

Peter: Get yourself shock absorbers of the highest quality.

Jane: My goodness! I'm only a young innocent woman. Are you enjoying scaring me?

Peter: Don't know a better show.

Jane: Hey Peter, be precise. My stomach is flooding with acid. What's your latest?

Peter: My dear friend, we've been buddies for two years now. I think it's time we upgrade the *software*.

Jane (*laughing*): Software for hearts? Is that your new research project? What exactly do you want from me Peter?

Peter: I want us to be lovers for two minutes of this pleasant lunch time. I know a day will be too long for you.

Jane: What has become of you? Is this some joke or ...

Peter (*interjecting*): Two minutes won't hurt your image my sweetest dear.

Jane: I guess you must be watching the programme, *Ridiculousness* on Digital Satellite Television (D.S.tv), *channel 130*. I bet you are.

Peter: I've lost the light. Turn the light on. What exactly is the behaviour of the world in love?

Jane: If that is so we need to sign an affidavit for love.

Peter (*laughing*): Why legalize a union of two minutes? That spells absurdity.

Jane: How can I spend my trust on you? What makes you think I won't get injured in those two?

Peter (*whispering*): Don't forget I've a tender heart, soft lips and soft hands. I'm rich in tenderness.

Jane: Ok then 'Mr. Richman', come close. Your wish is granted. Do you've a stop watch then?

Peter and Jane sit very close together on a bench near the tuck-shop in the busy industrial area. Jane dictates the show and refuses to kiss him. Yet Peter desperately wants a kiss. However, she allows him to put his hand around her slender shoulders and begin counting the seconds loudly. On one hand she wants Peter to be happy since he has had to endure some family discordant, but on the other hand she does not want to be taken advantage of. Sensing light-heartedness in the Peter show she allows herself to be carried along.

Peter: But you, my dearest, you shouldn't rush me. Haven't I asked for a mere two minutes?

Jane: You're running late dear. Two minutes are swift. Do whatever you've to do within the confines of our contract. Or else you'll pay tax for the added time.

Peter (*touching Jane's thighs awkwardly*): I'll be quick. But I need to reach the toes before my time elapses. But Jane, are you not going to be gentle with me?

Jane (*facing the blue sky with closed eyes*): Make it quick Peter. Eish you're running short!

Peter (*moving fingers meticulously*): Give me two extra mins my dear! This is sweeter than I thought my dearest of the dear.

Jane (*pushing Peter away with both hands*): I wish I was a goddess of time. Enough of your intrusion. Time up! I hope you've not planted bad lucky on me. I hope to get married one day so stop plundering my wealth.

Peter (*shaking his head in disbelief*): What's the meaning of all this? I've been very refined with you Jane. This is ridiculous yet absorbing. I want more of this honey.

Jane (*contorting her face*): You've invaded my intimate space already. A no-go area for most men. Now move away before Tariro discovers us.

Peter (*nervously*): What has Tariro to do with us? Are you telling me you flirt with him as well?

Jane (*laughing generously*):

I wish I could do more with him than just flirt. Honestly he's my crush. But sadly, despite being my workmate, he never looks in my direction. Every work day I dress seductively for him, but alas, he never comments on my beautiful outfits. I think if this trend continues I shall make an appointment with a *sangoma*. He's to fall for me. I can't imagine a life without him.

Peter (*pursing his lips*):

My goodness! When our two minutes dream is over, please let me know. So you take me for a toy or what? I thought we had some real connection, and this? I have carved your beautiful name into my heart.

Peter loves Jane seriously and feels quite jealous when Jane speaks this way. He has not openly shown this before, but he is trying the trick right now. He is testing the waters in a very funny way. He is convinced this will make Jane stop and think about a possibility of igniting an affair with him.

Jane:

Let me be very frank with you. We're in a new world where the unthinkable happens. Just look at the rate at which wealth is gained these days! Toes fetch a thick wallet. We're in a changing world and no one has the control of anything. You're only for breakfast (*making him more jealous*), and Tariro is my main meal!

Peter:

Look at you. Just listen to yourself! Don't tell me the new order has dissolved your heart?

Jane:

But why have you asked for a two minutes for our union? I thought that was a twinkling considering the way you're drooling over me. (*She begins laughing*)

Peter:

My cutie pie I did that to make you aware of the people's attitude towards affairs these days. There is lack of commitment. People want *instant* pleasure,

disengage and move onto the next *thrill*. It's no longer about love and commitment. It's about something else stashed in their binge-loving hearts.

Jane: You're not different either. You've used me at your own benefit. What makes you different? You've quenched your thirst by touching me. Tonight you're not going to sleep comfortably because of this excitement.

Peter: But deep down in your heart you know I've exquisite love for you. You'll never find that kind of love anywhere on this planet.

Jane: How do I know? You're too formal to my liking. I'm swept over by the unusual, the less routine, the path founder, you see. Anyway, thanks for the little gestures of gratitude.

Peter: Remember me when you miss your paradise. This life, our life, is full of re-runs. Unusual turns of life are not uncommon. No one is a master of life. I hope misfortunes stay away from you. Or else I will be the victor when your happiness mist up.

SCENE TWO

At Pamusha Investments everyone is back from lunch. This is Jane's busy work place where individuals mind their own businesses. It is also a cozy environment for both Jane and her boss Tariro. Tariro is lanky, broad-shouldered, thoroughly handsome middle-age man and the chief Accountant at Pamusha Investments, while Jane, a flawless beautiful young woman is the secretary in the Accounts Department. The two have a cordial relationship and Jane wants more out of this warm friendship. But Tariro has his foot pressed on the brake pedal. In the same spacious office, there is a third person, an angelic younger woman Tendai, and an

intern from the Great Zimbabwe University. The student is also a secret admirer of the accounts boss.

Jane (*smiling*):

Afternoon boss. How was your lunch? We missed you at the usual place.

Tariro (*tightening lips*):

I've very sharp eyes my dear. I know when I'm fooled. You enjoyed lunch with your man and you want to mollycoddle me with sweet words. I've one heart.

Jane (*placating*):

Oh you saw me with him. He's just a mere friend from this neighbourhood. A harmless male friend. You know he can never be my type.

Tariro (*crossed arms*):

And who's your unfortunate type?

Jane (*smiling charmingly*):

He's drooling over me right now.

Tariro:

Tell me (*smiling*) you're looking at your shadow. I've one weakness. I don't share a woman like beer or a cigarette. You were with him, so be it.

Jane:

What's the matter now? I told you he damaged nothing. I'm still sealed.

Tariro:

After that rough encounter with those oily, ragged nails of hands?

Jane:

But Sir, I know you to be a god of humility. What's wrong today?

Tariro:

Don't Sir me to your advantage. I've a bucketful of feelings like all of you as well.

Jane:

Ok I'm sorry from head to toe. Its half-time now. Time to change goal posts.

Tariro (*laughing generously*):

I don't have the *software* to change topics.

Jane:

Let's talk about marriage. It's a thorny issue to women of my age.

Tariro: Did I ever promise to marry you?

Jane: No, not at all.

Tariro: Then what's there on marriage to talk about, especially between you and me?

Jane: I want to know men's expectations on us, when we finally tie the knot.

Tariro: If you look at me you see a marriage counselor, right?

Jane: I'm sure you're more mature than that. You're more experienced and could be of great help to young women like Tendai and I. You know we always look up to you. I know very well that male chauvinism is not your mother tongue.

Tariro (*crossing arms*): Ok thanks for the sobering lecture. As for me, I expect my new wife not to have any experience of any sort. She should be *tabula rasa* on matters to do with the bedroom.

Jane: (*pursing her lips*) And what would you do with a greenhorn?

Tariro: Make it mature. Install new *software*. Animate it by giving it requisite bedroom skills.

Jane: And you boss, what value do you bring to the new marriage? Are you good at training to even match your billing?

Tariro: I think you agree with me, when going to an unknown place, someone should know the exact way.

Jane: I didn't know your personality had tinges of selfishness, injustice and stench arrogance.

Tariro: There's an aromatic smell of reality though. Like it or not.

Jane (*tightening lips*):

You belong to the Stone Age era. You're an unwanted remnant of this primitive period.

Tariro:

That's an opinion. Opinions are cheap. No one is poor in them.

Jane:

I guess you've little regard on the divorcees, single mothers, widows and other unfortunate women. They've no place in your life.

Tariro:

Why should I? Of course they've their own suitors and not in my scheme. Jane, don't you know that after the third or the fourth marriage, the womb gets tired?

Jane:

That's myopic. I don't know why you think this way. It's puzzling.

Tariro:

I just wonder why lobola is paid for a tired womb.

Jane:

With due respect my boss; I believe you're becoming reckless here. Lobola is an integral cultural issue which you can't just flag down. It manufactures bonds.

Tariro:

I remain unconvinced as to why it's paid in the first place.

Jane:

I thought you were a village boy. Now I wonder.

Tariro:

Of course I'm. I got the first impressions of life from an obscure village.

Jane:

So where did you get this *off-side* perception. It's part of our culture. No matter how learned you're or how foreign you're, you can't struck it off our Law. It's us. Partly of course, lobola is paid for the woman's ability to make babies for her new family and make strong family ties so that

families live in harmony. It has a holistic role.

Tariro (*laughing heartily*):

That's a conjecture that has outlived its mandate. It's a fact that lobola can't hold marriages. Given the divorce numbers, certificates don't certify marriages either. Women must learn to submit to their husbands. Their husbands invest a lot in them. As long as lobola is paid, then there is bound to be drama in marriage. The in-laws always expect the new wife to play the drum they are beating.

