

Double-Double Cross

Soyiso Ndaba

Purple Apple Productions

purpleappleproduct@gmail.com
0813714638

EXT. STREET-DAY

Two young boys are playing wire cars.

They collide their cars. Blackout.

TITLE CARD

"DOUBLE-DOUBLE CROSS"

EXT. STREET-AFTERNOON

Mandla, (34), and Mthura (35) are sharing a packet of fried chips.

Mandla wants to tape out but Mthura is forcing him to eat.

MANDLA

I'm good bro.

MTHURA

Ekse baba let's finish these fries.

MANDLA

You know I must eat when I get home.

MTHURA

What's going to stop you if we finish this packet? You're food killer baba don't act like Beyonce
(they laugh)

MTHURA (CONT'D)

Ok take 10 chips, then you can stop.

MANDLA

10 is too much for me. I'm a smoothie and salad guy bro, not this.

Mthura vice grips Mandla and forces him to eat.

Laughter.

INT. BEDROOM-MORNING

Mandla is standing in front of the mirror fixing his tie.

Lora (29), is in bed awake, tangled in blankets, wearing a nightdress. She is watching Mandla with a cheerful/proud look.

LORA

My love, what do you think of moving to a different city?

MANDLA

I don't think now is the right time.

LORA

Alright.

MANDLA

Why do you ask?

LORA

I was just thinking that...you know...maybe with why you have, we can afford to buy a bigger house in a better suburb.

MANDLA

What I have?

LORA

(Hesitant)

I mean... you know. The... thing, the bag.

MANDLA

What are you saying?

LORA

Of course it's not yours alone, I know that.

MANDLA

So you want me to...

(Pause)

You can't be serious.

Beat

And I've been telling you, I don't want to be part of this anymore.

Lora gets out of bed, goes to hug Manlda from the back, kisses his neck.

LORA

I'm sorry love, I will not brings this up again.

Beat

But babe this is bigger than any of your scores. Isn't this what you wanted? Just finish this one deal and change our lives forever. You...

MANDLA

Can we not talk about this, please.

LORA

Alright.

Mandla check his watch, and turns to kiss Lora on the forehead

MANDLA

I have to run. See you later.

INT. MANDLA'S APARTMENT-DAY

Lora is doing house chaos, cleaning the house, washing dishes.

She's playing loud music.

As she does this she sees a shadow passing by the kitchen window, she opens the curtain to check but she sees no one. She carries on with moping the floor.

When she gets to the bathroom, she goes to lock the main door and lowers the volume. When she is done cleaning the bathroom, she closes the curtain and the door, checks if it's safe, no one coming.

She removes a tile from the bathtub. Uncovering a black box. She takes it out and opens it. She sits on the corner of the bathtub for a moment, in deep thoughts, she then takes her cellphone out, and dials.

INT OFFICE-DAY

Mandla is on the phone with his friend, he is evidently happy and suddenly the mood changes.

MANDLA

I'm telling you...No way that's a lie...Wait...Listen...Remember that day we went out...hahaha....Just give up my boy...look at me now, healthy lunchboxes, I don't have to worry
(MORE)

MANDLA (CONT'D)

about cooking when I get home, my clothes are ironed...Nah, I don't report to anyone, Kota king...hahahaha....What's up?

(He looks around to check if his is still alone)

I understand that everything has died down...yes...it's just that I'm not sure if I still want to be part man...yeah, I know someone, maybe I can connect with them...or I can be there for the deal but I won't take any share from the earnings...Trust me I...This is going to raise many questions. We're not talking about R50 here, this is serious money...Do you think what I get here is enough to convince people that it's my only source of income? This deal is worth serious money bro and...

(The door opens a colleague enters)

Let's talk later bro, I have to go. Moja.

COLLEAGUE

What's up, did I catch you scheming or planning a heist?

They both laugh, but Mandla's laughter is not as genuine as the colleague's.

MANDLA

Me? Heist, scheming? Hell no.

COLLEAGUE

Boss wants to see you in her office

MANDLA

Do you know why?

COLLEAGUE

Nope.

INT. MANDLA'S APARTMENT-DAY

Lora is on the door saying her goodbyes to an unknown person.

