

THE MATERNAL ASSASSIN

written by

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EXT. MAPETLA, SOWETO - NIGHT

In a residential neighbourhood in Soweto, a red BMW 1-series hatchback is parked in a dark patch where the street lights don't reach. A woman is hunched over next to the car vomiting. She throws up a couple of times. After a beat she gets up, annoyed, turns her head to see if anybody saw her.

MPILO NKOSI, 38, black, long hair, is in a beige business suit and a long jacket, she looks like one of the 40 under 40 on the cover of Forbes Africa. Mpilo is a loner, has no attachments, she's spent her whole life having to fight for her place in a man's world, she's winning and she knows it.

She gulps down a bottle of water, grabs a packet of mints from her pocket and has one, all the while intently staring at a house across the street. She opens the glove box, pulls out a 9mm pistol and a silencer and screws it into the muzzle.

She locks the car and crosses the street. The house is a 4-room house, very small living space typical in the township.

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

She walks to the back of the house, there's an outside toilet. She hides the gun behind her back and knocks on the door. A woman's voice responds from inside the house.

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

Coming.

Mpilo waits for a beat, wondering why its taking long. The door opens, Mpilo stands there stunned by the heavily pregnant young woman standing in front of her, SIHLE, 22, black, with long braided hair in a ponytail, flashing a big smile.

SIHLE

Hello.

Silence. Mpilo stands there staring at Sihle.

SIHLE (CONT'D)

Are you the chauffeur?

MPILO

Yes, yes. I've been sent by Mr Davis.

SIHLE

Come inside.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Mpilo steps inside and closes the door behind her, hides the gun in her jacket pocket and follows Sihle. She watches with disapproval as Sihle waddles to the living room.

SIHLE

A woman chauffeur. Very cool.

MPILO

Is anybody else here in the house with you?

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Sihle is now in the living room. Mpilo stands underneath the threshold.

SIHLE

No, just me.
(caresses her stomach)
Well, obviously not just me.
(smiles)

Mpilo fakes a smile. The living room is as small as the kitchen, it leads to two bedrooms.

MPILO

Mr Davis must be excited to see you tonight?

SIHLE

Yes, we're going to stay with him.
He wants to be there when the baby is born.

There are baby clothes and nappies next to a duffel bag on the couch. Sihle sits down and starts packing.

SIHLE (CONT'D)

I'll just finish packing and we'll go.

Mpilo just stands there watching her.

SIHLE (CONT'D)

It takes me longer to do things these days. I wish I moved like Usain Bolt but I'm more like Gwede Mantashe.
(laughs)

Mpilo returns another insincere smile.

SIHLE (CONT'D)
Will you please fetch the booties
in the bedroom?

Mpilo turns and looks at the two bedrooms. Sihle points to the main bedroom.

SIHLE (CONT'D)
Yeah, that one.

Mpilo goes into the main bedroom.

INT. MAIN BEDROOM - DAY

Like every other room, the bedroom is very small. She finds cute pink baby booties on the bed.

She picked them up and immediately felt broody as she feels them in her hands. She catches herself in the mirror across the room. Then the smile dies as if she is jolted back to reality.

She throws the booties back on the bed, grabs the gun from her back and walks back to the living room with intent.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

She walks up to Sihle and points the gun at her. Sihle screams.

SIHLE
What's going on? What are you
doing?

She raises her arms as if she can stop the bullets. Mpilo can't pull the trigger, as if some force is stopping her. She wills herself to do it but she can't.

Then there's a knock on the kitchen door. They both give startled looks towards the kitchen. Mpilo raises a finger to her mouth and shushes Sihle.

She moves to the window facing the street. Opens the curtain a little bit and sees a black Mercedes-Benz sedan outside.

MPILO
Shit.

Mpilo stands there her mind racing. A knock again at the door. She looks up, beckons Sihle to her. She grabs her by the arm and marshals her into the main bedroom. She sits Sihle on the bed.

MPILO (CONT'D)
 (whispering)
 These men came here to kill you.

SIHLE
 What! Wh/y?

MPILO (CONT'D)
 /Shut up. Do exactly as I say
 if you want to live. Okay?

Sihle nods her head, crying.

MPILO (CONT'D)
 Stay here and don't tell them I'm
 here.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

The kitchen door opens and two guys in black suits carrying guns walk in. SOLDIER, 35, black, buff, an amateur boxer who couldn't make it to pro-level, his face tells the story. His partner or punching bag is SJAVA, 25, black, skinny, kind of guy who always needs a big brother.

SOLDIER
 Mam, hello. We're the chauffeurs,
 Mr Davis sent us to pick you up.

SIHLE (O.S.)
 I'm in the bedroom.

Soldier is carrying a brass vintage revolver with a wooden handle. Sjava has a standard black 9mm pistol.

They walk into the living room.

INT. LIVING ROOM / MAIN BEDROOM - NIGHT

Soldier signals Sjava towards the second bedroom. Simultaneously, Soldier walks into the main bedroom and points his gun at Sihle, Sjava pointing his gun rushes into the second bedroom.

Sihle screams. Soldier looks around the bedroom, nothing.

Sjava reverses out of the second bedroom with his arms raised and Mpilo following him with her gun pointed at his head. They stop at the door of the main bedroom.

SJAVA
 Soldier.

As Soldier turns around **BANG**, a shot in the shoulder. He screams, Sihle screams. He drops to the ground, his gun slides across the floor.

Mpilo points her gun back at Sjava's head. He is frozen with fear. She takes his gun from his raised hand.

Sihle is hyperventilating, wheezing and holding her chest.

MPILO
(to Sihle)
What's wrong with you?

Sihle points to the living room.

SIHLE
Inhaler, in my bag.

Mpilo sees the bag on the couch.