Jane:

I won't be in a marriage to fulfill anyone's wishes. I'll be there for my own enjoyment. But if my happiness happens to please other people, then, that'll be a bonus to me.

Tariro:

With such mentality, my dear Jane, spinsterhood will be your partner to the grave.

There is some silence as Tariro and Jane get busy with some paper work. However, Tendai is touched by their conversation and makes a moving contribution.

Tendai:

I've been following your arguments guys and I believe it's time to intervene. I'm at a loss of what to say. Lobola is our identity, just as good as being dark skinned and African. No one can reduce this fraction to the lowest terms. It's the final answer. The major problem we've as Africans is that we want to be light skinned like our former colonial masters. We think that being light skinned is being beautiful. One other sad scenario is that the West doesn't want to let go of us. They're always dictating issues on us. Respect this right. Honour that right. If you don't respect their ulterior rights no Aid for you. Why don't they just keep their kindness if it has such callous strings? Now

it seems as if Africans have lost their brains in the 'darkness' of their continent. Whatever ideas Africans have, they're dark and backward. The Whites don't have the right to influence our daily lives. Who are they anyway? After all, they don't own the template for this life.

After her unexpected contribution, Tendai is sent to buy some items in town and it is left for Tariro and Jane to continue chatting in the same office.

Tariro: What do you think of this young lady, Jane?

Jane: I doubt if she meant what she was saying. I don't think these are her ideas. It must be a product of a lecturer who wanted to win the hearts of the youth. She sounds older than her age then.

Tariro: Whatever it is Jane I don't care. This young woman has brilliant ideas. I love her with all my heart and soul. This is the kind of thinking that should be cultivated in our youth. I feel that as a nation we are losing our identity.

Jane: Do you believe this trash?

Tariro: Absolutely! She's won my heart, Jane. I want women with such robust mentality. Women with the capacity to coin new narratives. Inventers!

Jane: She's just a kid my boss. Tendai knows nothing of this life. How can you get carried away by the first steps of a toddler? She's wearing someone else's dress and it's a misfit.

Tariro: I love her. I've always loved her ever since she joined this company. But I've lacked the courage to tell her so. I Hope one day I'll let her know how I feel about her.

Jane (*lips biting*): Say you're joking right? You can't waste your valuable love on a university student. When this place is brimming with worthy contenders!

Tariro: I don't care about other women around here. I've genuine love for this young lady. Call her all sorts of names; I'll still waste my love on her. She's everything I love for a woman. The right looks, the proportional body, the kindness and the sharp mind. That's the mother of my children.

Jane: Tariro this is a serious issue. Haven't you heard what these university girls do at the Mashava campus? They take any man on board. Are you sure you want such a woman for a wife? Every man's mistress? If I were you, I wouldn't pick a woman from that stable.

Tariro: As I've said already, call her names that won't stop me from loving her. I know that it's jealous that informs all your responses.

Jane: Jealous as a word doesn't exist in my dictionary. Instead, it's concern on the first page. How could I, the goddess of righteousness, compete with prostitutes of this land? Have her at your own peril. I've done my part. After all you don't know this girl. Do you?

SCENE THREE

Accounts Office. Tariro has left for the boardroom meeting with the Chief Executive Officer. Tendai and Jane are in the Office alone and Jane is itching to discourage Tendai from falling for Tariro. But Tendai is not going to be easily pushed off her kill.

Jane: How old are you Tendai?

Tendai: I'm twenty-four going on twenty-five. Why is my age such an issue today?

Jane: Just wanted to make sure I guide you properly during your stay at this company.

Tendai: Why would you worry so much about me when it's just fate that brought us here? Ephemeral fate for that matter!

Jane: You're younger and would like you to avoid certain pitfalls that derailed our momentum when we were your age. Having to deal with men can be quite cumbersome when you're your age. Honestly, men may not be easy to handle at your age. Do you know how old our boss is?

Tendai: Why should that bother me?

Jane: It's very important for you to know.

Tendai: Please Jane will you make some sense? I don't see the reason why the mere age of Tariro should be a subject for our discussion. Are we not intruding in someone else's privacy? Where is your maturity Jane? Why do you enjoy gossiping a fine lady like you? After all, age is just a number and nothing more.

Jane: Not that gossiping is a hobby. I want you to know what you may be about to encounter. Our boss is fifty-three and when I had a conversation with him earlier on, he sounded smitten by you. He's fallen for you dear girl.

Tendai: What are you talking about? If that's true, why would he declare his love for me to you? That doesn't make any sense. Tariro is a mature man who wouldn't discuss such issues with you. Don't play games with me Jane. I've always learnt to mind my own business here. In any case, I've never crossed your path.

Jane: Don't get me wrong my dear sister. I'm not prying in your life. I just wanted to warn you though. Our life-road maybe littered with detours and yawning potholes.

Tendai: Warm me on what? I'm not as naïve as you are. I'm not your younger sister by the way. I'm not here to take Tariro from you if that's what you're thinking. Have him freely. I'm never one to snatch men. Feel free to associate with your boss.

Jane: No Tendai, I'm not accusing you of anything.

Tendai: Then, what're you doing? Giving a piece of advice that's already in pieces?

Jane: Hmm, just acting a big sister, like it or not.

Tendai: Have you seen me seducing Tariro?

Jane: No, not at all. It's only that I want you to be more careful with men.

Tendai: Why would you want me to be careful with Tariro if you're not interested in him?

Jane: He's my boss I wouldn't want an affair with him although he's still single.

Tendai: Stop lying to me Jane, I know you've ideas about him. It's only that he's taking long to tell you. Maybe you're not his type. It's acceptable that the truth can be bitter sometimes. But just learn to live with it. After all, matters of the heart are very tricky.

Jane: How could I've ideas about a man as old as my father? It won't work. Would you get involved with such a man?

Tendai: That's something that will never bother me. If that man has genuine love for me, I wouldn't mind marrying him even if he is eighty-five. For me age difference is not a barrier. There is no age limit in love! I would call a husband any age as long as we love each other. By the way Jane, love isn't a skill that is acquired with time. It springs up naturally. For me love is an inevitable calling. No one should tell you who to love and who not to love. It's magical. The moment you begin considering a variable that's the instant you lose it. That's my taste for love. It's my involuntary surrender to another human being. It's not imposed or coerced. And, if there's an issue I'll be unapologetic about; it's defending my taste for love.

Jane (*confused*):

So you wouldn't mind dating Tariro despite his age?

Tendai:

Why on earth would I mind? If he's the one my heart leaps for, so be it. Who can cool a hot spring from underneath? Even if he enters this room, this minute and declares his love for me, I'll sail with the gale without trepidation. I don't know why people craft parameters in love. That'll be my heart's choice; my own taste for love. No one should ever influence my sense of taste. Listen, Jane, Tariro is one man I can marry without a second thought. The sweetness of the sugars in an orange and a pine apple differ and so are our tastes for love. The sky isn't blue for everyone.

Jane (*feeling quite ashamed*):

I wish I was that strong-willed.

Tendai:

I guess you're materialistic. Your love or conscience is informed by it. But why would the able-bodied marry the physically challenged if not for love? Why would you marry someone simply because you feel sorry for him or her? Everyone has a suitor. I repeat, the sky isn't blue for everyone. In love, things happen instinctively and it's difficult to fight off the oozing feeling. This happens to those who experience that genuine love. Loving is involuntary. I'm not sure how it's with you.

Jane: (*grinning*)

What colour is genuine love?

Tendai: (*laughing*)

It's the colour only visible to the beholder. A genuine lover has the sensor.

Jane:

I'm sure you're not the only one who is aware of the existence of true love. Why are there so many broken marriages? What's wrong with society today?

Tendai:

If you want my opinion, here it is. People don't get into marriages with true love. The majority of us are driven by some forces outside the heart to love. Ulterior motives inform most marriages. As a result, these unions break into shreds with time. It's either one or the other, or both are in it for selfish gains. Genuine love is selfless. It's always eager to serve, to appraise and to submit. It's an unshakable ground! It's unfortunate that nowadays people consider money ahead of genuine love. This world is now poorer in love. Look around, riches are *ringing tones* for most people's cell phones. You see. Most people are pretentious. Genuine partners are scarce if you ask me. Only yesterday I read in *The Mirror* that the Masvingo Magistrate presided over ten divorce cases in just one court session. That's Masvingo. What of Harare, Bulawayo or Gweru? The numbers could be frightening.

Jane:

Tendai, that's alarming. If you think about that seriously, you'll remain single till the end of the world. What's happening to us? What was the divorce rate in pre-colonial Zimbabwe? People argue that times have changed. Yes, time's never static. But should that be enough ground to endorse immorality?

Tendai:

Nobody wishes to know about a buried past. After all, time is an undertaker of memories. It's the *now* that gives us sleepless nights. When it comes to love, the world is plodding in darkness. I wish *love* was a sellable commodity. I would buy it for this needy world. It's so sad; this world devotes its energy to other issues that are quite petty.

SCENE FOUR

Knock-off time at Pamusha. Tendai is going home to Morningside. She gets a lift in Tariro's Toyota Corolla. Tariro is going to Morgenster Hospital so is going to drop her at her parents' place.

Tariro: Afternoon Tendai. How has been work?

Tendai: I can't complain.

Tariro: So you're learning fast.

Tendai: Yeah, with your help of course.

Tariro: What do I do? You're focused at your work. You don't need a supervisor. You're just an amazing worker who's always eager to learn.

Tendai: Is that so? I don't see that in me. Are you sure you are talking about Tendai? I feel so flattered.

