

AN ANGEL IN EVERYONE

By Romie Singh • Published 2009

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Another great Yoza cellphone story

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STORY TEASER

Angela has been hiding her bulging stomach from her mother for over six months, but that's no longer possible. Her mother is suddenly faced with the truth that her 17-year old daughter Angela is no angel after all. For her it's clear: Angela has broken her rules and must take responsibility for her actions. Her daughter must leave to live with Pisto, the young man whom Angela met only once, on that fateful day. A visit to the clinic reveals that there is a lot more that Angela will have to face up to. And she's still so young. Is she up to the challenge? What about Pisto? And how can they live together when they barely know each other?

CHARACTERS

These are the main characters in An Angel in Everyone:

Angela Selebi *Female, 17* Angela's like that quiet girl in your class– you know the one who never says anything and seems to know nothing? Angela has very low self-esteem and doesn't really know herself or what's going on with her body right now. She's the only child of a single mum, Anita Selebi, and they live in a four-room house in Soweto. Her mother has always been super strict.

Pisto *Male, 19* Pisto is 19 and lives alone in a rural area. He lost his parents three years ago. All he knows is that they became ill and died; first one, then the other. But what they died from was never mentioned. His relatives organised a simple funeral and then left Pisto to fend for himself. He lives next door to Angela's Uncle Billy and her two sister cousins. Last September, Angela came to visit them and stay over, and that's when she met Pisto at a party. He changed her life in the twinkling of a kiss.

MaSelebi *Female*, Angela's mother, MaSelebi, grew up without a father. She met a boy and got pregnant at 17, without understanding how that had happened. The boy soon dumped her and she got no help from his parents and her own mother was too sick to help her much. She decided to bring her daughter up strictly to protect her, so that nothing like that would ever happen to her later in life.

CHAPTER 1

The day could not have started any worse. Overnight the storm had flooded the kitchen. MaSelebi was mopping up the mess. Her daughter, Angela was standing up to her ankles in water helping her. Suddenly she stopped, leaned back, put her hand on her back and gave a small groan. That's when her mother saw it – her stomach- the bulge, round and smooth -as clear as anything.

“Huh?” she said, dropping down the bucket with a crash.

Suddenly all hell broke loose.

“What's that? Eh? Ai, ai!”

“Ma! I'm doing my best. This mop is ancient,” cried Angela.

“I'm not talking about that! Hey wena! You've kept it from me all this time?”

She's rapping again! thought Angela, which is what she called it when her mother started ranting. But then she saw her mouth. It was wide open. So were her eyes which were glaring at her tummy. Angela knew this was it. The moment she had been dreading had come.

“I name my own daughter Angela – after the angel that I thought you were. But no! You're not an angel! Far from one!”

“Ai ma!” said Angela softly, tears in her eyes.

“How long have you been like this?” her ma shrieked.

What could Angela say? Her best friend had told her how your period stops when you're pregnant and you get morning sickness. Well, her period had stopped and the gory stories about morning sickness had happened; that was six months ago. She hadn't wanted to believe it then, but all the signs were there.

“You thought you could hide it from me? Uh?”

Yes, Angela thought, I really did. Angela had even hidden the unused pads which her mother bought her every month; she had worn her one size too big school jersey to cover the bump, and a loose night dress at night. At weekends she hid it with large sweaters and oversized

T-shirts.

“How dare you lie to me, you little ...you sinful...you...”

At this point her mum ran out of words and burst out crying.

“Ai Ai, Lord! Must I carry this burden, this shame, this horror with me, all over again?”

Reader comments

Here are some comments left by readers at www.yoza.mobi/stories/35/

Wow, its very interesting its makes you wana read more n more of the story! **Mbali**

Sometimes things just happen and we tend 2 hide them bt one way or another the truth wil come out.i would sit down with ma folks and let them knw the truth. **Tee**

It's such a hard decition! Unfortunately they're going to find out some time, and if the parents know they may help the girl through her pregnancy, some parents would act negative about this. If it happened to me I would talk to my parents openly and admit that I had made a big mistake. I'll pray that God will help my parents understand why it happened, but I wouldn't expect them to feel sorry for me.

