

BEN AND WIFE

The Package

written by

Edrick Joel Magambo

INT. BEN'S HOME. LIVING ROOM - DAY

BEN'S CELL RINGS.

BEN GAMBLER, late 30's, hurries out of his bedroom wrapping a towel over his soaking body. Picks the PHONE from the table - "MOTHER CALLING."

Ben exhales in disdain and answers it.

BEN

Hello. No mother, Danny is not pregnant. Why...? I don't want to be like my father. No, no, no mother the apple doesn't fall very far from its tree...

He sits on the edge of the couch.

BEN(CONT'D)

I know, mom but there's no such thing like being late when it comes to giving birth... Maybe for Danny but I'm still in my time I promise.

He listens, for a moment. Then:

BEN

What shoes?

He flinches.

BEN

I do remember every pledge I have made since last year mother and buying you a pair of brand new heels isn't one of them. What? Lingerie too? What in this world are you still going to use high heels and lingerie at your age? It's kinda gross buying lingerie for my mother... I mean isn't that supposed to be my father's burden? No. I haven't reviewed my promise-list lately but am conc sure I didn't promise you that.

Ben picks some paperwork from the floor, carelessly drops them into the cabinet - still on phone.

BEN(CONT'D)

Maybe you ate too much food last night and dreamt.

The cabinet drawer slides out and strikes the floor violently, almost slumming Ben's foot.

BEN
(for the drawer;
startled)
Fuck me!
(into phone)
I'm not telling you, mom. I'm
talking to the damn drawer. It
jumped off the rails.

Ben begins to collect his mess, non-too-pleased.

BEN
(into phone)
Why don't you tell dad to buy them
for you anyway? He just paid my
sister's tuition? See, mother
that's my reason for not becoming a
father... Parents tend to use their
children as an excuse to forego
other responsibilities. No, nothing
is different, in fact things are
even tougher these days. I know.
No, she's out for work.

He bangs the drawer back into the cabinet with both hands -
phone supported to the ear by his shoulder.

BEN
Mother... My job doesn't cash in
everyday okay? Fine, I'll buy you
the shoes but that's all I can
offer. Yeah. Tell father to buy you
the rest. Okay. I will send your
regards to Danny but forget the
pregnancy, will you? Bye. Oh, and
please don't call back. I'll
contact you when your stuff is
ready okay? Good.

Ben hangs up.

BEN(CONT'D)
Parents. I don't even know her butt
size.

INT. BEN'S HOME. BEDROOM - DAY

Ben puts on his pants. He opens the closet and takes out a
wrinkled shirt. He looks to the other side of the closet to
see all his WIFE'S outfits neat.

BEN
Seriously?

He examines the shirt unbelievably, and wears it anyway.

Ben carries a big suitcase from the top shelf of the closet
and drops it on bed. Opens. He meticulously takes out a pile
of sorted scripts, until he picks out a small notebook.

He sits on the bed, opens the book and his finger scrolls down a full list of unchecked pledges: until the finger clicks at "A PAIR OF HEELS, HANDBAG AND LINGERIE FOR MOM."

BEN

Oh.

He gazes the book for a moment. Casts it back into the case and quickly, but carefully, puts the scripts back on top.

He pockets his cell and dashes out.

INT. BEN'S HOME. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Later. Ben enters with a PACKAGE. Checks his pockets - his cellphone isn't with him.

BEN

Dammit. Where have I left the goddamned phone?

His mind wanders away from him for a moment, remembers. He puts the package on the table and rushes out.

A beat.

Meet DANNY GAMBLER the wife, 29, oppressive, and taller than the hubby.

Danny enters the house - her eyes right at the package on the table. She sets her bag on the same table and picks the package. She shakes it and smiles.

DANNY

This is worth something.

She shakes the box again with a bigger smile now. Picks the package and proceeds to the bedroom calling:

DANNY

Ben. Honey am home.

INT. BEN'S HOME. BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Danny comes in.

DANNY (CONT'D)

Ben.

Ben isn't there. She steps out - "her" package still in hands, towards the KITCHEN.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Danny peeps inside - head only.

DANNY

Babe are you in here?

He's obviously not.

INT. BEN'S HOME. LIVING ROOM - (SAME)DAY

Danny sets the package back on the table. She sits on the couch and holds her head in both hands, gazing the package curiously.

She leans back in the chair.

DANNY

Ben? Are you anywhere I haven't checked in this house?

No answer. Danny releases a long aggravated sigh. Rolls her eyes, then, shrugs. And OPENS the package.

She carefully pulls out a sexy chemise, nice lingerie, a brand new pair of shoes, and a handbag. Her mind is blown away.

DANNY

Whoa.

She kisses the contents of the package, truly excited.

DANNY

Yes! I love you Ben.

Danny places the shoes to the floor and inserts her oversized foot into ONE.

DANNY

I can't believe he still doesn't know my shoe size.

She abandons the shoes, holds the handbag to her shoulder and smiles. She falls back into the couch beaming with excitement, for a moment.

Danny stuffs the goodies back in the box, holds it protectively and starts for the bedroom.

INT. BEN'S HOME. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Ben enters to a glass of juice sitting RIGHT WHERE HE PLACED THE PACKAGE EARLIER. He puts his cell on the table. Wonders quietly, and settles down with the glass in his hand.

Danny scurries in from the kitchen - extravagantly excited, holding a full tray of cup cakes. She places the tray to Ben's front.

DANNY

Your favorite.

BEN

I see. Thanks.

He picks one cake and bites it immediately.

BEN
(chewing)

Hmmmm.