Tariro: I'm not flattering anyone here. I'm just being honest. I actually I admire your personality.

Tendai (*nervously*): Really? Please stop that, I'm getting goose pimples already.

Tariro: Please don't. You're just a special individual that's all. Right Tendai, do you like surprises?

Tendai (*giggling shyly*): I do, but I've never been surprised by a workmate before. What surprise do you've in mind? I'm getting uncomfortable, in fact, NERVOUS.

Tariro: Just a pleasant surprise from an admiring workmate. I want you to accompany me to Morgenster Hospital. I want to go there and see my mother who isn't feeling well. She's been hospitalized for the past five days and I've not had the chance to see her.

Tendai (*smiling*): Who am I to meet the mother of my boss? My own mother will kill me for coming home late. Why me?

Tariro (*scratching his head*): My mother likes surprises and I believe if she sees you with me, she's going to be healed instantly. She loves people around her. I'll tell you more after meeting her. So are you going with me or not?

Tendai: Umm this is really tricky. I've never been used as a panacea to someone's ailment before. I doubt my efficacy in this scenario. I feel like an animal being driven to a snare.

Tariro: Let's give it a try, who knows you could be the magic potion my dear mother requires.

Tendai (*contemplating*): I feel quite uncomfortable. I wish we were seeing someone out of hospital. Alright, if I happen to cure someone, so be it.

SCENE FIVE

After Tendai agreed to accompany Tariro to Morgenster Hospital, they drive in silence. Tendai is in deep thoughts all the way to Morgenster. She is not sure if she is taking the right step in her life. Tariro is happy that he managed to convince Tendai at short notice. However, despite the success, he fails to break the ice. He cannot find a way to tell Tendai that he loves her. Meanwhile Tendai is convinced that this is not just a trip to meet and heal Tariro's mother. She knows the whole trip is just a lame excuse by Tariro to make sure he is with her alone so he can launch a 'love scud missile' without any disturbance. She feels a little awkward the route Tariro has taken. They arrive in Morgenster to a surprisingly hearty welcome from Tariro's mother. Despite being told that Tendai is simply a workmate, she goes on to address her as her daughter-in-law. Tariro fiercely protests, but the old woman does not barge. She tells them categorically that if Tendai has no future plans with her son then she has no business being in Morgenster at her hospital bed. Tariro's mother is thrilled to see Tendai and cannot control her tears of joy. But Tariro remains cautious. He does not want his mother to scare away the bird before it lays eggs for him. Consequently, he excuses himself on behalf of Tendai and the two leave the hospital to a shower of blessings from the mother.

Tariro (*feeling a little awkward*):

I guess that was quite some experience for you Tendai. How did you like the excursion?

Tendai:

Quite insightful. I wish I could write a short story about it all. Interesting outing. I admire your mother's love. I'm challenged.

Tariro (*happily*):

Are you so sure about it all? (*he looked at her and began laughing*) And how did you find my mother?

Tendai (*with much interest and warmth*)

Honestly, you've a flamingly wonderful mother who's easy to be with. She is a lovely and likable human being. I thoroughly enjoyed her company and want more time with her.

Tariro:

I'm glad to hear that. I thought you were going to get hurt by it all. Now Tendai, words fail me. I don't know how to thank you for what you've done for me. All what's left for me is to say Tendai, you're such an amazing person. I wasn't aware of this other unique side of you. I've fallen for you my dear. I believe we can make an ideal couple.

Tendai;

I doubt if that could work.

Tariro:

Why are you skeptical?

Tendai:

There're a thousand issues to consider.

Tariro (*looking shocked*):

A thousand? Tell me these hindering issues.

Tendai:

The most apparent one is the huge age difference. Society won't take us seriously. We'll be an outcast couple. Doubt if we'll find sympathizers even in our immediate families. Is our society that accommodative? Even in Europe I doubt if we could live in harmony.

Tariro:

I get your genuine concerns. But these days age difference is no longer that contested an issue. Isn't it that they say culture is dynamic. Society is getting used to such scenarios. The real issue should be between us and noone else. That is, can we've enough love to overcome the challenges posed by our relatives? It's basically us. If our hearts are in phase and strongly so, then we've fewer problems because with genuine love for each other, we're insulated against any destructive force. The trick is having genuine love. Genuine love doesn't come second in any situation. All problems arise because of lack of it; when you are half-heartedly in it. Genuine love is selfless. It's all conquering. The problem is, most people don't have this special gift and so fake it. So my dear, age is out here. Are you ready to love enough? Do you've the capacity to grow your love? If your *height* in love is below sea level then the union will always experience uncomfortable heat waves.

Tendai (*clapping her hands contentedly*):

It's the first time to hear such an argument. Maybe I haven't seen much in life, but I believe you've a valid point. Yeah it should rest on the magnitude of love the given person has. Ok we can say age is out. It is the same as marrying a physically challenged person. For instance, marrying someone with no hands, no eyes, no legs etc. These guys will always have suitors and no one can challenge you for making such a choice. That would be outrageously discriminative. Pure stigmatization. So should we look up to such a society in modern age? It's a NO with three limbs. But now Tariro, if I may ask who this Tariro is and has he got this ability to love

unconditionally to eternity? Does he possess the love muscles that are immune to fatigue?

Tariro: Tariro is a very humble man, always eager to show enough love to the deserving. Giving enough love is his nature. The man is poor in words but loaded with actions. What I can say for now is, give him the life-time chance to feed you with love. Put him to test and reap a good yield. The man is as genuine as the sun; it never fails to rise.

Tendai: Put him to test? How is that possible without getting emotionally bruised?

Tariro: Your emotions are safe with me dear girl. I'm not a gifted speaker, but an action man.

Tendai: How safe is this safety you're harping about? I'm looking for an all rounder in love. A man ready to go tireless in a union. Oh, by the way Tariro we can't possibly make it together. Jane will certainly kill me because she loves you dearly and will never allow our friendship to flourish.

Tariro: Who is Jane? She is just one materialistic woman I work with. I've no feelings for her and never will. I don't know where you get this from. There're only two of us here and here you're talking about our workmate. What has she got to do with us?

Tendai: She advised me to leave you alone.

Tariro: She's the one who should leave us alone.

Tendai: I'm confused.

Tariro: Don't get stressed with jealous people such as these.

Tendai: I've every reason to worry. I'm a young woman who is at the centre of a hot issue. I

don't know which side to take now. Jane or Tariro? I don't know what to do with you.

Tariro:

Don't worry much my dear. That's life. Let me give you a piece of advice. If you want to enjoy this short life, just learn to be free and to be serious. Free in that you don't restrict yourself on matters of the heart. Let it flow. Enjoy what you've at hand. And enjoy it to the full. Never pass an opportunity that's capable of making you happy. Be serious in that when you work, work and forget that there's ever happiness on earth. Work to achieve all the goals you've set yourself to do. Set a trend and desire big things. But always remember that life has a funny side too that should be celebrated. Enjoy life while you've. And always work hard when you can (*emphasizing with a clenched fist*). But also remember to reward yourself after the hard work. Enjoy every possible moment even with those people you are not expected to share life with. That's the life that brings out the greatest joy. Finding pleasure and comfort from unexpected quarters is the success story. A massive achievement in this short yet eventful life. This life is a dream, sail with the gale. Even if you look at issues soberly, you're bound to see surreal images. That's the sum total of what life really is. So arrest all barriers and enjoy the dream of your life. That's the correct inclination to this life until it comes to its expected demise. Of course needless to remind you that everything on earth has an expiry date tag. The most sobering fact ever. So this little time you call life has a solid end. YOU have an ending! And so while the sun rises from the East, have time to laugh (*laughing heartily*), to smile, to hug, to love and to be

loved. Swim in the bubbling air of life. Fly in cool waters and be whatever brings joy to your unique life.

Tendai: Wow! Are you done with the advice? I don't know how to feel about you. You also want my valuable advice? You should do well as a pastor. Start your own church and will help you with the logistics to bring congregants. *(Laughing heartily)*

Tariro: I wouldn't want to mislead the masses. They've enough on their hands already.

Tendai *(laughing)*: But there is money involved. Lots of it. We can make money *(cupping her mouth with her right hand)*

Tariro: I maybe a sinner but wouldn't want to be a charlatan. Sorry this is not my area. So what do you think of my advice?

Tendai: I wouldn't be a woman if I'm not impressed.

Tariro: Implying?

Tendai: Have you lost your sense of hearing?

Tariro: Not sense of hearing, but lost the skill of reading between words. What's the meaning?

Tendai: I love you more than the words can put it.

Tariro *(leaning over to kiss her)*: Wow! Let me drink a glass of milk to this one.

Tendai: And let's share the milk.

SCENE SIX

It is quarter to seven in the evening. Tariro and Tendai are still on the road back to Masvingo City. Tariro decides to take Tendai to her parents' place since it is getting dark. He agrees to meet her parents and to make an obvious explanation as to why Tendai is this late in coming

home from work for she has never done so. The two lovers meet Tendai's mother at the spacious verandah and they sit on the steel garden chairs in this well lit verandah.

Tendai (*nervously*):

Good evening mom. How has been your day? Meet Mr. Matake, my boss at Pamusha Investments.

Mrs. Mbeu (*stretching her hand to Tariro*):

Nice to meet you and good evening. Welcome to our humble home. How's Tendai at work? I hope she's getting the best from you guys.

Tariro (*feeling quite uncomfortable*):

Good evening. Nice to meet you too. Tendai I must confess she's an exceptional learner. We're giving her the necessary experience she requires.

