

CONFESSIONS OF A TROUBLED YOUNG MAN

By Fanie Viljoen, adapted by Siphon Hlongwane • Publisher Lapa Publishers • Published 2010
Owner Shuttleworth Foundation • License Creative Commons
Attribution Share Alike 2.5 South Africa

Another great Yoza cellphone story

ABOUT YOZA CELLPHONE STORIES

Yoza cellphone stories are stories for you to read, review and comment on, all on your cellphone.

Read this story at www.yoza.mobi/stories/22/ or on MXit at MXit Cares > mobiBooks > Yoza.

Follow Yoza on Facebook at www.facebook.com/yozacellphonestories.

For more information go to www.yoza.mobi or email info@yoza.mobi.

STORY TEASER

Confessions is about Nathi, a popular boy and rising soccer star who struggles with to come to terms with being gay. Nathi is a Grade 10 learner who gets on well with his friends. He dresses in the latest fashions and likes going to parties. At a party Kebone and Nathi hook up. But something is wrong. What secret is Nathi hiding from his friends ... and from Kebone?

This story is an adaptation of [Uit](#) by Fanie Viljoen. This story was originally written in Afrikaans by Fanie Viljoen, and called *Uit*. *Confessions of a Troubled Young Man* is an adaptation of *Uit* by Sipho Hlongwane: writer, journalist and counter-revolutionary.

CHARACTERS

These are the main characters in Confessions of a Troubled Young Man:

Nathi is a good looking Grade 10 learner who is pretty good at soccer. He likes going to parties and has a bunch of good friends. He does and says the right things to fit into his group of friends. But he also has a secret ...

Musa is one of Nathi's friends. He has an eye for the girls. This jock is also a rising soccer star.

Tshepo is also one of Nathi's friends. He's got a great sense of honour, but he's not really sporty because he is overweight.

Kebone is the girl who falls in love with Nathi. She is really gorgeous to look at. But will Nathi fall for her?

CHAPTER 1

“Tjo, guys” says Musa, plonking himself down next to the rest of us Grade 10 boys. “Did you see how Kebone was popping out of her school dress again today? Wow, I couldn’t keep my eyes off her when I bumped into her just now.”

“You probably bumped into her on purpose,” laughs Tshepo.

“Again and again and again”, teases another guy.

“And what’s wrong with that?” asks Musa, grabbing the front of his trousers. The chaps laugh even more now. Musa turns to me. “Nathi, tell them, please, there’s nothing wrong with that.”

I give an embarrassed laugh. “Don’t drag me into your thing ... er ... things!”

“You tell him, Nathi,” says Tshepo, his big belly shaking with laughter.

Musa pulls a face. “Ag, you’ve got no balls, the lot of you.”

I shake my head. “Okay then. Kebone is sexy. Beyond sexy, actually. Wouldn’t mind bumping into her myself. Perhaps feel her up a bit...”

Musa gives a broad smile. “Now that’s a man talking!” he says and slaps me on the shoulder.

I snigger. “Sho, a real man!”

Reader comments

Here are some comments left by readers at www.yoza.mobi/stories/22/

Unless u hve gud morals ,whch is very rare. Yes we do.

Not, all of us talk like that about girls!! Some of us are maturated gentlemen. **AYANOVIC!!**

Boys talk abt gals n gals talk abt boyz. **Wigger**

What do you think?

Do all boys talk like this about girls? To answer this question, or to leave your own comment, go to www.yoza.mobi/stories/22/

CHAPTER 2

Saturday evening. Tonight’s party is at Kebone’s. There’ll be some drink too. Kebone’s parents don’t mind. Or so she says.

CONFESSIONS: CONFESSIONS OF A TROUBLED YOUNG MAN

I stand in front of the mirror and run my fingers through my hair. I've already decided to wear my Diesel jeans and Converse sneakers. But which t-shirt? The black Levi's one with the skull, or the Ecko Unltd. the blue one with the bright red logo?

I settle for the Levi's t-shirt.

A clever choice, I realise later, as I arrive at the party. A lot of young people are already there.

"You look cool," one of the girls says to me as I stroll up. From the corner of my eye I can see how she looks at my butt as I walk past.

Now I don't want to brag or anything, but I do have a sexy butt. It's from playing soccer. All those squats that the coach makes us do. I smile, full of self-confidence. This is going to be a great evening, I think, as Kebone comes walking up to me.

