



Lightning Across The Rainbow: A tale of many colours

Okah Ewah Edede

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My mother was trying to convince my father to kill her.

Father would have none of it even as my mom kept persuading him that it was the right thing to do; the best option available amongst the choices. Father was adamant in his refusal.

This argument has been going on now for 72 hours as both party stuck to their earlier position - none agreeing to back down.

"Ngulinzira," Mother called father by his name. My mom rarely calls my dad by his name except whenever she wants to drive home a point, "you have to find the courage to do the needful."

"I can't bring myself to do it my darling wife Sonia Mukasonga. I can't!" Father cried - referring to mother by her full name - as mother cradled his head in her bosom. I have never seen my father cry before but in the pass 72 hours he has been crying like a baby.

As I hid behind the lace curtain eavesdropping on them, my young mind tried to make meaning of all that was happening around me. I was six years old then.

"But you must try Ngulinzira, you must have the courage to do it for us," Mother said still referring to father in a formal way. I guess it was a negotiation ploy to make it easier for father to do what she was begging him to do.

Mother looked lovely in her silk robe that hugged her slim figure. Her long hair was tied in a ponytail behind her and fell across her left shoulder. Mother had a blessed ancestry, her skin were creamy light like goat milk and she had a nose many Europeans would be proud of. Everyone said I looked like her.

From afar we heard some noises and my dad stiffened, looking around with frightened bloodshot eyes like a lost chicken. I could see that his hands were trembling as he clasped them together; the shaking made his whole body quake.

"They are coming here honey," my mom said calmly to my father, "remember, you must be courageous to do what needs to be done, that is the only way you can save them. I trust you will save them."

My dad cried as he tried to cling to my mother but mom gently removed his hands saying in a firm formal

voice, "Ngulinzira Bizimungu, do not disappoint me. You must be strong for us; you must do it for us or I will never forgive you even in the hereafter."

Just then her eyes fell on me, and I thought she would be angry having caught me eavesdropping, but she walked toward me with outstretched arms; I ran to her and she lifted me up, planting kisses all over my face and saying, "Rosalie my poor baby, I will be leaving you soon but one day, hopefully when you are older, your father will explain to you what happened."

"Where are you going Nana?" I asked her not understanding why she sounded so sad and why I felt I would never see her again after that journey, "and why are you leaving? Don't you like Dada anymore?"

"No sweetie, I love your father very much but he must send me on this journey so that you can have a future and know what it means to be loved by a man and to have him love you back, but don't worry about it now Rosalie, one day you will understand."



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