Mrs. Mbeu:

And so what brings her boss here? Is there any trouble?

Tariro:

Oh, no. Everything is fine. I only drove her here because she had been held up by some pressing issues at work and so my boss (*smiling*) instructed me to drive her here since he felt it was a little late for her to catch lifts to this place.

Mrs. Mbeu:

Oh, how thoughtful your boss is. He's indeed a rare breed. I hope I'm not showering him with the praises he doesn't deserve (*she begins laughing*)

Tariro:

It's nothing more than that Mrs. Mbeu. He's a good boss for sure. And at this time, I guess I've done my part and should be going.

Mrs. Mbeu:

Why in such a hurry? Dinner is ready you can join us.

Tariro:

That would be wonderful, but my services are required elsewhere for now. Thank you. If you'll allow it, I would love to call again (*he begins smiling*)

SCENE SEVEN

It is around ten o'clock in the evening at the Mbeu homestead. Mrs. Mbeu can't sleep. She enters Tendai's bedroom with a very worried look. She is disturbed by Tendai's association with Tariro, who seems closer to the age of her father. She hopes to discourage her from getting too close to him.

Mrs. Mbeu (*knocking at Tendai's bedroom door*): Sorry to intrude into your privacy and it's late at night my dear girl. It's only that I want some clarification on one or two issues. Who's this Mr. Matake, your boss? What does he want from a young lady like you? Does he see a potential wife in you? I just couldn't sleep before I hear from you.

Tendai: He's just a mere boss at work. Nothing more and nothing less. Why should you be worried mom? I'm a grown woman now, wise in the ways of this world. Stop worrying or else we'll lose you to hypertension in the morning of the year. He came here out of care. He's a standout boss.

Mrs. Mbeu: Be very careful with these old men. Their interest could be to suck the nectar and make the honey elsewhere.

Tendai: Mom, men are made from the same cloth, whether old or young. They've the same instincts like those of animal bulls. So mom leave age out of this equation.

Mrs. Mbeu: I'm devastated you think you know men. Don't ever come to me complaining about any of them. I've done my part as a mother. Men are wind.

Tendai:

With due respect, mom, you've a wealth of experience, but I doubt if you know everything about men as you claim to do. Men, like women, will always be different. Honestly, there're men who are genuine and those that are dishonest. But age isn't a factor here. Men of all ages cheat. Same with women. It's who you're that matters. Any age can be a bad choice.

Mrs. Mbeu:

I'm afraid you'll leave him once he gets older and this will be against our culture. Before the advent of the white man, divorce without any good cause was a taboo. It was an anathema. Marriages had to work no matter what. That was binding. Yet these days, people go in and out of marriage like they do in a public toilet. They've lost touch with our inheritance; our identity. Yet there is a reason why the geography of our country is African. A reason why Africa has its own seat on earth and not inside Europe or America. It has to do with identity—that sense of independence. Hence external influence should be minimum. Maybe when it comes to trade on goods, yes, let Africa trade with the rest of the world, but not to interfere with the internal affairs of Africa. Every nation has to mind its own business if the nation is not greedy. What values from Africa have the West accepted? We know they've accepted our cheap labour. What else? Our identity is clear, we're Africans and the white man's education can't change that. We can't embrace everything the West throws at us. We remain largely rural African. What is the West? So people should be wary of bringing the whole world to our village. Our village is too small to host a whole world.

Tendai:

With due respect mom, this shouldn't be the platform for politics. We're not politicians. We're discussing the essence of love, mom. When it comes to love, mom, let my dream speak to us. I've my own taste for a husband. Of course I know it only too well that it's never easy to find a genuine man in a world littered with deceit. But I believe good men with husband qualities are there. There're factors to consider when one is looking for a husband, but advanced age isn't one of them. Good examples of such marriages are countless in this world. I even understand the pressure that can be felt by the younger partner. But this can be true for any couple. Of course later challenges are there, but these issues are not uncommon in every union. No one is safe anywhere. I'll never leave my choice, because I was never persuaded by anything external to pick it.

Mrs. Mbeu:

My worry is about you my dear. Be very careful with these men.

Tendai:

Never lose your sleep again mom. You know I've always been careful. But mom, do you still remember what happened with the Reverend's son that you advised me to date? Do you still recall the damage caused by your concern?

Mrs. Mbeu:

Oh, him, that was a monumental mistake. I'll never repeat that again. Yeah, old people are not always wiser. Please never remind me of that one again.

Tendai:

But you're at it again! Are we ever going to move on?

Mrs. Mbeu:

My dear daughter you don't understand what it means to be a mother. Wait till you

have a child. From now on I'll be silent on matters that concern you.

Tendai:

I've not imprisoned you. Take a lesser role in matters of the heart. Give me the freedom of choice. After all he'll be my husband and mine alone. Take Clara's case, her parents forced her to do medicine at the University of Zimbabwe and what happened? She's an accountant as we speak. As if that was not enough they arranged her wedding with that filthy rich young man from Harare and where are they now? And so when we analyse these events we see that children should be allowed to make choices in life with minimum interference from parents. You've a part to play but let that be advisory in nature.

Mrs. Mbeu:

Are we not changing our norms and values. Parents must be involved in all aspects where their children are concerned. We don't allow that independence in an African setting. My daughter, have you heard me? Let's be mindful of not bringing the whole world to our small village. How can we feed and clothe the world in our obscure village?

Tendai:

Good night mom. I've work to do tomorrow. Let me not remind you that this mantra has lost its virtuous lustre in present life. Hands-off my private life!

Mrs. Mbeu (*looking down in shame*):

Looking at the changes sweeping across the African continent, we can see the continent's dilemma. It's now difficult to go back to Africa. Africa, being perceived the weakest of the continents, is on teeming crossroads. Who will make the decision for our motherland? People no longer care about what comes out of their mouths or what happens in their lives. Someone has

deliberately tempered with the definition of culture. Where do we belong? Africa or Europe? It's maddening to imagine that we have a 'hanging' culture. What that means no one knows. I thought I was raising a family with African values, now if asked of these, I'll definitely fail. We tend to like what we are not.

SCENE EIGHT

Jane and Peter are at their usual 'waterhole' and its lunch time. The patrons of this Jasmine Tuckshop are plenty and are always noisy. Before the letter 'J' on the tuckshop name tag, a picture of a red heart is drawn and after the letter 'p' another red heart of similar size is drawn as well. The two symbols of the heart are glowing red and make the name tag really beautiful with the two words in white. Most people mechanically call this usually busy tuckshop—*JASMINE*. Today, the two friends sit on their usual rough bench and talk about life in general. Peter has a dream and is certain that time is ripe for it to flower.

Peter:

My sweetheart, how are things these days?

Jane (*hesitating and uneasy*):

My life is just a heap of unsolved social equations. It's becoming more of a huge burden. All along I thought the mist was clearing.

Peter (*giving Jane a pat on her shoulder*):

No need to get frazzled with the twist and turns of this transient social life. Enjoy what's on the table and ignore everything else. If I may ask, what's taking off your steam?

Jane (*concerned*):

My love life is in shambles. Tariro is taken. Tendai has snatched him from my palms. I've to defend my love; my dream.

Peter (*very humbly*):

Oh is that so? He was never yours sweet girl. And he's in any way not your world. Forget about him. He isn't a life giver after all.

Jane (*with a languishing look*):

It's not easy to ignore someone you're secretly in love with. Maybe time will heal my wound. But I'm going to make their affair difficult. Or else they've to move away from this place.

Peter:

There's no need for that. What does Tariro have that some of us don't have. You've a good life away from him. Why don't we take it up from here?

Jane:

Let's change the subject. I'm frazzled by all this.

Peter:

I'm also not comfortable with the idea that another man is preferred ahead of me. In any case what's the logic for a postponed match? But what's happening in our country?

Jane:

What're you referring to Peter?

Peter:

Look at the name tag of this tuckshop.

Jane:

What about it?

Peter:

It has an English name—JASMINE! Why not a name in one of the local languages? A name that speaks to the majority of the Zimbabweans. A name with a history and a familiar culture. Remember, names are part of our lives because they define us. Names influence our lives.

Jane:

Don't you know that the jasmine tree is a symbol of sweet, romantic love? The owner is sharing love and many people have found love here. I don't see anything wrong in it.

Peter:

Of course English is our vehicle of communication at various platforms, but we should also promote our own wherever possible. Remember they say a language carries culture. I'm an African and strongly

want to remain so. It being a symbol, it's just the Whiteman's figment. It's strange that people still believe in the strange sound of English names or words. They think English names woo customers just by their mere sound. I continue to wonder why our fathers still give us these English names such as Peter or Jane. These names don't speak to us and our way of life save that they're a colonial legacy. Just colonial tags. We're an engine that is misfiring after an overhaul.

Jane:

But is it possible to remain African through and through in this life where the West is acting big brother in all spheres of our lives. The West always thinks for us. It packages our lives. Do we know the distance we have travelled into the white woods? Do we remember our way back to the African huts? I wonder who, in Africa, are African enough nowadays. The African has been undergoing some metamorphosis since colonialism. But is this change permissible?

Peter:

You can say that again. Currently, as Africans, we have a problem we're not aware of. Someone must spell it out. On a different note, there is an audit going on at my organization, and thus, today I've more time away from work.

Jane:

It's the same scenario at my work place. I've to go there at around 4p.m. But I wish there was an audit on people's social life as well to see who dates who at companies.

Peter (*surprised*):

Why would you want such an audit to be instituted in people's lives?

Jane: At work places, some people are taking advantage of subordinates. Bosses are abusing offices in the name of skewed love.