Reader comments

Here are some comments left by readers at www.yoza.mobi/stories/22/

I neva go partyin unless, it a close frnd or relatives party, i thnk i dnt nid 2 go partyin or drink 2 v fun, one cn say i lead a borin lyk bt dats ur opinion, i dnt nid parties 2 v fun. **Candyfloss**

I am partyin animal bt i dnt lyk alcohol jst enjoy da music ,dancing n be around many frndly ppl.

I dont like partying because i find them pointles. Its a stupid excuse for teens to get drunk, act irresponsibly and blame it on the alcohol... Wat ever hapnd to having gud clean fun, lyk goin 2 an amusement park, paintballig or ice skatin wit ur fwnds. ATT ALL TEENS : IT IS POSSIBLE TO SOCIALISE AND HAVE FUN WITHOUT DRINKING AND ACTING STUPID. BCOZ OF THE DRINKING! **The One.**

What do you think?

Do you like to go to parties? To answer this question, or to leave your own comment, go to www.yoza.mobi/stories/22/

CHAPTER 3

The later it gets, the better the party becomes. I've already downed a few drinks. On the dance floor guys are trying out new steps. The girls are falling about with laughter. "You dance like a white boy," one of them shouts to Tshepo. He shows a middle finger and carries on as though he were the Strictly Come Dancing champion.

"Nathi, come show them how it's done!" calls Kebone.

I don't wait for a second invitation. I'm on the dance floor. The music is pulsing through me. Doof, doof, doof. I move without thinking. I hear a few admiring shrieks. Whistles.

CONFESSIONS: CONFESSIONS OF A TROUBLED YOUNG MAN

Then Kebone is with me. Up against me. I feel that body that Musa was talking about the other day. Kebone puts her arms around me.

“Kiss me,” she says, just loud enough for me to hear above the thumping music.

My heart skips a beat.

“Kiss me, Nathi!” she says again.

I bend my head nearer to hers.

I kiss her.

But something is wrong.

Reader comments

Here are some comments left by readers at www.yoza.mobi/stories/22/

Myb the guy doesnt realy have an idea what to do ,but he shouldnt be shy to kiss her,it must b a natural thing 2b shy bt nt 2 sm1 u luv.

I think he cnt kiss or he hasnt had hez frst kiss yet. **Barbie gal**

Mayb he's gay or mayb she jst aint tha gal 4 him

What do you think?

What is wrong for Nathi? To answer this question, or to leave your own comment, go to www.yoza.mobi/stories/22/

CHAPTER 4

There was nothing wrong with the kiss, I say to myself later that night as I lie in bed. Alone.

Outside the stars are barely moving in the dark sky.

There was nothing wrong. It was a great kiss.

Kebone liked it.

I liked it.

That's how it was supposed to be. Warm, wet.

Tshepo had gaped at us and Musa had come up to me afterwards to congratulate me. He had called me a bull. Maybe a stud bull, I don't remember now. The other guys were making such a noise.

CONFESSIONS: CONFESSIONS OF A TROUBLED YOUNG MAN

Musa is now the captain of the second soccer team. Maybe captain of the first team next year, even though he'll only be in Grade 11. I'd also like to run out for the first team next year. As a left winger. If Musa and I become close izimpintshi [pals/okes], that could very well happen.

I smile. First team! Ubaba's [father] shirt buttons would pop off with pride if that happened.

But there's also something my ubaba [father] will not be so proud if he finds out ...

Reader comments

Here are some comments left by readers at www.yoza.mobi/stories/22/

Yeah i wnt thm 2 be proud of me as much as i want to be proud of myself. Its a nice feeling knwng tht ur parents r proud of u. **VUVULICIOUS**

A coment abt chapter4 i thnk its very gud 2 mke ur parents proud nd wen u do dat u hv dat feeling of beingproud of urslf 2 u hv dat hunger 2 mke thm proud mre. **Mic.harris**

If myn was still alive i would hv dne great thngz 2 make hm proud of me.

What do you think?

Do you also want your parents to be proud of you? To answer this question, or to leave your own comment, go to www.yoza.mobi/stories/22/

CHAPTER 5

The weeks roll by. Just about every Friday or Saturday night there is a party somewhere. I am invited to a few. Others I gatecrash along with Musa, Tshepo and a few pals.

Kebone likes me. A lot. I am aware of it, because she's forever touching me these days. My arms, my thighs. "I see soccer's turning you into a real isigora [beefcake]," she whispers in my ear one morning during break. She runs her tongue over her lips.