LORA

Alright. Please try to be as swift as possible, and no mistakes. Bye.

INT OFFICE-DAY

Mandla is on his way to the bosses office.

He meets a colleague on the corridor and tries to find out the reason for the call.

MANDLA

Hey Bonolo, did any of you get a call from Madame Leader?

Bonolo shakes her head, No.

Before he enters the bosses office, he goes to the water dispenser gulps a glass, then heads into the office.

As he enters, he finds Madame leader waiting for him. No smile on her.

Mandla gets nervous.

BOSS

Come in, take a seat.

She takes out an envelope from the drawer, puts it on the table and slides it to Mandla.

BOSS (CONT'D)

This is for you. You may leave.

Mandla hesitantly gets up and heads to the door. Just as he is about to exit.

BOSS (CONT'D)

Mandla. You are free to go home.

Mandla is puzzled by this, he doesn't say a word. he looks at her, nods and then exits.

INT CAR STREET-AFTERNOON

Mthura is inside his car. Parked a few meters away from Mandla's apartment. He stares at Mandla's apartment for a moment. Suddenly he starts the engine and drives off.

CUT TO:

INT CAR STREET-AFTERNOON

Mandla is parked in no-mans land. His hands are trembling. His eye are teary and full of regret.

On the passenger seat is an envelop. He looks at it for a while.

He takes his eyes away from the envelope, looks at the road and holds the steering wheel as if he is driving.

After a moment he gathers himself, takes the envelop, opens it. When he is about to take out the letter, he suddenly changes his mind and toss it back on the seat and takes out his cellphone and dials. The phone rings for few seconds, he drops the call and tosses the phone away.

He starts the engine. Just when he is about to takeoff, phone rings. He looks at it until it goes off. It rings for the second time, he answers.

CUT TO:

INT CAR STREET-AFTERNOON

Mthura driving. He is on a call. Concerned and bewildered.

MTHURA

What's up? You alright
bro?...What?...Why the sudden
haste?...Oh...ok see you soon.

INT MANDNLA'S APARTMENT-AFTERTOON

Lora is seated on the couch doing her manicure, she is giving a sly queen vibes.

Mandla comes back from work. He is evidently not in good space. He goes straight to the bedroom without giving any attention to Lora.

Lora is puzzled by this behavior. After sometime Mandla emerges from the bedroom and goes to join Lora in the lounge.

Mandla tries to start a conversation. Lora packs her staff and leave the room.

MANDLA

Your nails are stunning.

LORA

That will be, if they were maintained
proper

MANDLA

Babe. Lora. My lo...

Before he even finishes his sentence Lora shuts the bedroom door.

INT MANDNLA'S APARTMENT/LOUNGE-EVENNING

Lora opens the door all dressed up. She stands at the door.

LORA

So you're not going to tell me what's going on? or this is just an act so that I don't asked you to take me out?

MANDLA

Is that how you ask how my day was?

LORA

You just walked pass me, no greeting, no acknowledgment, nothing. Then you expect me to ask you how was you day?

MANDLA

I'm sorry about that and...

LORA

Are we going out or not?

MANDLA

Not today babe..

LORA

As always. You need to budget of course, I know. I really don't understand you Mandla. How would you choose poverty over being rich. Abandon something that helped you finish off paying your bond, bought you a car.

Mandla laughs, cocky.

LORA (CONT'D)

It's funny neh, but it's the truth. For your own information brother. I am not going to accept poverty.

MANDLA

What does that mean?

There is a knock on the door.

MANDLA (CONT'D)
That must be Mthura. Please prepare us something to eat.

LORA
Ask Mthura.

Mandla looks at Lora in disbelief as she disappears in the bedroom. He goes for the door

INT MANDLA'S APARTMENT-EVENING

Mandla welcomes Mthura. They go to sit in the lounge.

MTHURA
My boy.

MANDLA
Hola. Come in.

MTHURA
What's the story?

MANDLA
Bro, We are doing this. Tomorrow we are meeting with the connect. And we are going the clean rout.

MTHURA
Slow down brother. What is happening, is everything alright?

MANDLA
Yeah.

MTHURA
Are you sure? Not so long ago you were not sure about this. Besides that, you've been preaching that you want a clean life. Where is this energy coming from?