Peter: It's a crime that has been normalized. A social construct that's a sad episode in our lives. Time to weed it out.

Jane: Yeah, it's not fair for old women or men to take advantage of the young.

Peter: I don't think that's the real issue here. What needs to be done is to empower the less privileged; the young and the vulnerable. The prey.

Jane: Is it possible to influence someone on matters of the heart? These love feelings spring out from within and no one knows their source. The feelings are natural. It's difficult to package feelings for individuals. It's an intricate web. Individuals have different tastes, very varied and very weird tastes. No common tastes. I wish life was uniform and yet it's just a pipe dream. This world will never reach a consensus on matters of love and sexuality. Is it realistic to like and love the same?

Peter: Our lives are becoming more and more complicated because as Africans, our centre has been moved. But whatever has happened to us, in the end, the choice is that of the individual to make. Who has the power to control the individual's feelings?

Jane: That's our biggest challenge, I guess.

Peter: I like it when you say love feelings have no boundaries. Not even the lover has control over them. They're an enigmatic hot springs. I wish I could magnetize your feelings.

Jane:

Is that really possible?

SCENE NINE

Jane and Tendai are in the accounts office. Tariro has travelled to Zvishavane on company business. He is away for the whole day and so the two women have the big office to take care of. Jane wants to make Tendai feel that she has made a wrong choice in love, but she doesn't know how best to do it.

Jane (*feeling uneasy*):

Good afternoon Tendai. How busy are you today? I've something personal to discuss with you.

Tendai (*surprised*):

What's it this time? You always come up with issues that are controversial.

Jane:

Why should you always evaluate me negatively? I'm a very reasonable and likable lady. You don't find many of us in Zimbabwe.

Tendai:

Okay *Miss Reasonable*, what's worrying you?

Jane:

The issue is I'm dating someone on Facebook. And I'm deeply in love with him.

Tendai:

With due respect Jane, that's scandalous. How could you do such a weird thing? There's a danger of people misrepresenting themselves, Jane. It's easy to be fooled on such platforms. For the record, the platform isn't bad, but it offers evil elements of our society an easy opportunity to disguise.

Jane:

Of course that's a potent argument, but where don't we get cheated? This life is littered with potential 'quicksand' platforms. And those willing to give away genuine love

are the most vulnerable. You can't trust anyone, anywhere; it's a fact these days. I can't even trust myself because of what my heart desires. But I've to take huge risks to achieve objectives of my heart. The demands of town life are monumental, especially to us the youth. Having lots of money is a must!

Tendai:

I thought I had you to trust here. Now I can't do that anymore. How can I, when you've little faith in yourself? But sometimes we give ourselves unnecessary pressure. Why do you need to compare yourself with someone else? Be YOU. That's the problem we've with today's youth---wanting to be what they're not.

Jane:

You're not wiser my dear.

Tendai:

What do you mean by that? I'm not hooked to any online dating.

Jane:

All along I thought you were a smarter young lady until now.

Tendai:

At least I make better choices.

Jane (*laughing generously*):

Is a fifty-three year old man a better choice?

Tendai:

I don't understand what you're hinting at. Stop speaking in riddles.

Jane:

Don't tell me you've forgotten your new love already! I thought you were head-over heels in love Tendai.

Tendai:

What crime have I committed?

Jane:

You know it only too well Tendai. Tariro is more than twice your age. Anyway, putting the huge age difference aside, what qualities attract you to him?

Tendai: Tariro is a precious mineral. He's as genuine as the sun, caring, patient and a god of empathy. How many do you know? I can't ask of a better lover. He isn't a Halley's Comet type.

Jane: I can see you are good at building castles in the air. But I'm not sure if Tariro has such sublime qualities, knowing him the way I do.

Tendai: I smell the stench here. You're jealous sister. Why don't you be mature enough and bless my bubbling affair.

Jane: Why would I envy an aged horse? A lot will be incongruous between us. I can't bless your affair because I don't know how committed Tariro is to you. Feelings change like weather. Sometimes being genuine is not even enough in a relationship. Love alone is also inadequate.

Tendai: Say anything there's about my involvement with Tariro, but this is not going to destroy my will to love him. My taste for love will not change. I believe his flavor will be the same as well. When love is enough, protection is automatic. Love is not despotic.

Jane: Okay sister, you can love your Tariro all you want, but don't do it blindly. Men are MEN.

Tendai: Women are also WOMEN. I've working eyes and ears. I'm happy with Tariro and my feelings shoot to 100GB.

Jane: I was only trying to help without any ulterior motive. But it seems I can't reach you. Over the years we've seen grown women crying because of bad choices in love.

Tendai:

True, this crying has been there since time immemorial. But we can't use the same bus ticket in a journey.

Destinies are usually different

Such is our mortal life

Life is an unpredictable wind

That carries people's destinies

Some travel to presidency

Some travel to prosperity

Some travel to poverty

Others travel to death

Others travel to nowhere

Such is our transient life

We are all unsure of the landing

But should we lose hair?

And abandon life?

Let us swim energetically to the shore end

After all, choices carve chances

For now, I've clutched my choice

SCENE TEN

Wednesday October 2022. Tendai has been hospitalized at Masvingo Provincial Hospital for the past three days. The ailment is still unknown. It is also Tariro's second visit to the provincial hospital. He is devastated to see his love in such a state. But many of his workmates, including Jane, do not share his sorrow. At the hospital's main gate, Tariro is stopped by very concerned Great Zimbabwe University female students.

Tafadzwa: Afternoon Sir.

Tariro (*very worried*): Good afternoon ladies. What can I do for you?

Tanatswa (*looking sternly into Tariro's face*): Are you Mr. Matake from Pamusha Investments?

Tariro: Yeah, that's me. Am I under arrest?

Tatenda (*smiling*): Not for now, but definitely at some point.

Tariro: Are you plain clothes policewomen? May I know the crime I've committed?

Fungai (*laughing generously*): The five of us are social watchdogs. We police the Masvingo community socially.

Tariro: Is this a joke or something? Please ladies, if you've nothing sensible to say excuse me.

Fungisai (*getting in front of Tariro*): We understand you're bothering our Tendai. Please leave her alone. She does not need an aged man like you in her youthful life.

Tariro: Who're you to judge? What qualification on love do you've? Do you've a doctorate in love? What was your thesis?

Tafadzwa: We're very worried Sir, about you and Tendai. Are you the *daddy-boyfriend* of hers?

Tariro: It's very surprising to hear that from you girls. Can you've a control of your heart's desires? Tendai made her choice out of her own volition and I don't see her here. She never made the decision at gun point. I don't see why you should lose hair over this matter.

Tanatswa: We've every reason to worry because Tendai is engaged to another man at Great Zimbabwe University.

(all the girls in unison): She is ENGAGED. Tendai has a youthful loyal boyfriend!

The girls leave in a hurry, leaving the bemused Tariro to rue his association with Tendai

SCENE ELEVEN

Jane and Tariro are in the Accounts Office at Pamusha Investments. Tariro is furious for he thinks that whatever happened at the hospital gate is the work of Jane's jealous. He is itching to tell Tendai what happened the other day but since she is ill he has no way of telling her.

Tariro: What's wrong with you Jane? I never thought you could stoop so low.

Jane: What're you talking about?

Tariro: You're filthy jealous Jane. You don't want Tendai to marry me. You thought I would do it with you.

Jane: With due respect Sir, don't ever involve me with your issues. You got yourself a younger lover and I wonder how that should involve poor Jane.

Tariro: Don't be smart dear girl. You sent five girls to attack me on my involvement with Tendai. You're a goddess of jealous. How could you embarrass me like that?

Jane: I don't know anything about those girls. Are they not people concerned about your queer relationship with a minor? That is your baby Sir, not mine.

Tariro: Jane, don't ever think that this issue is going to end well for you. I'm going to tell the CEO that you're incompetent and need to be replaced. If that fails you'll have to look for an alternative office.

Jane: I've told you I've nothing to do with that. I'm not the one who instructed you to abuse your office. Make further and thorough investigations. Maybe your girlfriend is involved in all this. Why would I shed a tear for losing a tired horse?

Tariro (*coming close to Jane*): Mind your language young lady. I can tear you into pieces right in this office. I wouldn't mind getting behind bars after hitting you hard.

Jane: Do whatever pleases you Sir. But the police camp isn't far from here. After all, beating me wouldn't erase the fact that you abused your office.

Tariro (*very furious*): Had it not been the fact that Tendai isn't feeling well I could've beaten you to a pulp.

Jane: But you know very well you'll not escape jail. Even without hitting me you can still see the bars. I can pretend that you've raped me. You don't need anyone to remind you how hot these rape issues are these days. Old man, you'll rot in jail and widow your fiancée as early as today. (*She began laughing with tangible sarcasm*)

SCENE TWELVE

At the hospital again and Tariro is seeing Tendai. Two young men arrive at Tendai's hospital bed. Tariro is there and has brought her flowers and fruits. The younger men greet him politely, but they do not leave him to talk to Tendai in privacy. They sit on Tendai's bed and crack jokes on love in general. Tariro doesn't laugh, but Tendai does to the extent of shedding tears of joy. The young lads enjoy the moment much to Tariro's chagrin. They wait till the visiting hour is over and confront him at the gate just like the girls did during Tariro's other visit.

Chenjerai: Excuse us sir, are you Tendai's father?

Tariro: No, I'm a colleague of hers.

Takura: Are you her only male colleague?

Tariro: There're many male colleagues.

Chenjerai: Why are you the only one visiting her? We saw you the other time as well.

