

**INT. BOOK SHOP - DAY**

We see DINEO PHELE (22) enter the bookshop, snug in a smart coat, colourful scarf and cream gloves. She has interesting rather than beautiful features, with dreamy eyes. She always looks like she's in a world of her own.

She unfurls scarf, takes off gloves. The shop has a slightly shabby but charming bohemian cachet. She looks around surreptitiously, takes a book from a shelf.

MALE VOICE

Ah, Lawrence. Great choice.

She fumbles, bumbles, drops the book.

As she reaches for it, a pale male hand picks it up. The hand belongs to DAVID ALEXANDER (27). A bit of a cute nerd, he wears trendy black-rimmed glasses, jeans, button down shirt and All Stars. She notices his eyes: he has beautiful eyes, intelligent and focused.

DAVID

Sorry. I didn't mean to --

DINEO

No, it's me being clumsy. Again.

DAVID

No, I shouldn't have snuck up on you.

David hands the book back to Dineo. He smiles broadly.

DINEO

Oh, no. I was just looking at that.

DAVID

Are you sure? I - I just thought you could use some help.

DINEO

I think I'll be OK.

DAVID

I mean, I'm happy to help.

DINEO

Well- if you're sure - I'm doing some, um, research.

(beat)

We have an assignment for our media society, at varsity, on the most banned books through the ages.

DAVID

OK. Wow. That's interesting.

DINEO

But geez, look at all these books--where do you start?

David takes some titles off the shelf to show her.

DAVID

You're on the right track. You can't go wrong with Lawrence. Of course, you need to read Joyce. I don't know if you'd enjoy Miller. Sometimes a banned book *is* a bad book, I say.

She is impressed.

DINEO

You know a lot about this. Books, I mean.

DAVID

I do get a bit carried away sometimes. I just love books.

DINEO

Me too. I just haven't read all that many classics. Except Shakespeare, of course.

DAVID

Not all banned books are period literature. You could narrow your assignment to an author or a specific era.

DINEO

You mean like Victorian times or early 20th --

FEMALE VOICE

Sorry to break up your little love affair here, but can you cover the front?

We see white Rasta girl, ELFIE (26), with blond dreads, long black skirt and Bob Marley T-shirt. She's looking at David with teasing amusement. It's obvious she knows him very well.

DINEO

(flustered, at David)  
I'm sorry. I -I didn't realise you worked here.

DAVID  
(flustered too)  
Oh, no. I mean, I do -- it's cool. Pay no attention to Elfie here.

ELFIE  
(grinning)  
Was he hitting on you?

DAVID  
As I said - pay no attention. Like zero.  
(at Elfie)  
What is it?

ELFIE  
He's not very good at hitting on girls, as you've noticed.  
(David glares at her)  
OK, sorry. I just need to start prepping for the reading tonight.

DINEO  
Actually, I think I'll just pay for these.

Elfie drifts off. At the pay station, Dineo sets her gloves and books down as she gets her wallet from her coat. She notices a goldfish in a bowl.

DAVID  
Oh, that's Gerald. Shop mascot.

DINEO  
Cute. Hey there. Hi, Gerrie.

Dineo hands David her debit card. He smiles.

DAVID  
He prefers Gerald. He's kind of old-fashioned that way.

She signs the slip, smiles back.

DINEO  
I'm sorry. Gerald.

DAVID

That's OK. He'll forget it in about - oh-  
three seconds.

As David hands her a bag, she smiles at him. Their eyes meet and hold.  
It's a moment.

**INT. PHELE HOME KITCHEN - NIGHT**

Dineo enters to find her mother stirring a pot of stew. The kitchen  
is large and warm, but not too fancy.

DINEO  
Hey, Ma. I'm back.

MAM'PHELE (46) is a strong, proud woman who enjoys her middle class  
status. An apron covers smart clothes.

MAM'PHELE  
I was getting worried. It gets dark so  
quickly in winter. You know I like you to  
be home before it gets too late.

Dineo takes off her coat and scarf, hangs it on the chair.

DINEO  
You worry about me too much, Ma.

MAM'PHELE  
Who else will worry about you? You know  
I don't like you to be late for supper.

She puts her arm around mother's shoulder, sniffs at pot.

DINEO  
Mmm. That smells good, Ma.

MAM'PHELE  
Your favourite! I hope you didn't ruin  
your appetite on canteen food again.

Dineo starts taking out her laptop out of her backpack.

DINEO  
No, Ma.

MAM'PHELE  
Did you eat the fruit I packed?

DINEO  
(rolling her eyes behind Ma's  
back)

Yes, Ma.

Mam'Phele turns from the stove, sees the laptop.

MAM'PHELE

Not at my table, not now Dineo. We're going to eat here.

DINEO

I'm going eat in my room. I have to start on my assignment.

Mam'Phele hangs Dineo's coat and scarf on a hook behind door.

MAM'PHELE

No, we're going to eat first. Together.

DINEO

Not tonight, Ma. This work is important.

MAM'PHELE

Where are your gloves?

DINEO

What? I - I don't know. Maybe I left them at the media centre -

Now mother and daughter talk past each other.

MAM'PHELE

Oh! I almost forget. Something came today.

DINEO

The lecture hall?

MAM'PHELE

In the post box. Very exciting news.

DINO

Oh, the *bookshop* --

Mam'Phele wipes hands, carefully extracts an envelope, shows it to Dineo.

MAM'PHELE

*Look!* Your cousin is getting married.

DINEO

Sino?

MAM'PHELE

Sinovuyo has a new baby - that makes two now - but no husband. And she will never get one.

(beat)

No, Tlamelo is getting married. To a man who works in a private bank. Read it. A September wedding. And just a White Wedding. Can you believe it?

DINEO

A lot of people have only one ceremony these days.

MAM'PHELE

That's the problem with this young generation. No respect for tradition.

DINEO

Ma, young people *do* respect tradition. But shouldn't they have some freedom to make their own choices?

MAM'PHELE

Don't be cheeky, Dineo.

DINEO

I'm not being (sighs)  
Anyway, when is it again?

MAM'PHELE

September.

(pause)

You will need to go with someone suitable, Dineo. Somebody strong in the community.

(beat)

Don't look at me like that, Dineo. You know what your uncle's family is like. They think they're better than us. They always have.

DINEO

They've been good to us.

MAM'PHELE

They see us as a charity case.

DINEO

They don't. OK. I'm going to wash up for dinner.

She kisses mother on cheek.

MAM'PHELE

This is my one chance to show you off, my child. We have to make an impression.

Dineo laughs.

DINEO

I'm your daughter. Not a trophy!

MAM'PHELE

Dineo. You forgot your bag here. And this bag of books ---

(clucking to herself)

Always with her head in the clouds.

DINEO (O.S.)

I heard that!

**INT. BOOK SHOP - LATE AFTERNOON**

David is about to lock the door when Dineo rushes up to door and he lets her in. He tries to hide his happiness at seeing her.

