\*hey babe. You're already starting to pack?\*

Me:yes. I don't want to forget anything.

Sambulo:you know, I bumped into Jasmine when I was getting the things I came with. I don't know how she was my doctor for so long. She's so full of herself.

Me:why?

Sambulo:she has this idea that I'm going to have an affair with her. Even after telling her to

stay away from me qqshe says it will stay between us and you don't have to know.

Me:it's good that you cut ties with her.

Sambulo:I just hope she listened after our conversation. So how do you feel about our trip?

Me:I'm excited. I can't wait. I'm just concerned about leaving our house with no one.

Sambulo:I've already asked Sthe. He will come and check regularly.

Me:okay. Thank you baby. I never thank you enough for everything that you do for this family. You're the best. I'm going to pack for us. I'm

done with the kids' clothes.

Sambulo:okay.

I walked to our bedroom and deleted that picture and blocked her number. She's expecting a reaction from me and she won't get it.

.....

Unconditional love

39

Nhlanhla wakes up and starts to shake Ntsikelelo in the middle of the night. Ntsikelelo mumbles in his sleep. She takes off the blanket

and he opens his eyes.

Ntsikelelo:what's wrong...babe you wet the bed?

Nhlanhla:the baby is coming!

Ntsikelelo:but you still have a month.

Nhlanhla:so what do you want me to do? Feel pain for that month? Stop the baby from coming? Wake up!

Ntsikelelo:I'm sorry. I'm waking up.

He got up and went to the closet. He took out the bag with the baby's clothes and picked Nhlanhla up. He walked to the car and put her

inside then drove to the hospital.

Nhlanhla:I'm not falling pregnant again! What was I thinking? Drive fast!

Ntsikelelo:I'm sorry okay! I am driving faster.

He drove the whole way to the hospital with her screaming and crying. He got to breath when she got admitted. But he was still worried. He sat in the waiting room waiting to hear from the doctor.

.....

Hours later Ntsikelelo was sleeping on the chairs in the waiting room. The doctor walked



to him and woke him up. He rubbed his eyes and yawned.

Dr:sir, your wife has given birth. But she's just fallen asleep now.

Ntsikelelo:how is she and the baby?

Dr:she will be fine. She gave birth to a baby boy. Congratulations.

Ntsikelelo:I thought she still had a month to go.

Dr:no. This was her exact due date. You can come and see them.

Ntsikelelo got up and followed the doctor. He

walked in and went straight to the baby. He looked at Nhlanhla then the baby.

Ntsikelelo:doctor is it possible to do DNA tests?

Dr:yes.

After talking to the doctor he left and Nhlanhla turned and looked at him.

Nhlanhla:you're not doing any dna test on my baby.

Ntsikelelo:I thought you were sleeping.

Nhlanhla:I heard everything. If you do the test me and you are over. You don't trust me.

Ntsikelelo:I trust you. I just don't want a repeat of the last time. Gogontle came early and she wasn't mine. You said you would give birth next month and this one is early.

Nhlanhla:is it my fault that the doctor told me wrong months?

Ntsikelelo:that's not what I'm saying babe. I trust you.

Nhlanhla:it's fine. You can do that test. It's clear you will never fully trust me.

Ntsikelelo:I trust you. I'm sorry for questioning the paternity of our son. I'm really grateful for this gift you've given me. So what's his name?

Nhlanhla:I was waiting for you.

Ntsikelelo:Xolani. That's his name.

Nhlanhla:it's beautiful. Can I use my phone to call my sister?

He took out his phone and gave her. She dialed her sister's numbers and soon she picked.

Nhlanhla:hey.

Zelda:hi. Who am I speaking to?

Nhlanhla:it's Nhlanhla. I'm calling with

Ntsikelelo's phone.

Zelda:what happened to yours? And why are you using Ntsikelelo's phone?

Nhlanhla:I just gave birth. He's the father.

Zelda:you just gave birth? You kept it from me the whole 9 months? You're so secretive.

Nhlanhla:I'm sorry.

Zelda:it's fine.

Nhlanhla:can you bring Gogontle when I get discharged? I want her to see her little brother.