Tariro: Do I need to answer this one? Is it a crime to be the only concerned male colleague? Suppose others don't care.

Takura: Old man, we're dry behind the ears. We understand you're imposing yourself on her. You're forcing issues here because Tendai doesn't love you. Instead, you're corrupting her with your money. But who said money can buy true love?

Tariro: Young man do you know what you're talking about?

Chenjerai: Yes, we know exactly that you're abusing the young girl. For your own information, Tendai is Takunda's girlfriend and they're engaged. And here you're spoiling your children's affair. Are you not ashamed of that? Do you think you've made a good choice? Is that a good taste for love?

Tariro: Good or bad choice, that has nothing to do with you. Are you Tendai? You've no right to intervene in her affairs. We all have different tastes for love. You can't love for someone else. People's *lovebuds* are very unique.

Takura: Whatever you're saying is cheap stuff. We're taking this issue to your bosses and later to Tendai's parents.

(The two younger men leave the hospital gate quickly and leave Tariro more confused than ever before. He resolves to investigate the source of the problems he is facing.)

SCENE TWELVE

It's a cold morning at Pamusha Investments. Tariro is in the office of the human recourse manager, Mr. Tambudzai and is extremely angry. He wants Jane to be fired or to be removed from the Accounts office with immediate effect. Hatred has been brewed between them to the extent that they cannot share an office and yet they have been the best of friends over the years.

Mr. Tambudzai:

Calm down Tariro. I don't even know the cause of your visit. What's it?

Tariro:

There's no need for formalities here. Separate us. I can't work with someone who is plotting against me. My life is at stake here. My privacy is being attacked.

Mr. Tambudzai:

Who's doing what? I don't get the sense here Tariro.

Tariro (*clenching fists*):

It's that celebrated lady of the night.

Mr. Tambudzai:

Who's this now?

Tariro:

It's that liar; that witch.

Mr. Tambudzai:

How can I assist if you speak in tongues? Who's this?

Tariro:

Jane!

Mr. Tambudzai:

Oh! What has she done?

Tariro:

She is inciting people to attack me in the streets. I can't move freely now. Everyone is up against me.

Mr. Tambudzai:

Which game are you playing? I wonder if today's the first of April.

Tariro:

It's my love which is at stake here. Some people don't want to see me in love.

Mr. Tambudzai:

Your love? Who has the power to wrestle it away? What's your suggestion?

Tariro: Summon Jane to this office and tell her to leave our office.

Mr. Tambudzai: Have you forgotten the rules of this company? I can't do that. I need to convene a full disciplinary meeting. No short cuts. We don't operate this way.

Tariro: With due respect sir, there's no need for all that. Just tell Jane what to do. You want her to keep abusing me? Is that what you want? Rejoice on my misery?

Mr. Tambudzai: It's you who's abusing me. You know the right channels Tariro.

Tariro: But you know you're applying the laws of this company selectively. What did you do when Mr. Dzingi had issues with his then girlfriend, Chipu?

Mr. Tambudzai: Believe what you want, but I'm not going to dance to your tune.

Tariro: It's because you're interested in Jane. You've always treated her favourably. I know you very well John. If there's a subject you've failed in life, it's this one they call *husbandhood*. In just six months, you were involved with eighteen mistresses. You deserve a place in the Guinness book of World Records.

Mr. Tambudzai: I wonder what it is that you want from me. After all, the world knows you as someone sterile. It's unheard of in an African setting that a man cloaks fifty something without a child. You should be a grandfather by now. And just listen to yourself complaining about issues to do with a fine young lady. Shame! Get out of my office you barren man. Think more about ending your infertility. I wonder why you're still alive at

that age. The African society is usually impatient and uncomfortable with disabilities.

SCENE THIRTEEN

Tendai has been discharged from hospital. She meets Tariro in the Civic Centre and is overjoyed to meet him there soon after her discharge. However, Tariro is less enthusiastic about their meeting because of all that has happened to him while Tendai was away in hospital. He is pained and has a huge burden to share with her. But somehow he does not know where to begin and what not to share. They sit just behind the old non-running colonial train-head. The centre is crowded and people are just moving about disorderly in all directions. Some revelers are having fun taking photographs.

Tendai: I'm relieved to finally be with you my dear. It's an understatement to say I've missed you. I've been thirsting for you.

Tariro: I'm glad you're well again. I was scared of losing you in the morning of our love.

Tendai: Me too honey. It was really difficult being in a hospital ward this point and time. Time and again I would think about you, my parents and start crying.

Tariro: Why would you cry? Afraid of death?

Tendai: My dear, getting seriously ill by some unknown disease is not easy. I had a thousand tests in just a week. At first it was sugar, then pneumonia, then H.I.V, meningitis, and a host of other ailments I can't remember. It was hell I tell. I've never seen doctors being so anxious about an unknown patient. Up to now I don't even know what took me ill. All I know is, I took countless volumes of curative liquids.

Tariro: Yeah. It was something else. And I don't know who to blame, doctors or the unknown ailment.

Tendai: I'm glad the anxiety is over. So, how was life during my brief absence?

Tariro: It was more than your hospital hell.

Tendai (*smiling and laughing lightly*): You can't be serious. Who made my sweet man to cry?

Tariro: Cry? It was worse than that.

Tendai (*mischievously*): Really? Tell me you're joking sweetheart.

Tariro: First it was Jane.

Tendai: That envious woman! What did she do this time?

Tariro: I believe she organised some youths to attack me at the hospital.

Tendai: Tell me exactly what happened and how you came to conclude that it was Jane who orchestrated your assault at the hospital.

Tariro: Two different teams of young women and men questioned my involvement with you. They swore unequivocally that you were engaged to one Takura, a GZU student. In addition they said they were going to take the matter up to my bosses and your parents.

Tendai: And how did you know that it was Jane's underhand scheme?

Tariro: Jane has always been jealous of us.

Tendai: But is that enough to link her to this dishonesty?

Tariro: What is your implication here? Whose side are you on Tindo?

Tendai: No implication. It's just an objective inquiry. You could have missed one or two facts. I'm always on your side even if you

may be tempted to disbelieve (*she began laughing*). What did you tell them?

Tariro:

I'm confused by your responses. As for the two teams, I told them off. It's a fact; the taste of love differs with people. Age or anything else can't be a hindrance to love. The feelings spring up from within an individual. It's an individual's personal disposition or preference. An inner being's call one has no control over. It's natural. We can write thick volumes about it. You can't force an individual to love what's not on the individual's wish list. Can you? Real loving is involuntary. Take a microscopic look at the couples around here. On face value they look mismatched. But who are you to make that declaration? And from which point of reference? The source of love is a mystery. I doubt if scientists have a clue.

Tendai:

Well articulated. I'm a little worried though. How do you feel about the whole saga now?

Tariro:

If anything, I've been inspired to make this relationship work. I've doubled my determination to make it a success. I want the world to draw an example from us.

Tendai (*smiling generously*):

What makes you think it will work against all these odds?

Tariro:

My heart is writing our story. I don't see an end to this love. Its magnitude is equal to the distance between here and the western horizon. It's infinite and indefinable. The world is in for a rude shock if it thinks otherwise.

Tendai (*laughing heartily and staring at him*):

Is it easy to trust your heart?

Tariro:

I'm suspicious. Why do I get the impress...?

Tendai (*interjecting and tapping his right shoulder*): Precisely your suspicion.

Tariro: But Tindo, how could you do that? Look at the damage you ...

Tendai: It was an essential litmus test. I couldn't find a better way of testing the strength of your love. I'd some indefinable doubt. Are you upset? Does this dry your enthusiasm?

Tariro (*laughing generously*): I see. I've overreacted and should make a lot of apologies. It has been a learning curve even at this mature age.

Tendai: Make excuses if you've to, but as you do so know that you've won the race for my love, my heart and my everything (*she hugged and kissed him lovingly*) I know it may be absurd to some people, but that is my decision to make. I want to love MY WAY. I don't want anyone to influence me otherwise. I guard my stance jealously. After all, it's my TASTE for love and just wonder why people get bothered by it. I've tried, without success, a million times, to block my feelings towards you. But the harder I try, the deeper I fall into our *love-hole* and, I'm more than happy to remain trapped in there. I feel flamingly feminine around you. Let the wind blow and let the thunder rumble; I'm taking refuge in you.

ACT 11

SCENE ONE

Jane is in the magnificently spacious, yellow-painted Accounts Office. The beauty of this office is surreal. It mirrors the affair that Jane is adamantly pursuing on the social space. This office is decorated with yellowish polished mahogany exquisite desks. Two golden highback swivel and tilting chairs are empty for Tariro and Tendai are off duty today. Jane is all alone and wearing a stunning reflective light brownish cocktail dress. She is in a jovial

mood, showy, sitting comfortably and carelessly on another swivel chair. She is hooked on social media and humming a tune of Jah Prayza's hit song CHENGETEDZA. Jane is chatting on WhatsApp and quite oblivious of the world around her. She has never seen this man, but she has fallen for him because she wants to be seen progressing in love. Jane wants to demonstrate to Tariro and Tendai that she has moved on and has made a better decision to find love on social media. She has a point to prove to all and sundry.

Nhamo:

Hie my sweet Jane. This is Nhamo Mudzonga from Claremont suburb, Cape Town, South Africa. I've changed the cell number that I used when we chatted two days ago. Don't worry, that's a rich man's DNA. I usually don't want people to keep bothering me after I've assisted them. I feel greatly indebted to you for allowing me to occupy your personal intimate space. I really go for you sweet jam Jane. Don't forget I'm a true Zimbabwean, born and bred in rural Maringire, Chivi.