"Things getting serious between you and Kebone?" Tshepo asks me as we head towards the classroom after break.

"You'd love to know, wouldn't you?" It's not really an answer. Tshepo can draw his own conclusions.

"She's after his bod," says Musa. He raises his eyebrows teasingly. "It's time akuzwise kancane [to get serious/go to 3rd base], Nathi."

I know what he means.

"I'm just waiting for the right moment, mfana [boy]!" I say, laughing. But inside I am not laughing.

Inside I am worried.

Reader comments

Here are some comments left by readers at www.yoza.mobi/stories/22/

It should be a decision tht comes frm within ,not to be pushed by friends. **INTROSPECTOR**

I dont think he should because it wil mess things up for him, if he has other intentions.

SWEET BABE

He shouldnt listen 2 his frnd,bad idea.he should go wit wat he feels n nt wat sum1 else does.

Kebone should back up a bit wit the sexual advances,shes makin da guy lose his cool.great story by da way. **Tweedie**

What do you think?

Should Nathi listen to Tshepo? To answer this question, or to leave your own comment, go to www.yoza.mobi/stories/22/

CHAPTER 6

My thoughts are a chaotic mess these days. Tshepo thinks it's because I'm in love. Kebone is hot for me. I can see it. She gives me these little letters full of hearts and stuff. And she sends me SMS's until late at night.

I think that's what's bothering me on the day of the big match against Oliver Tambo High.

"Yesses, silima [fool], get your head together," hisses Musa when I miss a critical tackle on Oliver Tambo's striker and the guy goes on to score a goal.

A goal that costs us the match.

Our guys walk back to the change rooms with drooping shoulders. I amble along behind everybody. Angry with myself.

I am only vaguely aware of the guys from the other team also walking up the passage now to their change rooms.

When I get back to our team's change rooms, my chest is drawn into a tight knot like a piece of chewed bubblegum. That's what scared feels like.

I'm the last one in the change room. "Close the door," the coach calls gruffly to me.

My eyes are on the ground. I feel the door handle under my sweaty palm.

And then I become aware of somebody standing and looking at me.

CONFESSIONS: CONFESSIONS OF A TROUBLED YOUNG MAN

I look up to the open door opposite our change room. Oliver Tambo's.

When I see the guy, I feel a jolt inside.

Reader comments

Here are some comments left by readers at www.yoza.mobi/stories/22/

Soccer is a team sport,you lost as a team,not by yourself,if u continue like this,you will loose your confidence and take that losing mentality into the next match.That will cost u so many games...Just keep your head up

Yeah 2 yearz ago wen i played 4 a community team i did not have confidence at all, i did nt have composure, i waz afraid 2 dribble, even wen i got chances 2 prove myself i would mess up time and time again. Dis year i played 4 a school team and dat waz by far my worst perfomance ever. Den i had a oppportunity 2 play 4 a under 14 team even though i am 16 i have finally played my best football in a while, i currently play as a left back but soon i culd play as a left wing midfielder or a central midfielder. **Mr+life**

Nathi is a vry troubled young man indeed.putting so much presure on himself is nt da best thing he could do 4 himself.kebone is a littld 2 hectic 4 me though,she seems 2 want 2 move at lightning speed in this relationship,maybe dats wats got nathi all worked up.

Tweedie

What do you think?

Have you ever caused your team to lose a game? To answer this question, or to leave your own comment, go to www.yoza.mobi/stories/22/

CHAPTER 7

Black hair and deep brown eyes. They start haunting my dreams.

The guy from Oliver Tambo. I saw him there for only an instant as he was about to close the door.

Maybe I'm wrong. Maybe he didn't even look at me.

Or did he?

Eyes locked in each other's for just an instant.

Aaargh, no!

I wake up. Wet with perspiration. Night after night this happens.

CONFESSIONS: CONFESSIONS OF A TROUBLED YOUNG MAN

I can't concentrate on my homework.

At school I float through the day like a ghost. I hold Kebone's hand during breaks. It's not allowed. But I do it.

Every afternoon at soccer I practise harder than usual. I have to make up for that stupid mistake on Saturday. I drive my body to breaking point.

I'm driving devils out.

I sweat. Clench my teeth. I shout.

My body, my muscles are hard. But my heart? That's another matter.

