

SYNTAX & SYNERGY

The Space Between



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Introduction

Syntax & Synergy



Dearest Reader,

Welcome to [Syntax & Synergy](#), an interactive space where language moves, stories breathe, and creative narrative is intention. This collection brings together three distinct yet connected bodies of work: the unapologetic advocacy of [Loud and Proud](#), the intimate poetic reflection of [Her Ink To Spill](#), and the gripping psychological thrills of [The Mirror's Silent Scream](#).

In [Loud And Proud Magazine](#), we confront the realities of Gender-Based Violence and Femicide (GBVF) through stories shaped by courage and truth. Anchored in the momentum of the #MeToo movement, this edition amplifies the voices of victims and survivors, examines the societal structures that perpetuate silence, and invites readers into an active stance against injustice.

[Her Ink To Spill](#) shifts inward, tracing my poetic journey through identity in South Africa. Across five chapters, I explore memory, authenticity, cultural influence, metamorphosis, and growth; an introspective anthology shaped by lived experience. It is a slow, reflective unravelling of self; a space where ink is the most honest storytelling device.

[The Mirror's Silent Scream](#) dives deeper into the psyche, offering a collection of psychological thrillers that unmask the complexities of the human mind. These narratives explore fear, resilience, delusion, identity, and the haunting reality that darkness often hides in the ordinary.

Together, these written works form a unified narrative ecosystem of advocacy, self-reflection, and psychological tension. This interactive experience invites you not only to read, but to engage, reflect, and sit with the weight and rhythm of each story.

Thank you for entering this space with IN2YNQ, where synergy is born in the in-between.

LOUD AND PROUD!

FOR THE PEOPLE, BY THE PEOPLE

→ FIND YOUR PERFECT LOUD ARTICLE

Inside This Issue:

We confront Gender-Based Violence and Femicide head-on with **real** stories, **real** women, **real** impact. Being loud is no longer a choice. It's a necessity.

Your Voice Matters

- Amplifying the Change
- The #MeToo Movement
- Voices of Resilience

MISSING GIRLS, BROKEN HOMES

In a deeply unsettling turn of events, a string of unprecedented disappearances of young girls has left the bustling community of Soweto in a state of shock and trepidation. SAPS have launched an investigation into these mortifying cases, aiming to shed light on this disconcerting situation.

Over the past month, three adolescent girls aged between 12 and 15 have vanished without a trace. The most recent disappearance occurred just last week, and as apprehension grows, community members are rallying together to offer support to the affected families.

Soweto, nestled in the heart of Joburg, alive with businesses and loving families, has always prided itself on being a community. However, the sudden vanishing of these girls has disrupted the lively atmosphere that residents have long cherished.

The most recent case involves Nkosazana Zwide, a 14-year-old girl who was last seen leaving her school in the early afternoon of Wednesday. Her family has been tirelessly searching for her, putting up posters, launching social media campaigns, and reaching out to the local police department, which is still on the first case.

The first girl to go missing, Lindsey Madida, aged 12, disappeared two weeks ago after unfortunately not returning home from a sleepover at a friend's house.

A few days later, 15-year-old Gcine Bheki, a devoted soccer player, vanished while walking her beloved pet in the nearby park.

The Soweto SAPS Department, under the leadership of Constable Rebecca Mitchell, is leaving no stone unturned in solving these cases. *"We are profoundly concerned for the safety of these girls,"* Constable Mitchell stated in a press conference yesterday. *"We are working closely with the families and the community, and we implore anyone with information to come forward."*

Local residents have formed search parties, held candlelight vigils, and engaged in various community-driven efforts to assist the families of the missing girls. Women For Change has played a pivotal role in mobilising community support and keeping the public informed about the developments in the investigations.

The disappearances have prompted discussions about safety and vigilance in the community. Parents are encouraged to engage in open conversations with their children about personal safety, and local schools have bolstered security measures.

As the investigation continues, the community clings to hope that the missing girls will be reunited safely with their families. The Loud And Proud will persist in providing updates on this troubling situation as more information becomes available.



THE DARK ROOT OF GBVF IN SA

In South Africa, gender-based violence and femicide (GBVF) is a widespread and deeply ingrained problem. Despite being well-known for its breathtaking scenery, diversity, rich history and impeccable constitution, this country still grapples with an alarming prevalence of violence against women and other gender-based atrocities.

In this article, we will delve into the complex web of factors contributing to gender-based violence in South Africa, shed light on the grim statistics, and explore the efforts being made to combat this scourge.

The harsh reality is that violence in South Africa takes many forms, including physical abuse, sexual assault, emotional abuse, psychological abuse, and femicide. The statistics are shocking, with the country consistently ranking the highest in terms of reported GBV cases. According to the South African Medical Research Council, in 2018, the rate of femicide in South Africa was *five times higher than the global average*.

Truth is, South Africa has many underlying causes that are connected to one another, and these are the following factors:

1. Historical and Socioeconomic Factors:

The legacy of apartheid, which officially ended in 1994, has left a lasting impact on the country's social and economic landscape. The deeply entrenched patriarchy and inequality continue to fuel GBVF.

2. Toxic Masculinity: South Africa, like many other countries, battles with toxic masculinity, which promotes violence as a way to assert dominance. The societal expectation that men should be strong and in control exacerbates the problem.