Jane:

How can I forget you Nhamo? When it comes to love, my heart has chosen you. Your name is pasted on my heart. I want to spend the rest of my life with you.

Nhamo:

That's good news my Sweetheart, you know I depend on you on everything. Remember I'm 34 and a successful businessman here in Cape Town. I also have supermarkets in Johannesburg, Pretoria and KwaZulu Natal. I hope to expand my empire to the United States and the United Kingdom. That's my vision 2025. Thanks a lot for being there for me. I've always wanted a Zimbabwean woman for a wife. Now I can see my dream maturing. I saw your beautiful pictures in that cocktail dress and the irresistible nudes. Sweetie, you're damn rich. You're somewhere beyond the word gorgeous. I'm speechless. You're my angel in Zimbabwe. I'm sending my raunchy nudes in an hour. I

bet they're going to excite you and make you predict the joy that awaits us.

Jane:

I'm flattered to catch the eye of such an important person like you. No man has ever showered me with such beautiful words before, even when lying to me. You're different. I can't wait to feed on this unique difference. You make my eyes teary and my world goes round. My dream is already walking towards me and I'm spreading my arms for a long sugary hug.

Nhamo:

Syrupy squeeze indeed. Your worry is over Jane. I love the innocence in you and I'm sure we're going to be a great couple. I just wonder why my parents gave me the name Nhamo. Contrary to the meaning of my name, I'm filthy rich. This explains why my friends call me NM. Not that I dislike my name, no. I love the Zimbabweanness in it. It's my identity. Of course, my parents and grandparents were poor, but not anymore. I've changed all that and still happy to keep my name, Nhamo as a reminder of my past. I need my people to know where I came from. My history is of the essence.

Jane:

So when can I see you? You sound like an ever busy businessman. Will you've time for your family?

Nhamo:

Don't worry honey. Everything has been worked out perfectly. It's the family that's missing otherwise Nhamo is here for it. To be honest, I'm already making plans for relocation to Zimbabwe. Family is priority number one. By the way send all the details of your home area, I want to send my people to come and pay lobola in a few days' time. Are you comfortable with that? I'll be

sending my paternal uncle and my younger brother to your people.

Jane.

Wow! Great! These are the loveliest words I've heard in life. My home area is not very far from the city of Masvingo. I come from Chibaya, an obscure village in Charumbira area. My parents live in this village.

Nhamo:

If that is the case, then it's fine. Maringire is not very far from Chibaya. By next week I should be able to send my representatives there. I desperately need a wife now. At 34, bachelorhood isn't as interesting as it used to be. It's time to settle down. I'm ready to be a father now.

Jane:

I'm speechless my dear. Do whatever it takes to make me your wife. I can't wait to wear the badge.

SCENE TWO

It is a cool Saturday in the Target Kopje suburb of Masvingo city. Tendai is at Tariro's majestic mansion. She is wearing a red Cakeworthy Minnie Mouse Puffy Sleeve dress and matching shoes. The two lovers are relaxing on blue garden chairs under a leafy mango tree. They are deep in discussion on the future of their union.

Tariro:

I passed the test and it's time for rewards.

Tendai:

Not sure of the rewards being referred to.

Tariro:

Are you not the one who carried out the assessment? It's time to cement our love by tying the knot. It's time to formalize our being together.

Tendai:

Okay, now I get you. Are we not rushing? Someone has woken up from the rough hospital bed and you want her in the bedroom already.

Tariro: Looking at ways of paying lobola is not necessarily pulling someone into the bedroom. It's a long process. I want everything done the African way. I want us to go to your people and pay the bride price. The reward is you accepting my hand in marriage. Do you agree?

Tendai: I agree. You get your reward for showing enough love. Your love is enough to carry both of us to the moon and back.

Tariro: This is the day of my life. It's an honour to receive the reward.

Tendai: For me, it's heaven on earth. I'll forever cherish this day because it's the first time a man has proposed to marry me. I know it happens to millions, but this is for me; *MaSiziba*. Marriage, here I come, please be mellow with me. I'm a novice; a greenhorn. But my heart is full of optimism and resilience. I'm ready to manage all our expectations.

Tariro (*laughing heartily*): Performing a marriage ritual already, before I've even shown you the kitchen.

Tendai: Is it really about the kitchen?

Tariro: Yeah what else could it be? The family gets food from the kitchen.

Tendai: I disagree.

Tariro: So what do you think it's about?

Tendai (*giggling uncontrollably*): It should be the main action room.

Tariro: I don't have such a room here.

Tendai: You're a celebrated liar.

Tariro: Ok, call me a liar but do you get the task at hand?

Tendai: That of telling my mother that I'm getting married to a man she has little faith in.

Tariro (*laughing*): Is that what we agreed? You've to tell your elder paternal aunt so you two can visit my rural home in Muchakata.

Tendai: Ok, consider that done. But you need to inform your paternal uncle and the rest of your people that you're finally giving up bachelorhood with all its advantages.

Tariro: Yeah the process is long but I'm willing to fulfill the tradition.

Tendai (*giggling like a small naught girl*): Be quick about it all, but don't flout customs. We want a marriage blessed by the ancestors. By the way, the fruit is ripe and requires gentle plucking. Today isn't the day to reveal everything to the walls. (*She just stared at him in silence*)

SCENE THREE

Three weeks after Jane and Nhamo became friends on Facebook. Jane's rural home is crowded with close relatives from both the maternal and paternal sides. The Mudzonga family spokesperson (Munyayi) is hurriedly selected for not enough time is available since pressure is coming from Nhamo in South Africa. He wants the whole process to be done his way. A number of corners are cut. Lobola has been paid to the Kudenga family. Nhamo's elder paternal uncle and his brother are immaculately dressed in navy blue suits. Every relative present is happy that Jane's initial marriage rites have not been complicated. The Mudzongas paid everything that was billed.

Jane's uncle: Today's our happiest day as a family. We want to thank our in-laws for showing great trust in our daughter. Some events in life make the sun shine twice a day. As a family, we've nurtured Jane to be morally upright and we believe she'll be a worthy asset to the Mudzonga family and this world.

Munyayi: We're also happy to be marrying into a family with a good reputation. We hope that we're going to match your admirable standing.

Jane's uncle: We follow traditions. How deep are your roots in traditions?

Munyayi: Only index finger deep.

Jane's uncle: We're up to the shoulders.

Munyayi: If that's the case, we're your students.

Jane's uncle: We're told that Nhamo is in South Africa. What does he do there?

Munyayi: Yes he's in SA and trying to make a living. There aren't enough jobs for us here in Zim so some of us have to cross the crocodile-infested river. He's a businessman there. But it's our hope that he'll come home and do business here.

Jane's uncle: We all hope for the best.

Munyayi: Yeah. SA is not good for most of our boys. So now that we have paid lobola, can't we take her home when we leave this place?

Jane's uncle: Traditionally, our family can only allow that to happen after the white wedding. So start thinking about the wedding day from now on if you want your wife earlier.

Munyayi: With due respect our in-laws; I believe we've religiously met all your expectations. We expect you to bend your traditions in our favour.

Jane's uncle: In any situation, the family backbone should never be tempered with. That's us; our life and survival.

Munyayi:

Okay we'll stick to the family traditions and respect our in-laws. All we want is to create a long-lasting bond between the two families. We're going to advise Nhamo to abide by the standing family rules.

Jane's uncle:

We've already intimated this to our daughter. This is the family uniform our girls always wear. It's our identity. If it's bad for you or anyone else so be it. Although you're our important visitors, we kindly ask you to dance to the beat of our drum in the name of love. I guess it's your taste for love that brought you to our homestead.

SCENE FOUR

Muchakata. Tariro's rural home. It's a home on a table-shaped hill. All the homesteads in Maramba village are explicitly visible from this place. It's the sentinel of the area, at the heart of the village, and very well chosen. All the buildings are immaculately thatched with hyperthelia dissolute (yellow thatching grass) and are built with gleaming Topaz light smooth face bricks. The yellowish bricks and the thatching grass are a match. Tariro's mother is happy to be at home for she is hosting Tendai and her aunt (Chengeto).

Chengeto:

Do you've any comments on our mission?
Any qualms about this place and the people?

Tendai:

You're the leader of the delegation and more experienced, so guide me auntie.

Chengeto:

I know I'm the person in charge here and have the requisite eyes, but in the end it's

your choice to make. Be it a conundrum or not you've to decide on your marriage to Tariro, basing partly on what transpires here, today.

Tendai:

Honestly, I think this is a beautiful place and I can't help, but fall in love. Even if I wasn't impressed by Tariro's homestead, I've made a binding decision on him. He's my appropriate taste for love. He's my personal choice; my precious vote.

Chengeto:

Are you sure about that? Can that love of yours be enough to overcome the marriage turbulence? In an African setting it's not about Tariro alone, it's the whole clan.

Tendai:

That's not a problem. It's our way of life. I'm not European. I've seen the people around here. They've massive hospitality. I want to be part of this group.

Chengeto:

Age gap relationships pose a myriad of problems. Has your mother approved it?

Tendai:

I wouldn't be here if she had not approved the relationship. You know my mother very well. She's a no nonsense one. Tariro and I have made researches into the type of our relationship. We're still consulting and ready to do any therapy together. One advantage about us is we've not been involved in previous marriages. We're both doing it for the first time. That's the uniqueness of our case. We don't have touchy pasts or children. Tariro and I have had very serious and honest discussions on our relationship and future, and came to the conclusion that we're right for each other. Another plus for us is that we're natural friends. We're telepathic lovers and have the boundless ocean of love. To be honest

auntie, the man is a working model. He's pleasantly real. And I'm not crazy about him. I'm genuinely in love and not neurotic about it all. I'm conscious of my space and ready to defend my taste for love.