Well, pregnancy isn't something that one can hide like forever, sooner or later, they'd eventually find out. On the other hand, girls tend to conceal the pregnancy for different reason. As for me, i'd just bravely tell them the truth and face the outcomes. **Bafana**

Its nt easy 2 sai u a prgnt mara u hv no choice especialy wn u a stil young .bt ui hv 2 tell them cus i prgent s nt smthin 2 hide.nd we hv diferent stories me i fall pregnT wn i ws 23 bt it ws dificult 2 tel mai mai cus he was goin 2 ask hu s der fada nd dat tym i told mia 2 mnth boyfriend dat im pregnet der he refuse. **LSG+diva**

What do you think?

If you were pregnant, would you hide it from one or both of your parents? Or tell them? To answer this question, or to leave your own comment, go to <http://www.yoza.mobi/stories/35/>

CHAPTER 2

Angela stood frozen to the floor. She knew what her mother was saying. Once in a moment of intimacy, and to warn her off having a boyfriend, her ma had told her how she had become pregnant as a teenager and how she had been left alone to cope. “That will never happen to you”, she had said. “You stay good. You are my little angel.”

But now MaSelebi’s worst fears had come true.

“How could I be so blind?” her mother cried. “Why didn’t I notice before?”

”Because why, you never take any interest in me,” said Angela softly. “You never look at me when I wash or get undressed, like there was something wrong with my body. I always feel weird, awkward somehow, in front of you.”

“When did you know?” she hissed, ignoring what Angela had just said.

"Angazi," Angela whispered through her sobs.

“You don’t know?” Her mother mocked her, throwing the mop with a crash to the floor.

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“Last September I went to stay with Uncle Billy. I met this boy. But I didn’t know anything.

I mean I only felt something around Christmas time.”

“Aiwah! This is too much! I’ve worked SO HARD to keep you in line! Did you ever listen to a word I said?”

How could I not? thought Angela. *Every day you said the same thing, over and over.* And in her head she could still hear how her ma used to rant: Don’t stay out after dark; don’t play with the other children; don’t talk to boys; don’t ask questions; don’t talk dirty. That was the worst. What was dirty about asking questions?

Angela gritted her teeth as her mother slapped her face.

Reader comments

Here are some comments left by readers at <http://www.yoza.mobi/stories/35/>

I dont undetstand why parents cant talk to their children about sex. my classmates and I talk about sex with our teacher in life orientation class.

You know im twenty right now..but i can recall when i ws much younger @ home we all were given a platform to ask what we wanted @ whatever time..and both mom and dad were there to answer i remember askn what oral sex was..lol..mum ddnt want answer that one but dad did..lol.so..me and our siblings are lucky i guess. **Dimplets**

The story is very nice cause it teach the teenagers about life.**mr+gud+guy**

The main thing is to respect. Dirty talk suddenly means strong language. Each and every child has 2 know about life, puberty stage. And the person should be asked those questions is the mother followed by the father then the teacher. **Buzzze**

What do you think?

What is ‘dirty talk’ in your household? What are you allowed to ask about? Who do you talk to about sex? To answer this question, or to leave your own comment, go to <http://www.yoza.mobi/stories/35/>

CHAPTER 3

Angela walked as fast as she could to catch the taxi in time for school. With no breakfast inside her, she felt sick with hunger. And fear. All day she worried about what her ma would do to her when she got home from school.

The last period was Biology and the teacher was going on about ovaries and fallopian tubes. What did that funny Y-shaped diagram in the science book have to do with her or anything she was feeling? *Nothing*, she thought. But whatever was going inside her, *that* was for real.

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The last bell finally rang.

She arrived home with a heavy heart. Her ma was waiting for her with a look of thunder on her face.