3. Inadequate Enforcement: Although South Africa has progressive legislation to address GBVF, adequate and proactive legal enforcement remains a significant challenge. Lack of resources, corruption, and inefficiencies within the justice system contribute to a culture of impunity.

4. Cultural Norms and Beliefs: Traditional beliefs and cultural norms perpetuate GBVF. Practices like forced marriage, initiation rituals, and religious ceremonies, can ultimately lead to violence and abuse.

5. Economic Inequality: Poverty and unemployment disproportionately affect women, making them more vulnerable to violence. Economic dependence on abusive partners can trap women in harmful relationships.



THE DARK ROOT OF GBVF IN SA

It's important to note that South Africa is not complacent in its efforts to combat GBVF. There are various organisations, government initiatives, and community-based programs working tirelessly to address this issue.

1. National Strategy Plan: A National Strategy Plan on gender-based violence and femicide has been established by the government of South Africa.

By strengthening legal enforcement, boosting preventative initiatives, and providing better services for survivors, this plan seeks to fortify the response to GBVF.

2. Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs): Groups that support survivors, advocate for legislative changes, and raise awareness include the *Women For Change*, *Sonke Gender Justice Centre* and the *Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation*.

3. Community Interventions: Young men and boys are to be involved in conversations on gender equality, healthy relationships, and masculinity through grassroots initiatives in their communities.

4. Education: To address the underlying causes of GBVF and alter societal attitudes, proponents of gender equality are pressing for comprehensive sex, gender, and human rights education. *Women For Change* has made this one of their missions through social media posts and blogs.

Gender-based violence in South Africa is a deeply rooted and complex issue, with historical, cultural, socioeconomic, and legal dimensions. Progress is being made, but there is still much work to be done.

Combating GBVF requires a multifaceted approach that involves all sectors of society from government, NGOs, to conscience communities, and individuals.

It is essential to continue raising awareness about the issue, providing support to survivors, holding perpetrators accountable, and challenging the cultural norms and beliefs that perpetuate violence. The future of South Africa depends on its ability to confront and eradicate gender-based violence, ensuring a safer, more equal society for all of its citizens.



AMPLIFYING THE CHANGE

A world fraught with shadows, and women are often the most targeted victims of abusers, serial killers, and violence. The painful truth is that gender-based violence is an inescapable issue that transcends borders, impacting women from all walks of life. It is not enough to merely acknowledge this stark reality; we must actively engage in activism and advocacy to combat the systemic forces that perpetuate this disturbing trend.

Statistics and headlines make it undeniably clear that women are disproportionately affected by various forms of violence. Whether it's domestic abuse, sexual assault, human trafficking, or serial killings, women bear the brunt of these heinous acts.

This reality compels us to examine why women are more often the victims of abusers and violence and, more importantly, what we can do to change this narrative.

The roots of this pandemic are deeply embedded in the complexity of societal, cultural, and historical factors. The objectification and devaluation of women, toxic masculinity, and ingrained patriarchal norms are catalysts in making women and children more vulnerable to abuse and violence. *It's a cycle that must be broken.*

Activism: A Beacon of Hope.

Activism and advocacy are the beacons of hope in the fight against the victimisation of women. By raising awareness, speaking out,

and demanding change, activists are challenging the status quo and driving progress.

Raising Awareness

Activists shine a spotlight on the dark corners of society where violence against women thrives. They bring stories of victims to the forefront, forcing society to confront the uncomfortable truth.

Shattering Stereotypes

Activists challenge the harmful stereotypes and gender norms that perpetuate violence. By redefining masculinity and advocating for gender equality, they strive to dismantle the oppressive systems that enable abuse.

Legal Reforms

Advocacy efforts often lead to legal reforms and policy changes that protect women and ensure that abusers face justice. The creation of better support systems and resources for survivors is a critical part of this work.

Support Networks

Activists also foster support networks for survivors, creating safe spaces where they can heal, share their stories, and rebuild their lives. These networks help survivors regain their strength and confidence.

For change to occur, we must recognise that violence against women is not an issue confined to one group, culture, or society. It is a global pandemic that requires a collective



AMPLIFYING THE CHANGE

response. Every one of us has a role to play in this fight, from holding abusers accountable to supporting survivors and challenging the gender norms that underpin this violence.

As a society, we must reject complacency and passivity in the face of this issue. We must amplify the voices of those who have been silenced and marginalised for too long. Our collective activism and advocacy can be the catalyst for transforming the narrative, ensuring that women and children are no longer the primary targets of abuse.

IT IS OUR MORAL DUTY TO STAND TOGETHER AND SAY:

"ENOUGH IS ENOUGH."



THE #METOO MOVEMENT

In October 2017, the #MeToo movement erupted, initially as a social media hashtag, but quickly evolved into a proactive global phenomenon. It provided a platform for individuals, primarily women, to share their personal experiences of sexual harassment and assault in the workplace. It was a pivotal moment that fundamentally reshaped activism, social justice, and advocacy.

The #MeToo movement challenged the prevailing culture of silence surrounding sexual harassment and assault. Survivors were no longer willing to bear the burden of shame and fear in isolation, and the movement became a rallying cry, emphasising that these were not isolated incidents but systemic problems.

One of the most significant impacts of #MeToo has been the empowerment of survivors. It has provided a platform for countless survivors to speak out about their experiences. It has enabled them to find solidarity and recognise their agency in seeking justice and healing.