MPILO
(to Sjava)
Get it. Any sudden moves I blow
your boyfriend's brains out.

Mpilo points the gun at Soldier, who is on the bedroom floor holding his bleeding wound. Sjava goes to the living room, opens the bag, takes out an inhaler and gives it to Sihle in the bedroom, then stands next to Soldier.

Sihle shakes it, sprays it into her mouth a couple of times and her breathing slows down.

MPILO (CONT'D)
Kick the gun to me.

Sjava kicks Soldier's gun to her.

MPILO (CONT'D)
Now slide me the one in his ankle.

Sjava takes out a small 38-revolver out of Soldier's ankle holster and slides it to Mpilo.

MPILO (CONT'D)
Are you okay?

Sihle looks at Mpilo and nods. Soldier notices the concern.

MPILO (CONT'D)
Okay, pick the guns and stand
behind me.

Sihle gets up, picks up the guns, holding them like diseased rats and stands behind Mpilo in the living room.

<p>SOLDIER (in pain) What are you doing? You were suppose to/.</p>	<p>MPILO (CONT'D) /Shut up. I'm asking the questions. What are you doing here?</p>
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SOLDIER (CONT'D)
Frank sent us.

MPILO
To do what?

SOLDIER
To back you up.

MPILO
Bullshit.

Soldier looks at Sihle sitting on the bed.

SOLDIER
(smug)
I knew you couldn't do it. Pussy!

Mpilo takes one step closer to Soldier.

MPILO
You think I'd hesitate killing you?

A hint of fear on Soldier's face. Mpilo stares at him for a beat.

MPILO (CONT'D)
Come out assholes.

Sjava helps Soldier up.

MPILO (CONT'D)
Let him get up on his own.

Soldier gets up gingerly. They walk towards Mpilo and Sihle outside the bedroom.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

SOLDIER
What are you going to do?

MPILO
Shut up and move.

Mpilo points them to the kitchen with her gun. The guys move to the kitchen.

MPILO (CONT'D)
(to Sihle)
Got some tape in this house?

Sihle nods her head and points to the other bedroom.

MPILO (CONT'D)
Get it.

Sihle disappears into the second bedroom.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Soldier and Sjava get to the door and Mpilo is right behind them.

MPILO
Open the door and get out.

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Soldier and Sjava step out of the house with Mpilo behind them. They wait there for a minute. Soldier studying Mpilo's face, an awkward silence in the air. Then a slow moving Sihle steps out of the house as well and hands Mpilo thick brown sellotape. She still has Soldier's revolver.

MPILO
(to the guys)
The toilet.

The guys move towards the outside toilet and walk inside.

EXT. HOUSE / INT. OUTSIDE TOILET - NIGHT

Mpilo throws the tape to Sjava.

MPILO
Tie him up.

EXT. HOUSE / INT. OUTSIDE TOILET - NIGHT

Moments later. Sihle is pointing the gun into the toilet, Soldier's hands and feet are tied up and his mouth is taped shut. Sjava is also tied up, Mpilo is putting tape on his mouth.

EXT. OUTSIDE TOILET - NIGHT

Mpilo closes the toilet door and locks it. As she tries to take the revolver Sihle steps back and points it at her, Mpilo raises her hands immediately.

MPILO

I'm sorry about before okay? I wasn't going to shoot you.

INT. OUTSIDE TOILET - NIGHT

Soldier and Sjava hear every word said outside the toilet.

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Mpilo reaches for the gun and Sihle flinches and points the gun at Mpilo. Mpilo backs off.

MPILO

Okay, I'm leaving. You don't have to worry about me.

Mpilo turns around slowly, with her hands still raised. She takes a couple of steps to leave then turns to look at the toilet. She stops and hesitates for a couple of seconds.

MPILO (CONT'D)

Look, someone is going to come looking for them. You are not safe.

SIHLE

(still pointing the gun at Mpilo)

Who are you people? What do you want here?

Mpilo slowly turns around.

MPILO

You and your baby are not safe. You need to come with me.

Mpilo takes slow steps towards Sihle. The gun is shaking in her hands. Mpilo slowly reaches for the gun, loosens it from Sihle's hands and takes it.

SIHLE

Why is someone trying to kill me?

MPILO

I don't know. Grab your bag and
let's get out of here.

Sihle disappears into the house. Mpilo empties Soldier and Sjava's guns and throws them in the bin.

INT. OUTSIDE TOILET - NIGHT

Soldier and Sjava hear the sound of something heavy items being thrown into the bin outside.

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Sihle emerges from the house with her bag, Mpilo and her leave.

EXT. FACTORY PROPERTY - NIGHT

Hours later. On a street full of factories in downtown Johannesburg, in one of the properties a security guard sits in a small guardhouse immediately behind a large steel picket gate. The light inside making him look so small in the midst of the vast dark background of the office building.

INT. GUARDHOUSE - NIGHT

The security guard, SENZO, 45, black male, has weariness on his face, a partially grey head of hair and beard, making him look older than he is, is sitting behind a small desk. There's a walkie-talkie in front of him, on the corner of the table is a kettle, lunch bag, a flask, tin tea cup and a small metal cash box with a lock. He is reading text messages on his phone. He reads one that says:

"Condolences Mtungwa. Bonga was a wonderful young woman. We will miss her. Jabu"

He sneers at the message, puts the phone face down and takes out his dinner, pap and boerewors.

As he takes a bite looking at the unimpressive view of the street through the gate he hears the loud sound of a car getting louder. Then suddenly two lights coming towards him getting brighter and more glaring...

EXT. FACTORY PROPERTY - NIGHT

...a red BMW 1-series is gunning for the gate.

INT. GUARDHOUSE - NIGHT

Senzo jumps up and falls backwards over chair. Braces himself for a crash.

EXT. FACTORY PROPERTY - NIGHT

The car slams to a halt inches from the gate.