Zelda:okay. But Ntsikelelo? I hope there's no repeat of last time.

Nhlanhla:no. This is his baby. Even though he doesn't believe it.

Zelda:you have to understand though. After what happened last time?

Nhlanhla:I know. Bye. I will wait for you tomorrow.

\*\*\*\*\*

MPHO

Me:hey babe. Please drive me to my mother's place.

Aaron:is something wrong?

Me:no. I just want to see her. I miss her.

Aaron:she's coming here. Why are you crying?

Me:I don't know. I just feel like crying. I don't know what is wrong.

Aaron:I'm making your favourite. What would you like to have while I make it?

Me:noodles.

Aaron:that's spicy. Yiu should stop eating it.

Me:it's the fastest meal and I'm hungry.

Aaron:I will make you a sandwich.

Me:okay.

He disappears to the kitchen and I do a videocall with my siblings. I missed them so much.

Andrew:ngwana.

Sello:are you fine? I had to stop working to be



part of this videocall.

Me:you all don't come to see me. I miss you.

Basetsana:why don't you come to see us? Your nieces miss you.

Me:you should bring them.

Basetsana:you have gained weight so early in your pregnancy.

Andrew:you don't say that to a pregnant woman.

Me:tell her. I'm angry now.

Sello:the day we come there we are taking you out. We will also do something to cheer you up.

Me:I can't wait.

Basetsana:don't forget to send me ideas for your wedding. I'm planning it since you can't do most of the things. When you come back from work you have to rest. I even have a designer who will make your dress.

Me:I can't believe I'm getting married in a month but I'm not done planning.

Basetsana:that's why I'm here. I will do everything for you.

Aaron:babe here's your sandwich. I'll be done cooking soon.

Me:thanks babe.

I take the plate and he walks back to the kitchen.

Sello:you're making the poor man cook for you?

Me:we help each other. That's all.

Andrew:you're lucky. So how's the baby?

Me:she's fine. I was sick the other day but I'm fine now.

Basetsana:what was wrong?

Me:I think Matlhogonolo wa nloya. The other day she came to my office uninvited and took my hair band. But I noticed it fast.

Basetsana:when I come there you must take me to her place. I'm going to tell her what's in my mind!

Andrew:don't just relax le wena. She could be eating your baby bit by bit and by the time you realise it will be too late.

Me:koko is always praying for me. I'll be fine. And mama went to talk to the prophetess again. So there's nothing to worry about.

Basetsana:but I'm still going to teach her a lesson. I'm still angry about her blocking your life.

Me:don't start. That was fixed.

Basetsana:but still she's trying again. You're not changing my mind.

Me:bye guys. I'm going to help my husband cook.

Sello:it's good to see you so happy. This guy is doing a good job. I thought he would be like your ex.

Me:mmh. Bye.

I go to the kitchen and sit on the counter.

Aaron:why are you here? You want to see me cook tasteless food?

Me:babe you're not cooking. You thought I wouldn't notice.

Aaron:I'm cooking. Look at the stove. It's on.

Me:ah babe. You bought this food. I can see the boxes and containers in the bin.

Aaron:eish! Why didn't I close it?

Me:it's the thought that counts. At least our helper got a day off.

We laugh. I was really surprised when he said he's going to cook.

Me:my brothers were praising you. Kanti no. You're cooking something that's already cooked.

Aaron:Mpho when I catch you...stop making fun of my cooking skills. You should teach me instead of laughing.

Me:I will teach you. But this is so funny. I didn't think you would do this.

Aaron:I was trying to impress mama

Mphonyana.

Me:that name is going to stick. I like it.

Aaron:this is a boy.

\*\*\*\*\*

AMELIA

Me and my husband are about to go out for our adventure as he says. I don't know what he has in store for us. But I'm so excited. We walk to the living room and we find a box. I open it and it's another note. \*I'd like to take you out for lunch. It's on me. You looked beautiful in that dress yesterday. Meet me at this restaurant and



ask for table number 5\* I laugh and put the note down.

Sambulo:what is it?

Me:Jasmine is asking me on a date. This one is crazy for real.