Moreover, the movement has shed light on the non-professional power dynamics that perpetuate harassment and abuse. It has prompted society to scrutinise the unequal distribution of power and its role in normalising such behaviour. As a result, it has sparked conversations about gender equality and the importance of clear consent in all relationships in the workplace.

The #MeToo has forced discussions about the inadequacies of existing harassment policies and the need for improved proactive unbiased reporting mechanisms.

Corporations have become more attuned to their responsibility in creating safer, more inclusive environments for their employees.

The movement has also influenced legislative changes to protect survivors and hold perpetrators accountable. Advocacy stemming from #MeToo has led to legal reforms that provide better safeguards for survivors and impose stricter consequences for perpetrators.

Prominent individuals accused of harassment or assault have faced both social and professional consequences, reflecting a change in societal attitudes. This shift underscores the principle that nobody, regardless of their status, is above accountability.

Furthermore, #MeToo has extended its support to marginalised communities, emphasising the intersectionality of gender-based violence. It has led to discussions about the unique challenges faced by women of colour, LGBTQ+ individuals, and those with disabilities.

While the movement has been instrumental in sparking change, it has not been without criticism and challenges. Critics argue that it may foster a culture of "cancel culture," where due process is neglected. Striking a balance



THE #METOO MOVEMENT

A CATALYST FOR CHANGE IN ACTIVISM, SOCIAL JUSTICE, AND ADVOCACY

between accountability and fairness remains a complex task that consistently challenges the unequal power struggle in today's society.

The #MeToo movement has indelibly impacted activism, social justice, and advocacy. It has provided survivors with a voice and ignited a broader discussion about gender equality and consent. This movement has not only elevated the conversation surrounding sexual harassment and assault but has also led to tangible changes in policies, legislation, and cultural norms.



VOICES OF RESILIENCE

Across the world, gender-based violence and femicide (GBVF) continues to be a problem that claims countless innocent lives. But even in the shadow of these tragedies, tales of amazing fortitude and bravery surface. The victims and survivors of GBVF are highlighted in this feature piece. It highlights their bravery, resilience, and capacity to inspire change.

For many GBVF victims, the pain and trauma often incubate in silence. The fear of stigmatisation, shame, or even retribution keeps them trapped in a cycle of abuse. But for some, a turning point emerges, propelling them from victim to survivor.



She's A Survivor

Maria's story serves as a vivid illustration of this profound transformation. As a survivor of domestic violence, she endured several years of both physical and emotional abuse while living in isolation. It was only when she realised the devastating impact it had on her children that she summoned the courage to seek assistance.

Today, she dedicates herself tirelessly to aiding other survivors, demonstrating that

the ability to break free from the cycle of violence originates from within. Maria's transition from victim to survivor is a truly inspiring testament to resilience.

"Survivors rely on a support system of friends, relatives, and experts who are crucial to their recovery. The psychological and practical assistance required to start over is offered by this network, your personal network." – Maria Tisdale.



Rising From The Ashes

Jane's story is a testament to the power of a strong support network. After surviving a brutal sexual assault, she found solace in therapy and the unconditional support of her friends and family. Jane has since dedicated her life to advocating for better mental health resources for GBV survivors and tirelessly works to raise awareness of the issue.

"The reason why I use my voice is because many survivors channel their experiences into activism, raising their voices to create positive change. Their advocacy is often a driving force in transforming societies and legal systems." – Jane Mathlatsi.



VOICES OF RESILIENCE



Empower Others

Sarah, a survivor of human trafficking, has become a beacon of hope for countless others. She now leads an organisation that empowers survivors, offering them opportunities for education and job training. Her commitment to ending the cycle of victimisation is a powerful example of turning tragedy into triumph.

"My past may have been defined by darkness, but today, I choose to shine a light of hope for those who have walked a similar path. Together, we can turn tragedy into triumph and rewrite the story of our lives."

– Sarah Lesley.

While no two survivors' journeys are identical, the path to healing often involves counselling, therapy, and legal support. The resilience of these survivors, and many others, is evident as they navigate the complex terrain of trauma recovery.

The stories of GBV victims and survivors are not only tales of pain and suffering; they are stories of courage, resilience, and hope. These individuals inspire change through their determination to break free from the cycle of

violence, their support networks, and their advocacy for a world free from GBVF.

Their strength is a beacon for those still trapped in silence and fear, showing them that they, too, can rise from the ashes and become survivors.

As a society, we must listen to their voices, support their endeavours, and stand with them in the fight to end gender-based violence, ensuring a safer and more just world for all.



Survivor Solidarity

Rebecca's journey is a testament to the strength that arises from unity and resilience. After surviving an emotionally abusive relationship, she found solace in support groups and counselling services that helped her rebuild her life. Rebecca dedicates her time to facilitating similar support networks for GBVF survivors, providing them with a safe space to heal and regain their independence.

"Through solidarity and shared experiences, survivors can draw strength from one another and inspire a sense of community that transcends the pain of their past." – Rebecca Johnson.



VOICES OF RESILIENCE

While no two survivors' journeys are identical, the path to healing often involves counselling, therapy, and legal support. The resilience of these survivors, and many others, is evident as they navigate the complex terrain of trauma recovery.