INT. GUARDHOUSE - NIGHT

Senzo opens his eyes, exhales, perplexed by the silence. He gets up angrily.

SENZO

What are doing!? Are you drunk!?

Silence, nothing from the car. He picks up his chair. He exits the guardhouse worked up and heads to the gate.

EXT. GUARDHOUSE - NIGHT

SENZO

Are you crazy!?

As soon as Senzo is at the gate the driver-side door of the car opens, MPILO gets out of the car, strides to the gate and points a gun at him. He immediately raises his hands.

MPILO

Open the gate!

EXT. FACTORY PROPERTY - NIGHT

Senzo stands there frozen.

MPILO

Are you deaf?

Senzo puts his hands in his pocket and shakily takes out a bunch of keys and a remote. He presses it and the gate moves to the side.

MPILO (CONT'D)

Get in the car.

SENZO

What?

Mpilo raises the gun to his face. Senzo with trepidation moves towards the car. As he gets closer he realises there's a young woman in the passenger seat.

INT. RED BMW - NIGHT

Senzo gets in the backseat. Mpilo takes the driver's seat. She hands the gun to SIHLE.

MPILO

If he moves, blow his brains out.

Like a cadet ordered by her sergeant Sihle takes the gun and points it at Senzo. Mpilo drives into the property. The gate closes behind them.

MPILO (CONT'D)

Where can we park out of site?

SENZO

(pointing forward)

Behind the building.

They drive past the main building.

SENZO (CONT'D)

I don't know what you want. There's nothing to steal here.

Silence. Sihle sprays her inhaler twice into her mouth while watching Senzo. At the end of the building the light from the car shines onto an open space, a couple of trucks and forklifts have been parked there. They turn right and stop behind the building.

Mpilo takes back the gun.

MPILO

(to Senzo)

Get out.

Mpilo gets out and comes around to the passenger side. Senzo confused. She taps his window with the gun.

MPILO (CONT'D)

Let's go.

He quickly gets out.

EXT. RED BMW - NIGHT

She opens the front passenger door and Senzo is stunned to see Sihle is pregnant, very far along as far as he can tell.

MPILO

Help her get out.

Senzo puts her arm over his shoulder and helps her get out of the car.

MPILO (CONT'D)

Take us to an office where she can sit down.

INT. FACTORY BUILDING - NIGHT

They go into the building through the backdoor and step into a huge factory with a lot of stations with machines. At the far corner is a big rectangular zinc box of prefabricated office units. It's held up high by steel stilts with stairs leading to the doors.

Senzo helps Sihle up the stairs into one of the offices.

INT. OFFICE 1 - NIGHT

There's a big table, lots of files and papers on it, a big leather chair behind it, another less comfy chair across the table and a large zinc filing cabinet against the wall. Next to the door there's a big window so the god who inhabits this office can look down to the factory floor to see his minions at work.

Senzo sits Sihle slowly on the big chair and Mpilo plonks herself on the other chair, still with the gun in her hand. Senzo watches them as they sigh like this is the first time they've slowed down in a while.

Mpilo catches Senzo standing there studying them, she jumps up.

MPILO

I'll be back, watch her.

She exits the office.

INT. OFFICE 2 - NIGHT

Mpilo walks into the next office, identical to the other one including the leather chair. She plonks herself on it.

INT. OFFICE 1 - NIGHT

Senzo takes the seat across from Mpilo.

SENZO

Who are you people? What do you want here?

SIHLE

(still trying to catch her breath)

We just want to take a break for a couple of hours, grandpa.

Senzo scowls, not appreciating being called grandpa.

SENZO

Is she your mother?

SIHLE

No, she's my chauffeur.

EXT. OUTSIDE TOILET - NIGHT

The toilet door is open, the door handle broken. Soldier is standing outside the toilet, he folds his flick knife and puts it in his sock. Sjava splashes his face with water from the tap outside.

SOLDIER

Get our guns from the bin, will you?

SJAVA

How you know there in the bin?

SOLDIER

Just get them so we can go. We got a traitor to hunt.

INT. OFFICE 2 - NIGHT

Mpilo sits there for a while looking at the ceiling, then her phone rings, the name "FRANK" on the display. The phone keeps buzzing as she contemplates whether to answer it.

INT. UNKNOWN LOCATION - NIGHT

FRANK, 44, black, is clutching his phone to his face. We only see his mouth, a gold tooth, his phone and the three gold rings on his fingers.

Mpilo answers the phone.

FRANK
 (into the phone)
 Mpilo what the fuck are you doing?

INTERCUT FRANK / MPIOLO

MPIOLO
 What do you mean Frank?

FRANK
 You shot one of my guys.

MPIOLO
 No, I didn't.

FRANK
 So Soldier shot himself?

MPIOLO
 I told you he was an idiot, but you
 wanted to hire a guy who calls
 himself Soldier.

FRANK
 Quit fuckin around. Where are you?
 More importantly, where is the
 girl?

MPIOLO
 Why didn't you tell me it was a
 girl. More importantly, that she is
 pregnant?

FRANK
 You wanted me to let you go. I gave
 you your last job. You don't get to
 pick what it is.

MPIOLO
 So why was Soldier and Sjava
 following me? To bring me my
 goodbye kiss?

FRANK
 Something like that. We don't work
 at Pick n Pay M. In our business
 when you retire, you get retired.

MPIOLO
 Jeez Frank. After 20 years I
 thought you'd have a soft spot for
 me.

FRANK

I do M.

Mpilo stands up and starts pacing up and down. Silence for a beat.

MPILO

Then let me take her away. You won't see us ever again.

FRANK

No, this is a big contract.

MPILO

Yes, for Mr Davis. Who is he?