Sambulo:she's a psycho. We must not take it lightly.

Me:you know what? This is a free date. Let's go to the date and enjoy ourselves. She just planned a date for us my husband. We are saving money. Don't you think?

Sambulo:you're right. If we really knew this

person we would thank them for free food. You know what's crazy about this? Someone invited you for a date and you are taking your husband with.

Me:she will learn not to plot again. I'm going to teach her a lesson after this date. She's even ruining our plans. Let's go.

....

Unconditional love

40

AMELIA

We arrived at the restaurant and it was those

fancy ones. We got there and a waitress came to us.

Waitress:table for two?

Another waiter came to where we were.

Waiter:Amelia Langa?

Me:yes.

Waiter:I got it covered.

The waitress left.

Waiter:your table has been reserved for you.

Me:I'm with my husband. Can we get another chair?

Waiter:of course.

We walk to the table that he shows us and I sit down. He comes with the chair and my husband sits down.

Me:who booked this table for me?

Waiter:a woman. I forgot her name.

Sambulo gives him his phone and he nods his head.

Waiter:that's her. She said you can have anything you want. She will pay.

Me:thanks. Can you bring Orange juice for me for now?

Sambulo:me too.

The waiter leaves and we laugh. I'm going to teach her to stay away from married men. She chose the wrong one this time. She will regret it.

Sambulo:since you asked me on this date my lady what are we having?

Me:the budget is unlimited. If I could I would order the whole food here. Let's get the most

expensive meal.

Sambulo:how about we order for everyone who's here? We're eating for free after all.

Me:you're right.

The waiter came back with our juice.

Me:we are ready to order. What's your special today?

He showed us the special on the menu.

Me:not bad. It's affordable. I want you to give this special to everyone who's here with a round of drinks of their choice. For me and my

husband we want this one. And also get us this carrot cake. A full one. But bring it when we leave.

Waiter:coming right up.

Sambulo:babe why did you order something expensive for us and not for everyone?

Me:we deserve it. A woman has never paid for a date for me. It feels nice hey.

Sambulo:she's going to freak when she sees the bill.

Me:it's a happy day. Christmas come once in a year.

Sambulo:but you have a good heart though. You ordered for everyone here.

Me:I've always had a good heart.

We laugh. I want her to run when she sees married men. She can afford it anyway. She had money to come to Cape Town for someone's husband.

.....

After our date we went back to the house. Mama was still at the beach with the kids. The helper was in the living room.



Her:Mr Langa. Your friend was here. She was looking for you.

Sambulo:she said she's my friend?

Her:yes. She had curly hair.

Sambulo:okay. Thanks ma.

We walked to our bedroom after putting the cake in the fridge.

Sambulo:I can't believe she did this.

Me:she had everything planned. She wanted to get rid of me so that she can have her time with you. She's smart hey.

Sambulo:she's stupid. Who does what she just did?

Me:Ntsikelelo is calling you.

Sambulo:hello?

Ntsikelelo:hello. I wanted to let you know that I have a baby boy.

Sambulo:that's good news. Congratulations.

Ntsikelelo:thank you.

Sambulo:but you don't sound happy.

Ntsikelelo:the mother is not happy. I said I want to do DNA tests because the baby arrived a month early.

Sambulo:I heard that it's possible but I don't blame you. The mother has lied to you before.

Ntsikelelo:you know?

Sambulo:yes. I don't know why you hid it from everyone.

Ntsikelelo:I'm sorry.

Sambulo:it's fine. As long as she makes you happy.

Ntsikelelo:she does.

Sambulo:that's good then. Just do the test so that you can be at peace. Or else you will always wonder if the baby is really yours or not.

Ntsikelelo:you're right. Bye.

\*\*\*\*\*

ZELDA

Lerumo:I think you should go. She has been trying to show you that she has changed.

Me:do you know how hard I worked for Amelia to forgive me and for us to be friends again?

Lerumo:you see? Amelia forgave you. Why don't you forgive your sister?

Me:if she ruins things for me...

Lerumo:she will not do that. Just go and see her. I tell you it won't be that bad. You can choose to forgive her or keep on helping her with taking care of Gogontle only. It's up to you. But since she'll be taking Gogontle soon I think it's better you two fix things.

