

## Part III

# Memories & Slow Songs

Vuyo Mkhwanazi

He was late.

I cooked a three-course meal and he was late.

Trying to imagine what was going through his mind was driving me crazy, this couldn't have been easy for him but he knows how much punctuality means to me.

I wanted to be there for him but he wanted to go alone. Losing Oarabile changed him. He smiled less, went out less, it was almost as if he had no desire to make his presence known in the world. He just wanted to disappear, actually he disappeared.

I can't blame him though, I wouldn't be myself if I lost Keamogetse. Being a single mother is hard but a child is the truest love one can ever find. She changed my world and on most days I think she is my soul mate.

When I found out I was pregnant I didn't know what to do. It caught me off-guard, I didn't even know when it happened but I was grateful. The idea of bringing a child into my life scared me. I was struggling to find a job, my boyfriend had just broken up with me and things were awkward between Angelo and I. I had no one I could turn to for the first few months.

“Mommy, mommy. Someone is at the door....HE IS HERE”. Kea run up to me, she was excited that her favourite human in the world was here. She and Angelo got along really well. She saw him as her father. He loved her dearly but I could see he always kept his feelings reserved and was guarded. A huge part of me hoped that he wouldn't do that with Oratilwe but I also hoped that finding out about his daughter with Namisa wouldn't come between him and Kea.

Sometimes I wish Namisa had kept Ora a secret, Angelo was finally learning to make peace and move on with his life. He was happy with his job, started dating Lonwabo and was making efforts to go out more, to spend more time with his friend. However if Namisa hadn't come back into his life, maybe he wouldn't have found the strength to visit Oarabile's grave today. I guess one must always take the good with the bad.

“Hi Vuyo... I'm sorry I'm late”, he said while wiping his feet on the doormat. “I had a flat tire. That took a bit of time and I had to drive slowly, couldn't risk it”.

“Wait”, I said as he tried to give me a hug. “Let me get Kea to get you a towel. You're wet. I don't want a mess all over my house. Dry yourself off and go freshen up in the guest bedroom.”

He said it was a flat tire but I've known him long enough to tell when he'd been crying. Rain and tears, this was just like that night.

Watching him play with Kea always warmed my heart and this night was not any different. She knocked on the guest room door a few times before he came out and so began their antics. Piggy

back riding, watching television and talking about what she wanted for Christmas. Their conversations were as loud and animated as ever but fun to watch.

“Goodnight mommy”, she whispered and ran to kiss Angelo on the cheek. “Oh... So where is my kiss” I asked.

“You’ll get it in the morning”, she giggled and ran to her room.

As soon as Kea shut her door close, I looked to Angelo. He had that look in his eyes again but this time it wouldn't work.

“I know you have a lot on your mind Angel, talk to me. Don't shut me out”.

He looked at me and then at his phone. He asked to be excused so he could call Lonwabo and tell her that he would be getting home late, he wanted to wait for the rain to calm down a bit. He wasn't always this cautious. Trying to stick to the speed limit or driving carefully are traits he developed during his period of reclusion. It wasn't necessarily that he was reckless but he just seemed to not trust himself as much.

I wanted to offer him a drink to help him relax but I was afraid he might think I was trying to recreate that night.

I remember seeing him walk up to me. He first sat on the couch, stood up, sat again and then gave me hug that felt like he was throwing himself in my arms. I was confused but I figured he would open up to me and after a few drinks he did more than just open up.

I remember that night vividly including how bad I felt but the way he kissed me and the way he held me, it was wrong but it felt right.

He spoke about the funeral, about how he tried to tell Namisa how he was feeling about losing their son but she would just burst into tears, and that he felt that her pain was greater than his.

After a few drinks I was opening up too.

I wanted to let him talk that night but I had been bottling up so much. I told him that Thabo used to hit me, that Thabo was seeing other women and he made me feel not enough. I was a cliché. I was basically a desperate woman and I needed attention. I must have convinced myself it was okay, as I moved closer to

him that night I had to remind myself that he said he and Namisa fought and he was sure it was over that time.

I was still with Thabo but I told myself I was going to leave him, I had had enough of the abuse and cheating. I don't know who kissed who first but I know I didn't pull away, I know I wanted more. For the first time in a long time I was being kissed by someone who I knew loved me even if I wasn't sure it was the kind of love I wanted to feel.

