

Chapter 11

Every Dog Has Its Day

Edited by Serendipity

I've been told no one is meant to be unhappy, that misery is temporary and when it falls on you, it simply means it's your turn; tomorrow it will fall onto someone else and so on.

Life has no guarantees other than the fact that as humans we are destined to make decisions we either regret or wish we could have done differently. Some regret kissing the wrong boy, wearing the wrong dress and forgetting to remind people we love them. Others regret missing opportunities, giving up on their dreams and giving up on themselves but one thing I know everyone regrets, is forgetting that everyone has a story.

We forget that before marriage, you were strangers, then you become friends, you start dating, get engaged and become lovers. Marriage needs to take all those factors into consideration. Like strangers always wish to know your partner better, like friends always respect each other, and like lovers, you are to be of like mind and intention. It sounds so simple but honestly, it's more difficult to do than you think.

I always thought I knew the man I married but after recent events, I wonder if truly one can ever know someone. What started as a simple day, turned out to be the start of a new chapter in my life.

To think it all started with a simple knock on the door days before our wedding.

It was December 23rd and I was the last one to get dressed. We were going shopping. The trip was going to serve two purposes; getting everyone Christmas presents and finalizing the décor for the wedding in 2 days.

Everyone was excited, unfortunately the excitement was short lived. At first I couldn't hear the knock. Dada was playing her Christmas jingles as loud as she could. I think it was her way of making sure we were all awake and no one was late. Everything was going smoothly until our unexpected guest forced us to delay our plans.

Uhuru went to open the door and walked back with him. He walked in, greeted us and we just stared. The others got over their shock quickly and went to hug him but I continued to stare. It had been nearly 8 years since I last saw him. We used to get along but now his presence makes me uncomfortable. His crude jokes implying Uhuru looked more like him than my husband had gotten the best of me. I disliked anyone playing such jokes, so I did my best to force separation between him and my family. Even though I knew he wasn't my favourite person in the world, he and my husband were best friends and basically brothers.

I knew his being here meant nothing but trouble. Whenever he was around, Rafiki would come home late, go out drinking and just be a guy. I wanted to pull him to the side, find out what he wanted and then tell him to leave but it was too late. Without warning I saw my husband fly past me and hug Hatari.

They were so happy to see each other, I suppose even though they hadn't seen each other in years, they were prepared to pick up where they left off. My husband looked at me and smiled signalling his wish for privacy with Hatari, it was a silent plea, like one a child makes when they wish to go and play.

I nodded and reminded him we made plans to go shopping as a family, so he could not ask to be excused but also he couldn't invite his bestie either. He promised he wouldn't take long, ordered one of the helpers to bring them some whiskey and then off they were to the study.

I don't know why I believed he'd keep his promise, after all Dada is the only member of our family is good at keeping time. After 3 hours of waiting, I told the others to go ahead without us and that we'd catch up to them. I waited another 30 minutes and then decided enough was enough. I went to the study and walked in on what was clearly an unpleasant conversation. Rafiki had his hands clenched in a fist and it was evident Hatari had decided to find comfort in the whiskey.

They both just stared at me. Hatari parted his lips to speak and I'm sure he wanted to request that I give them more time but the look I gave him made it clear that I was not in the mood to be tried with. He bowed in a mocking manner, stood up and left the room.

Rafiki sneered his eyes and then said "*You know that was rude right?*"

"*And making your family wait hours for you isn't? I don't like the person you become when he visits.*" I say with a tone of annoyance in my voice.

"*What did he do to you? All you've ever said is you think he is a bad influence but then again you've never approved of any of my friends.*", he responded.