“Angela Selebi, sit down!”

Angela’s mouth was dry.

“I trusted you when I sent you to stay with your cousins. You have gone against all that I’ve taught you and the Lord’s Commandment.”

Angela waited. What was coming next?

“I will not live with you and your illegitimate child. That...that boy... that man... whoever he is, has to either marry you...”

“What?”

“Marry you,” her mother went on, “or pay for damages!”

Angela’s heart stopped.

“You want me to marry? Leave home?” Angela was sobbing now.

“Well you are not living here. What’s his name?” she heard her ma ask. “Manje?” she insisted leaning forward threateningly.

“Pisto,” Angela said between her tears.

“Pisto?” She spat his name out in disgust. “What sort of a name is that? And he lives next door to my brother, you say?”

Angela nodded. “Yes ma.”

“Fine! Well, I will phone my brother and tell him to get hold of this *Pisto* and tell him the *good news!*” MaSelebi said, sarcastically. “There will be consequences, wena!”

Reader comments

Here are some comments left by readers at <http://www.yoza.mobi/stories/35/>

If i was Angela's mom..i wudve let my daughter.stay in ma house...bt on 1 condition ..she mus not drop outta school, nd that the child is her responsibility.when she comes outta schl nd weneva she is at home..and make sure that the father of the child supports his baby..nd my daughter mus also looks 4 ways that she can earn money 4 her baby. **Candy Apple**

I will accept that my daughter is going to become a mother and help her with her child and advice her. **Benonis Finest**

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Id be very angry..furious..but later id realise there isnt much that can change now..so id start by being thr..but i wouldnt make things anything easier in her behalf she has to realise that with every action is a reaction so if she is going to be a mum..im nt gna take that priviledge away from her and do it for her.. **Dimplets**

Yoh yoh yoh, dats wat we call bad parenting skills.. U dnt send ur child off to no man's land jus because she's pregnant.. What kind of massage is she bringing accross.

Preon

I would try to look at the world around me today and compare it with the world around me then and see the point. **Nikon**

What do you think?

What would you do if you were Angela's mother? To answer this question, or to leave your own comment, go to <http://www.yoza.mobi/stories/35/>

CHAPTER 4

Angela felt so ashamed. What would Uncle Billy think? How would she even look at her cousins again? And Pisto? She didn't even know him, only from that one night, and she hadn't talked to him even once since then. How could she ever move in with him? Did her mother really mean it? Must she leave home? What about school and her matric?

Suddenly a hundred questions piled on top of her and she felt crushed under the weight. Sobbing quietly, she lay on her bed and went over everything that had happened on that day, six months ago. She had no one to talk to, just her own voice in her head.

It all happened last September, she whispered to herself through her tears.

Ma had gone to a funeral. She didn't want to leave me on my own. She doesn't trust me to be alone in the house. So she sent me to Uncle Billy's. He's not strict like Ma. Palesa, Lerato and me were allowed to go out and jol at the local braai on that Saturday. That's where we met Simba and Pisto.

Simba did all the talking, but I liked Pisto because he was quiet, like me. We spoke about bands and hobbies and we both liked the same things. It was so cool! He had CDs I'd never heard of. So when he said let's all go back to my place to listen, I said yes. My cousins were not in the mood and went home. I said I'd be along in a minute. I really believed it. But then we had a few drinks, too many, I admit. He kept telling me how beautiful I was and how he wanted to be with me.

I don't really know what happened next, except that we went on drinking some more and began doing all sorts of things which were new to me. I liked the warm feeling of being held in his arms. I was so happy, happier than I'd ever been. I wanted to stay with him forever. It was my first time. I told Pisto and asked him nicely to be gentle. And he was. My best friend always said I might bleed and I did. But it felt great. I felt oh so special. After an hour we woke up. The

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alcohol had worn off. All I had was a bad taste in my mouth. I said goodbye and sneaked back to uncle's.