The stories of GBV victims and survivors are not only tales of pain and suffering; they are stories of courage, resilience, and hope. These individuals inspire change through their determination to break free from the cycle of violence, their unwavering support networks, and their advocacy for a world free from GBV.

Their strength is a beacon for those still trapped in silence and fear, showing them that they, too, can rise from the ashes and become survivors.

As a society, we must listen to their voices, support their endeavours, and

STAND WITH THEM IN THE FIGHT TO END GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AND FEMICIDE





her ink to spill

NAVIGATING IDENTITY
IN SOUTH AFRICA

NAVIGATE YOUR OWN JOURNEY WITH JUST A CLICK

INSYNO

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The birth of her

At the shores of South Africa, I first drew my breath,
A black girl's journey, a story to address.

In Eastern Cape's embrace, where I took my first cries,
A black girl destined to reach for the skies.
New Castle's streets echoed with childhood's grace,
Igugu lam, those golden moments I chase.

Zulu lullabies and Xhosa's melodic tongue,
Underneath the African sun, where I swung.
Languages woven, a vibrant tapestry of sound,
Clicks and rolls, in every word I found.

Five years danced by in Newcastle's sweet air,
Then Pretoria called, a city so fair.
Sepedi's warm cadence, a new rhythm to then chase,
Thobela! I whispered, stepping with grace.

From the Eastern Cape's cradle to Pretoria's door,
A journey of growth, learning, and more.
Afrikaans's whispers, like the sun's gentle kiss,
Shaping my soul, an identity I won't miss.

In the heart of each language, a story unfolds,
Of a black girl's journey, her dreams and her holds.
From "**Molo!**" to "**Dumelang**," voices unite,
A symphony of cultures, shining so bright.

I am the echo of South Africa's song,
From Eastern Cape's mountains to where I belong.
New Castle's innocence, Pretoria's hold true,
In the confines of time, my story finds its due.



a humble story

In the Afrikaans streets where I came to be,
A black South African girl in a land not foreseen,
Beneath a sun of blazing African sky,
I learned to spread my wings, unafraid to fly.

In 'n wêreld waar ander kleure verblind

I found my place, embracing what I'd find,
I danced to rhythms both old and new,
A patchwork quilt of cultures I'd gather.

Ek praat 'n bietjie van hier, 'n bietjie van daar

A language mosaic, beyond compare,
From English to Xhosa, to Zulu and Afrikaans too,
A tapestry of tongues, like morning's dew.

My neighbourhood painted in hues so bright,
With friendships diverse, the world felt right,
At tender age, I never sensed the seething spite,
For innocence saw only love's pure light.

Race was a notion, a concept obscured,
In our hearts, acceptance was the only cure,
Together we played, our laughter pure,
In a world untouched by hatred's lure.

Through the years, I wore each culture's thread,
A harmonious blend, like prayers unsaid,
In unity, we thrived, our spirits fed,
In Afrikaans streets, where dreams were spread.

So, let this story be one of grace,
A young girl's journey, a hopeful embrace,
In a montage woven of every race,
A symbol of unity, in this sacred space.



memories sustained

In the canvas of time, my story's art,
From South Africa's heart, these memories start,

Mpumelelo, my brother, a precious part,
A name that foretold success, from the heart.
With joy, I witnessed his first breath's sweet take,
A bond formed then, time could not forsake,

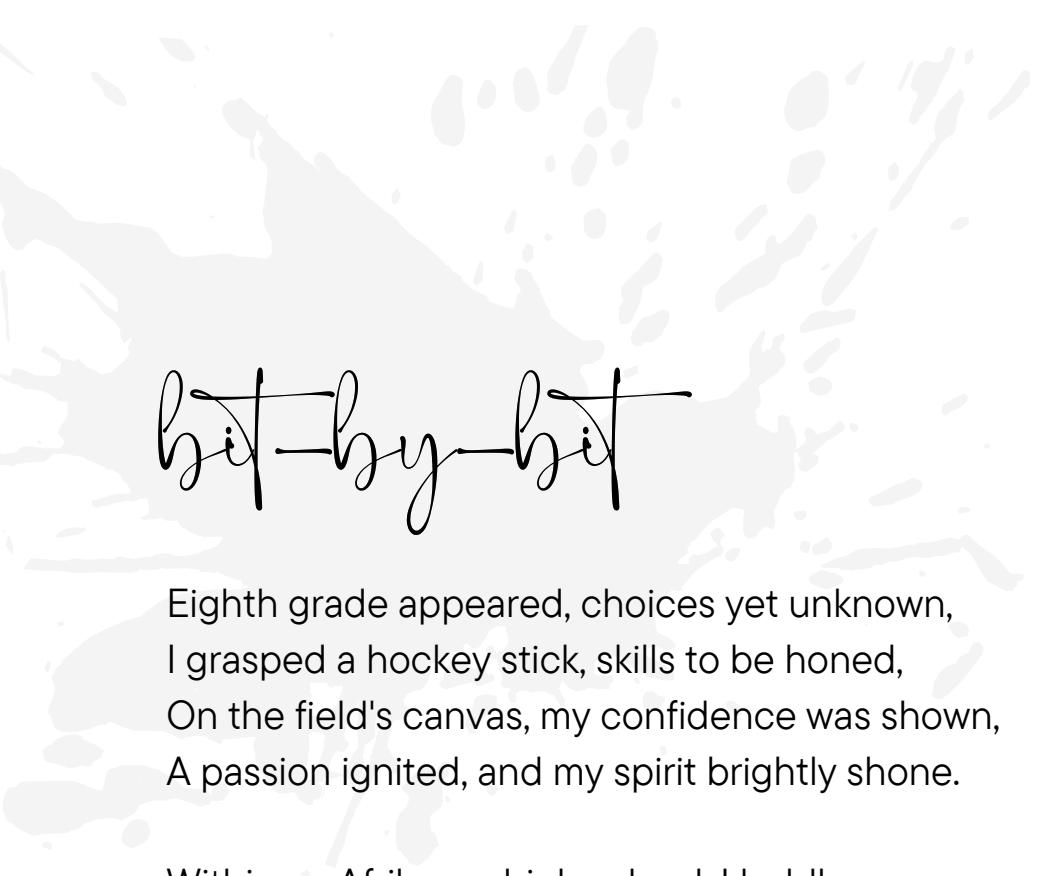
In his laughter, I found a sacred lake,
A love unbreakable, in life's endless wake.