Me:I will see you when I come back. I love you.

Lerumo:I love you more.

Lethabo:mama re ya kae?(where are we going?)

Me:I'm taking Gogontle to her mom.

Thabang:I thought you are her mother.

Me:her mother is your auntie. I will take you to meet her one day.

Lethabo:okay. Bring us something.

Thabang:it's school holidays. We want to go to our grandmother.

Me:daddy is busy. I will take you when I come back.

Lethabo:okay.

Me:tell Boitumelo to pack for you.

I take Gogontle's hand and we go to the car. I drive to the hospital thinking about what is going to happen. We haven't been in the same space for a long time. We mostly talk on the phone. And it's always about her daughter.

When I pack my car I take Gogontle's hand and we walk to the reception and ask where Nhlanhla is. They tell us and we get there and find her breastfeeding the baby. Gogontle runs to her mother.

Nhlanhla:my baby. How are you?

Gogontle:I'm fine. It's school holidays. Can I come and stay with you?

Nhlanhla:of course. And you'll play with your little brother.

She finishes breastfeeding and puts him back in his little bed. Gogontle walks there and stares at him.

Nhlanhla:thanks for coming.

Me:okay. So what's his name?



Nhlanhla:Xolani. His father named him.

Me:that's nice. So you mentioned DNA tests.

Nhlanhla:his father did DNA tests. He doesn't trust me.

Me:you can't blame him.

Nhlanhla:I've changed. I've worked hard to show him that I've changed. It's been a year and some months now.

Me:he just wants to be sure. And if you're sure that it's his baby then you have nothing to worry about.

Nhlanhla:I'm just hurt that he doesn't trust me.  
This is his baby. He's the only one that I've been  
sleeping with.

Me:I know you're hurt but understand where  
he's coming from.

Nhlanhla:maybe you're right.

Me:and please, can you try to be a good person?  
This might just work out and you will have a  
family of your own.

Nhlanhla:I won't do anything to jeopardize this  
again. But his siblings still hold a grudge  
against me.

Me:they will come around.

Nhlanhla:I'm sorry about what I did to you. I promise it won't happen again.

Me:it's fine. As long as you keep your promise.

Nhlanhla:please forgive me?

Me:I forgive you.

I got up and hugged her. She's my sister. She may have done me bad but she's still my flesh and blood. It's not going to happen overnight. It will take time but things will work out.

.....

## Unconditional love

41

NARRATED

Jasmine walked into the restaurant and looked for the waiter that she talked to the previous day. She found him at the till and greeted.

Jasmine:did she come?

Waiter:yes she did. With her husband.

Jasmine:with her husband?!

Waiter:yes. Let me give you your bill.

The waiter showed her how much she owes.  
She looked at it twice and shook her head. She  
looked at the waiter feeling dizzy and balanced  
with the counter.

Waiter:maam are you okay?

Jasmine:I specifically told you it's for her only!  
Besides, two people cannot eat this much!

Waiter:oh that. She ordered for all the people  
who were here. Even the staff.

Jasmibe:this is so much! I'm not going to pay.  
One person cannot eat something for almost

R10 000.

Waiter:ma'am you came here and gave me instructions. You said she can order whatever she wants. She did exactly that. Pay or you'll leave here in a van. I'm not going to lose my job because of you.

She took out a card and the waiter made a payment. After he was done he gave her the card and she left. She drove to where Amelia and her family were staying. She knocked and the helper opened the door. Jasmine walked in screaming Amelia's name. Sambulo appeared with the kids already in their swimwear about to go to the beach.

Sambulo:why are you screaming?

Jasmine:where's your wife?!

Sambulo:yes. My wife. What were you thinking doing what you did? Did you think I would leave her for you?

Jasmine:where is she?!

\*I'm here. Why are you making so much noise\*

Jasmine:you ordered for the whole restaurant!  
Why did you do that?