I knew from that day on, everything would be different, but I had no idea how. Why didn't I ever think that sleeping with Pisto could make me pregnant, or worse? Where was my brain that night?

Reader comments

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Guys lets wake up n get our acts together use our heads for once.sex is nt a hobby or casualty, or a love proof.love alon proves love.sex was meant to b a gift to the married.nd i assure u it is more perfect wen waitd 4 until dat tym.wait as long as u have 2 it wl b worth it.nt waitn is jst worthles. **Black Crystal**

Everybody does things they regret afterwards. We learn that way, but following advice from people who have been through different stages in their life is really useful, some time in life we all realise they were right!

Iv done de vry same story dat angela dd,n afterward i felt so bd bt it waz fantastic at de tym bt after doin dat i feld realy bad n hurt i hated maself bt unfortunatley blaming maself culdnt solve a thng. **Daniel Diboneng**

Ya,i hv done n irrespsnble thng n it felt way way so gud.bt due 2 livn by princples,i felt dat i faild myslf n dsrespctd wat i bliv in. **I'm me**

What do you think?

Have you ever done something irresponsible even though it felt so good at the time? How did you feel afterwards? To answer this question, or to leave your own comment, go to <http://www.yoza.mobi/stories/35/>

CHAPTER 5

Meanwhile, Ma Selebi sat in the kitchen in the dark. She could hear Angela sobbing in her room and couldn't help but recall that day when she was a young girl and like her daughter, had also fallen pregnant, at 17. She had also sobbed for hours alone and been afraid.

What is a mother supposed to do? MaSelebi thought to herself. *I had no guidance before I got pregnant. My mother taught me not to ask dirty things. My boyfriend, Siphon, seemed to know everything. I thought he was so grown up. But when I told him I was pregnant, he turned into a little boy and put his hands over his ears.*

'YOUR baby, not mine!' he had cried. His parents shrugged it off when I told them. They didn't care. Their son was just being a man. 'You are the one who should have taken more care!'

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They blamed me. So did I. So did everyone else. It was immoral and I had to be punished. Only my teacher had a kind word to say to me: 'Anita, no matter what bad names other people call you, remember, there's an angel in everyone!'

So that's why I called my baby Angela. I prayed that the angel in her would protect her from harm. I did all I could. I didn't allow her to play with other children, especially not the boys. I always made sure she came home straight after school. Even if she was five minutes late I gave her a beating because her school was just down the road. We went to church and she enjoyed Sunday school and knew her Bible very well. I prayed every night she would be a good girl, an angel, and never make the same mistakes as me.

Oh Lord, why didn't my Angela turn out to be a good girl? Is it really all my fault?

Reader comments

Here are some comments left by readers at <http://www.yoza.mobi/stories/35/>

Being a gud grl means dat u mst always hv a gud behaviour as a lady nd respect yrslf nd talkn abt boys does'nt mean u r nt a gud grl bt its part of each nd evri grl cos evri grl gt proposd by boys nd she's going to tel hr frnds so i dnt thnk thrz any prblm bwt dat nd talkn wit boys or being a fwnd wit boys dos'nt mean u r a bd grl.bt den i dnt blame Masilebi she ws tryn to protect hr Angel nt to pass throug de pains she did whn she found out dat she's preg whn she ws 17 nd thrz no parent wld wish dat 4hr daughter. **Lwazi**

Being a good girl i think means being responsible , focused.everone is allowed to make mistakes ,we all do .no matter how good or bad or focused even if you read and know bible.i dnt think is her fault but she could have done better to educate her child, she could have gave her what she couldnt havd at her age.nt allowing child to play ,expecting her to be perfect not to make mistake was wrong thing,shes just a child after. **True**

A 'good girl' is a girl who listens to what her parents say, and follows their instructions. I don't blame her. Sometimes, when things like this happens, we just have to accept.

Realistically, a world has changed. A mother shouldn't give up on repeating the same thing to her child over and over again. If your child don't listen, do not blame yourself, you'd have done your best. God works in miraculous ways. Maybe that which annoys you is a blessing in disguise. **Bafana**

Nothing beats talkin. **Bonani**

Your comments?