DAVID

Oh. Hi. It's you.

Dineo is breathless.

DINEO

I'm glad I caught - you - in time. OK, deep breath. Did I leave my gloves --?

DAVID

Oh! Those were yours? Let me see --they must be behind the counter.

Dineo follows him to the pay station.

DAVID (CONT'D)

So hey, did you start on those books?

DINEO

Last night. I'm really enjoying some of the Lawrence. There's definitely more romance and emotion in his text --

DAVID

--than just sex? Absolutely.

DINEO

It seems criminal that anyone ever  
thought it was a dirty book. Do you -  
smell - something?

David tries to hide his sudden panic, ignores her question.

DAVID

Oh yes. Here.  
(holding gloves up)

DINEO

What do you think of Nabakov? Do you think  
he's misunderstood in terms of his  
overall work or was he pigeonholed -

DAVID

I really should get going on the cashing  
up.

DINEO

Oh, yes. Sorry. I should get going.

She starts to leave.

DAVID

Aren't you forgetting something?  
(she turns)  
Your gloves?

He gives her the gloves. Their eyes meet and hold. A moment. Then:

DINEO

(sniffing)  
I definitely smell something.

DAVID

Well, I'd better lock up.

David ushers her to the door.

DINEO

Smoke. Definitely. Sweet. *Ish*. Don't you  
smell it?

DAVID

Smell what? No.

DINEO

You *must* be able to smell it.

DAVID



Probably just - Incense? These new room deodorizers, you know - always coming up with new fragrances -- OK, thanks for stopping by.

Closing door, he finds Elfie smoking a blunt behind a shelf.

DAVID (CONT'D)

How many times have I told you *not* to do that in here!?!

ELFIE

You said no excessive spliff smoking. It's after hours. Why you getting all PG 13 on me dude?

(holding blunt out)

Want a hit? No? Come on. You need to relax.

DAVID

No, you help me cash up. If you're still capable of counting.

ELFIE

So why was she back?

DAVID

Who?

ELFIE

Who, he asks? You know who. Do you like her? *You do!* You like her. I can tell.

DAVID

(grinning)

Oh shut up, Elfie.

ELFE

I can already see your gorgeous cappuccino babies. I'll be god mother.

David is still grinning.

DAVID

You've been smoking too much!

**INT. PHELE HOME KITCHEN - MORNING**

Dineo grabs an apple from the basket. Her Mom is in enormous pink dressing gown. She holds a cellphone, squints at the screen.

MAM'PHELE

I've made breakfast. Pap. Sit. You can't go to school on an empty stomach.

DINEO

Varsity, Ma, and I'm going to be late.

MAM'PHELE

Do you need petrol money for your car?

Dineo bits into apple, shakes head: No.

MAM'PHELE (CONT'D)

Help me with this SMS before you go. Here --- this one.

Dineo takes phone from her mother.

DINEO

Mmm. It's a reminder about the church outreach programme meeting. You have to be there at nine.

MAM'PHELE

What would I do without you?

DINEO

Ma, I've see you send group emails and MMs. You're just too lazy to get your reading glasses.

Smiling, she gives the phone back, prepares to rush out.

MAM'PHELE

Come back, Dineo.

DINEO

What now? I'm going to be late.

Her mother holds up a Tupperware. Dineo takes it.

MAM'PHELE

You can't learn at your school - sorry, varsity - on an empty stomach.

(she kisses Dineo)

I'm very proud of you, you know that Dineo.

Dineo smiles. She glows in the halo of her mother's pride.

DINEO

Bye, Ma.

**INT. BOOK SHOP - DAY**

David notices Dineo perusing a shelf. He wants to go over - hesitates. Then, fixing his glasses, taking a deep breath, David approaches.

DAVID  
Hey -- You're back.

Dineo's eyes don't leave the titles on the shelves.

DINEO  
Uh-huh. All those books you sold me were written by dirty old men.

DAVID  
What?! Those are classics.

DINEO  
Hmph. Written by old dead white guys.

DAVID  
Old what dead? White what guys?

She turns to him and grins teasingly. She likes sparring with him.

DINEO  
You know what I mean. What's hot *now*? Who are today's edgy writers?

DAVID  
Rewind to the old dead white part.

DINEO  
I'm not knocking them, it's just not the angle I want.

Their eyes meet and hold as David asks a double question.

DAVID  
What *do* you want?

Beat.

DINEO  
I - I want to get an A on this assignment.

DAVID  
How's this for an angle? Women writers.

DINEO  
Women writers?

DAVID

Women writers. Did you know that last year 7 out of 10 books banned by American libraries were written by women?

Elfie suddenly appears from behind a shelf.

DINEO/ELFIE

*Seriously?*

DAVID

Seriously.

DINEO

Why didn't you show me those first?

ELFIE

(at Dineo)

He's a nerd. Words are his foreplay.

DAVID

(at Elfie)

How long have you been lurking and listening?

He looks apologetically at Dineo.

DAVID (CONT'D)

We don't have a lot of contemporary stuff in at the moment but I'm sure I can order  
---

ELFIE

(with innuendo)  
I'm sure he can.

DAVID

(at Elfie)

Don't you have a shelf to dust?

**A BIT LATER ---**

David is imputing her cellphone number on the computer.

DAVID

893 --Got it, Dineo. I'm David by the way. Y'know, so when I call, you won't think it's some random guy.

DINEO

I don't really have random guys calling me.

DAVID  
That's not what I meant --

She is clearly enjoying teasing David too. She smiles.

DINEO  
I know what you meant ... David.

He smiles, relieved.

When she leaves, Elfie teases David too.

ELFIE  
You're worse than Gerald here. Going in circles. Round and round. All alone. Dude, she gave *you* her *number*!

DAVID  
For a *book* order! How cooked is your brain?

ELFIE  
Ahhh, its so cute when it blushes. Ask her out already, Goofie.

Beat.

DAVID  
Think I should?

ELFIE  
Do you like her, David?

DAVID  
Yes.

Elfie looks at him as if to say: There's your answer.

**INT. PHELE HOME KITCHEN - SUNDAY MORNING (LATE)**

Dineo, in jersey and jeans, waits for a kettle to boil, book in one hand. Mom arrives in her Sunday Best, trailed by VUSI (28): tall, fit, good-looking, in a suit. She hides the book under a file.

MAM' PHELE  
Oh here she is! My daughter who thinks Sundays are for catching up on sleep  
(touches Vusi's arm)

Vusi was kind enough to give me a lift home.

VUSI  
Hello, Dineo.

DINEO  
Hi, Vusi. How's your Mom?

MAM'PHELE  
Poor woman, she's still not doing too well. Blood pressure. We prayed for her at the service his morning. You should have been there, Dineo.

DINEO  
I'm sorry to hear that, Vusi.

MAM'PHELE  
Keep Vusi company while I put my hat away. Make him some coffee. --Did you know Vusi is a qualified dentist?