Amelia:it was free lunch. What was I supposed to do? I heard you were here. So you wanted me to go to that restaurant alone so that you can

have time alone with my husband? Jasmine, I came here with my husband. I go everywhere with him. I should have ordered everything that was in that restaurant. My husband is off limits. He has told you time and time again that he doesn't want you. Why are you still embarrassing yourself? Have some respect for yourself and stop running after married men. It's embarrassing. I hope you learnt your lesson.

Jasmine:can you please repay my money? That was not my agreement with the restaurant.

Amelia:why did you do it in the first place? And that stunt of yours of acting like another man sending me flowers. Sisi, my husband trusts me. It will take more than what you did to make us fight. This is not your cheating ex husband. Even if you succeeded at getting me to the



restaurant alone he wouldn't have even looked your way. Why did you even follow us to Cape Town? How did you know we were going to stay here?

Jasmine:you're going to pay for this.

Amelia:I won't pay for anything. You just disturbed us. Please leave. My family and I are about to leave. Thanks for the free lunch.

Amelia went to open the door for her and Jasmine walked there. She raised her hand to slap her but Amelia caught it quickly.

Amelia:next time I will get you arrested for hitting me. Get out!

Jasmine stared at her then went out banging the door.

\*\*\*\*\*

MPHO

Two weeks later

My family was coming to visit us. I've been on my feet cooking with our helper. All my siblings will be here. It's been a while since we were all under the same roof. So it's a big deal for me.

We finish cooking and leave the food there then go to sit in the living room. Mama has already arrived and I'm so happy to see her again

Mom:o shap?

Me:yes. I'm fine.

Mom:I have something for you.

She took out a string and told me to lift up my top. I did that and she tied it around my waist.

Mom:it will protect you and the baby.

Me:something wrong?

Mom:no. Just to be on the safe side.

Me:okay mom.

Mom:you look beautiful. This pregnancy is treating you so well. You're yellow.

Me:mom I've always been like this.

Granny:you get more beautiful everyday.

Mom:you see? Now you're blushing.

Me:aah.

Mom:is something wrong?

Me:that pain is back again. It's not much but it's

there.

Mom:drink this water. It will be fine.

Me:mama what are you hiding?

I take the water and drink it. She came with it in a two litre bottle.

Me:mama I'm not going to be stressed. I know it's not good for the baby. Just tell me.

Mom:the woman who helped you said someone doesn't want you to give birth to this baby. She gave me that string and this water. You should also get these things on this list and bath with them for seven days. Then you will be fine.

\*This is why I think I should go and show that girl that my sister is not to be messed with. We know who is doing all of this but we are not doing anything.\*

Mom:Basetsana calm down. That's not going to help.

Basetsana:come here Mpho . I missed you.

I get up and hug her. I also missed her. It's been a while since she came home. My brothers come in with the children. I go and hug them. I'm happy to be with both of my siblings.

Sello:you look beautiful. I'm happy that you're now fine.

Me:I missed you guys.

Andrew:I heard that fool is out of the hospital. When we leave here we are going to talk to him. Ask him why he's always after you because you forgot about him and are living your life peacefully but he's disturbing that. Mama you're not going to stop us. That's if you don't want to lose your last born. Because if we don't do anything about it that witch is not going to stop.

Sello:he's right mama. If we don't get to the bottom of this we'll only do something when it's too late.

Basetsana:we brought you baby things. This baby is a boy but we bought things that are

suitable for a boy and a girl.

Me:it's a girl.

I open the bag and it's full of new clothes. I'm not even five months yet but already my baby has almost everything. I'm so lucky to have siblings like mine.

\*\*\*\*\*

Sello and Andrew got into their car and drove to Mohau's house after Mpho gave them the address. When they got there they found a car parked outside. They parked behind the car and went in. They knocked and Matlhogonolo came to open.



Matlhogonolo:can I help you?

Sello:this is a pastor's house and this is how you welcome people?

Andrew:can we see your husband?

Matlhogonolo:come in.

They went in and found Mohau sitting with his son. Matlhogonolo took him and left them.

Mohau:what are you doing here? I thought you said we must not cross each other's path.

Sello:that's what I thought. But your wife is making it hard for our sister. You of all people

should know that we don't want to hear anything with our sister. You mess with her, you mess with us.