What does being a 'good girl' mean? Can you blame MaSelebi? How can a mother protect her daughter? To answer this question, or to leave your own comment, go to

<http://www.yoza.mobi/stories/35/>

CHAPTER 6

The heavy rains had finally stopped, thank goodness. No more messy kitchen floors and buckets to catch the drips. The trees grew green again and Angela sat on the *stoep* feeling the rhythm of her life around her. Maybe it was the heartbeat of the tiny baby inside her.

Her mother interrupted the moment.

“Angela! Have you been for a checkup at the clinic yet?”

Angela shook her head quietly.

“No, of course not,” MaSelebi said angrily. “Well, you must go. The sooner the better.”

Angel knew her mother was right. Of course. Why hadn’t she thought of it herself? She really must be more responsible. She had two lives to think about now.

The teacher didn’t turn up for class so Angela used the time to go the clinic. It was full of women and children but there were also so many teenagers with bulging tummies, like her own. The doctor was in a foul mood. She would get no sympathy from him.

“I need to take some blood for a test.”

He was irritated and clicked his tongue as he pricked her finger.

“Tsa! Why are you young girls not using condoms? You must all know the dangers of unprotected sex! Not just pregnancy. What about the STIs and HIV? Uh? Here!”

He pushed a pamphlet into her hands.

“Sit out in the corridor and read this. I’ll call you back for your results. Go! Next!”

She waited and flicked through the pages. It was clear. She had been really stupid to have sex without a condom. She knew the dangers of HIV and how it spreads. Why hadn’t she thought then, at the time? The doctor finally called her back in.

“Positive!” he said not even looking up. “That’s what you get for sleeping around.”

“That was my first time, sir,” said Angela softly.

“You were a virgin? Well, you’re positive.”

“Positive?”

“Yes, positive girl. Don’t you understand?”

Angela felt her ears humming. *Is that good?* Angela had heard of positive living. It sounded like she was OK.

The room was turning. He was shouting stuff at her that she couldn’t understand.

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“You must start the PMTCT programme. See Sister Grace in the VCT and make an appointment at the ANC. Next!”

PMTCT? VCT? ANC? Angela couldn't understand a word. The room began to sway. Her head was spinning. Suddenly her legs turned to jelly and she collapsed in a heap.

Reader comments

Here are some comments left by readers at <http://www.yoza.mobi/stories/35/>

There should had been pre testn counselln..and then post test counselln after before issuing the results..and not anyhaow since its an emotional issue havn to deal with accepting urself..and living positively. **Dimplets**

He shud have bin more gentlier wit her,i mean,dats why dey offer consellin b4 dey give u ur results.we all make mistakes n unfortunately dis was angel's mistake..wat da doctor did was really nt appropriate n thoughtful. **Babie-c!!!**

Eish! Angela, life is gettin tough nw, nw its all about responsibilities all de way. **Thaby**

When u study or applt fr a job tht involves community work our interecting wth community u knw tht u must be patient n caring n understndin coz thts wt u wnted nt grumpy n rude coz thts wt u choose for yo self. **Lee**

What do you think?

The doctor didn't explain anything about being HIV positive to Angela. What should he have said? To answer this question, or to leave your own comment, go to <http://www.yoza.mobi/stories/35/>

CHAPTER 7

Angela had no idea how she got through that next week? HIV positive? The words echoed inside her head. Her mother asked how it had been at the clinic but Angela kept silent about her test and the results. She didn't have the courage to tell her ma the whole truth.

“Oh well,” said MaSelebi, “at least you can give birth in the clinic properly and have the child registered. And registered at your new address.”

“New?” said Angela, trembling.

“Yes. I'm taking you to your Pisto's house.”

How she liked to spit out that name.