Reader comments

Here are some comments left by readers at www.yoza.mobi/stories/22/

I think it's awesome cause we all in some stage of our lives has been through something like this.
Yeah yeah...**Abby**

Yeah.... It happens many times to me your heart just bit fast and slow at the same time. **Toxicated**

YEP, THERE IS A GIRL I LOVE AND I AM THINKING OF HER EVEN AT
MIDNIGHT. THE WORSE THING SHE DOESN'T BELIEVE ME. **PETER TOSH**

What do you think?

Have you ever been kept awake because you're thinking of a girl or a guy? To answer this question, or to leave your own comment, go to www.yoza.mobi/stories/22/

CHAPTER 8

One of the nightclubs in town is having an under 18s party. The Hills Fantastic are performing. Kebone and I are there. I kiss her a lot. I laugh when she makes a joke. I hold her tight with my hands.

Not with my heart.

Something is wrong. I knew it that first time I kissed her.

Nothing is wrong, I scold myself.

AKUNANKINGA [NOTHING IS WRONG]!

You're lying to yourself, says a voice inside me. You always have. I pretend not to hear the voice.

CONFESSIONS: CONFESSIONS OF A TROUBLED YOUNG MAN

“I’m just going to the bathroom,” I say to Kebone after a while.

“Are you okay?” she asks. “You’re shaking.”

“I haven’t eaten yet tonight,” I say. I don’t know whether she can hear me. The music is too loud.

I elbow my way through the people. Bodies rub against mine. Voices everywhere. Music.

I break through the packed club. Neon light shines on my hands, my clothes.

I walk into the bathroom. Take a deep breath. The place smells of urine and cigarettes. I bend over the washbasin and splash water on my face. Over and over.

When I look at my reflection in the mirror, someone is standing behind me. He steps out of the dark into the light.

Reader comments

Here are some comments left by readers at www.yoza.mobi/stories/22/

Wow awesome stories that left me wanting more. **LIL NATOR**

I have but then again no matter how hard u want to hold them with your heart when its not happening its not happening its just not meant to be i tell myself but it hurts when hez hot

Yes it has happnd to me for year...thought to stay longer it wil change nd it didnt..wht a waste of tym. **Jane**

What do you think?

Have you ever held someone’s hand, but not held that person with your heart? To answer this question, or to leave your own comment, go to www.yoza.mobi/stories/22/

CHAPTER 9

Black hair. Brown eyes.

It’s him.

The guy from Oliver Tambo.

“Hey ... Nathi, isn’t it?”

I turn round. My body is trembling. My inside is pulsing, but not from the music.

“Sh-sh-sho,” I stutter.

CONFESSIONS: CONFESSIONS OF A TROUBLED YOUNG MAN

“I’m Njabulo.” He holds out his hand to me. At first, stunned, I just stare at it. Then I realise I must look skaam, like a scared sheep. I stick out my hand. Shake his. His eyes are on me the whole time. I look down.

What’s happening to me?

Then I know. I feel guilty.

Njabulo is still holding my hand. Too long? I pull mine back. He smiles roguishly. A lovely smile.

No!

“You played a good game the other day,” says Njabulo.

“Thanks. Just a pity about that last tackle I couldn’t manage.” I look up again.

“It happens to the best of us.” His smile widens. “So?”

He leaves the last word suspended in the air. I frown. He tilts his head slightly. “You’re ... aren’t you?”

“Sorry?”

“I just wanted to make sure,” he says.

“I don’t know what you’re talking about.”

He slowly comes nearer. Then closes his eyes and brings his head closer ...

Suddenly the room closes in on me. I must get out of here. I push him away from me. Some other guys are coming in. They look at me. “Kwenzakalani? [What’s going on here?/What the hell?]

” says one.

I run out.

Reader comments

Here are some comments left by readers at www.yoza.mobi/stories/22/

If i eva find mysle uncomfatable in a nytclub i would call my parents to ftch me. **Queen P**

RUUUUUUUNNNNNN! **Lady**

Obviously i would hit the road to avoid troubl. **Nikon**

What do you think?

What would you do in an uncomfortable situation in a nightclub? To answer this question, or to leave your own comment, go to www.yoza.mobi/stories/22/

CHAPTER 10

“You’re ... aren’t you?” Njabulo’s words at the nightclub haunt me. What does he think of me?

I feel nauseous.

I am outside the club. My breath feels thick in my throat. Kebone is with me. “Hey, Nathi, what’s going on?” She puts her hand on my shoulder. I shake my head. “I’m phoning my mom to come and fetch us,” she says. “You really don’t look well.”