Mohau:I didn't do anything to your sister.

Andrew:then why is your wife after our sister?  
Tell that witch to stop what she's doing.

Mohau:what did she do?

Andrew:she's a witch. She's bewitching Mpho.  
She had blocked her life. Made her lose her job.  
Now she wants to kill her baby.

Mohau:Mpho is pregnant?

Sello:that's not why we are here. Tell her to stop.  
If she does not stop we will do what she's doing.  
An eye for an eye. And you will be caught in the  
middle. That's a promise.

Mohau:Matlhogonolo!

Matlhogonolo came to them and took a seat.

Mohau:what is this that I'm hearing 5that you're  
now a witch?

.....

Unconditional love

Mohau:speak! What are they talking about?

Matlhogonolo:I don't know. I'm not a witch!

Andrew:do you think we would waste our time coming here for nothing?

Mohau:what did you do?

Sello:what were you doing in Mpho's office trying to steal her hair band?

Matlhogonolo:do you really think I would do that? What would I hope to achieve?

Sello:we know someone who is powerful than the one who did this for you. My sister is always

in pain because of you. We are just here to warn you. Continue doing whatever you are doing and we will do worse. We will send it back 10× more and you will not believe it. If my sister's baby dies yours will also die. I'm telling you to talk to your wife to stop now.

Mohau:Matlhogonolo since when are you this evil?

Andrew:we are leaving. If our sister's baby dies yours will die. That's a promise.

Andrew and Sello got up and left. Mohau looked at his wife.

Mohau:you're a witch now?

Matlhogonolo:they are lying.

Mohau:what were you doing in her office?  
You're still lying! You're willing to sacrifice our  
baby? Why didn't I see you're a witch all these  
years?

Matlhogonolo:babe I didn't do anything.

Mohau:I want you out of this house. Don't come  
back until you're ready to tell me the truth.

Matlhogonolo:I am sorry. I didn't mean to do all  
of this.

Mohau:so now you're admitting that you're a  
witch? What has she ever done to you? If it was

her doing this I would understand because we hurt her. Not you! Why?

Matlhogonolo:you think it's easy living in her shadow? Everything I do must be exactly like she used to do. You always compare me to her. I'm tired of you trying to change me to be like her. I will never be like her. You still love her. I'm only tolerating it because I love you. I hoped that you would get over her but still you're after her. She's a constant reminder that I will never have you all to myself. You will always love her.

Mohau:but you didn't have to bewitch her. What if her baby died? Stop whatever you did to her before her baby dies. You want those people to kill my baby?

Matlhogonolo:if you kick me out of here then

her baby will die.

Mohau:are you hearing yourself? You're so evil.  
More evil than a witch.

Matlhogonolo:I'm fighting for my place in your life. If you kick me out she will die the day she gives birth. Just remember that.

Mohau:I won't kick you out. Just tell me who did this. I'm trying to forget about Mpho because she loves that guy and is not going to leave him. I was willing to try and work on things between us. But how do I do that after finding out about this?

Matlhogonolo:we can still work things out. I will call my auntie and tell her to stop what she did



to Mpho. As long as you promise not to try getting her back.

Mohau:I promise. I almost died because of trying to get her back. I'm not there anymore. I want us to work on our marriage.

Matlhogonolo:good. I've worked too hard to get here. Look how I turned your businesses around? It's all me. Or else you wouldn't be here. You would be crippled. But I looked for ways to get you healed.

Mohau:and I'm grateful for that.

\*\*\*\*\*

Nhlanhla:Gogontle bring me the baby's bottle.

Gogontle:he's hungry?

Nhlanhla:yes.

\*Hey babe. How was your day?\*

Nhlanhla:it was fine. How was yours?

Ntsikelelo:it was good.

Nhlanhla:I see the results put a smile on your face. I also received them.

Ntsikelelo:I'm sorry for not believing you.

Nhlanhla:I'm not angry. I'm to blame for this. I lied to you the first time. So it's understandable that you'd doubt me. I understand.

Ntsikelelo:so have you started planning the wedding?

Nhlanhla:no. I still have to heal first. I can't be moving around.