Angel was in a daze. *What? So soon?* The noise in her head grew louder. Her mother seemed to have planned everything without once asking her what she wanted. School was no better. Her class teacher had finally noticed Angela's new shape and taken her to one side.

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“Leave school,” she had whispered. “You will have to. It’s school policy.”

Everyone had plans for her. Only she seemed to have none. Things were happening to her. She was pregnant; she was HIV positive. She was losing her home and her school. Had she lost total control over her own life?

That night, Angela slept badly. She dreamed of staircases going up and down, leading nowhere, winding round and round, taking her in different directions. But the next morning when she saw the leaflet by her bed, she suddenly felt her head clearing.

“Counseling! I must get counseling. This pamphlet says VCT is free. That’s where I have to go next.”

She decided to skip school and go looking for Sister Grace that same day. There was a long queue but at last it was her turn.

How wonderful Sister Grace’s soft voice sounded compared to her mother’s icy tongue.

“Being positive is not a death sentence, my dear.”

“I’m scared, Sister,” Angela said, fiddling with her dress and almost in tears.

“Now sit down and let’s talk.”

And talk they did. For ages. At last Angela felt able to ask all sorts of questions.

“PMTCT? What’s that?”

Sister Grace answered her kindly.

“Prevention of mother-to-child transmission. We do our best to stop the HI virus getting into your unborn baby at birth.”

“And ANC? Do I have to be a member?”

Sister Grace laughed sweetly. “No Miss Selebi. ANC stands for ante natal clinic.”

At last someone who had time to talk to her and explain things nicely, without laughing at her! Angela was just so grateful. Sister Grace could explain clearly, without freaking her out, what it meant to be HIV positive.

“I’ll be counseling you on a regular basis. You can talk to me about anything and I promise you that what we talk about remains between you and me, and will never leave the four walls of this room.”

What a relief! Her mother need never know.

“You can disclose your status when you feel ready. Give yourself time.”

“Yes Sister.”

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But how much time would she need? She had kept her pregnancy quiet. Now she had to keep her status a secret. For how long?

Reader comments

Here are some comments left by readers at <http://www.yoza.mobi/stories/35/>

If u try 2 stop some girls from doing something theyll snap bck at u saying dnt u worry ITS MY LIFE ill do what i want 2 im grown ect! bt once they r introuble then they r all of a sudden little again ineed of help. **Cotton Candy**

Disclosng isnt easy bt trying cn make it easy ..**Mandisa**

Ppl do confuse da two, i mean they disclose their status nd in da end they infect othr ppl by hvn sex nd pretendin evrythn is ok!

What do you think?

There is confidentiality: keeping your status a secret; and there is not telling your partner about your HIV positive status and pretending everything's normal. Do you think some people confuse these two? To answer these questions, or to leave your own comment, go to <http://www.yoza.mobi/stories/35/>

CHAPTER 8

It was so hot, so humid the day that MaSelebi took Angela to meet the future. Thunder clouds were building up again. Angela could not keep up with her ma who marched straight past Uncle Billy's house. MaSelebi was not speaking to her brother anymore. If he had been stricter this would never have happened, she had shouted at him angrily down the phone.

Now they were in front of a small brick house with no curtains and old weeds in the garden. Pisto lived here.

MaSelebi gave three almighty knocks, as if they were at the doors of hell. Angela had no time to catch her breath. The door opened and a tall shy boy stood before them.

"Young man," MaSelebi hissed, "you have brought shame to my family's name!"

Pisto looked lost for a moment. His eyes went straight to Angela's bulging tummy and her swollen feet. Then he caught MaSelebi's eyes wide with anger and ringed with lines of disappointment.

Uncle Billy had already given Pisto notice the day before that they were coming.

"Angela's mother is on the way. She has been spitting fire on the phone."

It was Uncle Billy who finally told Pisto that Angela was six months pregnant. And he agreed with his sister: Pisto and Angela had to face the consequences.

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“You will have to learn to be responsible, young man.”