I could tell he was getting irritated but so was I. Maybe I should have walked away but I also raised my voice. "*I approved of Shujaa... You are the one who just decided to cut ties with him, saying that you were doing it to make me happy. And don't raise your voice at me, I am your...*"

"Queen", he interrupted, "*You are Queen and I respect you but I didn't graduate top of my class from Harvard to have you undermine me. I am entitled to an opinion and to be respected too. I have kept quiet for years, living in your shadow and making sacrifices. Don't mistake my silence for stupidity, I know what has been going on around here.*"

I felt my hands form a fist, I knew things were getting out of hand and I needed to calm down. "*I was going to say I am your wife, not your Queen... But if you want to go that way, then this is me, your queen commanding you to tell him to leave. I don't have time for this shit. Your best friend is not going to ruin another Christmas for me.*"

He looked at me like a scolded child, ready to curse his mother but he just stared. He knew I was serious and just nodded to signal his acceptance. I turned to leave the room but Hatari barged in and said, "*I'm not leaving until you agree to help me. If you don't represent me, then I will inform the police of the little accident you had in college. The one that resulted in the unfortunate death of one of your college friend buddies. You promised you'd always take care of me, so don't change now.*" He poured himself another glass of whiskey and left the room.

I looked at Rafiki, confused and with my arms crossed waiting for an explanation. He took his glass and poured in some whiskey, he walked over and gave it to me.

He tilted his head and I knew he wanted me to drink it all up. I did as instructed and he filled the glass. He knew I wasn't a fan of alcohol, for him to want me to take down two glasses of whiskey meant whatever he had to say, was something I would not be able to take lightly.

He took me by the hand and led me to desk. He then sat me down in the chair and placed himself on the desk. *"I know you will have a lot of questions but I ask you listen carefully while I tell my story. In college I was not as put together as I am now.*

I was studying in a foreign country, I was alone and I needed a way to de-stress at times. So I turned to drugs. I'm not proud of what I did but it made life easier to bear. I only took it when I needed to forget. It worked really well, so when my other friends needed a release, I introduced them to it.

Unfortunately, one of my friends took too much and overdosed while he was in my room. I was a law student, so being caught with drugs wouldn't look good on my record.

My other friends and I decided it would be a good idea to hide the body away, until the end of exams. It would have been for a few days and then we would figure out some way to dispose of it. Later we had his body moved to a drug den in another town. Before anyone noticed that he was missing, his body was found and we got away with it. Newspapers said he overdosed and we got to graduate in peace.”

He paused for a moment and looked at me. I had no words and he could see that. He wanted to stop but I could tell there was still more, so I put my hand on his and he continued his story.

“Now the reason why Hatari is here, is because he is currently the prime suspect in a murder trial. He wants me to represent him, he says he is innocent.”

I was shocked and I couldn't believe what I was hearing.

"So let me get this straight, you failed to report the death of your college and now you want to be caught in a public murder trial? Defending Hatari, I understand but honestly how could you hide such a thing from me, your wife? You did drugs? You hid a dead body? I don't know who you are anymore. By the way, murder suspects don't get off without bail or special help. Shouldn't he be in prison?". I stood up and walked over to the window, I

couldn't believe this was the man I thought was perfect. The man I thought had no mistakes other than being married to a woman like me.

"Listen to the pot calling the kettle black", he responded. He poured himself another drink and continued. "I know Uhuru and Dada aren't my daughters. I've known for years. While you were in Paris after our wedding, I went for a full check-up and the doctor told me I couldn't have kids. He is a childhood friend, so he didn't mind keeping my daughters' heritage a secret. As for Hatari being out of jail, he told the police commissioner he knows you, so they brought him here and let him go. So you can either help me, or you can watch me do this without you but I will help him. When I was bullied, molested and had no one, Hatari was there. I owe him my life and I can't abandon him".

I rolled my eyes, *"I swear, it's almost like you are married to him".*

He got up and moved closer to me. *"I'm not married to him. I'm married to you, you are my wife and I love you but I need you to help and from now on, no more secrets please."*

He pulled my hair from my face and looked into my eyes. I couldn't remember the last time we were this close.