Mam'Phele and her big hat sail out the room.

VUSI  
No coffee for me, thanks. Stains the teeth. Just kidding. Coffee would be great.

She sets about making coffee.

VUSI (CONT'D)  
It's been ages since I last saw you. You've grown up.

DINEO  
I wish my mother would see that.

Vusi extracts the book from under file.

VUSI  
What are you hiding here?

DINEO  
Oh that?  
(she spills milk, damn!)  
It's - just - just something for varsity.

Vusi looks at her with admiration.

VUSI

Your mother tells me you're on a full bursary. How many distinctions last year? --- Six?

DINEO

Groan. I wish she wouldn't do that.

VUSI

It happens when you're an only child. I know all about it.

(re: book)

Sjoe. This is some pretty heavy stuff.

DINEO

It's an eye-opener, I know. But it's for an assignment.

VUSI

I should read more. I used to enjoy reading in varsity. These days my X Box and my mountain bike are my weekend kick, you know.

DINEO

My weekend kick is more a cup of tea and Shakespeare --

A hatless and serene Mam'Phele sails back into the kitchen.

MAM'PHELE

Don't bore Vusi with your book talk  
(she is just teasing, turns to  
Vusi)

She's in love with Shakespeare, this one.  
I hope you're going to stay for lunch,  
Vusi?

Vusi puts down his coffee cup.

VUSI

Sorry, Mam'Phele. I wish I could.  
I must get back to my mother.

MAM'PHELE

Send her my best, son.

Mam'Phele hugs him.

VUSI

Bye, Dineo. Good seeing you again.

Dineo senses he is being polite. She hasn't felt any chemistry or spark. As soon as he is out the door, Dineo turns to her mother. Tries to hide her anger.

DINEO  
What was that all about?

MAM'PHELE  
Have you peeled the vegetables?

DINEO  
Don't think you can avoid this, Ma. I can smell a set up!

MAM'PHELE  
I don't know what you are talking about. He gave me a lift from church. Hah - You musn't be so suspicious, my child.

But her mother hides a secret, cunning smile from Dineo.

**INT. BOOK SHOP - DAY**

Dineo works on laptop in the chill area. David comes over.

DAVID  
Everything cool here?

DINEO  
Yes, thanks. It's just quieter than the media centre or my mom's kitchen. It's not a problem, is it?

DAVID  
Of course not. Help yourself to the coffee. Just stay away from Elfie's -er, 'special' brownies.

An innocent Dineo is genuinely confused.

DINEO  
Special? How are they special?

DAVID  
I don't know. Extra chocolate? She's pretty protective of them --

From corner of his eye, David sees Elfie make chicken wings with her arms.

DAVID (CONT'D)



Do you mind if I sit a bit?

DINEO  
Won't your boss mind?

DAVID  
I'm sure he'd be OK with it.

DINEO  
I don't want you to get fired.

Elfie gives him a thumbs up.

DAVID  
How is the assignment going?

DINEO  
I'm just putting together some notes.  
I've decided to go with the women writers  
---

DAVID  
Just a sec. Be right back.

David rushes over to a CUSTOMER at the coffee station and shoo's him gently away from the brownies. Elfie takes over as David goes back to Dineo.

DAVID (CONT'D)  
OK. Where was I?  
(beat, pause)  
There's something I want to ask you,  
Dineo.

She looks at him from rim of laptop: Yes?

DAVID (CONT'D)  
Would you maybe like to go for dinner  
sometime?

Dineo is so shocked she fumbles with her laptop and knocks over her coffee mug. It spills. She jumps up! David jumps up!

Now -- Dineo and David speak over each other as she tries to mop up coffee with serviette and he stops her, by taking her arm, as his voice comes out stronger and more confident.

DINEO  
Damn. Sorry. I'm so clumsy -

DAVID

Damn. Sorry. No, it's me, Dineo. That didn't come out right. What I wanted to say was: I'd really like to take you to dinner this Friday and I'm hoping you'll say yes.

He looks directly into her eyes, hand on her forearm.

DINEO

This Friday? I wish I - David, it's just - I can't. Right now, it's a not a good - The thing is, at the moment I'm focused on my studies --

DAVID

So you have a No-Dating Policy?

DINEO

No, not really.

DAVID

You don't like guys?

DAVID (CONT'D)

No, I do. It's more ---

David looks crushed, but he's trying to hide it though.

DAVID (CONT'D)

Please don't go on. I understand.

DINEO

I - I'm sorry -- Ireallyhavetogo--

She rushes out.

**INT. PHELE HOME KITCHEN - AFTERNOON**

Dineo works on her assignment. Enter Vusi, in jeans and polo shirt, carrying a heavy box.

DINEO

What's this?

VUSI

Church stuff. For your Mom's outreach programme.

DINEO

She's not here, but thanks. Can I get you a coldrink?

VUSI

No, I can see you're busy with your project? Going well?

DINEO

It's a lot of reading, even more research, but I'm enjoying it.

VUSI

I see how dedicated you are, Dineo.

(beat)

Look. I know you're busy but I want to ask you --

DINEO

Wait.

VUSI

What?

DINEO

Is this your mother's idea or my mother's idea?

VUSI

You don't even know what I'm going to say.

DINEO

You're going to ask me to go out with you.

VUSI

Busted!

(beat)

OK: they put the idea in my head. But the execution was all mine.

He looks at her with sincerity but not passion.

VUSI (CONT'D)

I *would* like to take you to a a dinner. This Friday.

Dineo laughs at the irony of her situation.

DINEO

Wow. This must be my lucky week!

VUSI

I'm not following you.

Dineo stops laughing as she waves away his comment. She turns a bit more serious.

DINEO

We both know my mother is just looking for someone to take me to a fancy wedding in September.

(beat)

She shouldn't be doing this and you really don't have to feel like you have to do this for me, Vusi.

VUSI

I don't mind chaperoning you to the wedding. It might be fun.

DINEO

And I don't mind going alone if I have to.

VUSI

Your mother says you don't get out a lot, that you don't date or have lots of friends.

(beat)

I'd like to be your friend.

The truth in it stings and Dineo struggles with her anger.

DINEO

My mother doesn't know what she's talking about.

VUSI

Don't be upset, Dineo. She just doesn't want you to be lonely.

DINEO

(almost to herself)

Lonely? What is she -

She realizes it is true: she is lonely. Vusi's sympathy is more than she can handle.

DINEO (CONT'D)

I'm really busy with this assignment, Vusi. So if you don't mind? I'll tell my mom you stopped by. I'm sure she'll call you to thank you.

She gestures to the box. Vusi can see he's said the wrong then, but after a hesitation, he leaves.

A emotional Dineo can't get back to work.

**INT. BOOK SHOP - DAY**

A nervous Dineo comes up to a surprised David as he stands behind the counter.

DAVID  
I didn't think I'd see you again.

DINEO  
Hello, David.

A beat. She looks at him, then at Gerald, trying to find courage. David looks unsure about what to say or do.