Mandla takes a moment before responding.

MANDLA
I got fired today.

MTHURA
Are you for real, why?

MANDLA

I'm not sure but I suspect they found something in my PC.

MTHURA

How is that possible? Don't you erase all these things after?

MANDLA

I do. But there's a day I forgot to delete proof of payments for the feeding scheme deals. My colleague asked to use my computer.

MTHURA

Damn.

MANDLA

Since that day, he just likes to say funny things about heists and quick cash schemes. This other day, I think he caught me loading credit cards.

MTHURA

Do you think he snitched? Wait, is that why you wanted to be clean?

MANDLA

That's not the point. Let's just focus on pulling this through and get rich.

Beat.

With conviction, determination and enthusiasm Mandla lays out a plan. Mthura is left wondering, later gets on track with Mandla.

This is the plan. Two of those stones are 5'10sright? One is yours and One is mine the rest we split and give some to my connect. My connect works with De Beers certified customers, mostly from Antwerp. Everything is legit here. We give him the stones, he meets the buy, then boom, in three weeks time we are rich.

MTHURA

Do the buyers also deal underground?

MANDLA

Almost all business, in someway deal in the black market brother. Tomorrow, we're on. I've already contacted my guy.

MTHURA

Tomorrow?

Lora comes out of the bedroom. She greets Mthura and goes to the kitchen.

LORA

Hi Mthura.

MTHURA

Hey, how are? What's the occasion, all dressed up and make ups?

Lora laughs. Mandla fidgets awkwardly, clears histhroat and mumbles some words. Mthura looks at Mandla inquisitively. Lora jumps in to breaks the moment.

LORA

Nothing special. I just felt like dressing up.

She then goes to the kitchen.

MANDLA

Please make this man green smoothie babe, he needs some vitamins.

They all laugh.

TIME CUT TO:

INT MANDNLA'S APARTMENT/LOUNGE-EVENING

Lora comes back from the kitchen with two plates on a tray. She puts them on coffee table, then goes to fetch four glasses and juice. Two plastic glass are filled with smoothie. after bringing the glasses she heads back to the bedroom.

LORA

Alright I'm going to leave you boys, enjoy.

As she leaves Mthura, gets really concerned by he tries to conceal it and acts as if if everything is fine.

They eat, Mandla can't keep his mouth shut. Going on and on, while Mthura is trying connect the dots on what is really going on in this house.

MANDLA

How's the food my boy? It's delicious and healthy right. At least tonight you're not going to eat those oily chips you love.

They laugh. Beat.

MTHURA

So tell me boy, why don't we find a local buyer. I mean we also have legit companies here at home. Alexander Bay, Kwame Diamonds. We can look for a connect and make transaction. That will cut on some logistics and minimize the waiting time. How much do you trust your guy?

MANDLA

We don't want to be friends with Hawks, unless we want jail time. You need to think international, buy don't worry, I'll keep teaching you. My guy is legit, he's been in the game for a longtime.

MTHURA

(Awkward laugh)

Where do you know this "my guy" from?

MANDLA

Remember after we scored, when we were trying to find a buy. Lora connected me with her uncle. He's the one who referred me to our man.

Mthura is shocked. He gives Mandla a "what the fuck" look. Mandla gives a defensive look. A staring contest for a moment. Mthura moves closer to him and lowers his voice, but it firm.

MTHURA

Brother, brother. You are treading on a dangerous terrain. Are you aware of that? How did Lora get involved in this? What I remember is that you told me she doesn't know anything about
(MORE)

MTHURA (CONT'D)
this, or any of our business. What
else does she know?

Beat.

MANDLA
(Calm)
She doesn't know anything bro, relax.
She over heard our telephone
conversation, and I let her in on some
false information, that we were
talking about one of our friends who
deals minerals. Saying he wants expand
his network. That's how I got to be in
contact with our guy.

MTHURA
I'm not kid man. You share your bed
with this person everyday.

MANDLA
The stones are where I left them and
safe. We can go check.

TIME CUT TO:

INT MANDLA'S APARTMENT/ BATHROOM-EVENING

They go the bathroom.

