

Chapter 6

No Church In The Wild

Edited by Serendipity

In my opinion, the bible is the most controversial book on the planet.

Everything that is wrong, is right but still wrong none the less. I believe the reason women are in charge of our culture is because the women didn't like the idea of submitting. They didn't like the idea of a man ruling the world and everything in it. We admit Eve made a mistake but then again, she did change the fate of an entire species. You can call that being foolish but we see it as being influential.

Men have continuously made bigger mistakes but because they haven't had the same effect we did, they get away with it scot-free. The Bible, like modern day constitutional law, is patriarchy made into poetry. Women are expected to accept it or else they are trying to break a “system” that works.

My mother during her reign managed to amend many laws. Because of her, there are more programs targeted at funding young girls to study and more women are getting funding for their businesses. Despite my two mindedness of religion, I still go to church religiously because it was something my father believed in. It kept him sane.

I think it was how he dealt with joining the family. He would read the bible to me at night. He was selective about which verses he read and which he explained to me. Women were limited to caretakers and bearers of future kings but men were the ones separating seas and leading the nations we birthed. Men monopolised miracles and women ate it up.

I am not mad at the bible, I know that it is incomplete. That was something my father always emphasized. “*You can never let someone’s account of the past determine your capabilities in the future*”. I know a lot of it was left and I know it was men who made that decision. Only God knows how many books had someone like me making the decisions and things turned out great?

Another thing my father loved doing was telling me about spiritual gifts. The gift of prophecy, to speak in tongues and communicate to God directly or the ability to distinguish between spirits. It was like having superpowers. In theory, they always sounded amazing, until I had to encounter them.

It happened seven months ago. I had just finished working in the study and I was on my way to the main house. As I was walking through the kitchen, I heard the sound of someone crying. I wanted to mind my own business, maybe I should have but I knew it wasn’t Mfariji because she and Rafiki were on a date, and

it couldn't be Uhuru because she always runs to me when she gets scared. I walked closer to the sound until I could see it was Dada. I had never seen her cry before. She was always tough and ready to defend Uhuru. I asked her what was wrong but I could hardly make out what she was saying through her sobbing.

She was really upset and it took a very long time to calm her down.

"Mom, I think mama is keeping a secret from me. I think daddy isn't my father", she said with tears in her eyes. I was surprised to hear her say that, so I laughed it off and said "Baby, that is impossible. Why would you think that? We are one big happy family".

"Mom, I had a dream and in the dream, a man was standing in front of me. He started pointing at me and I got scared, so I moved out of his way and to my surprise, Uhuru was standing behind me. It seemed like his words were directed at Uhuru, he said that she doesn't know who she is and she must find her father but since I had the dream and ran away, I think the message was meant for me. I am not my father's daughter".

As her words came to an end, my heart sank and she started to cry again. I just pulled her closer and tried to comfort her.

I knew my secret would not stay a secret forever and always wondered how I would get caught and who would catch me but I never thought it would be a 14 year old.

They say keep your friends close and your enemies closer. Am I now forced to see her as an enemy? A girl I call my step daughter? That not was the first time I felt that God had to be a female, this level of pettiness to prove a point? Did He really have to be this cunning and manipulative? He should have just made it something as simple as a birthmark or a blood tests but not a dream.

We are a family of faith and so we pray hard but no one prays harder than Dada. One would swear she is going to start her own church in future. She doesn't read from the bible but rather quotes from it. Spiritual gifts were fascinating until I was their target.

I believe in the truth but self-preservation is part of human nature and that night changed the way I engaged with my daughter. We agreed that we would keep the dream a secret and that she would never bring it up again, that I would keep her safe and not let anyone hurt her.

I knew I would keep my end of the deal but I had to make sure she'd do the same, so I got closer to her. Spent more time with her than I usually did. Going shopping, movies, and sometimes I'd even leave Uhuru behind just so Dada and I could be alone and talk. We never brought it up because I convinced her that it was a bad dream. I regret the intention behind our relationship but not the consequence thereof. We grew really, I got to know her better and she was actually a really sweet girl; extremely overprotective of her little sister. They were only nine months apart but you'd swear Dada was years older than Uhuru. I admit it was nice to have a daughter who was more like me. She was focused, responsible and always ready to stand up for women and remind Uhuru of her worth. I think she is who I would have been if my mother had seen me as more than her future replacement but more like her daughter. I learnt to love her so much but I never lost sight of my mission; to keep Dada from revealing my secret.

My secret was safe and we never brought it up until today.

They say, if you want to make God laugh, then tell him your plans and boy, I bet you she, he, they were in heaven, having the time of their life. Today during Sunday mass, the priest decided to preach about spiritual gifts at church.

His sermon started well, speaking on blessings and how we should accept all the little gifts given to us. Somewhere between gifts and singing parts of hymns, he said, "*1 Corinthians 12 verse 7-10 states: The Spirit has given each of us a special way of serving others. Some of us can speak with wisdom, while others can speak with knowledge, but these gifts come from the same Spirit. To others, the Spirit has given great faith or the power to heal the sick or the power to work mighty miracles. Some of us are prophets, and some of us recognize when God's Spirit is present. Others can speak different kinds of languages, and still others can tell what these languages mean. But it is the Spirit who does all this and decides which gifts to give to each of us.*" He went on to ask for testimonies and concluded with "*You are never too young to have spiritual gifts*". He said those words while staring at Dada.

I saw Dada's face light up, she smiled from ear to ear. I wondered why the priest looked at her, maybe she had revealed our secret to during confession or he just wanted to make her feel special but I knew that I needed to do damage control.

Quickly I pulled her to the side for a little talk. "*Dee, I saw you smiling when the Father Zawadi was speaking on spiritual gifts. Do you think you have spiritual gifts?*". She smiled and nodded.

I hugged her. *“I am sure you are special my little girl. Do you know there are many spiritual gifts but sometimes the things we see aren’t always from God.”*

“Who are they from mom?”, she asked.

“Sometimes it is the devil trying to confuse us and hurt us. He shows us things and tricks us into hurting people. Do you understand me baby?”

“Mom. Do you think the dream about dad not being my father was from the devil?”, she asked with a smile on her face. I guess she found comfort in the idea of the dream being a lie, that her father was still her father.

“Yes baby. I think it was. The devil was trying to use you to tear our family apart. It is a good thing we kept everything a secret. A lot of people would have been hurt over a lie okay my baby?”, I said as I kissed her on the forehead. *“Do you want to get ice cream? Let’s go get your daddy to buy us ice-cream.”*

I admit it wasn't the nicest thing to do but I had no choice, I had to lie to a little girl and bribe her with ice-cream. I'm not proud of it but it had to be done. I had to protect my daughter. I don't

know how she would react if she found out Rafiki is not her father.

Somehow I managed to avert it for now but I knew very soon, my secret would be out in the public and I would no longer be able to hide it.

I had a feeling that very soon, our lives would change and I would no longer be able to keep Uhuru safe from the truth.