Seventh grade, a softball field's sacred ground,
The bat met the ball with a resounding sound,
A home run we needed, victory unbound,
In that moment, dreams and reality were found.

In these memories, like jewels, I'm adorned,
In my South African soul, they are deeply ingrained,

Each cherished moment, a treasure, unadorned





bit-by-bit

Eighth grade appeared, choices yet unknown,
I grasped a hockey stick, skills to be honed,
On the field's canvas, my confidence was shown,
A passion ignited, and my spirit brightly shone.

Within an Afrikaans high school, I boldly grew,
A black South African girl, questions in my view,
Seeking answers in a world with views askew.

Through foreign halls where tongues in harmony danced,
Seeking connection, a serendipitous chance,
Within identity's maze, I took my stance,
Through doubt's haze, my soul's intricate romance.

As goals found their mark, friendships were closely knit,
In life's grand discovery, my unique wit.



verlore in afrikaans

In die **shadows** van Afrikaanse kultuur,
Alone, ek voel asof ek hoort nie hier
Seduced deur die dans van Afrikaanse woorde,
 Verlore in die klank van vreemde akkoorde.

Die braai se **smoke**, rugby se **noise**,
 The konserte onder die sterre, elke dag en nag,
 Ek het alles omarm, met elke oogopslag,
 Maar tog het ek nie verstaan, ek het die verkeerde vrae gevra.

Ek het geleer om te **speak**, om te **dance** en sing,
In the choir of language that was not my own
 Ek het gestreef om in te pas, om 'n deel te wees,
 In 'n **world of differences**, sonder my eie vrees.

In die proses, het ek myself verloor,
 My identiteit verdwyn, in die murg en been vanoor,
 Ek het besluite geneem, sonder om te besef,
 Die pad wat ek kies, het my eie siel verpes.

Nou vra ek myself, wie is ek **actually**?
 In hierdie kultuur, wat is regtig **important**?
To know who I am, of om terug te keer,
 Back to the roots that I once held dear.



more than just a colour

In the crossroads of my soul, **ek** redefine,
 A journey unscripted, '**n lewe** intertwine,
 I stand before you, unapologetic, **trots**,
 '**N storie onvertel**, in verses yet to be unrolled.

I'm a new chapter, '**n** version not the same,
 A black girl's journey, '**n** ever-changing game,
 I've danced with shadows, worn different **skoene**,
 My **identiteit's** kaleidoscope, '**n** vibrant muse.

I've walked in spaces, **Afrikaanse** realms I've seen,
 Dated **seuns** with stories, that weren't always clean,
 But in the **oë** of those who seek to define,
 They say I've crossed some line, like '**n** fragile line.

I'm shunned by my kin, my own kind it seems,
 For I don't fit their dreams, in the black girl's schemes,
 They say I'm not enough, not "**swart genoeg**", they insist,
 But in the heart of this abyss, I persist.

In the corridors of privilege, I've taken my place,
 I've climbed the ladder, won the academic race,
 A star athlete, they cheer my name on high,
 But in the shadows, they question **hoekom, oh hoekom?**

They whisper behind their hands, judgment in their tone,
 They claim I've lost my own, my **identiteit's** overthrown,
 But who are they to judge this journey of mine?
 In the clockwise of time, my **kleure** shine.

I am more than the labels, the expectations they decree,
 I am the sum of my choices, my **gees** wild and free,
 I'll keep rewriting this story, with every stride,
 In the dance of my **identiteit**, my **hart** will decide.

So, don't define me by the colour of my skin,
 Or the choices I make, or the battles I win,
 I'm a black South African girl, '**n** tapestry of grace,
 In this complex world, I'll find my rightful place.



in the eleventh grade

In the eleventh grade, post the COVID's shroud,
I stepped back into life, but not the one I knew,
A world reshaped, I questioned, I allowed,
For change to sculpt my view, and my soul anew.

The walls of my home, where time had its grasp,
Had taught me more than the school's structured mask,
I'd journeyed within, through my culture's depth,
Discovered the roots that gave my spirit breath.

My white love, his heart a canvas so bright,
With eager hands, he'd journeyed by my side,
To learn, to embrace, to understand my core,
As we delved into Zulu traditions, to explore.

