



# *My Name Is*

*by Lynn E. Oliveira*

# *Nkosi*

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My Name is Nkosi

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My Name is Nkosi is a fictional book based on real life facts either observed and/or experienced by the writer Lynn E Oliveira. This book is based on actual facts and/or collection of real life stories from different sources put into one.

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## **CHAPTER 1**

### **LUST**

The city pulsed all around him, he could feel his heart thud in time with the rhythm of all the various beats. One undertone, oonce oonce oonce, primitive and wild. The smells and sights and sounds made him forget that he was cold and hungry. Excitement overcame his fear of being alone for the first time in a big city. He bounced down the street, fed by adrenaline. He had no direction, no money, no place to go but it didn't matter. He was here at last. Those lights, only seen from a distance, that energy only imagined from far away, he was now part of it. His eyes were wide, his mind open, capturing everything. Home was far away, freedom lay before him like the eight lane highway he had just risked his life to cross. Jozi and all its splendours!

He wanted the life he had seen on T.V. and he knew it was here that he was going to get it!

The cars and the girls and the clothes and the house. All the bling, all the good things that life had to offer. He was 17 and free to grab the tail of his lucky star! The beat coming from the nightclub was pounding, the girls grouped outside so hot, the cars parked at the pavement gleaming, streamlined things of awesome beauty.

He was standing staring at a shiny red one when a group of girls fell out the club. Two white girls and a black girl, all hanging onto each other, giggling, tossing back shiny hair, clothes barely covering bodies like he'd never seen before.

"Wa'ss your name?" Hiccapped the blonde.

"Nkosi." He mumbled, dumbstruck.

"Ah, Jason." The blonde slurred, pinched his cheek. They all burst into a fit of laughter. He caught a wave of perfumes, lotions and the underlying smell of sour alcohol.

"Here!" The blonde tossed two coins in his hand and fell in behind the wheel of the shiny red car.

He stared down at the coins in his hand and then at the taillights of the car speeding away down the road.

"Haai wena!" He felt someone shove his shoulder. "That's my spot! Give!" No sooner did he have money when it was taken.

"You want to stand, go speak to Bossman!" His eyes followed the arm pointing up the road towards a HUGE man, ebony black, lounging against the hood of a silver Peugeot. He looked like a rap star, all bling and black leather, pointed snake skin

boots, cool shades resting on his forehead. He could see a rock hard torso under the netted black vest, abs ripped to perfection. He started towards him slowly, instinct made him wary. The big man engulfed one shoulder with a huge paw, turned him left and right, looked him up and down.

"You can stand, section 3, tell Jabu to show you. What's your name?" The huge man spoke in a soft lazy drawl.

He hesitated just a moment.

"Jason." He might as well take a new name to start his new life with. An angel had christened him.

"Take these. Left pocket E's, 50 bucks one, right pocket blunts, 10 bucks one. Tips to guard you keep, the rest comes to me!" Bossman's low voice crept up and down his spine, his eyes took him in and nearly drowned him, black pools devoid of emotion probed his brain.

"Ok." Jason felt compelled, driven by forces beyond his control.

"You owe me 80 bucks standing fee for tonight, pay me tomorrow!" Jason heard the silent threat.

He had a job and a new name! His dream was

coming true, he thought. His first night he made 120 bucks. Eighty bucks for Bossman, forty bucks to keep. Enough for food, smokes, a cold drink. Bossman made five hundred bucks off the drugs Jason peddled for him. A white girl touched me! The thrill of it kept him warm that first night in the alley, sleeping on top of some boxes under his makeshift blanket of newspapers. He blocked out the moans and cries of misery, held his dream close.

Days and nights started running into each other. The rhythm of the streets made its own time. He was soon earning enough to pay for a room, his own room! Bossman ran the rooms too, he had a finger in every pie, a beautiful girl or two or three every night. Jason was in awe of him. Bossman's darkness scared and thrilled him, his power intoxicated him. Somewhere in the back of his mind a warning bell tinkled but he stilled it, silenced it. It was easy enough. He allowed himself two spliffs a night. To keep the cold out, to silence his mother's voice inside his head, to be in touch with the vibe. To feel as though he were a part of it. Every weekend the blonde showed up. Gorgeous and untouchable, a goddess, his dream in the flesh.

Jessica!

In his room, his hovel, his hole he could conjure her up at will. He could replace the smell of piss

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and beer, fish oil and something darker, the smell of despair. He could replace the stink with her perfume, her lotion, her essence. He could block out the darkness of his tiny hole of grime filtered light, could conjure up her bright blonde light to fill all the murky corners of his existence. He filled his head with her laughter to drown out the fights, gunshots, babies screaming for food, sounds of flesh hitting flesh, pitiful sobs lasting way into the night. He filled his eyes with her beauty to block out the beggars, drug dealers, whores and pimps. Little boys sucking plastic milk bottles of glue like it was oxygen. The filth and the rats and the hopelessness he refused to see. It was temporary, he thought, a step on the ladder, he thought.