Something must have taken over him because the next thing I knew, he pinned me against the wall. He looked into my eyes and I felt his grip tightening around my arms. He was trying to hold himself together. It was the first time I had ever seen him so aggressive.

I felt my body heating up and bit my lower lip. I think he understood I wanted it. He smiled and turned me around. I felt his body press against mine and slowly his hand made it to my neck while his other hand lifted up my dress.

His hand moved slowly on my skin and I wondered why today was the day I decided to wear underwear. I pushed back so I could take it off but I felt him pin me down harder. He pulled my underwear to the side and put it all in without warning. This wasn't the man I was used to. Always gentle, always worried if I was enjoying it.

I let out a moan and quickly he put his hand on my mouth to silence me. With each thrust I wanted more of him, I wanted to tell him that but his hands were so tight around my neck I could barely breathe. Deeper and deeper he went until I felt my body reach its peak and explode all over him.

He went from a tame lion to a hunter eating his prey and God it felt so good. He put me on the table and spread me apart, it was magical. The feeling of his tongue dancing inside me while his hands took turns gripping and sliding across my thighs.

I had wanted this for so long, I didn't know it could feel this good. We made love all over the study and forgot that the rest of the family was probably waiting for us.

When we were done, we lay still on the floor with our backs against the wall and I felt safe cuddled in his arms. Afterwards I told him everything; about the accident, Imani, my confession and about Mfariji not knowing about the PI.

After hours of talking, we agreed to table everything and focus on coming up with a plan to help Hatari.

“So that’s what we are going to do right?”, I said.

“Yes. I think it could work. I see why you’re the one in charge”, he said while kissing me on my forehead.

“You were bullied and molested? Why did you never tell me any of that?”

“Well”, he said, “How do I bring that up? Men are supposed to be strong and these things don’t happen to us.”

“Really?”

“Come on Zee, you know how the world works. Women are the victims and men are the monsters. We can’t switch sides. So many people ignore how many boys are raped by their nannies or how many are molested by their aunts. We are the monsters and we do all the bad things”.

I wanted to argue with him but his words had some merit. Social media has shown me that men are afraid to discuss the traumas they have been through. Maybe it was guilt for misjudging him and painting his character wrong or pity that he felt he couldn’t open up to me about it, but I just sat quietly while he played with my hair. I wondered how many women had boyfriends or husbands who hid what they had been through. I saw with females that were survivors of sexual assault, they were broken and even though they spoke out about it, they were still breaking, so what of those who didn’t speak and what of those who felt their voices would fall to deaf ears?

“You said they moved the body? What do you mean? Who moved the body I asked?”, I asked.

“Your mother did Zee.”

“My mother? What do you mean my mother?”

“At the time, I wasn’t sure if I wanted to marry you. Turns out she had been spying on me, trying to make sure the suitor she chose for her daughter wasn’t a bad fit. She knew about everything. She offered to make everything disappear, if I agreed to marry you.”

I should have been upset. He didn’t marry me out of love or out of duty but to return a favour but what right did I have to be mad, I married him because I knew he couldn’t have children and I wanted to spite my mother. Someway, somehow, that woman is always at the centre of everything.

I had more questions and I wanted to know how much influence my mother had on him but before I could ask Uhuru came knocking on the door.

“Baby, what is it? Mommy and Daddy are busy right now? We are working”.

“Mommy. Come quick. Daddy’s friend is here.”

“Yes baby. I know your dad’s cousin Hatari is here baby.”

“No not him mama. Someone else is here”, said with excitement.

We got dressed and went to check who it was. When we got there I just stared, and couldn't believe it. He walked in and said *“Guys, the case is all over the news. I came as soon as I heard”*.

Rafiki replied to him, *“Shujaa, are you serious? It's only been a few hours since Hatari was released”*. I could tell her wasn't happy to see him.

“Good afternoon your majesty”, he said.

I looked at him and then at Uhuru. I couldn't believe the day I was having, first my husband's cousin was moving in and now Uhuru's father came unannounced.