DAVID  
The book you ordered isn't in -

DINEO  
Do you know research shows a goldfish can remember stuff for like five months?

DAVID  
Really?

DINEO  
You sell this guy here short!

DAVID  
OK. Noted.  
(beat)  
But I'm sensing you didn't come here to talk about Gerald's self esteem issues or his unrecognized memory capacity.

He smiles a bit, to try and get her to open up to him.

DINEO  
I'm sorry about the other day, David.

DAVID  
You really don't have to be sorry about anything. I obviously misread the signs.

Dineo's voice becomes soft and vulnerable.

DINEO  
No, you didn't. You didn't misread anything.

Hope seems to light David's eyes.

DINEO (CONT'D)

Listen, is it OK if I work here this afternoon? Take advantage of your free WiFi and coffee?

DAVID

Of course.

DINEO

You know, if you want to come over for a chat in a little while, that would be cool.

DAVID

You sure?

DINEO

We could even try that conversation again? That one where you ask me out and I *don't* act like an idiot. What do you think?

David, suppressed happiness in his eyes, smiles, then nods.

DAVID

Fifteen minutes too soon?

DINEO

Five would be fine with me.

**INT. ITALIAN RESTAURANT - FRIDAY NIGHT**

The meal finished, Dineo and David talk animatedly in the candlelight.

DAVID

Of course all the usual enemies of art haven't changed. The church, the state --

DINEO

But surely censorship must play *some* role?

DAVID

Like it did before '94? No thanks. I believe the reader is the first and last censor.

(beat)

Did you know the book shop carried a lot of controversial books during the Apartheid era. In fact, my Uncle was even arrested once ---

DINEO  
Your uncle owns the shop?

DAVID  
(sheepishly)  
Actually, I do.

Dineo reaches over and playfully slaps his hand.

DINEO  
Here I was worrying about you taking so many breaks. And your boss firing you at any minute.

DAVID  
Uncle Kirk left it to me in his will. It's ideal for me. I live just around the corner.

DINEO  
You're lucky. I'm like a homing pigeon - travelling in to varsity every day.

DAVID  
Why don't you stay in Res?

DINEO  
My mom would never allow it. That's why she bought me a car.

DAVID  
That's pretty decent of her.

DINEO  
It was my 21st present last year - I think my Uncle helped --

A YOUNG BLACK WAITER comes to clear the table. He looks suspicious of Dineo with David.

WAITER  
(at Dineo, in Xhosa)  
Will there be anything else?

DINEO  
(in Xhosa)  
Nothing. Thanks.

WAITER  
(In Xhosa)  
Is this your boyfriend?

DINEO

You can leave now. We're fine here

When the waiter leaves, David leans forward.

DAVID

What's *his* problem?

Dineo looks uncomfortable, but shrugs as if it say: Who knows?

DAVID (CONT'D)

Maybe should go get coffee at that new place? Round the corner?

Dineo is reluctant to leave, but looks at her watch.

DINEO

I - I should get going soon.

DAVID

But it's not even 10. And it's a Friday night. There's a great new Woody Allen on at Rosebank --

DINEO

Oh, I love Woody Allen.

DAVID

What? Are you kidding? I'm a *huge* fan. Looks, we can still catch it -

The waiter walks past and David flags his down. He doesn't acknowledge David with any sort of respect.

DAVID (CONT'D)

May we have the bill, please?

The waiter looks sullenly at Dineo, leaves.

DAVID (CONT'D)

I know someone who's not getting a tip. I think we should ask for a manager.

DINEO

Just ignore him please.

David agrees with a shrug, he'd much rather focus on her.

DAVID

So what will you do when you finish up this year? Post Grad?



DINEO

I don't know. I mean the idea of studying further is cool, but I think I should get some work experience. *Life* experience you know.

DAVID

Does that include dating - I don't know - say nerdish book store boys with neglected goldfish and crazy Rasta assistants?

Dineo laughs warmly. Their eyes meet and hold in the soft and romantic light.

DINEO

You're not a nerd...

(beat)

In fact, you're kind of cute.

She giggles. He grins.

DAVID

Cute, hey?

DINEO

That's what I said. Cute.

Dineo finishes her Cola with a straw, flushed and suddenly shy.

DAVID

Cute but not handsome, hey?

DINEO

No, cute. Handsome is for older guys.

DAVID

Ah, something to aspire to. OK.

DINEO

So why are you single, David Alexander?

David looks into his empty wine glass.

DAVID

There was a girl a while ago. To cut a short story short: it didn't work out. Angela wanted -

DINEO

Angela? Was that her ---

The waiter brusquely hands David the bill.

DAVID

Thanks.

DINEO

Let me get half of that.

DAVID

Are you crazy? I'm paying for this.

DINEO

But I asked you out.

DAVID

No, I asked you out first!

DINEO

David --

As they fight over the bill their hands touch, and David covers hers with his.

DAVID

I'm really glad you changed your mind.

She looks really happy she changed her mind, too.

#### **MONTAGE TO MUSIC**

*We see Dineo and David drinking coffee at book shop, debating a book. Dineo, in the kitchen, smiling at a WhatsApp David has sent. David, in the bookshop, grinning as he replies. Dineo laughs aloud to his response, Mam'Phele giving her a suspicious look.*

*Here's Dineo at bookshop, typing at her laptop. David sneaks up behind her, covers her eyes. Surprise! --- Now we follows Dineo and David walking in the park, and this is where we pick them up again.*

#### **EXT. PARK - AFTERNOON (AUGUST)**

DAVID

--After the accident, my Uncle Kirk took me in. If he hadn't, I would have been an orphan and not the cool Harry Potter kind. Seriously, he was like a father to me.

Her hand, in cream wool glove, reaches for his hand, in black leather.

DINEO

It must have been hard. I can't imagine what it must be like to lose both your parents. My Dad died when I was ten.

(beat)

You know, sometimes I think I remember him - perfectly, like a movie - and other times, I don't know. It's like I'm writing the movie and making up the memories.

DAVID

I know exactly what you mean.

DINEO

My mother worked hard to give me everything she could without him. The best school, the best advantages. The best school meant two jobs for her at one point.

DAVID

You guys must be pretty close. What's she like? Your mother?

DINEO

She wants what's best for me, I think

DAVID

She's done a great job. That I can tell you right now. I'd really like to meet her.

She hesitates, paints on a smile.

DAVID (CONT'D)

What? You don't want me to meet her? That it? You don't see our relationship going anywhere?

DINEO

Of course not. And don't tease me.

DAVID

I like teasing you.

Dineo takes off her glove to touch his cheek.

DAVID (CONT'D)

Dineo. Where *is* this going?

She leans in to kiss him: the end of loneliness and a tender exploration of new love.

David embraces her. The kiss deepens: she responds to David's strength, his quiet passion. He is the best kisser ever.

An ELDERLY COUPLE walking a dog give a disapproving look. Dineo is a bit upset, looks at them and then back at David.