Quickly we realized what we had done was wrong. He smiled and laughed nervously and I played with my hair while looking away. He was tired that night and asked to sleep. I obliged him but I was still curious.

We had just kissed and I wasn't sure if it was the alcohol or emotions but he needed comfort and I needed to feel something. I went to my room while he slept on the couch and put on my night dress. I always liked how the black lace felt against my skin, so wearing it, hopefully it would give me the courage to persuade him to continue.

As I made my way to him, Namisa and Thabo were the last thing on my mind. I was however concerned about our friendship. I

wondered if it would survive the night and would I be able to stop myself from wanting to feel that again.

I kissed him on the lips again and put his hand on my waist. I kissed him once more and put a little more effort into it. I felt my tongue graze his teeth as it made its way to his.

He opened his eyes surprised, he wanted to speak but I feared he would say her name and so I put my finger on his lips. He sat up and we looked eyes, him looking at me, me looking at him. We were in a stale mate and I knew he needed a push.

I went on my knees and felt my nerves build up. My hands were moving on their own as I tried to convince myself to go further, “Vuyo. It’s okay. It’s going to be okay. Just try and if he says no, then you stop”.

Slowly I unzipped his pants and prepared to taste his manhood but quickly the nerves faded as the size filled my mouth and his moan fed my ego. I continued, making sure all the lessons I got from Thabo were put to use. He always said, ‘Make sure it’s wet before you use your hands and don’t forget, pressure. Use the right amount of pressure’.

Angelo was silent, hardly moving. I wanted to see if he was okay and as I began to pull back I felt his hand pushing down on my head, urging me to take more in. I obliged and heard him whisper “Oh, GOD”. I kept going, every so often moving my hands along his inner thigh, rotating between taking it in, focusing on the head and playing with his sack.

I felt him get close, he was almost there. Ready to explode and I wanted it inside me. I made him lean back against the couch and positioned myself on his lap. I wanted to do it but I paused.

My nerves were back. I froze and just stared at him. I blushed and looked away. As I was about to pull away I felt his hands on my waist lowering me down onto him and I felt him open my gates. It slid right in. My walls surrounded him and we were one. With eyes closed, I let out a prayer in the form of a moan and there was my first orgasm.

Even though he belonged to someone else and I, to another. Me in his arms and he in mine, making love made sense and I reserved tomorrow to focus on today’s regrets. That night I realised I was actually in love with my best friend but there was never a right time to tell him. He was with Namisa by the time I was ready to accept my feelings for him and I was pregnant. He had lost his son and the last thing I wanted him to do was be a step-father to a child he wasn’t ready for but while I was waiting

for him to heal, he fell in love with Lonwabo and now here I am with him beside me, watching listening to music, reminiscing a weekend we have never acknowledged happened.

After Kea was born, he visited me often but this was the first time this couch symbolized something else. It was the place he lay me down and put my feet in the air. I remember him looking down at me and shame running across my face, I was afraid he could see how much I was enjoying it.

How I was enjoying his chest pressed against mine with my knees to my head. His thrusts and my moans were in rhyme. He had his way with me and I was happy. I knew he was using me as an escape but it was amazing and a moment I cherish.

We made love in different ways, in different places all over my house and in that I learnt so much. I learnt so many things about my friend. When I sat on his face, I found out that his tongue feels like silk. I learnt that as gentle as in nature as he is, he can be forceful when he wants. He showed me that he knows where to place his hands while a woman rides, how hard to hit when her rear was in view and how hard to pull her hair when she wasn't being loud enough.

I don't know if I let him have it or he just took it but it was his over and over again. Begging him to go deeper, pleading he go

faster and begging that he do it again. On all fours, against the wall and on the floor.

Angelo made me feel like a woman again and I lived on that high for a few days until I had to get the morning after pill. Filling in the form and answering the questions felt like an insult to my experience. 'Yes, it has been 72 hours... No, it wasn't rape or sexual assault... Yes, I want it.'

The only question left was to ask if the person I slept with was my boyfriend or not.

I don't think I will ever find the right time to tell Angelo how I feel about him but to be honest, I would rather be keep my feelings hidden than risk losing him. I have my daughter and the man I love in my life. Even if not romantically, it is more than enough. So even though he was spending the night at my place today and we would not be recreating that night, I was just happy to know that he was next to me as I lay on the couch and fell asleep with my head on his shoulder.

Thank God for rainy days.