His second month he bought a hotplate, a kettle, a cup, a plate, a spoon, a new blanket. Treasures stored, bolted into his little home. His third month he bought shoes, a jacket, a belt, trousers. The streets of Jozi were literally lined with good deals. There was always a bargain to be had. Commerce on the streets was informal, haggling over price accepted as the norm. He avoided the drink, avoided the glue, avoided the many routes of escapism by sheer will. His only concession was his two joints of dagga, his herb, good medicine. His dream was alive, his will strong. He would show them! He would return to his village one day in a shiny car, rich and fat and successful with beautiful Jessica at his side. It would happen! He

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watched the T.V. He had big plans! Next month he would buy a bed.

The wee hours of the morning in July is ice cold in Jozi. As he made his way home from work he could hear the moans from the alleys. The braziers were burning low, old men and young boys died regularly in the concrete jungle, stalked by the bitter cold, attacked in their various states of chemically induced sleep. There was no place to hide. He thanked his God for his room as he wended his way through the sleeping and drunk on the stairway.

The bolt securing his door was a battered hunk of metal, the door stood wide open. Everything was gone, even his small stock pile of groceries. His stomach sank, he couldn't banish this reality with dreams of Jessica. It was pointless to try find his possessions or call police. In this warren of rooms silence was the golden rule. In this city of cities possession was nine tenths of the law. He sat in the middle of the floor and cried. Eish! A seventeen year-old man crying! Then he got angry, then he got determined! At least he wasn't in the alleyway, he thought.

He slept under newspapers again. He awoke with a new resolve. If he could do it once he could do it again! He would just stand double shifts. He would not give up. To go back home now would be

too humiliating, a defeat, a failure.

So he did stand doubles and peddle Bossman's drugs and become bone weary. One day, he thought, the money would not just pass through his hands, it would stop at him. One day! Just to find a way. Drugs he could peddle but the Nigerians owned the game, he would only ever just be a player. To cross Bossman would be to shoot himself in the head. Car guard was small change. Not a way to get where he wanted to go.

On a beautiful Spring night in September, after the dry freeze winter, Jason felt his future coming towards him. The night buzzed as only a Spring night in Jozi could buzz. His eyes were still wide his will still strong, the city around him was electric, full of promise. 11pm Jessica blew into his spot, bounced out the car. A group of four beauties, already half gone, wanting more. Eight E's, no make that 12! Tonight's going to be a good night. All that sex and excitement caught him up in its vortex. He was important to her. To buy the drugs she'd pulled him in close, he'd become a co-conspirator to her, an essential part of her evening! He stared after her as she swept into the club, heels clacking, skirt swishing, a wink just for him over her shoulder. So bright and dazzling, on top of her world.

3am he was leaning against Jessica's car, dozing,

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when the big Nigerian bouncer tossed her in his direction.

“Get this one out of here!”, he barked.

She fell against him, uncoordinated, limp, vom-it matted her hair, make-up streamed down her face. She tried to look up at him, tried to focus, retched onto the pavement. He had to get her out of here! He fumbled in her bag for keys, bundled her into the passenger seat, sat in the drivers seat and went blank.

“Calm down!” He said to himself.

This is just like the farm truck. Newer, fancier but just like the farm truck. He’d watched her disarm the alarm countless times, had watched her every move with obsessive intensity.

“Just copy what you’ve seen.” He told himself.

He pulled out slowly into the road not knowing what direction to take or where to go. He wanted to get her somewhere safe to sleep it off, to park somewhere and watch over her till she got better. Protect her. He stopped the car under an overpass in the deep shadows, covered her with his jacket. He dozed off in the cocoon of the car, soft leather cradling him, his dream girl a reality by his side.

He woke up feeling strange, displaced. It took a moment for him to recall, get his bearings. It was bliss! His first blowjob! Jessica was going at him like a demon. He pulled his mind back, grabbed her head in his hands, looked in her eyes. Her cheeks were red , mouth half open. Her pupils were pinpricks in her Oh so blue! Irises.

“Fuck me!” She begged in a raspy voice.

Jason felt powerless to resist, didn't want to resist. His dream girl wanted him! He took her, gave her what she wanted, what she screamed for! He was inside her when he saw the change of expression in her eyes. He saw her mouth contort. The realization of where she was, what she was doing, who she was with was like a shadow playing over her features right in front of him. He felt the scream build up in her, instinctively he pulled away from her, grabbed his jacket and scrambled out of the car. The terrible shriek!