Ntsikelelo:are you still angry?

Nhlanhla:I'm not angry. Really. I'm fine. So you have nothing to worry about.

Ntsikelelo:so you will go with me to Aaron's

wedding?

Nhlanhla:I don't think I will be able to go. Amelia will be there. I don't want to make people uncomfortable.

Ntsikelelo:Amelia doesn't have a problem with you. You have nothing to worry about.

Nhlanhla:if you say so.

Ntsikelelo:that doesn't sound convincing.

Nhlanhla:if I have healed I will go. I mean, the wedding is two weeks away. Maybe I'll be fine by then. So yeah. I will go with you.

Ntsikelelo:just know I'm not forcing you to go with me.

Nhlanhla:I know.

Ntsikelelo:do you want me to do anything for you before I leave? I'm going back to work.

Nhlanhla:if I need something I know where everything is. Don't stress yourself.

Ntsikelelo:okay. I love you.

Nhlanhla:I love you too.

Ntsikelelo left and Nhlanhla finished feeding the baby and she fell asleep. Gogontle joined the

baby on the bed. Nhlanhla got up and went to the kitchen. She found Nokwanda eating pizza.

Nokwanda:you can have some if you want.

Nhlanhla:thanks.

She took a plate and opened the box and took three pieces. She poured juice in a glass and was about to leave when Nokwanda stopped her.

Nokwanda:are you really genuine or this is all an act?

Nhlanhla:I'm not acting. I understand why you hate me. I mean i lied the first time. And if you

think this is not your brother's baby then you are wrong. Your brother did tests and they proved that Xolani is his.

Nokwanda:I don't hate you. I just hated your actions. So do you work?

Nhlanhla:don't worry. I graduated last year and I've got a job waiting for me. Just that I fell pregnant and couldn't start working. So your brother's money is safe.

Nokwanda:that's not what...

Nhlanhla:we both know that's what you wanted to say. You can't fool me. Thanks for the pizza.

TWO WEEKS LATER

WEDDING DAY

Mpho, Amelia and her bridesmaids were in the room that she was using as her dressing room. Amelia was helping her get dressed. Mpho looked at the mirror and smiled. Her day was finally here and she couldn't be happier.

Amelia: you're a beautiful bride.

Mpho: It took so much for me to get here. I never thought I would be here. I know I'm already married but seeing myself in this dress just makes everything final. It shows that this is really happening.



Amelia:it is. You should enjoy your day. Now it's time to go. Who's that knocking? I hope it's not the groom? He can't see you.

Amelia walked to the door and opened.

Amelia:you're not allowed to be here.

Mohau:I just need to talk to Mpho. Please. It's important.

Amelia:she's not going to change her mind. Besides, she's already married.

Mohau:let me talk to her.

Amelia:should I let him in?

Mpho:yes.

Amelia:are you sure?

Mpho:yes.

Amelia:if he tries something just shout.

She nodded. Amelia and the bridesmaids walked out.

Mpho:don't lock the door. Keep it open.

Mohau:how are you?

Mpho:I'm good.

Mohau:I'm sorry about what Matlhogonolo did.  
She admitted that she has been bewitching you.  
I swear I knew nothing about it.

Mpho:it doesn't matter. As long as she stops  
what she's doing then we can all move on with  
our lives.

Mohau:are you really marrying this guy? It's not  
too late to change your mind. You can still stop  
the wedding.

Mpho:stop it for what? You?

Mohau:I never stopped loving you. I love you

Mpho and it's not going to change.

Mpho:well, things have changed for me. I met a kind and loving mn.

Mohau:those two words in the same sentence as that guy? Did he tell you that he almost made me a cripple? He's dangerous.

Mpho:he has never been dangerous to me. I loved you so much back then Mohau. I never thought we would be here. But you cheated and impregnated a witch. Then I met someone that I fell in love with. He mended my broken heart. The one that you broke. And now I can't imagine my life with someone else.

Mohau:I guess this is goodbye. Can I kiss you

for the last time?

Mpho:I'm not going to cheat on my husband. If that was all you can leave.