Yet, I found myself at a crossroads anew,
No longer the Afrikaans girl they once knew,
I'd evolved, rediscovered, in colours so bold,
As my Zulu heritage reclaimed its hold.

The questions persisted, an internal fray,
Who am I now, in this ever-changing play?
I stand at the juncture, undefined yet free,
In the eleventh grade, I embrace what will be.



self-love?

In self-exploration, my heart took flight,
A journey uncharted, bathed in inner light,
I wandered through the corridors of my soul,
To find the truths that made my spirit whole.

A black identity, an artistry profound,
With colours vibrant, in cultural richness, I am bound,
I fell in love with who I am once more,
My roots, my strength, my heritage to explore.

Yet deeper still, another truth I twirled,
A pansexual heart in a changing world,
In every shade and gender, love's warm expanse,
My heart found solace, in this sacred dance.

In their acceptance, I found my way,
A journey of self-love, to brighter days.



culture like jericho

However, there were darker days ahead,
 Awakening truths, like tempests, they spread,
 Not from white hearts, but within my own kin,
 Racism's sharp daggers, like a silent sin.

I sat in the doctor's room, a heavy heart to bear,
 Diagnosed with ADHD, and depression's snare,
 In one session, these demons did arise,
 In Zulu and Xhosa, I voiced my cries.

*Kodwa kwakunzima emhlabeni ohamba phambili,
 Ukwazi izinto ezintsha, zibuyise ezintweni,
 Ubufebe sezinhlamba, impela ngicabange,
 Emzini wami, izizwe zami, impilo yafika.*

*Ngoku, ndiyakubona ezinye izinto, kuba yim iphelelaphi?
 Amazwi akho amnene ayaphuma kwiintlungu ezinjengendzila,
 Xhosa noZulu, inkxaso endibalulekileyo ephuma phambili,
 Emhlabeni wam, abantu bam, impilo ingaphuma.*

My relationship, once strong, now started to crumple,
 Of a year and a half's love, it slowly began to fade,

Not yet over, but hanging by a fragile thread,
 In the quiet of my heart, I felt the dread.

The fear and frustration, a tempestuous sea,
 In the rhythms of my culture, I tried to break free,
 From the shadows that lingered, my spirit embraced



she's fucking raging

In shadows cast, love's deceit, I weep
 Beneath the moon's cold embrace
 A virgin's trust, in secrecy I'd keep
 Yet in your hands, my heart's a fucking
 disgrace

In shadows cast, where love's deceit did creep
 Beneath the moon's ice-cold secrets, I wanted
 to leap

Virgin trust, in your hands, I so damn blindly
 bestowed
 But you, a snake in the grass, your wickedness
 loudly showed

The night, a canvas dark, your face a sinister
 mask
 A lover's touch turned into a cruel, heartless
 task
 In agony, I learned, trust is fragile, easily torn
 Betrayal's mark, a wound FOREVER worn

Oh fear?
 A haunting spectre in my goddamn dreams
 The scars you left, reminders of those soul-
 crushing scenes

In solitude, I piece together my shattered
 seams
 I'll rise from the fucking ashes, reclaim my
 inner dreams

BUT

Let me speak of rage, a righteous poisonous flame
 Burning fierce, the patriarchy's cruel fucking game
 For in my pain, I find my power's untamed,
 A phoenix from the ashes, toward the skies I aim

Feminism's my anthem, my battle cry
 I'll stand with sisters, let our bruised voices fly
 We'll break the chains that try to bind us, chain us
 down

In unity, we'll conquer every fear you throw toward
 us now
 In therapy's sanctuary, I found my own
 Through whispered wounds where demons once
 did lay

With each shared fear and every healing sigh,
 I learned to mend and let my spirit fly

In broken pieces
 I found my strength

A journey of healing,
 A life to pursue

No longer chained by your infidelity,
 In the light, my strength won't dare to hide
 For I've emerged from the darkness, fierce and free

No longer bound by your goddamn hypocrisy

sleepless

Sleepless nights, a relentless parade of shadows,
PTSD's echoes, relentless in their haunting.
No rhyme or reason in the chaos of thoughts,

Depression's weight, a leaden anchor in my chest.
Fear of touch, like an electric shock, courses through,
The vulnerability of skin, a battleground of scars.

In the still of darkness, sleep paralysis grips,
As my mind's theatre unfolds, a restless captive.
Nightmares birthed from the past, reenact their scenes,

The night, is a canvas of pain, where I'm lost in my dreams.