DINEO  
(re: couple)  
Does, er, that get to you?

His answer is a firm kiss: No Way

DAVID  
There's always going to be people like that.  
(a look of trust between them)  
And they're always never going to matter.

He kisses her again. She forgets everything in this embrace.

**INT. PHELE HOME KITCHEN - AFTERNOON**

Dineo's mother helps her take off her coat.

MAM'PHELE  
And where have you been all day?

DINEO  
I was at the library, Ma.

MAM'PHELE  
On a Saturday? You work too hard, my child. Too much studying for a pretty girl like --

She suddenly finds a dry gold leaf in Dineo's coat's hood.

MAM'PHELE (CONT'D)  
Do they have a lot of trees at this library?

DINEO  
What? Oh that's - nothing.

MAM'PHELE  
You know I don't like you to lie -

DINEO

OK, Ma. I -I went to the park. No biggie.

MAM'PHELE

With who?

DINEO

A friend.

MAM'PHELE

From school?

DINEO

No. A guy. A guy friend. Now I'm going to my room and work on my-

MAM'PHELE

You know I don't like secrets, Dineo. Are you serious about this boy?

DINEO

He's just a boy --

MAM'PHELE

Dineo ---

DINEO

I don't know, Mama. It's early days, but yes -- I like him.

MAM'PHELE

And Vusi?

DINEO

Vusi and I are not interested in each other that way. I told you that. A hundred times.

MAM'PHELE

But who is this young man? He must be something special if he can get you to take your nose out of all those books. I must meet him.

DINEO

Ma, I have to get going on this -

MAM'PHELE

We must have him over for dinner. It's only right.

DINEO

He's - well, he's - shy, Ma.

MAM'PHELE

I'll make my lamb stew.

DINEO

You don't understand. David is - he's a  
- vegetarian.

Her mother is thinking: A black boy, a vegan?

MAM'PHELE

A vegetarian? Serious? But everyone  
loves my stew. Invite him this Saturday,  
Dineo. I want to meet him. This David.

DINEO

Whatever. Can I go now?

**INT. BOOK SHOP - DAY**

DINEO

Is David around?

ELFIE

He's around here somewhere. Hey, listen.  
I'm glad you're here. You and David must  
come to the Azanian Astronauts this  
Saturday!

DINEO

Azanian what?

ELFIE

A Rasta group playing in Newtown. The  
lead singer? Out of this world. I've been  
to every concert just to see him ---

DAVID

Is Elfie telling you how she's become a  
sad groupie?

ELFIE

I'm no groupie. I'm just making sure he  
notices his future wife.

DINEO

Elfie was inviting us out on Saturday,  
but I told her we have other plans.

DAVID

We do?

ELFIE  
Sounds serious.

DINEO  
Dinner. With my Mother. Serious enough?

ELFIE  
Look you go, Goofie. You're meeting the  
parents!

DAVID  
Don't look so worried, Dee.

DINEO  
Maybe we should cancel. I don't--

DAVID  
I want to meet your mother. She'll love  
me.

ELFIE  
She will. I'll make sure he doesn't  
mismatch his socks again or wear his Star  
Trek T-shirt.

**INT. PHELE HOME KITCHEN - NIGHT**

Dineo and David alone in the kitchen.

DAVID  
Do I look OK? I wanted to wear a tie. Elfie  
said I was going to dinner not a funeral  
--- Hey, what's your mother's name?

DINEO  
Rebecca, but don't ---

Enter Mam'Phele. She freezes for a beat when she sees David, before  
her good manners take over. Her face remains a mask.

MAM'PHELE  
You must be David.

DAVID  
Rebecca. It is so nice to meet you.

Her smile becomes even more frozen at his use of her first name.

MAM'PHELE  
Welcome to our home, David.  
(beat/awkward pause)

Dineo, where are your manners? You haven't even offered David a drink.

DAVID

I'm cool for now. I mean, I'm fine. Thank you.

MAM'PHELE

I do have some beer here. Wine too.

DAVID

No thanks, I'm fine.

DINEO

He said he's fine, Ma.

They sit around the table. It's beautifully set.

MAM'PHELE

Dineo, maybe David would like to say grace for us?

DINEO

It's OK. I'll say it.

MAM'PHELE

As the man at the table, David should say ut.

DAVID

Oh. OK. Grace. I'm sorry. I haven't really done that.

MAM'PHELE

Do you go to church?

DAVID

My uncle raised me. He had kind of a bohemian streak. I wouldn't say church was high on his agenda.

DINEO

David isn't very religious, Ma.

Dineo's mother looks pained but serene.

MAM'PHELE

I suppose we all have our own ways. Dineo?

The three of them link hands. Awkward. Tension under surface.

DINEO



For what we are about to receive may the  
Lord make us truly thankful amen.

David doesn't let go of Dineo's hand, gives it a comforting squeeze.  
Mam'Phele notices, her mask smiles. Dineo pulls her hand away.

DINEO (CONT'D)

Are you sure I can't get you anything to  
drink? Ma? You OK with your milk?

MAM'PHELE

So what do you, David? Are you studying?

DINEO

David has his own business, Ma.

DAVID

It's a bookstore. It's small but I love  
it.

DINEO

It's very successful.

MAM'PHELE

Small businesses are the backbone of this  
country. You should be proud of yourself.

DAVID

With so many people buying online, it is  
hard to stay competitive.

MAM'PHELE

That's right. This technology is not  
always a good thing --Dineo, give David  
more rice. We don't want him to think  
we're not good hosts.

DINEO

He has enough rice, Ma. Just let him eat.

DAVID

This is great stew. I live on takeaways,  
2 minute noodles-- so this a real treat.

MAM'PHELE

It's Dineo's favourite -- Does your Uncle  
also stay in Johannesburg, David? Do you  
have other family?

DAVID

Ah, Uncle Kirk died last year.

MAM'PHELE

Oh, I'm sorry. That is sad. I don't mean to be intrusive. Dineo hasn't told me much about you.

David looks at Dineo as if it to ask: Why not? She looks down at her plate.

MAM'PHELE (CONT'D)

I hope you're not too full. I made a warm toffee pudding. It's also a family favourite.

**LATER --- DAVID PREPARES TO LEAVE**

MAM'PHELE

Thank you for joining us. It was nice to meet you.

DAVID

Thanks again for everything, Rebecca.  
(at Dineo)  
Goodnight...

Dineo nods, tries to smile. David leaves. The silence stretches.

DINEO

I'll tidy up. Wash the dishes.

MAM'PHELE

I think I will take a nice hot bath. Please put the leftover stew into a Tupperware. The big one.

DINEO

OK.

MAM'PHELE

Make sure you put it in the fridge. You can leave the rice in the pot, but make sure you wipe the stove. Oh --- and Dineo---?

(she turns to Dineo)

You will *not* see that boy ever again.