“Rape!” Ringing in his ears, filling his head.

He looked back for one instant. While her mouth screamed, her eyes registered nothing but hatred, for him, for herself.

Jason ran. That endless screeching followed him down the deserted road. He ran and ran and ran. Bobbing and weaving into unknown streets, dark-

ened alleys. Hands grabbed, obstacles appeared and disappeared and still he ran from the nightmare that had been his dream. He recalled being a boy, drew strength from the memory of running pell-mell up the dusty track to his village. Different screams reverberated in his head, cries of innocent joy, a group of boys racing as fast as the wind for no good reason at all.

He ran till he felt his lungs would burst or he would fall down dead. In a doorway of a derelict building he fought to catch his breath, retrieve his faculties. He still had Bossman's take for the night in his jacket pocket, had his own tips, a couple of joints unsold. Enough to get himself away. He could never go back, never! She would never be able to see him again and not want revenge. She would never acknowledge the truth. He had seen the disgust in her eyes, felt her rage. Besides, Bossman would kill him for making off with the nights take, no excuses would be heard. Best to go away.

He followed the halo of lights in the distance. The sign of any big town, that shining halo. He walked through the night, through the next day. Cars, trucks, buses, bikes all whizzed past. He gave them not a passing thought. He kept on replaying the transition from heaven to hell over and over in his mind. His face burned with humiliation. He felt so stupid. All those nights spent with

an angel in his mind, all his idealistic dreams of her reduced to an overwhelming stench of vomit and the look in her eyes of pure hatred or terror. He didn't know which. He marched on, head and shoulders into the onslaught of that recollection.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **PRIDE**

The highways turned to suburbs, he felt as if he was far enough away to try thinking clearly, to try to figure out what his next move should be. When he finally started to pay attention he saw that the houses he was walking by were big, stately. Like in the movies. Past elegant gates, long drive-ways led to mammoth residences that could just be glimpsed through the lush spring foliage. Fine spray from sprinklers caressed his skin intermittently, the fresh smell filled his nostrils and his head. He felt rejuvenated, washed clean. Peace came back to him. Walking along the oak shaded avenues, tranquillity reclaimed his soul.

“Watch it!” He heard the shout just before he felt the impact. Just below his knees, knocking him on his arse.

“Oh shit! I’m so sorry.” A flurry of fussing hands.

“Are you ok? I’m so sorry!” Again.

Jason felt his legs. They were sore but intact, his tailbone hurt! He took in the flashing gold, heavy perfume, fluffy blonde curls, rich plump curves.

“Is there anything I can do? Somewhere I can

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take you?" Staccato voice dripping concern, big green eyes oozing empathy.

"I've got nowhere to go." Stated Jason softly.

"Well that won't do! Do you know gardening? Of course you know gardening!" All organization and purpose. "It's the least I can do after knocking you over!"

She helped him up, ushered him inside the gate, bustled him up the driveway, whisked him past the house and deposited him in an outside room. "Rest for today, you can start tomorrow. I'll get Rosie to bring you some food. Now now!" And she was gone and he was alone and his head was spinning! In the ensuing quiet, Jason took in his surroundings and wondered at the hand that fate had just now dealt him.

The room was large with a bathroom attached. A shower and a bath! He felt like a king in this room! The bed was soft, the windows clean, the carpet like thick summer grass under his feet. He could hear birds singing all around, could feel the garden shift and sway outside the building. The sound of traffic seemed far away, muted by the moat of greenery. There was a homely sound of pots and crockery in a kitchen, the soulful notes of an African M'ma singing along to gospel from a transistor radio.

He could garden! Everyone from his village could

plant and grow just about anything. It was born and bred into him to take care of things that grew, how hard could flowers and plants be? Plants to eat and plants to look at had the same needs. He could see his patch of earth in his mind, the mielies grown tall, rustling overhead. The rows of cabbage, spinach, carrots, tomatoes a bountiful oasis in the surrounding dust. He had had to walk far to collect the water to nurture that patch, had painstakingly weeded and protected his harvest. With all the tools at his fingertips he could not fail.

“Dumela Boetie.” He was brought out of his reverie.

“Dumelang M’ma.” Rosie he guessed.

She was round and jolly and made his heart long for home. He could feel the traditional connection, was enveloped by the simple goodwill. The plate she brought him was loaded! All the good things he had taken for granted. The streets of Jozi were more for fast food, packaged food, movie food. He attacked that plate of pap and stew morogo with relish. With a hunger of the soul not of the belly. Rosie watched him and laughed a great big laugh, took his dishes when he was finished and left him alone with his thoughts. He had a job and a place to live! God was smiling on him, his dream was still alive! Jozi started to drift away from his mind. He felt safe.

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