My head is a whirlpool. I feel I am not in my own skin. This hasn’t happened. Not to me.

Njabulo wanted to kiss me. What if I had let him? Something in me wanted to. Something didn’t.

“You’re ... aren’t you?” he asked.

Yes, I am ...

No, I am not!

I am Nathi Ndebele. I have a girlfriend. Sort of. My body is tough from soccer. One muscle on top of the other. I am a real man. That’s also what Musa said. *That’s* what I am. I love sport. I swear. I like beer. I don’t swing my hips when I walk. I don’t bat my eyelids. I don’t flap my hands around in the air.

I am a man!

And yet.

“You’re ... aren’t you?” Njabulo had asked.

Reader comments

Here are some comments left by readers at www.yoza.mobi/stories/22/

A strong lion, he doesnt easily get scared. **Rose**

A real man is a man with respect for himself nd others,and he cares for people,and there is no thing such thing as real men ,a man is a man no matter what.!

A real man is not like any other man. He's mature, has self-confidence and brave. He's sure about hmself and knows what he wants, when and he gets it!.. He's healthy and kind inside and out. He shouldnt necessarily be well-built, but he should take care of hs physical wellbeing. He should behave maturely and not fo0lishly. He shouldnt show his feminine side too much, he should care for others and respect them and lastly he should always make sure he does his best in everything!!.. Thats a REAL MAN!... wel done.

Miss Sasha

What do you think?

What does a “real man” look like? How does a “real man” behave? To answer this question, or to leave your own comment, go to www.yoza.mobi/stories/22/

CHAPTER 11

Njabulo saw something in me. What is it? I’m standing naked in front of the bathroom mirror. I look at myself. What is it about me that makes him think I am ... different?

I touch my body. Feel the soft beard stubble. The hair on my chest. The ridges of my six-pack. Then further down.

I wish I knew how I could make right what he saw in me.

Where is the otherness?

Gay.

That’s what he thinks. He thinks I am isitabani [gay].

Does he see it in my eyes?

I look and look and look.

But all I see is myself. At the back of my head I know there is more to me than what can be seen from the outside.

“Is something wrong?” my mother asks at breakfast.

“No, nothing. I’m okay,” I reply.

“Were you sick last night?” my father also asks now. “You came home earlier than you said you would.”

“I felt nauseous. Nothing serious.”

My father puts down his knife and fork in his plate. “Did you chaps drink?”

“Only cooldrinks, Dad. It was an under-18s party.”

“Should I take you to the doctor?” asks my mother. Her hand is cool on my forehead.

A doctor won’t be any help, Mom, I want to say. Maybe a psychologist. But I wonder if he’d want to scratch through the jumble in my head.

“No, Mom. I’m fine,” I say.

I lie.

Reader comments

Here are some comments left by readers at www.yoza.mobi/stories/22/

He really needs to accept himself because that's crucial for him to live a life that best suits him and be happy, so in order for him to let it out, he needs to discover who he really is and not hide it...the society must be against it, but that's how he was made, he didn't choose to be that way, he just needs a supportive and caring person whom he can open up to, because he is still scared, he doesn't have strength and the courage to admit it

He should go to the therapist to understand the changes he's going through... There's nothing wrong with being homosexual if that's what he prefers, no one has the right to judge him for it

I think he must accept the way he is because it's something that he can't change and be proud of who he is.

Ntoshy

What do you think?

Nathi doesn't need a psychologist; he needs to accept himself for who he is. Or what do you think? To answer this question, or to leave your own comment, go to www.yoza.mobi/stories/22/

CHAPTER 12

"You're different these days," says Kebone at school.

"Oh, I'm just thinking a lot."

"About what?"

"Stuff." I can't tell her that I'm wondering whether I'm gay or not. I can't tell her about Njabulo. She won't understand. Nobody understands such things. Hawu, I don't even understand it myself. It's just something I feel in my body. For years now, actually. But I tried to reason it out of the way. All guys look at each other. But it doesn't mean anything. It's a phase you go through.

Kebone puts her arm around my waist. "I was wondering," she says softly. "We've been seeing each other for some time now. Don't you think it's time we ... you know ... took things a bit further?"

I look into her eyes. I know what she means.

"Are you sure?"

"Yes. We can use something ... you know ..."

"It's not just about babies," I say.

"I know."

“It’s also about emotions. People must feel something for each other.”

“But you love me, don’t you?”

My insides churn over. The uncertainty screams in my head.