Mandla stands by the door. He points at the bathtub, instruct
Mthura to remove a tile.

Mthura does as instructed. A black box appears, he takes it
out. Opens the box. A couple of white stones appear.

Lora's laughter is heard from the bedroom. Mandla quickly
goes back to the lounge.

Mthura closes himself in bathroom. He puts the box where it
was and joins Mandla in the lounge.

INT MANDLA'S APARTMENT/LOUNGE-EVENING

Mthura joins Mandla in the lounge. He prepares for the road.

MTHURA
Tomorrow I'll be here. 6am sharp.

MANDLA
That's too early bro

MTHURA
What time do you wake up when you're
going to work. You are going to work
boet.
(To Lora in the bedroom)
Lora I'm out. The food was nice, thank
you.

Mandla walks him out.

He comes back. Takes the dishes to the kitchen. Puts them in
the sink. Then goes to the bedroom.

INT MANDLA'S APARTMENT- BEDROOM-NIGHT

Mandla enters the bedroom. He finds Lora sitting at the
corner of the bed with the letter in her hand. The emotion is
grave.

LORA
Could you please explain this to me.
Mandla just stands by the door, looks at her for a moment.

LORA (CONT'D)
Are you going to say something or
what? You chose to hide this from me
and tell your friend instead? What do
you take me for Mandla? I am clearly
not what I think I am to you. You see
me as you kitchen girl or some cheap
thing you can use when you want to
fulfill your needs. "Hey baby, make us
some dinner, hey baby you are my
number one. hey bay, hey baby"

She goes to Mandla, presses the letter on his chest. Looks at
him straight in the eyes.

LORA (CONT'D)
Congratulations on your promotion.

She storms out.

Mandla is left dumbfound. He takes the letter looks at it.

The letter reads " Congratulations, you have been promoted to
an Executive Assistance & Operations Specialist position"

Realizing he messed up. He throws himself on the bed, facing the ceiling.

MANDLA
(soft)
Shit.

INT. CAR STREET-NIGHT

Mthura is parked on the street, two guys are with him the car.

MTHURA
Gents, no mistakes. As soon as we stop to join the main road, you jump in. I'll be driving, I will make sure doors are not locked.

GUY 1
Don't worry we've got this.

GUY 2
Are sure about this? We're not playing here.

MTHURA
100% positive.

GUY 2
Straight after the job, you gives us what's ours, no stories. If it fails because of you. Still you give us what's ours. Otherwise you will suffer the consequences.

MTHURA
Trust me everything is gonna go well. Just don't take anything that's in the car.

GUY 1
Why are you doing this?

MTHURA
I'm trying out a new business. I'm selling cars. I will report this one stolen, the insurance is going to give me a newcar. This one is goes on sale. You job is take the car, don't hurt anyone or take anything inside the car.

GUY 2

All good.

INT. MANDLA'S APARTMENT-BEDROOM-MORNING

Lora is packing her bags. Mandla is in bed awake, all up in his head.

He tries to talk Lora to staying. Lora does not entertain that.

MANDLA

My love, please don't leave. I promise to fix all of this. I will do anything for you.

Lora continues with packing, unmoved by Mandla efforts.

Mandla's phone beeps. It's a text from Mthura-- "I'm outside, let's move"

He gets up, pulls a t-shirt and shorts, then goes to attend Mthura.

EXT. MANDLA'S APARTMENT-FRONT DOOR-MORNING

Mthura is anxiously waiting. Mandla comes out, not looking ready for the road.

Mandla's head is all over the place.

MTHURA

Bro?

Mandla sighs. He is avoiding Mthura's eyes.

MTHURA (CONT'D)

Talk to me bro what's happening. We're supposed to hit the road now.

MANDLA

Yeah I know.

MTHURA

You know and then?

Mthura is getting agitated by Mandla's unwillingness or slow participation in the conversation.

MTHURA (CONT'D)

My man, my man, my man say something.

MANDLA
I was wrong bro.

MTHURA
You were wrong about what. Talk bro,
talk.

Beat.

Can we talk on the way?

MANDLA
I thought I was fired, but it was a
promotion.

MTHURA
So, what's the matter?