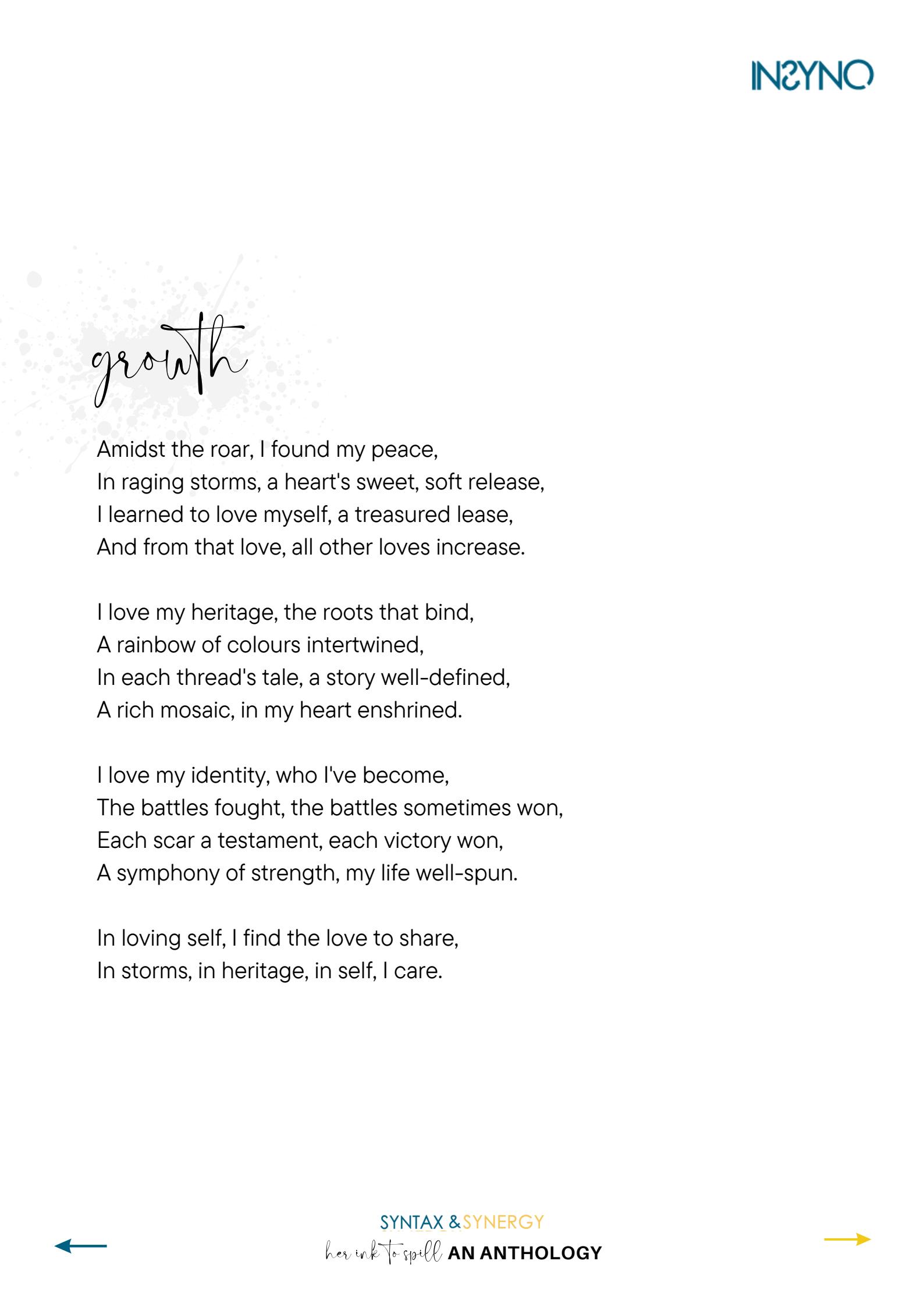


breathe

Breathe through the pain, reclaim your domain,
Breathe for your gain, break free from the chain,
Breathe, anxiety, release your tight rein,
Breathe, it's only me, not a hurricane.

Breathe in the light, dispel the disdain,
Breathe through the fight, let go of the strain,
Breathe, find your might, in this vast terrain,
Breathe, take flight, break free from the mundane





growth

Amidst the roar, I found my peace,
In raging storms, a heart's sweet, soft release,
I learned to love myself, a treasured lease,
And from that love, all other loves increase.

I love my heritage, the roots that bind,
A rainbow of colours intertwined,
In each thread's tale, a story well-defined,
A rich mosaic, in my heart enshrined.

I love my identity, who I've become,
The battles fought, the battles sometimes won,
Each scar a testament, each victory won,
A symphony of strength, my life well-spun.

In loving self, I find the love to share,
In storms, in heritage, in self, I care.



INCYNO

A COLLECTION OF PSYCHOLOGICAL TERRORS

THE MIRROR'S SILENT SCREAM

THE MIRROR'S SILENT SCREAM GOD'S LOOKING GLASS

Rebecca had always believed in the benevolence of her faith, that God could see her. She just never imagined that her reflection would be watching too.

She had grown up between church pews, soft hymns, warm sermons, and youth group retreats filled with bonfires and reverent holiness. Faith was the one thing she never questioned. Until the day her truth became evident—uncontained, undeniable, queer—and suddenly faith became a blade pressed to her throat, nudging her down a treacherous path she will forever be condemned to.

Now locked in a small, sterile room within the confines of the conversion centre her parents delivered her to, Rebecca felt a disconcerting chill seep through her. The centre, sponsored by her church, was colder than hell should ever be.

The room had no windows, no clocks, and no voices except the ones engineered to correct her. Her room was white with sheet-metal walls disguised as sanctity, and aggressive fluorescent lights that seemed to strip her of identity. In the corner, a wooden crucifix hung on the wall, above a square mirror no bigger than her face. The old mirror with warped wooden edges cast an eerie shadow, its surface rippling with malevolence.