But hadn't Pisto been responsible all these years? Living alone, looking after himself? Getting himself to school, cooking for himself? Life had become such a lonely burden.

Uncle Billy could see Pisto's sadness.

“Look young man, people make these kinds of mistakes. It's part of life.”

He remembered the state his own sister had been in when she got pregnant.

“Listen. I'm there for the both of you. I'm right next door,” he said, giving Pisto's arm a squeeze.

Now, as Pisto stood facing Angela's mother, he was humble and polite, hoping it would help to calm things down.

“Won't you come in, ma?”

Angela was amazed. How could he be so chilled?

But her mother's voice cut through like a knife.

“I will not enter your house. Who do you think I am? She's your responsibility now! Goodbye wena!”

And with those words she left. Angela watched her disappear as Pisto carried her bags into his house.

“Welcome,” he said softly.

“Thank you,” she replied.

This, she thought, is the first day of the rest of my life.

Reader comments

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Id be scared,embarassd n shaking in my boots.i tink angela blames ha self4 putin pisto throh dis day bt i think sh glad dt h ddnt behv dsrpsctful infrnt of ha ma. **Killerpain**

Wow wow wt a stry...ts vry intrstn n knwldgbl...i lyk t n i gt so mch in t. **Sviwe**

I strongly think that Angela's mum was beyond wrong to do that to her own daughter, she as well made the same mistake when she was young so what gives her a right to judge n treat Angela like that? Angela is not perfect n her mum is not either... Like uncle Billy said, "everyone makes these kind of mistakes" its perfectly normal.... We all make mistakes sorry for being human..all im saying is that Maselebi before she starts pointing fingers, she should make sure her hands are clean! **Lil+Mis+Popular**

What do you think?

If you were in Pisto's shoes would you be as calm as him? How do you think Angela feels? To answer this question, or to leave your own comment, go to <http://www.yoza.mobi/stories/35/>

CHAPTER 9

Their first night together was strange. Pisto didn't know what to say to Angela or where he should sleep. Her tummy was so big he offered her the whole bed while he balanced cushions together across two chairs. But in the night when he started coughing violently, she felt bad.

"Come into your own bed Pisto," she urged. "There's enough room."

And so they spent their first night together side by side. But she couldn't sleep.

Should I tell him I'm HIV positive? What if he throws me out too, like ma?

After a few days, Uncle Billy came round. He was worried about how they were coping. He felt responsible for his niece. She had after all got pregnant during her weekend stay with him. And he could see Pisto was a sick man.

"He's coughing a lot, wena," he whispered to Angela when Pisto went out to boil some water. "I can hear him through the walls. It's so loud! He's sick. You need to take him with you next time you go to the clinic for a checkup."

Angela panicked. *He knows? How can he know I'm HIV positive?* But then he asked:

"And how is the baby, Angela? Hey! You're so big now!"

Angela was so relieved! He was talking about her ANC checkups. But she promised him she would talk to someone at the clinic and get help.

Sister Grace was very worried when Angela described Pistol's cough.

"It might be TB. It might be HIV. Listen, Angela. You were a virgin when you had sex with Pisto which means Pisto must have passed the virus on to you. That means he is HIV positive. He might need to go straight on to antiretrovirals. He needs to get tested for TB and HIV and have his viral load checked."

"Sister, I'm scared...really scared to tell him I am positive."

"Oh Angela, I can understand that and I will help you with that. But what about him? Do you think he knows his status?"

"Maybe he does deep down, I don't know. We haven't talked about anything like that."

"You both need to, especially now that you are living together and bringing up a baby together. I do couple counseling. I can help you both talk about being HIV positive, about how to have safe sex and live positively with a baby that may not be infected."

AN ANGEL IN EVERYONE

“Sister,” Angela sobbed, “I so want our baby to be healthy and I don’t want Pisto to die. I don’t want to bring our baby up without a father.”

“Shh. Don’t cry. Let me come round and talk to you both this evening. You know what they say? There’s nothing to fear but fear itself.”