**INT. DINEO'S MOTHER'S BEDROOM --- A BIT LATER**

Dineo stands in the doorway, as her mother sits in front of her dressing table.

DINEO  
(softly)  
Can we talk about this?

Her mother simply cold creams her face.

DINEO (CONT'D)  
Please, I just want to--

MAM'PHELE  
It's late. You should go to bed.

**INT. BOOK SHOP - DAY**

Dineo (glum) and David (worried) sip coffee.

DINEO  
I don't know. Maybe we should take it  
easy. Take a breather.

DAVID  
A breather? What does that even mean,  
Dee? Are you, are we, breaking up?

DINEO  
You didn't see the way she looked at me.

DAVID  
You're overreacting. I was there. She was  
OK. Your Mom's cool.

Dineo snorts.

DINEO  
She will never accept you. Us. She is very  
traditional.

DAVID  
Just take a deep breath. We'll work it  
out.

DINEO  
*How?*

DAVID  
I don't know, but we're in this together.

DINEO  
I suppose we could still see each other.  
We'll just have to be careful. As long as  
she doesn't find out.

DAVID  
(a bit angry)  
What? Are you serious? We're not in high school. I'm not playing that game.

DINEO  
Please--you don't know my mother.

DAVID  
You're right. I don't know her and she doesn't know me. So we'll give it time for us get to know each other.

Dineo doesn't look convinced. She gathers her bag to her chest.

DINEO  
I have to go. I shouldn't even be here.

DAVID  
When will I see you?

DINEO  
I don't know. I'll call you.

DAVID  
When?

DINEO  
I don't know. I still have my assignment to work on. I must go.

David looks frustrated and sad. Is he losing her?

**INT. PHELE HOME KITCHEN - MORNING (SEPTEMBER)**

Dineo, working on laptop. Cellphone rings. CallerID: *David*. She doesn't answer.

Then, a bit later, Vusi enters with another big box.

DINEO  
More stuff for the church?

VUSI  
We have to raise enough money if we want that day care facility. What are you doing stuck inside? It's a great Spring day out there.

DINEO

This assignment is taking up a lot of my time.

VUSI

I know but you can't forget to have fun. Hey -- I have two tickets to Azanian Astronauts.

DINEO

I didn't know you liked reggae?

VUSI

(with reggae accent)

I love it, maaan. You know this group?

DINEO

No, nut my friend Elfie is obsessed with them.

VUSI

They're great. Come with me, then. It will be fun.

Dineo is not angered or surprised by his overtures at friendship. She smiles.

DINEO

I know you think you have to get me out and about in the real world, V, but I'm fine.

VUSI

You don't look fine. You look tired.

DINEO

It's - just. No, it's nothing.

VUSI

Did I tell you I had a minor in Psych? You can tell me.

(beat)

I know we got our wires crossed a bit but I would like to be your friend.

She can tell he is being sincere.

DINEO

OK. I met someone. Someone I really like.

(beat)

It was going really well. Then I did the most stupid thing of my life. I let him meet my mother.

VUSI  
And she hates him.

DINEO  
And she hates him.

VUSI  
Why?

DINEO  
David's white. I mean, big deal, right?  
Hello - 2013!

VUSI  
I know. I don't think it's a big deal.

DINEO  
And of course, he doesn't understand how  
I'm totally stuck in the middle.

VUSI  
The way I see it, you have two choices.  
Tell this guy - David, is it? - to back  
off a bit, give you time. Or do what your  
Mom wants. Dump him.

DINEO  
I don't like either of those choices.

VUSI  
When I was a kid I wanted to be a forensic  
scientist.

DINEO  
What happened?

VUSI  
I become a dentist to make my parents  
happy. And I'm cool with that, but when  
it comes to relationships, I don't think  
you can compromise.

We hear Mam'Phele coming down the passage.

MAM'PHELE (O.S.)  
Vusi? Is that you?

DINEO  
Will you do me favour? I can't do this  
without your help. Just play along. OK?

Her mother enters the kitchen.

MAM'PHELE

What are you two up to?

**EXT. PARK - DAY**

David and Dineo sit on blanket under a tree. But it's not exactly a postcard of a romantic picnic.

DAVID

Who is Vusi again?

DINEO

He's just a friend, David.

DAVID

Why involve him? You know I don't want you to lie to your mother.

DINEO

You don't understand. She watches me like a hawk, a prison warder. No trust me: it's better she thinks I'm at this concert with Vusi.

DAVID

You're just giving her another reason to hate me.

DINEO

Let's not fight about this. Please. Let's just enjoy our time together.

She leans over and kisses him on his cheek.

DINEO (CONT'D)

I've missed you.

David takes her hand, wants to reassure her.

DAVID

OK, I'll go along with this. For now -- but I think this whole banned and forbidden book thing is going to your head.

They kiss, then Dineo's cellphone rings.

DAVID (CONT'D)

Don't dare answer that. This is our time, remember.

DINEO  
I wasn't planning to.

She kisses David back.

**INT. DAVID'S FLAT OPEN PLAN LIVING SPACE - LATER**

David's place is a quirky bachelor pad, lots of books and movie posters. Dineo watches her as she dials her cellphone.

DINEO  
Three missed calls! Why isn't he answering? Something's wrong ---  
(her call answered)  
Hi, Vusi. Were you looking for me?  
(she listens to Vusi)  
What? Oh my God. I'm sorry. No, no, of course it's all right. I-I'll speak to you later.

DAVID  
What's up?

DINEO  
Vusi had to take his mother to the hospital. He's there with her now.

DAVID  
That's not good. Will she be OK?

DINEO  
Oh, God, how am I going to get home. What will she say when I don't get home with Vusi?  
(her panic becomes visible)  
I'd better catch a taxi.

DAVID  
No ways. I'm driving you.

DINEO  
No, you stay here.

DAVID  
Dineo, you're twenty-two, not twelve. I'll drive you home and talk to your mother.

DINEO  
That's so not a good idea. Please.



DAVID

I'm stronger than I look. Super Book Nerd  
takes on Mighty Mam'Phele.

Dineo looks agitated.

DAVID (CONT'D)

Come on, trust me. It will be all right.  
I promise.

**INT. PHELE HOME KITCHEN - LATER**

Mighty Mam'Phele is waiting for them. She glares at David.

MAM'PHELE

I should have known you were behind this.

DAVID

With all due respect, Dineo is her own  
person, with her own life. Why not trust  
--?

MAM'PHELE

*Trust her!* When she lies and sneaks  
around. I suppose your sold her these  
funny books too?

She holds up a book. Dineo is shocked that her mother has violated  
her privacy.

DINEO

Ma, where you in my room --

MAM'PHELE

---All these ideas she reads. They're not  
ideas --- they're poison! Is this is  
what's responsible for my daughter's  
behaviour? *This!*

DINEO

None of this is David's fault. I sneaked  
out on my own. I shouldn't have involved  
Vusi, I know that now. I know made a bad  
decision but-

MAM'PHELE

You only started making bad decisions  
when you met ---

(at David)

You look like a nice young man, David. But  
you're not right for my daughter.