FRANK

Look, I'll make an exception for you. Put her to sleep right now. Bring her back and I'll put an extra 100 grand in your retirement fund.

Silence. Mpilo contemplating.

MPILO

Not this time, Frank. I can't do it.

Frank covers the speaker with his hand and takes a breath.

FRANK

Then I have no choice but to call the dogs on you.

MPILO

Bye, Frank.

Mpilo hangs up.

INT. OFFICE 2 - NIGHT

Mpilo stands there for a second. Then she goes back to Sihle and Senzo.

INT. OFFICE 1 - NIGHT

MPILO

I have to go.

SENZO

Yes,

SENZO (CONT'D) /SIHLE
 What?! No!

Mpilo takes out some money out of her pocket and hands it to Senzo. Senzo stands up and looks at Sihle who is equally confused.

MPILO
 (to Senzo)
 In the morning take her to Park Station and put her in a bus out of Gauteng.

SIHLE
 You mean you're leaving me here?

SENZO
 No!

MPILO
 I've done all I'm prepared to do.

SENZO
 No, you can't. She is not supposed to be here. Both of you need to leave.

MPILO
 There's enough money there for your trouble.
 (to Sihle)
 You need to get out of this city. It's not safe for you here. And don't call the police, you'll just give yourself away.

Mpilo walks out of the office and Senzo chases after her.

INT. FACTORY BUILDING - NIGHT

Mpilo rushes down the stairs and Senzo is frantically following her.

SENZO
 Hey! No! You can't leave her here.

Mpilo ignores Senzo as she rushes across the factory floor.

SENZO (CONT'D)
 You can't leave her here. Both of you have to go.

Mpilo get to the door and Senzo grabs her arm before she can open it. She swiftly turns around and points her gun at his face.

MPILO

Let go of me.

Senzo lets her go, raises his arms, takes a step back and stands there in fear.

MPILO (CONT'D)

That girl is scared. There are people looking for her as we speak.

SENZO

(looking at the gun pointed at him)

Looking for her to do what?

Mpilo moves the gun closer to Senzo's face.

MPILO

What do you think? Keep her safe for the night and put her in a bus in the morning. Okay?

Senzo nods his head. Mpilo turns, opens the door and leaves.

EXT. JOBURG STREETS / INT. BLACK MERCEDES - NIGHT

Sjava is driving and Soldier is on the passenger side, he has the shirt sleeve of his left arm folded. He's wrapped his wound with a bandage. His jacket is on his lap and his sneering at the bullet hole in it.

SJAVA

Are you sure you don't want to see a doctor?

SOLDIER

I want to find that bitch. Keep driving.

SJAVA

Driving to where? They could be anywhere.

SOLDIER

She'll want to find a spot to hide for the night. She won't go to her house or any of our safe houses. She's be desperate. Desperate prey is dead prey.

SJAVA

What's your beef with her anyway?

SOLDIER

She thinks her ass smells like roses. I knew we couldn't trust her, she was always on Frank's blind side.

SJAVA

She's second to Frank though, she's practically our boss.

SOLDIER

(shouting at Sjava)

A bitch will never be my boss. You hear me? Do you take orders from a bitch? If you do get out of this fuckin car right now. Hear me?

SJAVA

Okay, I here you.

SOLDIER

(mumbling to himself)

I'll never be disrespected by a woman.

Soldier takes out his gun and spins the wheel.

SOLDIER (CONT'D)

When we find her, we send her to her ancestors.

SJAVA

That old thing will get you killed one day.

Soldier raises the gun and pretends he is aiming at someone.

SOLDIER

This is Matlakala when you see her you know its goodbye. Boom!

SJAVA

That thing has jammed before.

Soldier caressing the gun like it's the most precious thing in the world to him.

SOLDIER

Not when it matters.

INT. OFFICE 1 - NIGHT

Senzo walks into the office carrying his flask in one hand and the tea cup in the other. He places the cup next to Sihle and takes the seat across from her. The tea is hot, he blows cool air into the flask. Sihle is drinking water.

There's an awkward silence as they both take sips.

SIHLE

You don't have to do anything. I'll find my way in the morning.

SENZO

Of course young girl, I don't want nothing to do with this. I should just call the police.

SIHLE

No, don't please.

Silence again.

SENZO

Why is a young girl like you caught up in criminality anyway?

SIHLE

I'm not a criminal I don't know why people are trying to kill/ me.

SENZO (CONT'D)

/Probably chasing some boyfriend. Pregnant as well.

SIHLE (CONT'D)

I'm not chasing a boyfrien/d.

SENZO (CONT'D)

(getting upset)
/You young girls, always after the fast life. Getting yourself in things that are dangerous.

Sihle staring at Senzo and also getting angry.

SIHLE (CONT'D)

I don't think you know me M/r.

SENZO (CONT'D)

(shouting)
Quiet Bonga!

Sihle gets up from her chair, grabs her bag and starts walking to towards the office door. He watches her walk past him.

SENZO (CONT'D)

Stop young girl, don't go. Sit down.

Sihle stops at the door. Turns around and heads back to her chair and sits down.

SIHLE
My name is Sihle.

SENZO
I don't like problems Sihle.

SIHLE
Me too, I didn't choose to come here.

Silence.

SIHLE (CONT'D)
You called me Bonga. Who is Bonga?

SENZO
My daughter. You remind me of her.

SIHLE
Do we look alike?

Senzo wistfully smiles.

SENZO
I just buried her this Saturday.

SIHLE (O.S.)
I'm sorry.

EXT. JOBURG STREETS / INT. RED BMW - NIGHT

Mpilo is driving through the factory district. Her face serious and her eyes distant. Suddenly she starts to feel sick again.

EXT. RED BMW - NIGHT

She stops the car on the side of the road, jumps out, runs to the other side and vomits.