MANDLA
We're canceling bro. They want to make
an official announcement at 9am and
we're supposed to meet at exactly the
same time with the my guy.

Mthura gets fired up by this. He paces around.

MTHURA
No, you can't tell me that. Cancel the
party at work. Tell them you'll join
later. In fact, to hell with that work
of yours.

MANDLA
Are you hearing yourself? Don't be
selfish Mthura.

Mthura looses his cool,

MTHURA
Says Mr. selfish himself. Why is
everything centered around you?

MANDLA
You are...

MTHURA
I am really tired of this shit you're
doing. When you say jump, you don't
want me ask how high. I am not your
son! This thing of yours has been
going on for a long time, but I let it
(MORE)

MTHURA (CONT'D)

slide. You belittle me, doubt my intelligence. You don't see me at all. Everything must go according to your rules, BOSS!! You said you were pulling out of this. And I asked you to give me the stones, I'll find my way through. You told me I was clumsy I'll mess up and you kept them, for what? This attitude of yours is pissing me off. I can do this on my own man. I looked for a buy, you didn't approve. Now what BOSS? You are messing up all my plans.

MANDLA

You suggested a buyer.

MTHURA

I did not suggest. I told I have a buyer, but you would listen to me as always.

MANDLA

Why is all this coming up now? I thought we are brothers. We can talk about anything.

MTHURA

We never talk I listen to you all the time. Are you aware that I ;lost my job because of this? And it was your idea too?

MANDLA

If I remember correctly, you came to me and told about the safe which I didn't know existed right? What did you want me to do with that information?

MTHURA

It seems like you forget that you are the one who introduce to all of this.

MANDLA

Did I force you?

MTHURA

This attitude, this attitude! Give me the stones bro I'll find a buyer.

MANDLA
Are you sure abo...

MTHURA
Fuck off Mandla.

Mthura lunges to Mandla, before he gets to him a car stops next to Mandla's apartment he stops. They give attention to the car.

Mandla's phone beeps, he checks it, it's a text from the connect "I'm on my way to the spot, don't keep waiting"

Lora comes out pulling a suitcase, carrying a sports bag and make up bag. The attention is now on Lora. Lora seems somewhat relieve/happy.

Mandla is lost and defeated.

LORA
Hey Mthura, it's been nice knowing you.

Mthura looks at Mandla 'what's going look'. Mandla tries to stop her.

MANDLA
Babe, please let's talk about this please.

Lora does not respond, she continues walking to the car. Mandla her way. Lora doesn't stop. She puts her bags in the car, gets in the passenger seat. The car drives off.

Mandla is left standing next to the driveway, Mthura is behind him, confused to latter.

As the car drives, Lora looks at the two gentlemen. Gives them a sinister smile and wave at them. They watch the car as disappears into the distance.

Mthura's phone beeps, a text from the Guys "We've been waiting here what's happening? we are giving you 5 minutes, make it quick"

Mthura gets anxious.

MTHURA
Bro, give me the stones.

Mandla turns towards him with anger, 'I will kill you look'

MTHURA (CONT'D)
I don't have time, I need to leave
now.

Mandla's phone rings, a call from Madam leader.

MANDLA
Madam Leader, good morning.

BOSS(V.O)
Morning Mr. Executive. I'm calling to
let know that we've booked Radisson
Blu, we're not going to the office.
See you soon bye.

As he drops the call, he receives a text from the connect,
"If a minute passes and you are not here, I'm gone. I hope
you know the consequences when you don't show up"

MTHURA
Let's move bro or should I go and take
them?

MANDLA
Go!!!

Mthura goes inside the apartment.

Mandla is left outside, ears in his eye. He sits on the
pavement

Mthura comes back running, black box in hands.

MTHURA
Shit, damn. We lost them bro. Look at
this.

He pours marbles on the ground. He is fuming

Mandla just looks at him, his unmoved. He has given up.

Mthura takes Mandla's phone and calls Lora.

Lora phone rings inside the apartment. They look at each
other.

Mthura slide on the wall, hits the ground, puts his head on
top of his head.

Mandla lays on his back, eyes and mouth wide open.

We get the picture of a Blues clear sky through Mandla's POV.

FADE OUT.

THE END

DRAFT 3