Gay/straight. Straight/gay.

“Yes,” I say softly. “I do love you, Kebone.”

“So, we’re going to do it?”

I nod. “This weekend?”

She smiles.

Reader comments

Here are some comments left by readers at www.yoza.mobi/stories/22/

He isn't,he is just trying to avoid the situation which will back fire badly. He is trying to prove a point that he is a man but yet he doesn't know himself. **Smiley gal**

my opinion on this chapter his being forced into this by her..... but he doesnt know what he wants, his doing it coz he doesnt want to break her heart which is understandable but at the end of it all his not true to himself an thats the thing that counts an on top of that he thinks of the stigma that comes with being gay an it scares him coz he doesnt really know how to deal with it.....

He's definetly going through the motions, he feels nothing for kebone it's just that he's confused and he's having a kind of identity crises. It's not a phase, he's gay and there's nothing wrong with that. He just needs to realise that. **Pear Pie**

What do you think?

Is Nathi just going through a phase or not? To answer this question, or to leave your own comment, go to www.yoza.mobi/stories/22/

CHAPTER 13

On Saturday I go to Kebone’s. Her parents are not there. She is waiting for me.

And later that night ...

It’s my first time. I’m sure I’m clumsy. I’m sure I’m not doing it right. I’m sure I should be enjoying this more.

This is how it must be. This moment of togetherness. A man and a woman.

CONFESSIONS: CONFESSIONS OF A TROUBLED YOUNG MAN

But why doesn't this moment feel right? It is as though a piece of my soul stayed behind in the dark street in front of the house.

When we're finished, I get up and go to the bathroom. I close the door and go and sit on the edge of the bathtub.

I've never been more heartsore.

Reader comments

Here are some comments left by readers at www.yoza.mobi/stories/22/

More than i can control sometimes. **Kings**

I still do...Love is amazing,it doesnt want to give u,or forget the good times we have with our loved ones.Even when we choose to hate,it chooses to overflow hate...Love is amazing...we feel heart sore when we lose those we love or things that we treasure...i still feel heartsore because i care,i care because i love. **Princess palace**

Yes i hv,wen i found out dat de guy i lovd wit al my heart ws cheating on me bt nw m ovr it ,i've found de lov of my lyf thnx 2 God.:-}

What do you think?

Have you ever felt heartsore before? To answer this question, or to leave your own comment, go to www.yoza.mobi/stories/22/

CHAPTER 14

"So we did it," I brag to the guys at school.

Tshepo chokes on his sandwich. "Wha-a-t? Really?"

"Great!" says Musa. He slaps me on the shoulder. "And how was it? Bekunjani? [How was it?]"

"Amazing! Truly amazing." I'm full of bravado. But I'm lying to them. I don't show it, but I feel ashamed.

I tell myself that I *had* to sleep with Kebone. I had to see what it's like with a girl. I had to test the feelings within me. I had to know what feels right, what feels wrong.

But what happened has only made things more complicated.

It's becoming a struggle. I search for answers. Who am I? What am I? Why am I like this?

I search in the Bible. I find verses that tear me apart. But I go on wrestling with God. I try to make a deal. Make me different, and I'll do anything for You. It feels to me as if He doesn't hear me.

CONFESSIONS: CONFESSIONS OF A TROUBLED YOUNG MAN

I look for answers on the Internet. I read other people's stories. Some of them make me cry.

I search in magazines. In one of my father's old Kickoff magazines I read about Xisco, the Spanish soccer player who came out. A gay soccer player! Most people simply accepted him as he was.

That's the thing: acceptance.

But I suppose you must accept yourself first.

Reader comments

Here are some comments left by readers at www.yoza.mobi/stories/22/

Yes they can be good if not best i know a couple of them they are excellent players as people they are not different the only different thing about them is their sexual preference. **Lady gaga**

Gay or not if you are talented and you have a goal and you want to achieve it. I don't see where sexuality fits in. Everything is done and achieved with passion, love, determination and skill so don't let your appearance or gender bring you down. **Smiley gal**

Yes, being good as sport has nothing to do with being straight or gay, talent is talent regardless and so is skill. **Golden-Gal**

What do you think?

Do you think gay people can still be good sportsmen or sportswomen? To answer this question, or to leave your own comment, go to www.yoza.mobi/stories/22/

CHAPTER 15

It's the last game of the year. I have to prove myself today. I've got to make it into the first team next year. Today I'm going to do it for my team, but also for myself.