DINEO  
Ma, please --

DAVID  
Isn't that for Dineo to decide?

Dineo can see her mother is very, very angry. She panics.

DINEO  
(at David)  
Maybe it's better if you leave.

DAVID  
Is that what you want?

MAM'PHELE  
It's what she said, David.

He gives Dineo a look, but she can't meet his eyes. He turns and leaves.

**INT. BOOK SHOP - DAY**

The shop is empty except for Dineo and David. David looks disappointed and empty too.

DAVID  
I don't know if I told you, but my Uncle Kirk was gay--

DINEO  
I didn't know ---

DAVID  
And all his life he felt he had to hide it, who he really was. I mean, he only came out to me at the end, when he was sick. He was a lonely man - this shop was all he had. These books.  
(beat)  
I can't live like that. *I won't* live like that.

DINEO  
You don't understand my mother. We just need to cool it a bit, buy a bit of time --

David's anger comes through, he jumps to his feet.

DAVID

Can you hear yourself right now? You're not fooling anyone. This isn't even about her.

DINEO

Please --just--

DAVID

This is about you. What do you want, Dee? What are you prepared to stand up for? Fight for?

She doesn't answer. She looks miserable.

DAVID (CONT'D)

Do you even know?

DINEO

I know I don't want us to break up.

She looks at him. Their eyes meet and we see them holding on to love, but the anger and confusion is just too much.

DINEO (CONT'D)

Is that what's happening here? Are we breaking up?

DAVID

That's for you to decide.

Dineo is about to leave, when David calls her back.

DAVID (CONT'D)

Dineo!

She turns. Hope seems to flicker in her face. She wants him to forgive her.

DAVID (CONT'D)

That book you ordered came in yesterday. The Maya Angelou.

DINEO

(hiding her disappointment)  
Oh. Thanks--How much do I owe you?

David hands her the book. His words have double meaning.

DAVID

Nothing.

**INT. PHELE HOME KITCHEN - MORNING**

Dineo stares at her laptop screen blankly, an empty coffee mug next to her.

MAM'PHELE

Were you up all night again, my child?

Dineo nods. Yawns.

DINEO

I finally finished my assignment.

She pops in a flashdisk and copies files.

DINEO (CONT'D)

I'm going to have it printed, then hand it in at the media centre. I'll be back later.

MAM'PHELE

Let me make you some breakfast. Dineo-?-?

She turns. Dineo has shuffled out. The kitchen seems emptier.

**INT. BOOK SHOP - SAME**

David is staring at Gerald in the fishbowl blankly. An empty coffee cup stands beside him.

ELFIE

Can I make you another cup, David?

He doesn't seem to hear her.

ELFIE (CONT'D)

You did the right thing. She didn't need pressure from you and her Mom.

DAVID

I'm going out. I don't know if I'll be back today. You OK to lock up?

Elfie nods, he leaves.

A few seconds later Dineo enters. She greets Elfie.

DINEO

Is David in?

ELFIE

No, not at the moment. He's at - er, a supplier.

(beat)

I think he just needs some time too, Dineo.

(beat)

Did he ever tell you about Angela?

DINEO

No, not really.

ELFIE

David thought she was the love of his life. She wasn't. She was a bitch. She broke his heart.

(beat)

When his Uncle died, she wasn't prepared to be there for him during the bad times. She just took off with another guy. She didn't even come to the funeral.

DINEO

Why are you telling me this, Elfie? Is there a point?

ELFIE

I just want you to know that David's my friend. I won't let him get hurt again. OK?

DINEO

I don't want to hurt him. But it's complicated.

ELFIE

Love is very simple so un-complicate it.

A customer comes to the desk. Dineo leaves, absorbing these slightly angry words.

**INT. PHELE HOME KITCHEN - NIGHT**

Mam'Phele prepares supper. Dineo sits staring into space.

DINEO

60 percent. Can you believe it? It's the lowest I've ever got for an assignment. How did I get it so wrong?

MAM'PHELE

That's what boys do. They're trouble. I can't say I'm not disappointed.

DINEO

It's just one assignment.

MAM'PHELE

Well, don't get upset with me. You must just work harder on the next one.

Dineo cracks a bit under the pressure of her mother's expectations.

DINEO

I'm sorry I'm not the perfect daughter, Ma.

MAM'PHELE

You are perfect. To me.

DINEO

Remember when I did ballet because you wanted it - because Tlamelo was doing it. Or when you wanted me to go to the best school - only the best? And then varsity, a degree.

(beat)

I'm grateful for that, all of it, but when do I make *my* own decisions?

MAM'PHELE

You're tired because you're not sleeping--Tonight, I'll make Milo

DINEO

I was thinking. Last night? Instead of doing a post-grad degree, why don't I get a job for a while, a place of my own. Please, Ma.

MAM'PHELE

Oh, I see.

DINEO

See what? You only see what you want. You ignore anything that doesn't fit in your perfect picture!

MAM'PHELE

I'm your Mother, I'm not stupid. You want to move in with *him*!

DINEO

No! What? I would never do that. That never crossed my mind. I just want to be independent. For once in my life, maybe be a grown up.

MAM'PHELE

Let me tell you something, my child. A man like David is only interested in one thing. No, don't look at me like that. He thinks it's exotic to be with a black girl and when he gets tired of you, he will discard you--

Dineo grabs her car keys.

DINEO

I can't listen to this, I'm sorry.

MAM'PHELE

Dineo! *Dineo!* Come back here. *Now!*

**INT. DAVID'S FLAT - NIGHT**

David, in T-shirt/shorts, opens to the frantic knocking. He opens. A distraught Dineo falls into his arms. He holds her, wordlessly comforting her. Two souls have found each other.

**INT. DAVID'S FLAT - NEXT MORNING**

Knocking on door in empty flat. Dineo emerges from bedroom. She opens the door.

ELFIE

Dav--*Dineo*? What the hell? Did I smoke some weird stuff last night. Wait! Don't tell me you guys *finally* got it together!?

DINEO

It's not what it looks like. David slept on the couch. He gave me his bed. A proper gentleman.

ELFIE

See this face. This is what disappointment looks like. I swear he's not going to get anywhere playing the proper gentleman. Where is he anyway?

DINEO

I don't know --- Oh. Wait.

She finds a note on the counter.

DINEO (CONT'D)

He's gone to buy ingredients for breakfast. French Toast. How does he *know* that's my favourite?

ELFIE

Because he's into you, he's digging you on a totally primal level.

DINEO

Oh, come on. You think so?

ELFIE

Don't try be coy. You want him too. Don't you?

David enters with a brown shopping bag.

DAVID

Who what? Who wants who? Hey, you're up.

DINEO

I was just saying I want French Toast.

DAVID

I wanted to surprise you.

Elfie makes herself totally at home as she looks from Dineo to David.