Reader comments

Here are some comments left by readers at <http://www.yoza.mobi/stories/35/>

Sh must counsel dem both, advice dem. **Lady d**

I would ask Pisto to come and see me if were Sister Grace then I could ask him about his passed relationship then along the line ask him if he has tested for HIV before in his life and tell him to consider it as he will be a father living a healthy life, that will be showing Angela the way to live since they are together. **Money-maker**

Tell them 2 live a positive life.

Its very inspirational and comes as a lesson to our generation and the realization of how vital education is in life. **Mcdreezy**

It was an amazing story hope Pisto will do the right thing and take the advice with Angela and have a healthy child. **Tshireletso**

What do you think?

If you were Sister Grace, how would you talk to Pisto, what would you say? To answer this question, or to leave your own comment, go to <http://www.yoza.mobi/stories/35/>

CHAPTER 10

Fresh rain was falling in the night as Pisto thought about Sister Grace’s visit and what she had said. At first he had felt anger that she could think he could be HIV positive. Now he felt deep shame that he had tried to fool himself for so long.

“You could live so much longer if you take antiretrovirals,” Sister Grace had told him softly. He looked down, his arms crossed in silence.

“You can live with the virus, Pisto. It’s the fear that kills.”

Now as he lay next to Angela listening to her tummy, he could feel the life pulsating inside her – a life he had helped to create.

“He’s such a kicker. Let’s call him Drogba!” He stroked her bump gently. She laughed, but then turned towards him with a serious look on her face.

“You want to see him grow up don’t you Pisto?”

AN ANGEL IN EVERYONE

“What sort of question is that? Of course I do.”

“Well we could help each other, like Sister Grace said. We could take our medication together. Now you know I’m HIV positive. You know what that means. Please Pisto. Let’s do this together. I want to grow old with you. If we take our pills we can live longer. Our baby needs us to live. And he will be such an angel.”

Through the window they could see a misty rainbow round the new moon that shone through the clouds.

“Do you think if I am HIV positive I can be an angel?”

Angela reached out and put her arms round him.

“Of course. But not just in heaven. We need angels here on earth too! And yes, there is an angel in everyone, Pisto. In everyone.”

And for the first time since that night in September, they held each other tight, and kissed.

Reader comments

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I love da fact dat pisto angela was, so calm n accept. Bt she ws irispensible though hw cn 1slp wth a perfect stanger without a protection...it rocked, it taught sum of us 2b responsible abt our own safety n health. **Mr+silly+shy**

Living in a situation like this would only mean one thing, the new start of new life to live. **LIL+BRAINOS**

The story is great nd its a motivtn 2 ol teenagers 2 b careful abt wht thy thy do 2day cos its 4 2mro. **2+hard+2+handle**

Livin HIVirus its nt the end of the world as thyv said THERES NOTHIN TO FEAR BY FEAR ITSELF thy dd a gd job takin thy medication nd raise a healthy child.

Wow this was a grt stori its reali is true every cloud has a silver lining. **Roxy**

Wow am just so inlove with pisto now thats a real man.he just eludes sweetness.i loved the story so much i felt it ended quikly left me begging 4 more n left me thinkin. . . **.Black+crystal**

This story is so amazing.interesting.2 d readers tz leftd a message..yoza bring us more story. **toxic+virus**

What do you think?

If Pisto and Angela stay on antiretrovirals what sort of family life can they expect? What does living with the virus actually mean in real terms? To answer this question, or to leave your own comment, go to <http://www.yoza.mobi/stories/35/>

MEET THE AUTHOR

My name's Romie Singh. My father was Indian, my mother English. I have lived in England, France, India and in Germany where I worked eleven years for Radio Deutsche Welle before moving to South Africa.

I've spent the last twelve years working exclusively for the South African community radio sector as a radio producer, trainer and author. I wrote three dramas for the *DW Learning by Ear project* including 'An Angel in Everyone', which I've now been adapted to become my first mobi novel.