Kebone has also come to see the match. She's somewhere in the stands among the crowd. The air smells of shisa nyama [braai]. Excited voices, flags everywhere. I walk to the change rooms. Then I see him. Njabulo is also here today.

He smiles. My body goes lame. I fight my feelings. He walks towards me. "Hope you have a great game, Nathi. Show them, mchana [son]!"

I stop breathing for a moment.

My thoughts spin into overdrive.

Later, on the field, things go horribly wrong. Our team's plans are just not working out. It's as though every guy is on his own mission today.

CONFESSIONS: CONFESSIONS OF A TROUBLED YOUNG MAN

Fortunately the other team is also making a mess. Two free kicks help us to creep up towards their score.

All we need is just one goal to equalise.

And then the chance comes.

The ball is kicked high and forward towards me. In front of me is a gap to the goal-line. I am on the sideline, but I'll be able to do it. The ball lands at my feet. I feel every muscle in my body kick into action. Now is my chance!

The other team's men come flying nearer. I keep my eye on the goal-line. I'm going to plant the ball right there next on the top corner of the goal. I already see myself doing it.

The crowd is going mad.

I run like I never have before. A dive from the other team misses. Forward! Another dive. I duck away from another man's flying tackle. Treading left, right, left.

I'm right by edge of the penalty box. I dribble past another defender.

I shoot.

The whistle is not blowing for the goal. I stand up. Look at the referee. "You just missed, wemfana [boy]" he says to me.

Reader comments

Here are some comments left by readers at www.yoza.mobi/stories/22/

Its not the end of the world n not all the time do world clas players score. Its your talent not yo scorin tht wil get nathi to first team.

Nt gtn gud marks hurts, t got me thnkn of wot ma parents would say. It felt lyk the end of the world.

I liked the chapter i'd picture t e guy dribblin n passing felt as if m watchng the match. **Ncesh**

What do you think?

Eish, so much pressure to perform! Tell us about one of your near scores or misses ... maybe it's not about a sports miss, but rather not getting a high enough grade for a test? To answer this question, or to leave your own comment, go to www.yoza.mobi/stories/22/

CHAPTER 16

We've lost the match. "Just leave me alone!" I say to Kebone when she comes to hang on to me, to comfort me.

CONFESSIONS: CONFESSIONS OF A TROUBLED YOUNG MAN

I am angry with myself. I've messed it up again.

I take my boots and walk away from the stands, away from the people.

I want to be alone.

I go and sit on one of the school verandas, in front of an empty classroom. The sun is hot on my legs. Disappointment is filling my whole being. What will I tell my father? He has so many expectations of me.

"Sorry about that missed goal," says a voice behind me. "It was very close. You almost scored."

Njabulo comes and sits next to me. I turn my head away.

"I know how you feel. It's already happened to me too," he says.

I say nothing.

"Are you cross with me as well?" he asks. I don't reply. "It's about the other night at the club, isn't it?" We sit in silence for a while. "Sorry, I thought you were also ..."

I turn towards him. Look in his eyes. And take his hand. He gives mine a squeeze. "It's okay," he says softly.

That's when I hear someone behind us. I turn around quickly. But now there is nobody.

Reader comments

Here are some comments left by readers at www.yoza.mobi/stories/22/

IT GR8 STORY WOW I LYK IT(x)(x)(x)(x) **HOPE**

Its ok for girls and not that its wrong for boys either. Its pretty un-usual because of the gay trend,that has invaded our society. Men around the world are cautious and do not welcome physical gestures or comfort,from other man full heartedly. The society is used to man not displaying their emotions publicly. All in all,i have nothing against gay people or guys comforting each other,but this act may be mis-interpreted and found offensive.

Ther is nothin wrng wit ppl holdin hands in public it shows affection. **kay**

What do you think?

Is it ok for two boys or girls to hold hands in public? To answer this question, or to leave your own comment, go to www.yoza.mobi/stories/22/

CHAPTER 17

The bomb explodes on Monday, before school.

CONFESSIONS: CONFESSIONS OF A TROUBLED YOUNG MAN

“You and me. Behind the gym!” hisses Musa.

“What’s this? What’s going on?” asks Kebone. She runs after me.

Now I know. It’s not about the game we lost. It was him - Musa. It was him that I heard on the veranda.

“I’ll show you what I do to you little gay boys!” He spits out the words one by one. A circle is forming around us.