Danny sits next to him.

DANNY
You like it?

BEN
I love it.

DANNY
You deserve it.

She reaches out and puts her arm around his shoulder romantically.

The grin on her face makes Ben suspicious instead. He halts the chewing.

BEN
Are you alright?

DANNY
(singing; excitedly)
I got a feelin'... That tonight is
gonna be a good good night,
woohooo...!

BEN
O-kay. Would you please share the
source of your orgasm.

DANNY
I love the bag, honey... Although
the shoes are a bit small but I'll
trade them for --

BEN
Wo, what?

DANNY
The shoes were small. I can't
believe you still don't know my
size after four years of marriage.

BEN
Danny.

He puts the half-cake on the table and looks straight in Danny's eyes.

BEN(CONT'D)
I'm so glad you're glad, especially
with your speculations of a good
(MORE)

BEN(CONT'D) (cont'd)
good night tonight but I didn't buy
for you anything.

DANNY
What about the box?

BEN
It's my mother's.

DANNY
And its contents?

BEN
All that's in the box belong to the
box and goes with the box.

DANNY
Over my dead body.

She swipes him away and rises alarmed. Ben suddenly bursts
out a laughter at the top of his lungs. Danny frowns.

BEN
Wait, you thought I bought all that
good stuff for you?

DANNY
When was the last time you bought a
nice pair of shoes for me?

BEN
What?

DANNY
Did I gag a little asking that?

BEN
Danny you prefer to buy your own
shoes, plus you deal in female
shoes too... And where in heaven
sake does your daily income go?

DANNY
A woman's money is her money,
husband and your money is our
money.

BEN
Are you kidding me?

DANNY
And never let your dissatisfied
wife learn about what you have
bought for your mother before your
mother receives the package.

She starts for the bedroom none-too-pleased.

BEN
Wait, what'd you mean?

She doesn't respond.

BEN
Where's my mother's stuff?

DANNY
They belong to me now.

BEN
Danny...

He follows her.

INT. BEN'S HOME. BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Danny climbs the bed and covers herself under the blanket as Ben enters.

BEN(CONT'D)
Danny we need to talk.

No answer.

BEN
Please, honey my mother needs all that stuff. I promised her and you know I keep my promises.

DANNY
(under the blanket)
What kind of guy buys lingerie for his mother.

BEN
I'm not having this conversation with you under the blanket. It feels like talking to a corpse.

Danny swipes the blanket off her face.

DANNY
Did you just call me a corpse?

BEN
I was just saying...

She throws the pillow in his face.

DANNY(CONT'D)
Take the couch.

BEN
Honey...?

She covers herself again.

BEN

Right.

Ben picks the pillow and trudges out.

INT. BEN'S HOME. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Lying on the couch, Ben punches some numbers on his phone and puts it on his ear.

BEN

(into phone)

I need your help. It's a family matter that requires your kind of skills. My wife. Great, that'll work perfectly. Yeah you may but don't hurt her too much. Alright. See you then.

INT. BEN'S HOME. BEDROOM - DAY

Ready for work, Danny crouches under the bed and pulls out the package. She takes out the lingerie, new shoes and packs them into the NEW BAG. Puts on one of her old pair of shoes, grips the bag under her armpits and walks out.

INT. BEN'S HOME. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Ben is meditating on the floor - eyes closed. He hears Danny recede from the bedroom and opens his eyes to see Danny armed with his mother's new bag. Ben just grins.

DANNY

What?

BEN

Have a dearest day, dear.

She steps out and slams the door.

BEN

(quietly; for Danny)

Wait for it.

EXT. BEN'S HOME - DAY

As Danny walks down the driveway a GUY IN A HOOD is trailing her - but she isn't aware of this. The guy hurries toward her and just as she steps outside her premises -- the guy STRIKES HER IN THE FACE VIOLENTLY.

Danny yowls, turning to see the guy, and just in time for ANOTHER GUY ON A SCOOTER to SNAP THE BAG from her shaky hands.

She screams out loud. Ben dashes out of the house to her rescue.

BEN
What's the matter?

DANNY
Chase him!

BEN
Who?

Danny points to the guy in the hood, who's now running toward the scooter.

DANNY(CONT'D)
Those imbeciles have stolen my bag.
They've slapped me too.

BEN
(giggle a little)
You mean my mother's new bag?

DANNY
Just go after him.

The guy in the hood jumps onto the scooter too and it disappears into the street.

BEN
(carefree)
There gone.

DANNY
You didn't even try!

BEN
One good hurt deserves another. You stole the package from me, honey, it's been stolen from you too - along with your cellphone...

Danny now screams for that.

BEN(CONT'D)
And a fine slap. Do you need some ice?

She walks away too pissed. He smiles for the camera.

INT. BEN'S HOME. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Ben is typing on his computer. A knock hits the door. He heads for the door. Opens, and the guy in a hood holds out the NEW BAG for him. Ben takes it with a smile.

BEN
Nice performance.

GUY IN HOOD
Thanks. Hope I didn't hurt her much.

BEN
Just enough.

GUY IN HOOD
She has a nice cellphone.

BEN
Do you like it?

GUY IN HOOD
Seriously?

BEN
Seriously.

GUY IN HOOD
Sure.

BEN
Take it.
(it's already in the
guy's pocket)
She'll buy a new one after all.

GUY IN HOOD
Thanks.

They trade hands and Ben shuts the door as the guy starts off the compound. Ben dials MOTHER.

BEN
Hey, mom. I have just secured your package right now. I'm on my way.

CUT TO BLACK.