Chengeto:

I hear you, but have you considered his energy and desire when it comes to bedroom issues? These are pertinent issues that must be digested prior to marriage. For instance, is he going to play his role effectively? If not, is that not going to bring discord to your marriage?

Tendai:

The man is astonishingly virile for his age. We've thoroughly discussed all that as well. This was the main reason I paid him a visit some time at his house in Target Kopje. In short, we're ready for any eventuality. We're both armed to defend our love; our taste. After all, my love for him is not imaginary.

Chengeto:

How did you know of his virility? I wonder if it's that easy. Did you ...

Tendai (*interjecting*):

No! No! We didn't indulge. He's unbelievable self-control. Tariro is a downright patient man. My personal desire. Okay, the thing is, when I visited him at his house; I deliberately turned him on in a bid to check on his masculinity. For now, all I can say is, I marvelled at what I saw.

Chengeto:

Remember, at the moment, your relationship hasn't been put to a real test. Everything is just theorized.

Tendai:

Whatever it is auntie we're ready to endure it. Mind you, every relationship has its challenges. Marriage is never a bed of roses. When the system fails, we'll use love to repair it or better still use pumpkin seeds and

others. Enough love is the only panacea we have.

Chengeto:

Mission accomplished?

Tendai:

To a tick.

SCENE FIVE

Chamunorwa homestead. Tariro is in his village of origin at his youngest uncle's home. All his uncles are present to hear his story. He informs them of his intention to marry Tendai. They're surprised and yet happy. Astounded simply because he's seasoned in bachelorhood. Most of his childhood friends are grandfathers.

Chamunorwa (*clapping hands*):

The *Chirandus*. Those that sleep in the consecrated hills of Chimbete and Mafukuza. My revered elders. Our good-natured son, Tariro, is here to announce his quitting of bachelorhood.

Uncle 1:

We hear you Chamunorwa. Is he ready for the marathon?

Chamunorwa:

Here's his token to show his uncontested maturity and his readiness to start a family. (*passing on a twenty dollar note to Tariro's eldest uncle*)

[Every member of the family present gets hold of the money from Tariro, starting with the youngest and finally the oldest. The eldest uncle keeps the money so that it can be shared amongst the brothers after the meeting]

Uncle 2: Has he saved enough money for this journey? We don't want any hiccups that will bring our family name into disrepute. We've family standards to adhere to. No child of ours has ever shamed our family name.

Chamunorwa: Tariro says he's saved enough to marry two wives on the same day (*all the members laugh heartily*)

Uncle 3: If that is so then we're happy to hear how organised and serious our son is. He's the family blessings.

Uncle 2: We hear he's marrying a very young woman. Have you asked him if he's prepared for the inevitable challenges ahead? The younger woman may pose a lot of tricky demands. We wouldn't want to waste both human and monetary resources paying lobola, when the young wife goes on to warm another man's groin in frustration.

Chamunorwa: I've done all that and will continue to guide him according to family expectations. His function will not be in doubt for we're going to subject him to a number of African therapies that have worked over centuries.

Uncle 3: Indeed, that's your responsibility and you're going to be the leader of the delegation when we go to our in-laws for lobola paying.

Uncle 2: Now we need to send a word to the in-laws so they can give us a date on when that can happen.

SCENE SIX

Two weeks after careful consultations were made, its lobola paying time for Tariro. The Matake family spokesperson was cautiously chosen. Tariro's delegation is well received at the Mbeu home in Morningside suburb. Lobola is paid in full and the two parties are overjoyed. Even those who had doubts on Tariro's age forget to mention the issue since they are impressed by the way he paid the lobola.

Tendai's uncle:

The Mbeu family's speechless. Nothing like this has ever happened to our family. The meeting of every demand! This occasion qualifies to be the marriage of the century. History is made and a welcome one too.

Munyayi:

We're glad to be creators of history. It's all because of our taste for love.

Tendai's uncle:

Many of us have had doubts about everything else, but today you've proved us wrong. This is a trait of a united African family. It invests in good relations. I wish our families could go back to the closeness of yesteryears. We've fast-treked our values to the extent of losing the core.

Munyayi:

We all feel humbled. Now that we've met all the expectations, are we allowed to take our bride home?

Tendai's uncle:

The family has no objections to getting your bride. She's your wife now. From now on when you talk of your family, she's a bona fide member. That's official. The family 'High Court' has ruled. When can we expect the European wedding?

Munyayi (*excusing himself to consult*):

That's a good question, but let me hear from the person at the helm.

Tendai's uncle:

Oh, I thought it was something obvious that a white wedding is at our door step.

Munyayi (*returns after some time*):

My in-law, we're not having a white wedding. We're going to do the traditional shona wedding ceremony.

Tendai's uncle:

Oh! I thought you guys were Black in skin and White at heart. Now I'm puzzled. I was already salivating, imagining all the White dishes I've seen at such gatherings.

Munyayi:

We could be staying in town and learned, but we're African at heart. We yearn to do everything the African way. We believe the African thinking is gone and we need to resuscitate and rejuvenate it. People are becoming less African in their ways of doing things. Indigenous knowledge system is in a comatose.

Tendai's uncle (*clapping hands in adoration*):

You've brilliant ideas, but I wonder if it's possible to bring the people back to the African centre. If doing the African traditional wedding ceremony is what you desire, you'll get it. We must begin to think along the African philosophy. Who said the best wedding ceremony has to be White?

SCENE SEVEN

22 January 2023. The bridesmaids and the groomsmen are hired just for the day. No rehearsal is carried out since the guys are just 'mercenary'. A big day for Nhamo and Jane. It's their wedding day in the Civic Centre in Masvingo. The centre is thronged with people from all walks of life. There are no restrictions or invitation cards. A typical African wedding ceremony where everyone is invited. It's an open wedding and people have been bused from Chivi and Charumbira. Nhamo has provided everything. The food is still to be eaten and the ceremony is just winding up.

Reverend (*beaming a smile*):

Now I pronounce you husband and wife.
You may kiss the bride.

During and after the meticulous kissing, there are deafening ululations from the crowd and relatives of the newly weds. The noise dies down and the director of ceremonies takes to the podium. But before he could utter a word, four heavily armed policemen arrive and have a word with the Reverend. After briefly talking to the Reverend, they go straight to Nhamo and handcuff him. There's a loud silence as Nhamo is taken in a police van to the Masvingo Central Police Station. The Reverend takes to the podium.

Reverend (*visibly shocked*):

Ladies and gentlemen, it's with a heavy heart that I announce that our bridegroom, Nhamo has been taken into police custody. He's charged with murder, attempted murder, rape, and attempted rape, human and drug trafficking, money laundering and racketeering. The police have informed me that some of these alleged crimes have been committed here in Zimbabwe whilst the others were committed in South Africa. He's been on police's wanted list for 30 crimes committed between 2017 and 2020 in both Zimbabwe and South Africa.

After the announcement by the Reverend, Jane collapses and is rushed to Masvingo Provincial Hospital. The wedding guests hang their heads as they leave the wedding venue in utter disbelief. A few guests remain, hoping that the food maybe served. Jane's relatives are shattered and all go to hospital with her.

Reverend:

I don't know what to feel or say. I'm numbed. This world is getting crazier everyday with these and other marriages. In my opinion, when it comes to love, social media is there to blind and cheat a committed and responsible heart. But our daughters don't see it this way. They think it's fashionable to find a husband on Facebook. This platform, like many other platforms, gives room for misrepresentation. Now, just imagine the magnitude of the pain that young lady is experiencing. Turning a

widow on her wedding day. It's horrible! I become very uncomfortable when certain people bless world events with such phrases as the *new normal*. What exactly are we christening? For whose benefit?

Man of honour:

Who's this man and how did these guys meet?

Reverend (*shaking his head in shame*):

Some criminal called Nhamo Mudzonga. He's living in Cape Town, South Africa. They met on Facebook and decided to get married just after a few chats. I don't like the level this world is sinking to. It's sinking deeper than the sea bed. I feel thoroughly embarrassed to have solemnized such a marriage. I also wonder how those that bless same sex marriages feel. What verses in the bible do they quote? It's just about this delicate concept called rights; the rights that are an enemy of nature. Some tastes for love are surely unpalatable. An anathema.

Wedding guest 1:

South Africa and Facebook are the two monsters we've these days. We've lost many of our children in South Africa. In addition, many marriages have been killed in SA and the Facebook is a rich ground for marriage wrecking.

Wedding guest 2:

I wonder why our children trust men and women on Facebook. Is it greed? Why do people have so much faith and trust in the unknown? A new culture? It can be suicidal to get a husband or a wife on Facebook. It's odd too. Whose culture is in use on twitter, WhatsApp or Facebook? Is it wise to be a friend of the whole world? It's improper to reduce this world to a village. Who will be the village Head of this unique village?

Man of honour (*angrily*):

That's impossible. My sympathy goes to Jane. She thought she had found love that was genuine. But now she's widowed and emotionally mutilated. She needs comprehensive counseling sessions for her to survive the shock. All of us need to go and see how she's doing at the hospital. After all, we witnessed her being cheated by fate. People must find solutions to all this. It's a shame for our people to experience this. If we don't find lessons from these events, we're a lost nation. It's imperative that we have to learn fast for there would be no respite for us in the future.

The End