She stays down for a couple of seconds then gets up and stands against the car. Through the dimmed windows she notices an object on the floor of the front passenger side. She opens the door, picks it up and realises it's Sihle's inhaler.

MPILO
Shit! Fuck!

INT. RED BMW - NIGHT

Mpilo gets in the car and throws the inhaler on the passenger seat. She looks at the empty road ahead, looks back at the inhaler, shakes her head, starts the car and drives off.

EXT. PETROL STATION - NIGHT

Moments later. Mpilo drives into a 24-hour petrol station. It's small with only 3 petrol pumps, the light from the shop shines on the parking spots just outside the door. She drives past the shop and parks where the light doesn't reach.

INT. SHOP - NIGHT

Mpilo walks into the shop, it's small with about four aisles, a fridge with a glass door against the wall to the far right. A seemingly bored cashier to the left behind a thick glass window, busy with his phone.

Mpilo picks up a shopping basket, walks to the fridge and grabs a couple of water bottles.

EXT. PETROL STATION - CONTINUOUS

A black Mercedes drives into the petrol station and parks next to one of the pumps. A petrol attendant approaches it, the driver's window slides and Sjava's face appears.

SJAVA

What's up man? Please fill it up,
95.

PETROL ATTENDANT

Yep.

The attendant goes around the car to the petrol tank.

EXT. PETROL STATION / INT. BLACK MERCEDES - CONTINUOUS

SOLDIER

Let's get some smokes.

Soldier and Sjava both get out of the car and walk to the shop.

INT. SHOP - CONTINUOUS

Mpilo is now in the snack aisle, she puts some Doritos and biscuits in the basket.

She spots some fluffy toys in a big straw basket, she picks up a couple and peruses them, she finally decides on the panda bear.

EXT. SHOP - CONTINUOUS

As they walk towards the shop Soldier glances at the parked cars in the dark. Something catches his attention. There's a shade of red amongst the cars in the dark. He heads towards them.

SJAVA

Where're you going?

Soldier ignores him and keeps walking. He gets to the red car, looks at the number plate and smiles. He then looks back at the shop.

Sjava recognising the car too.

SJAVA (CONT'D)

No way.

He looks back at the shop too.

INT. SHOP - CONTINUOUS

Mpilo skims through another aisle, packed with self care products, she stops suddenly, she looks around the shop, then picks up a pregnancy test and analyses it.

EXT. SHOP - CONTINUOUS

Soldier and Sjava are standing just out the door looking at Mpilo.

INT. SHOP - CONTINUOUS

She heads to the cashier, a tall black man, 32.

CASHIER

Hello Mam.

MPILO

Hi.

Cashier scans Mpilo's shopping items. He gets to the pregnancy test.

CASHIER

You the first person to ever buy one of these. I told my boss nobody would ever buy a pregnancy test at a petrol station. People usually come for something else.

(turns around and points to the condoms)

Mpilo is weirded out by the comment.

CASHIER (CONT'D)

But I guess I was wrong.

MPILO

What's your name?

CASHIER

Thabo.

MPILO

Thabo, shut the fuck up and ring my things.

Thabo is taken aback. He proceeds to scan the rest of Mpilo's items, avoiding eye contact.

EXT. SHOP - CONTINUOUS

Soldier and Sjava step away from the door.

SOLDIER

Give me your phone.

SJAVA

What'u want with my phone?

Soldier gives Sjava a stern look. Sjava reluctantly hands his phone to Soldier.

SOLDIER

Hide this in her car.

SJAVA

What? How?

SOLDIER

Find some tape, use gum. I don't give a shit just make sure she doesn't see it.

Sjava then heads towards Mpilo's car.

INT. SHOP - CONTINUOUS

THABO
Will you need a bag mam?

Mpilo nods. Thabo bags Mpilo's items.

MPILO
(handing him cash)
Where's your bathroom?

THABO
At the back.

MPILO
Thanks.

Mpilo grabs her bag and walks out.

EXT. PETROL STATION / INT. BLACK MERCEDES - CONTINUOUS

Soldier and Sjava are in their car having now moved it from the petrol pump to a parking spot with a view of the shop entrance.

They watch Mpilo carrying a shopping bag and a toy under her arm head to the back of the petrol station.

INT. OFFICE 1 - NIGHT

Sihle is lying on top of the office desk on a blanket and a pillow. Senzo is sitting on the chair next to her sipping tea.

SIHLE
Thank you, sitting on a chair can
be tiring, lying down helps.

Senzo nods.

SIHLE (CONT'D)
Did Bonga go to school?

SENZO
She was studying art, she loved it.
I didn't understand it.
(MORE)

SENZO (CONT'D)

When she was a little girl she used draw these horrible stick figures, create the weirdest things from cut up magazine pictures. But when she got into Wits I was so proud.

SIHLE

Was she your only child?

SENZO

Yes.

Silence for a beat.

SIHLE

Was she sick?

SENZO

Yes, when you love the wrong person, who leads you in the wrong direction, then that love is a sickness. Bonga and I never fought, except when it came to that boy she was with. I knew boys like that growing up, always thought they were better than everyone else in the neighbourhood. Loved the fast life and didn't care who they hurt along the way.

(beat)

One night while I was here at work I get call from a friend of mine who is a policeman, he says I need to come to the station, it's about Bonga. I rush, when I get there I'm told this boy of hers stole a car and picked up Bonga from school. They were involved in a high-speed chase with the police and crashed into another car and died immediately.

Senzo immediately breaks down.

SENZO (CONT'D)

(crying)

He took my little girl. Why did it have to be my little girl? She was an angel.

Senzo weeps and Sihle looks at him with sympathy. Senzo eventually calms down, takes out a handkerchief from his pocket and wipes his eyes.

SIHLE

I am so sorry Senzo.

Senzo smiles back at her.