Mohau:okay. Just know that I will always love you

He walked out and Amelia came back in.

.....

Aaron smiled as his wife walked down the aisle. He breath out and put his hands together. Music played as the bride walked to where the groom and the pastor were. Aaron met her halfway with a smike plastered on his face.

Aaron:you look beautiful my love.

Mpho:and you look handsome.

Aaron:are you ready to do this?

Mpho:more than ready. Let's do this.

....

Unconditional love

Finale

A year later

Matlhogonolo:auntie, Mohau really played me.

Auntie:did you really think he's a fool like that?

Matlhogonolo:he waited until Mpho gave birth to dump me. Now I'm divorced with nothing. I got nothing from the companies. I don't know why this happened auntie because I paid you everything.

Auntie:I told you to kill him while we still had time but you refused.

Matlhogonolo:can't you give me something to make him take me back?

Auntie:just forget about it. You said it yourself that he has a recording of you admitting to doing witchcraft on Mpho. One mistake we're going to jail. I don't want that.

Matlhogonolo:I can't believe he fooled me.

Auntie:but you have nothing to worry about. His companies are going to fall to the ground. He won't believe it when it starts to happen.

Matlhogonolo:I just want my husband back please.

Auntie:there is nothing I can do.



Matlhogonolo:maybe if I didn't listen to you I wouldn't be here.

Auntie:so you're blaming me now?

Matlhogonolo:I'm just saying. Let me just leave.

\*\*\*\*\*

AMELIA

I'm on the bed with the twins. Just like I wished, it's a girl and a boy. I was really happy when I gave birth to a girl and a boy. That means we are done having kids. Looking back at my life I feel happy and grateful. Grateful for everything that I have and the life that I'm living. This is

how my life was meant to be like. Maybe me meeting my ex first was the way for me to meet my soulmate. And I'm happy that he finally found me.

I look at my love coming inside the bedroom with Emihle in his arms. It's her birthday today. He puts her on the bed and she's so happy.

Mihle: mommy guess what I got for my birthday?

Me: a doll set.

Mihle: a car!

She claps her hands happy. Yeah her father got her one of those kids cars. And madam has

been smiling all day.

Sambulo:how are my people doing?

Me:your kids can't sleep during the day. And I want to rest.

Sambulo:let them be.

He crouches next to me and kisses me. Then he stops and smiles.

Me:and that?

Sambulo:that's for making me the happiest man in the world. A father and a husband. If there's one thing my ancestors did right is making us

meet.

Me:I love you so much.

Sambulo:I love you more. we make beautiful babies hey.

Me:yes. Even though they all look like you.

Langa:mama can we hold the babies now and go to eat cake with them? We are having a party today.

Mihle:it's my party.

Sambulo:babe did you love partying when you were young? This one is obsessed with parties.

Me:no. I don't know who he takes after.

Langa:I love cake.

Me:come and give mommy a kiss.

Both of them kiss me on my cheek then stand and watch the babies.

\*\*\*\*\*

MPHO

Oh God! Life can surprise you. After everything that I have been through I never thought I would make it. I thought I would die of depression. But God said no with me. He said he was not done

with me. He still had good things in store for me. He was going to turn my life around. And he did exactly that. Now I look at what I have and feel so grateful.

I look at our baby making baby sounds just after I finished bathing him. He is growing so much. He is now four months old. I still can't believe that he made it above all the evil that was planned on him.

Aaron:mama Botlhale.

Me:papa Botlhale.

Aaron:how was your day? Are you ready to go?

Me:yes. Look at how playful he is.

Aaron:you know, it's so good to see him like this. Strong and handsome like his father. We fought a hard fight for him to be here. But it was worth it. I remember when they diagnosed you with preeclampsia and you went temporarily blind.

Me:don't remind me of that time. I was scared. I thought I would be blind for good and not even see my son.

Aaron:but here we are. We have so much to be grateful for.

Me:yeah. Thank you for loving me. You didn't leave or give up on me. When I was blind someone would have left but you stayed.

Aaron:my love for you is unconditional. You could be paralyzed and I would stay. I love you Mrs Mahlangu.

Me:I love you more.

The end.