

Chapter 4

My Views On Marriage

Edited by Serendipity

Dear Diary,

I seem to turn to you more and more these days. I tell you all the things I can never tell anyone. You know of thoughts, fears and emotions I can't express. You also know of my family and my infidelity.

You know so much but I don't think I ever told you why I struggled to love Rafiki when our relationship first began. Of course I was totally against an arranged marriage but my father convinced me it would be okay.

Growing up I always knew who I wanted to be, I had it all planned. I was to leave this village and move on to bigger and better things. I wanted to live the city life, maybe work at a strip club or maybe be an escort.

I didn't want to do it for the glamour or because I wasn't raised correctly, no, my parents made sure we were clothed and always had more than enough. I wanted to do it because it was different, far from the norm, unexpected and because I knew my mother would hate it.

She like me, she was forced into an arranged marriage. I've read of her kindness and generosity while all I know is the version of her with a lonely heart. Stories of her made her sound like a

woman who was ready to set the world on fire, instead she chose to settle

I didn't want to be like her, I wasn't going to be her. I was not going to carry the same mistake, so I needed to have a plan.

I would have a loving family; a family not ruled by culture or stupid traditions but by rules set by my husband and I.

For that I would have to marry a man who was comfortable in himself, ready to measure me based on what I could bring to the table, we would have a place with no struggle for power or unneeded exhibits of manhood, in summary my plan was to marry a white guy.

He, of course, would have to meet the criteria on my checklist first. He would have to be smart, funny and rich. He would also have to be really handsome because who doesn't want beautiful babies? He would also have to have a passion for music, be a creative and have great taste in friends but most importantly have a great deal of respect for woman.

I'm not the kind to sit down or walk away, so if he raised a hand then he should be prepared to meet with my fist. I was taught marriage is forever, so I'd either be loved for life or be the

woman he'd regret ever making his wife. After all, hell has no fury like a woman's wrath.

I have nothing against black men or men of other races, and I do not think that they are not good enough for me but it's just that, they are all I have ever known and the majority of them have done nothing but bring trouble to women.

Mother would never let me into the throne room when she was giving council and it was father's duty to keep me occupied in between lessons but every so often I would sneak in and hear their conversations. I never went in when she was dealing with the elders or coming up with new legislation though, the one time I did she blamed father for it. They fought and didn't speak to each other for a week and I could tell father wasn't happy.

I never found joy in father's unhappiness, so I tried to stick to mothers rules. All of them but eaves dropping.

I would overhear conversations between my mother and her friends, they would ask my mother for advice on how to help women who were getting abused or those who took their own lives because they caught their husbands in bed with other women.

The stories were endless and also involved black men. Other than my father, the black men I saw were nothing to aspire to be with. Mother ordered the hanging of rapists and molesters, the sentencing of men who tried to force their power over women and anyone who went against the laws of the village.

I grew up with all this happening around me, so was I asking for too much to want none of that? To want a man who wouldn't see my ambition for a career as a way of seeking attention and wanting to be noticed? He wouldn't assume that when I say I want to help him at the office, I only want sex in a forbidden environment. All I want is to find a man that understands when I say "I don't need a man", I don't mean he has no relevance but rather that me loving him, accepting him into my life is a privilege and he better well appreciate it?

I admit I was misled by television and media, I thought a white man would love me best and treat me like the queen I was to be one day. I thought he would be a man who would share my views on marriage and we would take turns cooking, he would help around with the kids, he would support my career and I, his. I wanted textbooks romance and in return I would agree to all the kinky things they do in the videos, even the ones with chains and all the toys; I'm sure I would look great in latex giving orders, telling him to beg for it.

My best friend, Thamani, loved watching those videos, especially the ones where the woman would be tied to a bed and the man would have a whip. I would always wonder, would I be able to be submissive and beg someone to enjoy me? Beg him to put it in a hole it doesn't belong? Would I find pleasure in that? Would I be able to sacrifice making love for a chance at a man who would never leave?

Due to tradition, it was always known that I'd marry young, and owing to my title, I was allowed to ask any question, even those about sex. From what I've been told growing up, making love was the ultimate and end all, one can't feel more loved than that and that it was much better than just sex but the irony of it all was that the people telling me about it, were all single and hoping to find love again, or rather trying to force themselves to forget the love they had to forfeit and try blossom with someone else.

This village made me sick and so did their people, I wanted the city life but instead I got a glorified village boy. Barely 24 and a Harvard graduate, my parents made such a hoo-ha about it. He was tall, dark and handsome; every girls dream, the only problem is that he wasn't my dream. He was what I was trying to run away from, someone who was used to competing and not uplifting others, someone who lived a life of pampering and being made to feel special but most importantly he was someone raised to be the king of our tribe.

Diary, maybe that's why I hated him most, because I knew no matter how far I wanted to run, how much I deserved to be free, I was betrothed to him and even if I found my white exotic lover, I'd still be told to marry him.

It was hard to love him at first but eventually he won me over and changed my views on marriage. He was kind, romantic and willing to see me as more than just someone he was born to marry. He wasn't at all what I thought he was, not flashy or full of himself.

He was actually intimidated by me, almost to the point of fearing me. I remember his first words, with excitement and anxiety in his eyes... "I, Rafiki Muulula, am honoured to marry you princess. An honour and a privilege. You have blessed my family greatly by changing my status, from an ordinary commoner, to being the King of our great people. May you live long and I pray I am to your satisfaction".

I misjudged him and I was wrong, but that was clearly the first and last time. My mother taught me never to be wrong, former Queen Utawala didn't approve of mistakes but also believed you can never know too much.

So now I do my best to learn something new every day and not judge a book by its cover.

Yours

Mapenzi Muujiza,

Reigning Queen of the Watoto wa Mungu people.