INT. PETROL STATION TOILET - NIGHT

Mpilo is sitting on the toilet lid, her jacket is off, staring absently at the door. She looks at the floor and picks up the pregnancy stick on top of her jacket. She looks at it for a long time then sinks her face into her hand and lets out a long sigh of despair.

She then gets up, picks up her jacket, puts it on and walks out.

EXT. PETROL STATION TOILET - NIGHT

As soon as Mpilo is out of the toilet she takes a big blow on the back of her head. She lets a loud scream and falls to the ground. She suddenly hears the cocking of a gun, she looks up and sees a smiling Soldier pointing a gun to her face.

SOLDIER

Get up.

Mpilo gets up and stands against the wall grabbing the back of her head, feeling the excruciating pain of the blow. The back of the petrol station is dark, the only light coming from the toilet.

SOLDIER (CONT'D)

Get her gun.

Sjava reaches for her back and takes her gun.

SOLDIER (CONT'D)

Pat her down, she might have another piece hidden somewhere.

As Sjava pats her down he feels something in Mpilo's jacket pocket.

SJAVA

There's something here.

SOLDIER

Well take it out. Do I have to tell you everything.

Sjava reaches in the pocket and pulls out the pregnancy stick, looks at it and hands it to Soldier. Soldier examines it for a second.

SOLDIER (CONT'D)
Are you pregnant?

Mpilo looks at him but doesn't say anything. Soldier starts laughing very loud, Sjava joins him and laughs too. Soldier then gets closer to Mpilo.

SOLDIER (CONT'D)
(looking Mpilo dead in the eyes)
What is a bitch like you going to do with a child?

He then raises his gun and presses it against Mpilo's stomach.

SOLDIER (CONT'D)
I should kill you and this bastard that's inside you.
(beat)
Where is the girl?

Mpilo looks at Soldier dead in the eyes, resolute and stubborn. Soldier punches her in the stomach and Mpilo drops to her knees coughing.

SOLDIER (CONT'D)
Tell me where the girl is or I'm gonna perform an abortion.

Mpilo again just looks at Soldier, stubborn, with no intention to talk.

SOLDIER (CONT'D)
(to Sjava)
Get her up.

Sjava stands in between Mpilo and Soldier, bends down, grabs Mpilo's shoulders and lifts her up. As Mpilo gets up she shoves Sjava very hard and bundles him into Soldier. They both fall and Soldier's gun slips from his hand and falls about a two feet away.

Mpilo goes for it but as she gets closer Soldier grabs her ankle and she falls down. She kicks out but his grip is too tight. He quickly lifts himself up and makes a rush for the gun but Mpilo leaps to it first and points it at the oncoming Soldier and stops him dead in his track.

MPILO

Move one more step and I'll turn
you into Sibongile.

Soldier stands there looking at Mpilo on the ground pointing the gun at his pants. Mpilo gets up, moves closer to Soldier, her nose flaring. She points the gun at his face.

MPILO (CONT'D)

You were gonna give me a what!? You
piece of shit.

Soldier stands there arms raised, scared. Sjava is still on the ground.

MPILO (CONT'D)

Both of you get in the toilet.

Soldier and Sjava move into the toilet and Mpilo locks them inside.

INT. PETROL STATION TOILET - NIGHT

SOLDIER

What's with this bitch and toilets?

EXT. PETROL STATION TOILET - NIGHT

Mpilo stands against the wall then lets out a huge sigh of relief. She grabs her mouths and starts crying, looks at her stomach and starts caressing it.

EXT. PETROL STATION TOILET - NIGHT

30 minutes later. Soldier and Sjava kick the door and get out of the toilet.

SOLDIER

That's the last time that woman
locks me in a toilet.

Soldier takes out his phone, presses it a couple of time and we see a street map and a flashing circle moving on it.

SOLDIER (CONT'D)

(with a sinister smile)
Got you.

SJAVA

I hope I get my phone back.

SOLDIER

Shut up about your phone. Let's go
end this.

INT. RED BMW - NIGHT

Mpilo is in her car driving, the plastic bag with the snacks
and the panda bear is on the passenger seat next to her.

INT. OFFICE 1 - NIGHT

Senzo is sipping tea sitting on the office chair and Sihle is
napping on the office table. Suddenly Senzo hears a car horn,
this wakes Sihle up as well.

They look at each other with concern, Senzo hits the light
switch and room goes dark.

SENZO

Stay here.

Senzo walks out of the office.

EXT. FACTORY BUILDING - NIGHT

Senzo walks towards the gate, on the other side of it there's
a light so bright he can barely see anything else. As he gets
closer a shade of red is slowly revealed through the gate.
The driver side door opens and Mpilo steps out.

MPILO

I left a parcel inside.

Her face is bloodied and bruised.

INT. OFFICE 1 - NIGHT

Sihle still in the dark hears footsteps on the stairs, her
eyes widen, her breathing gets a little faster. The footsteps
get closer until they are outside the office door then the
door opens.

Senzo walks in and switches on the light, as soon as Sihle
sees him she lets out a sigh of relief. Mpilo walks in behind
him carrying a shopping bag and a toy panda. Sihle stands
there surprised.

EXT. FACTORY PROPERTY - NIGHT

A black Mercedes is parked across the street from the factory. Soldier and Sjava are looking at the lit office building.

INT. OFFICE 1 - NIGHT

Mpilo is wiping her bruises with a wet cloth. Sihle seated and Senzo standing against the wall next to the door are watching her.

SIHLE

Why did you come back?

MPILO

I can leave if you two have everything under control?

SIHLE

No. Its just that you said you've done all you prepared to do.

MPILO

I had an encounter with our pursuers. Not far from here.

Sihle is suddenly scared.

MPILO (CONT'D)

Don't worry, that's why I'm here. I wanna make sure you get in that bus in the morning.