Rebecca tried not to stare, but she felt the mirror watching her. Every second felt like an eternity, and with each passing breath, her reflection on the glimmering silver hesitated a beat too long. On the first night, she thought her anxiety projected the grotesque, contorted forms of herself. By the third, she knew she hadn't. During her morning prayer, Rebecca reached for the Bible on the bedside table, its pages worn from years of devotion. She clutched it near her heart, her fingers trembling as she opened the book of Jeremiah to a verse that had always brought her comfort.

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans for welfare



and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope." She read the passage, and the mirror rippled like breath against water.

Her reflection smiled, and she didn't.

Rebecca dropped the Bible with a gasp, and the door swung open to reveal Sister Esther. Still shuddering with distress, all she could offer her assigned spiritual guide were wide, tearful eyes. Sister Esther took in Rebecca's panic with the same indifference she gave the sharp pinch of her starched collar—an irritation, nothing more.

"Good morning, Rebecca," she whispered. "Let us begin with prayer." Reluctantly, Rebecca kneeled to accept the prayer that held a burdensome pressure. A pressure that held the weight of correction; a correction that reminded her of her mortal sin.

Rebecca listened with a heavy heart as Sister Esther condemned her love as an affront to God. The woman's words were sharp-edged, slashing through Rebecca's soul. In the church's eyes, Rebecca's queerness was not a gift from God; it was an affliction, a perverted abomination that needed to be abolished.

The mirror behind the Sister's shoulder pulsed with each accusation, the reflection behind her body growing darker, taller. Its features muddled like wet paint running down a canvas. Rebecca tried to focus on the real woman, the real cruel Sister Esther, but the mirror's version shifted its head in an unnatural, clicking motion.

"You must understand," the Sister professed, "your perversion is a wound."

The mirror-self leaned close, its mouth opening too wide, as if eager to swallow the sentence whole. Rebecca recoiled and shut her eyes. She wished she hadn't. The room became a minuscule torture chamber after that. Every session included the mirror with its presence, its imitations, and its gnarly distortions. When she sat on her bed, it showed her hunched. When she prayed, it showed her kneeling with her head twisted with protruding tendon and bone. When she cried, it showed her grinning.

Days—weeks—passed; she couldn't tell which as time melted, and the



Sister's lectures intensified with each fast, scripture reading, and isolating tactic. Rebecca's identity was dissected, labelled, and condemned as a festering plague.

"You must remove the part of you that offends God!" Sister Esther declared.

Is it worth it? Rebecca sobbed, watching her reflection separate from the bone. Am I losing myself? Am I losing God...my mind?

Rebecca's knees buckled, and the mirror trembled with her—no, ahead of her—as if anticipating the collapse of her will. Her reflection twitched, convulsed, and peeled away from her body like wet skin sloughing off a carcass.

She backed away, choking on a sob, and her reflection followed.

Its jaw unhinged, splitting down the centre with a wet crack. Revealing rows of serrated teeth, each one clicking into place with sickening hunger. Its scream tore through the room, but she hadn't opened her mouth. The sound came from the mirror, a shrill, shattering howl that vibrated the fluorescent lights until they flickered violently.

Rebecca recoiled.

Then...screamed.

It burst out of her like something she'd been holding for years, a howl scraped from bone and terror and the suffocating weight of holy walls. Her reflection mimicked her scream with a jaw splitting further, cheeks tearing open, eyes bulging with savage glee as if her pain fed it—freed it. The creature in the mirror roared with her and against her, mocking, mirroring, devouring the sound she made.

She screamed until her throat was raw, and the lights buzzed to her heartbeat. It's only when she heard a muffled thud that she stopped and swallowed her bible.

She looked over to the floor, and her Bible had fallen open to the book of



John. Voice hoarse, she read the first verse her eyes laid on: "God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him."

Tears welled in Rebecca's eyes as the profound truth of those words washed over her. She had always believed in a loving and compassionate God, and now she realised that her love, as a queer woman, was an expression of that divine love. It was not a sin; it was a testament to the breadth of God's love.

Relieved tears carved burning paths down her cheeks. She pressed a hand to the cold floor as if it alone could anchor her to reality. Her monstrous reflection slowly closed its jaws and retreated into the mirror. The skin stitched itself back together, and for the first time since she had arrived at the centre, Rebecca saw her true, brown-eyed self.

The following morning, Rebecca spoke with a newfound strength and she shared her truth, her faith, and her conviction with Sister Esther. It was a declaration of her love for God and her love for herself. Sister Esther listened to her testimony, and the mirror rippled with their true reflections.

Days later (though it felt like centuries), the door of her small room swung open. Her parents stood there, tentative and trembling, as though afraid she had become something unrecognisable. Rebecca didn't know if they understood or if the centre had simply given up, but she walked toward them with her spine straightened by resolve and abundant love.

Self-love.

THE END.



Thank You

Syntax & Synergy

Dearest Reader,

Thank you for stepping into this space of stories, reflection, and resonance. **Syntax & Synergy** exists because great minds and hearts like yours choose to listen, engage, and move with meaning.

Your time and presence transforms these pages from mere words into connection, from simple narrative into thematic purpose. Whether through advocacy, introspection, or psychological discovery, each chapter lives fuller because you shared this journey with me.

At IN2YNQ Communications, we believe creativity is a rhythm, and you became part of ours.

Thank you for reading with intention, and allowing these words to sync with your world.

Until the next ideation meets creation,

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