“What do you mean?” I stutter. “I’m not isitabani [gay]!” I hate the word. I hate myself. I hate it that I can’t be honest.

The first punch hits me in the stomach. I bend over double. Instant tears well up in my eyes.

Musa is impintshi yami [my pal/oke].

Another punch. This time on the chin. My teeth clack together.

I hear the guys laughing.

My hands become fists. I hit back. Three quick punches. Two miss their mark. The third brings blood streaming from Musa’s nose.

“So you sit holding hands with a guy after the game,” he hisses as he wipes away the blood. “That’s probably why you couldn’t score that last goal. You were thinking of your boyfriend.”

For a long moment there is silence on the school grounds. I see Kebone. She looks at me inquiringly, turns around and walks off.

Then there are more blows. Lots more.

Reader comments

Here are some comments left by readers at www.yoza.mobi/stories/22/

Great story that shows the plight of gays. **King**

Being gay isn't a choice im not gay but people need to realise that its not a crime to be gay u cant bring upon violence because of it! Its like hittin someone because they black or indian for that matter we are all born the way we are u cant change that fact! When u are different and your friends reject u at least then u will really know who your true friends are! Speak to someone u trust

Being gay is no excuse to hit someone, it is just mega STUPID, it is such discrimination.

NickiD

What do you think?

Do you think Musa is doing the right thing? Our readers responded like this: 1. *No, being gay is Nathi's rightful choice. Leave him alone!*: 76% 2. *Yes, teach Nathi a lesson*: 23% To answer this question, or to leave your own comment, go to www.yoza.mobi/stories/22/

CHAPTER 18

The thing ends up in the headmaster's office. I feel alone. Afraid. Afraid.

I hear the headmaster's voice. I don't know what he is saying. The devastating storm raging inside me drowns out all words.

They *know*.

This thought hurts.

"I'm sorry, ndoda yamadoda [old man]," says Tshepo when he finds me in the rest room. "It doesn't matter to me. I'm still your mpintshi [pal]." I try to smile and say thank you through the pain.

At home I stand still for a moment in the dark passage. I listen to the sounds of the empty house.

I try to find an answer.

Why am I still here? Why am I alive? How am I going to tell my father and mother? Why did this have to happen to me?

I don't find the answers I'm looking for. I feel numb. My whole body feels dead, like my swollen top lip.

Dead.

That's one way out.

In my cupboard is a belt. It will easily fit around my neck.

Reader comments

Here are some comments left by readers at www.yoza.mobi/stories/22/

Its nt the end of the world bt its a start of a new lyf nd nw h nid 2stand up 4hmslf nd hv confidence,as h wil go on tough time is ther h has 2mix wth those who understand hm well nd h wil hv courage 2stand up again nd live hs lyf 2the fullest. **Lungie**

i realy feel sorry him he didnt ask tht to happen with him I LOVED THE STORY ANY GAY GUYS GO THREW THT STAGE

Everyone is there own person. Musa should learn to except that he cant control Nathis life. If Nathi wants to be gay than let him be gay. Nathi should also except it himself and committing suicide wont solve anything. Everybody will just remember him as 'Nathi, the coward.'. Thank you.

What do you think?

Being rejected hurts more than anything in the world. Do you have any words for Nathi? To answer this question, or to leave your own comment, go to www.yoza.mobi/stories/22/

CHAPTER 19

I don't want to die.

All I really want is for the pain to die.

I don't have the guts to put the belt around my neck.

I just look at it. And I cry.

That is how my father and mother find me there.

When I see my father, I remember what he once said to me: "Every parent has a dream for his child."

What I am is certainly not part of that dream.

That is why it tears me apart to tell my father and mother that I am gay. And that I am sorry. It's not something that I could have chosen. It was just ... there.

When I'm done, I wait for them to tell me that they don't love me any more. That I must take my things and leave their house.

But it doesn't happen.

They cry with me.

They put their arms around me.

They say: "You are still our child. We still love you."

Every parent has a dream for his child.

That dream is bigger than who we are and who we love.

Reader comments

Here are some comments left by readers at www.yoza.mobi/stories/22/

*crying *i wish nathi all the best for him

I wish him inner peace n hope n sunshine 2 fil his heart. **Kukie Jar**

big boy:if only i had the guts tht nathi had 2 tel my parents,i very proud of him. **Piperboy**

What do you think?

What are your wishes for Nathi? To answer this question, or to leave your own comment, go to www.yoza.mobi/stories/22/