SENZO

Great. This is not my wheelhouse.

SIHLE

Who are you, Mpilo?

MPILO

(beat)

I work for an organisation run by a guy called Frank.

SENZO

What type of organisation?

MPILO

In the world of business and politics sometimes, well these days more often than you think, when a rival cannot be persuaded to step aside, he must be removed. Frank runs a business where such things can be arranged.

SENZO

And he sends you?

MPILO

Yes, me and many others.

SIHLE

So you kill people?

Mpilo and Senzo give each other a look of understanding then turns to Sihle.

MPILO

Yes.

Sihle takes a beat and absorbs what this means.

SIHLE

So you came to my house to kill today?

MPILO

Yes, I came to kill someone. But not you.

SENZO

What do you mean?

MPILO

I don't do women or children. Its my rule, it has been since I started and Frank knows that.

SIHLE

But there are those that do?

MPILO

(slight shame)

Yes.

SENZO

But surely an assassin knows who her target is?

MPILO

Not this time. I'm retiring,
getting out. They told me I had to
do one last job, they gave me a
piece of paper with an address but
I didn't expect to find you.

SIHLE

So I should be thankful it was you
who came to my house and nobody
else?

Silence for a beat.

SIHLE (CONT'D)

But why me? I'm not a businessman
or politician.

MPILO

Yes, we need to uncover that. Tell
me about the father of your child.

SIHLE

You think someone was trying to
hurt him by hurting us?

MPILO

I'm not sure. Just tell me about
him.

Senzo eagerly listening.

SIHLE

His name is Alex Davis.

SENZO

Alex, what time of name is that for
a black man?

SIHLE

He's white.

SENZO

He's probably married.

Sihle looks at Senzo with embarrassment.

SENZO (CONT'D)

Foolish girl.

MPILO

(admonishing)
Bab'Khumalo!

Senzo looks away.

MPILO (CONT'D)

Continue.

SIHLE

Okay, he is a businessman. He's chairman of Deco Holdings, they're an IT company.

Mpilo sits there absorbing what she is hearing.

MPILO

Deco is owned by this old rich white family, the Bowens.

SIHLE

Yes, the Bowens. Alex is married to Priscilla Bowen.

MPILO

And if it was found out that Alex had a child with his side chick.

(to Sihle)

Sorry. Then how much does he stand to lose?

SIHLE

You think Alex sent you to?...Never, Alex loves us. He said he'd leave his wife and be with us.

MPILO

This is the type of work Frank has done in the past. Helping powerful men hide their dirty secrets.

SIHLE

No, I just need to call Alex and talk to him.

Mpilo and Senzo look at each other.

MPILO

You can't call him or they'll track us here.

Sihle is devastated.

SENZO

I'm gonna go do my rounds.

Senzo leaves. Quiet in the room, Mpilo watching Sihle to see how she is taking the revelations. Sihle has her head down, sad, contemplating the meaning of what she has just heard.

SIHLE

What happens now?

MPILO

We get out of town in the morning.
I know somewhere we can go that
even Frank doesn't know.

Sihle nods in acceptance. Mpilo grabs the shopping bag she had put on the table and hands it to Sihle.

MPILO (CONT'D)

Here, I got you some snacks.

SIHLE

Thanks, I'm hungry.

Sihle opens the packet of chips and gorges a few down.

SIHLE (CONT'D)

Why'd you really come back?

They look at each other dead in the eyes for a beat.

MPILO

I am afflicted with the same
condition as you.

SIHLE

What?

Mpilo reaches into her pocket and hands Sihle a positive pregnancy test. Sihle is dumbfounded.

SIHLE (CONT'D)

Is it something you want?

MPILO

No, yes, I don't know.

Mpilo stands up and paces up and down the room.

SIHLE

Congratulations, I guess. Do female
assassins normally have babies?

MPILO

There aren't many female assassins.
I'm the only one as far I know.

SIHLE
So, no friends?

MPILO
I've never had a girls' night out
if that's what you mean.

SIHLE
How do you feel?

Mpilo sits down next to Sihle.

MPILO
Like I wanna protect it, him, her.
(touches her stomach)
Like, like...

SIHLE
You feel like a mother.

They look at each other smiling.

INT. FACTORY FLOOR - NIGHT

Senzo is walking on the factory floor among the machines suddenly someone wraps their arm around his neck from behind and chokes him. Senzo tries to fight him off but he is too strong. Sjava appears in front of him pointing a gun at him.

SOLDIER
Calm down or you'll go to sleep for
good.

Senzo stops fighting and calms down.

SENZO
How did you get in?

SOLDIER
My friend here used to install
electric fences. He knows how to
get past them. Now that I've told
you my secret, tell me yours. Where
are the two bitches?

INT. OFFICE 1 - NIGHT

Mpilo and Sihle are sitting next to each other laughing. Sihle is holding the panda bear that Mpilo bought.

SIHLE
This is cute.

MPILO

I thought so. You know panda bears are some of the most protective mothers in the world.

SIHLE

Your baby is gonna be lucky, her mother will be able to tell what sort of gun goes with what sort of shoes.

MPILO

Yes, the chrome 9mm is a very good match with two-piece suit.

They both laugh and continue laughing throughout the night.

INT. STAIRS - DAWN

Mpilo and Sihle have their bags and Mpilo is helping Sihle down the stairs to the factory floor.

MPILO

Let's go Gwede Mantashe.

SIHLE

(subtitled)

Lemini yeza nakuwe.

They laugh.

INT. FACTORY FLOOR - DAWN

As they get to the floor BANG, Mpilo is shot in the stomach. They are both are shocked, not knowing what just happened. Mpilo falls to her knees, Sihle concerned goes down to her knees as well.