ELFIE

What gives here? What's going on in this little picture of domesticity?

DAVID

If you're here, who's at the bookshop?

ELFIE

Gerald?

DAVID

You're very funny this morning.

(at Dineo)

So syrup? Or tomato sauce?

ELFIE

I'm gonna go with syrup *and* tomato sauce. I got the munchies.



DAVID  
You're not staying for breakfast.  
(at Dineo)  
Dee?

Dineo seems a million miles away, but snaps out of it.

DINEO  
David, will you come with me to Tlamelo's  
wedding next weekend?

ELFIE/DAVID  
What?

DINEO  
You heard me.  
(beat)  
And I'm with Elfie on this one. I want my  
toast with both too.

David looks at her as if it say: You sure about this?

She looks very sure. She's made her mind.

**INT. PHELE HOME KITCHEN - DAY**

Mam'Phele looks suspicious of Dineo's new found serenity and confident as Dineo prepares a meal.

MAM'PHELE  
I spoke to Vusi yesterday. His mother is  
doing well.

DINEO  
I'm happy to hear that. The last time I  
visited her, she looked in better  
spirits.

MAM'PHELE  
Dineo, why don't you give ask Vusi to the  
wedding?

DINEO  
No, Ma. I'm sorry. It's not going to  
happen.

MAM'PHELE  
You're still going to the wedding, Dineo.  
Your Uncle expects you.

DINEO

I know. Wouldn't miss it for the world.

MAM'PHELE

I'll get you a new dress. That will make you feel better.

DINEO

I don't need a new dress. I'm going to wear the blue one with the white pattern. I always feel good in that one.

MAM'PHELE

What about shoes? We can get on my account  
--

DINEO

I'm taking care of that tomorrow. I'm going shopping with a friend from varsity.

For once, Mam'Phele is at a loss for words.

**INT. DAVID FLAT - MORNING**

Elfie adjusts David's cheeky bow tie. He looks handsome in a suit. Hair tamed. He still wears his glasses though.

ELFIE

Just remember you have to be strong for each other - it works both ways. OK?

(beat)

Dineo is not Angela.

DAVID

Angela who?

ELFIE

Your Uncle would've been so proud of you, David.

DAVID

Hey, dial down the emotion. I'm just going to a wedding. I'm not getting married myself.

They hug. It's an emotional moment.

ELFIE

I love you, Goofie.

**INT. PHELE HOME KITCHEN - MORNING**

MAM'PHELE

Is this hat on properly?

DINEO

It looks perfect.

MAM'PHELE

What is the time? We should --

A knock on the door. Dineo drops he small clutch bag. She's very nervous.

Mam'Phele enters, wearing an elaborate hat, beats her to the door. There's David and he is holding a bunch of flowers. He smiles at Dineo and suddenly she's not nervous.

Dineo's mother is so shocked, she can't speak.

DAVID

Morning, Mam'Phele. These are for you.

She doesn't take them. David clears his throat.

DAVID (CONT'D)

I'd really like, I mean it would be an honour to accompany you and your daughter today.

David's mother allows him into the house. Minor victory.

MAM'PHELE

If that's what Dineo wants, then I can't argue with her.

DINEO

Thank you - Ma -

MAM'PHELE

But you'd have to excuse me. Because I will be staying right here.

Dineo looks upset again. David stays cool and calm, stands firm.

DAVID

I don't think Dineo would want to go without you. There's nothing more important to Dineo than family.

Reluctantly, Mam'Phele takes the flowers, sniffs them, places them on a table.

MAM'PHELE

Thanks for the flowers. They're a nice gesture. But I won't change my mind.

DINEO

Ma, please --

DAVID

Would it help if I told you I'm in love with you daughter?

Dineo reacts to this statement. What? He loves her! Wow.

MAM'PHELE

If you love my daughter, you'd let her find someone of her own kind, who understands her culture.

DAVID

We are the same in every way. When I hear her laugh, I feel her lightness. When she's sad, I feel that weight too. Right here.

Mam'Phele looks at Dineo. Her face softens as she recognizes the truth of David's emotions.

MAM'PHELE

And you, Dineo? What do you have to say about this?

Dineo moves over to David, quietly she takes his hand.

A pause. Mam'Phele sits down. She looks at David.

MAM'PHELE (CONT'D)

After Dineo's Dad died, Dineo became my whole world. I just wanted what was best for her.

DINEO

David is what's best for me, Mama.

Mother and daughter share a look of understanding.

MAM'PHELE

(at David)

Do you have a nice car?

DAVID

It's pretty nice.

MAM'PHELE

My husband's family are very well-to-do  
in our community. I won't be embarrassed,  
you understand.

He nods with a solemn look on his face. He understands.

Dineo's mother stands and holds Dineo's shoulders.

MAM'PHELE (CONT'D)

You look very beautiful, child.  
Sometimes I forget you're a young woman.  
But today I see it.

She hands David a huge wedding present.

MAM'PHELE (CONT'D)

You take this. Don't drop it.  
(beat)

You know Dineo could've gone to this  
wedding with a dentist.

(she gives the hint of a  
mischievous smile)

I'm not sure she made the right choice.

DINEO

I did, Ma.

(at David, mouthing the words)

I love you too.

David grins at Dineo: the look tells us they'd made it.

The three leave for the wedding. We hear church bells off screen.

**INT. BOOK SHOP - A FEW MONTHS LATER**

Dineo skips into the shop, kisses David across the counter.

DAVID

Hey! This is a place of business.

DINEO

Hey, I know the boss. It's cool.

Dineo notices a striped, exotic fish in the bowl with Gerald.

DAVID

Oh, yes. Zaza!

DINEO

What?

DAVID

Elfie thought Gerald needed a soul mate too. Meet ZaZa. We can't tell if ZaZa is a girl fish or a drag fish but - hey - the two of them are happy, right?

DINEO

Guess what?

DAVID

What?

DINEO

You're looking at a Graduate!!

David comes around counter, hugs her, lifts her from ground.

DAVID

That's awesome, Dee. I'm so proud of you.

DINEO

You are coming to my graduation ceremony, aren't you?

DAVID

(teasing/mock groan)

Is your Mother going to be there?

DINEO

Don't be mean. She actually asked about you the other day.

DAVID

This calls for a celebration.

David calls to Elfie.

DAVID (CONT'D)

Elf, do you think you can hold down the fort?

Elfie appears.

ELFIE

Of course.

(at Dineo)

And congratulations on graduating. That's a big deal. I'm proud of you.

DAVID

Your eavesdropping is going to get you fired one of these days.

David takes Dineo's hand. We see their fingers laced together as they walk out into the sunshine.

We see Gerald and ZaZa swimming around in the bowl. As Elfie sorts out some books, from behind her we hear a

MALE VOICE

Excuse me? Do you have any books on reggae?

Elfie turns and is looking at Vusi. A gleam comes to to her eyes.

ELFIE

I think we might be able to help you out.