Mpilo grabs her stomach, removes her hand and sees blood. They both look up and see Soldier smiling with his gun pointing at Mpilo. Sjava has Senzo in a chokehold with his gun pointing at his head.

SOLDIER

(walking closer)

Frank is gonna kiss my ass when I tell him I completed the contract. But he's gonna worship the ground I walk on when I tell him I got the traitor.

In a swift move Mpilo pulls out her gun, Soldier fires at her but his gun jams, Mpilo puts two in his chest from Mpilo.

Sjava shocked at seeing the fallen Soldier pushes Senzo to the ground, aims his gun at Mpilo, she aims hers at him and they both fire.

Sjava gets hit twice, he misses Mpilo with his shots. He hits the ground and dies immediately.

Senzo crouched down in fear slowly raises his head at the sudden silence. He gets up and sees Sjava down and not moving, he turns his head to see Mpilo and Sihle down as well.

He jumps to Sihle's side, unconscious, blood flowing down the side of her mouth. She has bullet wounds in her shoulder and torso.

Mpilo crawls to her.

MPILO

No, no, no!

She puts her head on her lap, she starts crying.

MPILO (CONT'D)

I wanted to save you. I'm so sorry.

She continues to cry for a beat. Suddenly Sihle starts coughing, she opens her eyes. She coughs again a couple of times.

SIHLE

(blood coming out her mouth)

My baby.

MPILO

Shuuu. You'll be okay.

SIHLE

(to Senzo)

Save my baby please!

Mpilo and Senzo looks down at Sihle's legs and there's a puddle of water on the floor.

SENZO

We are going to have to deliver the baby. Don't worry Bonga was born at home. I'll get the blanket.

He goes back to the office for the blanket.

MONTAGE:

Music is playing as we watch Sihle give birth.

Senzo is telling Sihle to push.

Sihle is screaming while pushing.

Mpilo is holding her.

There's blood all over their clothes and faces.

Eventually Senzo pulls the baby out and hands it to Sihle.

END OF MONTAGE

INT. FACTORY FLOOR - MORNING

The baby is crying, Sihle and Mpilo are shedding tears of joy over her.

SENZO

What's her name?

SIHLE

Mpilo Enhle, after her two mothers.

Mpilo brushes the baby's head and looks at both of them with pride.

SIHLE (CONT'D)

(crying)

Mpilo Enhle...Khumalo.

Sihle hands the baby back to Senzo. Mpilo and Sihle resigned to their fate. The tears of joy are now tears of sadness.

Sihle closes her eyes and her body goes still. Mpilo shedding tears herself kisses her on the forehead, closes her eyes and her body goes still.

INT. SANDTON RESTAURANT - BATHROOM - DAY

18 years later.

PALESA, 20, black girl, wearing a short, tight black dress is fixing her make-up in the mirror.

PALESA

Friend, we've hit the big time.

Today we are with men not boys.

(MORE)

PALESA (CONT'D)

And I'm not talking about what's in their pants but what's in their pockets.

(laughs)

Palesa turns around and looks at the closed door of the toilet stall behind her.

PALESA (CONT'D)

Hurry up? They won't wait the whole night.

(turns back and continues to fix make-up)

We hear a girl's voice from inside behind the stall.

GIRL 2 (O.S.)

I'm coming.

PALESA

What are you doing anyway?

GIRL 2 (O.S.)

Nothing.

PALESA

Knowing you, you probably doing your maths assignment, Miss Cum Laude.

GIRL 2 (O.S.)

Go ahead okay, I'll meet up with you at the table.

PALESA

Okay, hurry up.

Palesa walks out the bathroom.

INT. SANDTON RESTAURANT - TOILET - NIGHT

MPILO ENHLE KHUMALO, 18, is sitting on the toilet lid. She has braided hair tied into a ponytail. She's wearing a silver dress.

She looks like Sihle, her innocence can making her appear like an underdog. However, she can be a wolf in sheep's clothing.

She has her hand in a small clutch bag. She pulls it out and she's holding a small revolver pistol. She looks at it like she's bracing herself for something.

Suddenly her phone rings, she puts the gun back in the bag and pulls out her phone and answers it.

MPILO ENHLE

Hi Dad.

SENZO (O.S.)

Hi baby. How are you?

MPILO ENHLE

I'm good, dad.

SENZO (O.S.)

I don't like this thing of not sleeping at home Mpilo.

MPILO ENHLE

Relax dad. I told you it's just a study session with my friend Palesa. I'll be back in the morning.

SENZO (O.S.)

Okay baby. I just wanted to tell you I just arrived at work.

(beat)

I'm proud of the young woman you have become.

Mpilo Enhle feels a hint of shame looking at the gun in her purse.

MPILO ENHLE

Thanks dad. Good night, I love you.

SENZO (O.S.)

Good night.

Sihle hangs up.

She stands up, pulls down her skirt, the hem of which ends above her knees. Then she walks out.

INT. SANDTON RESTAURANT - NIGHT

As she walks to the table there is a sensual aura to her, as she works her hips.

Palesa is sitting at the table with two gentlemen, in their 60's. One black male wearing a brown suit, he has the look of a 70s American gangster. The other is a white male wearing a navy double-breasted jacket.

When Mpilo Enhle gets to the table Palesa introduces her.

PALESA

Frank, this is the girl I've told
you about Mpilo.

FRANK

I knew somebody named Mpilo a long
time ago. She was a good friend of
mine. I hope we can be good friends
too.

Mpilo Enhle notices the gold tooth.

MPILO ENHLE

I hope so too.

Frank points to the white gentleman.

FRANK

This is Alex, also a good friend of
mine.

ALEX

You are a very beautiful girl
Mpilo.

MPILO ENHLE

Thank you, Alex.

Alex pulls back a seat for Mpilo Enhle, she sits down holding
her clutch bag close.

FADE TO BLACK.