

OCTOBER 2026

# KHANATURAL

Rooted in Realness

LEGACY BUILDERS  
LEBO & DEANY  
MOJAKI



# LOVE YOUR SYSTEM



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CONTACT US

- Address: 02 Francis Road, Jeffrey's Bay, Eastern Cape, South Africa, 6330
- Tel: +27 79 695 8848
- Email: [sales@khanatural.com](mailto:sales@khanatural.com)
- Website: [www.khanatural.com](http://www.khanatural.com)





# Editor's Note

October invites us to pause and pay closer attention to our mental and emotional well-being. As we observe Mental Health Awareness Month and mark World Mental Health Day on 10 October, we are reminded of the importance of creating spaces where mental health can be discussed openly, with compassion and without stigma.

At KhaNatural, we see wellness as an ongoing journey that asks us to care for ourselves in ways that feel meaningful and sustainable. Through the stories in these pages, we hope to open honest conversations about mental health, challenge misconceptions and encourage our readers to think more deeply about what well-being means to them.

We are also grateful for the continued growth of the magazine and for every reader who has welcomed KhaNatural into their lives. Your support gives these stories a purpose and allows us to keep building a community around conversations that matter.

This month's issue brings together stories that may make you pause, laugh, reflect and perhaps shed a tear. There are moments of vulnerability, joy and insight across these pages, with something to take with you beyond the final page.

As you read, we hope you find a story that speaks to you, a perspective that stays with you or simply a moment to slow down and reconnect with yourself.

Wishing you a peaceful October and, as always, happy reading.



*Khabonina Q*  
**Editor-in-Chief**



## In this issue...

This October, KhaNatural brings you stories of creativity, culture, wellness and inspiration, with voices and perspectives that invite us to look a little closer.

Mother and daughter Lebo and Deany Mojaki take us behind the scenes of Elizabeth Morr, sharing the story of the brand they have built together and the legacy they continue to shape.

We explore the relationship between food and mental wellness, looking at how what we eat can influence how we feel, while Bo Molefe reminds us of the range and depth of his creative talent.

In his thought-provoking column, Mokwadi explores a subject that deserves a closer conversation: "A Woman's NO Is Not an Attack on Your Manhood." It is a timely reflection on boundaries, respect and the importance of listening when someone says no.

Our editors also share their latest book selections, bringing you stories to read, revisit and carry with you beyond the page.

Welcome to our October issue. We hope you enjoy discovering what's inside.



 KHANATURAL

# BUILDING A LEGACY

From a seed of an idea to a growing family legacy, South African jewellery brand, Elizabeth Morr has always been rooted in intention. Founder Lebo Mojaki and her daughter, Deany, open up about the brand, and what it means to carry its story into the next generation.

KHABONINA QUBEKA



Elizabeth Morr is a South African jewellery brand whose pieces have made their way from the screen into the cultural imagination, appearing in productions such as *Happiness Is a Four-Letter Word* and *Shaka iLembe*, among others.

At the heart of the brand is founder and creative force Lebo Mojaki, now joined by her daughter, Deany Mojaki, who has taken on the role of CEO.

I had one of the most satisfying conversations with these two women. Our conversation spanned legacy, generational wealth and natural succession, and I left feeling inspired.

I asked Lebo if she knew how great the Elizabeth Morr brand would become while she was still in the building stages.

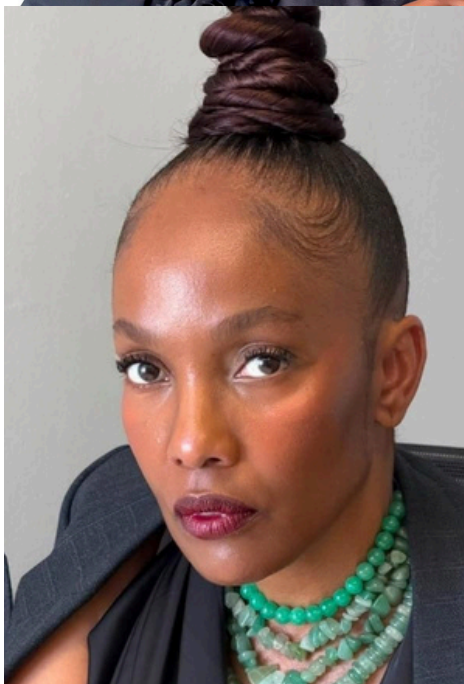
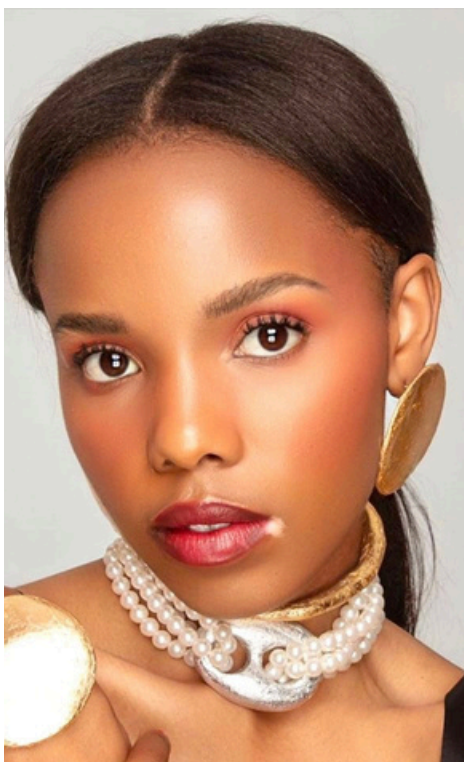
“Oh yes. Elizabeth Morr was always meant to be big. I often think of the mustard seed analogy: when you place something so small into the ground, everything it needs to become is already within it. Its nature is to grow.”

That mustard seed becomes an interesting way into the story of Elizabeth Morr because, as we spoke, it became clear that the brand’s growth has always been intertwined with family. I had to bring Deany into the conversation. After all, she has watched it all happen, and I’m interested in her point of view. She watched her mom curate Elizabeth Morr while growing up.

“It was actually really fun growing up around Elizabeth Morr. My mom started the brand when I was 16, so I was already very aware of what was happening and able to appreciate the process.”

Deany says she has always loved fashion, and both her mom and late father loved fashion too, so being around that world felt very natural and exciting to her. She loved watching how her mom creates, where her inspiration comes from, and how an idea slowly becomes a finished piece.

“I think the biggest thing young people need to understand about the jewellery and accessories space is that it takes a lot of work. You almost need to have two brains — a creative brain and a business brain.”



I agree with her completely. Creativity helps you make something beautiful and original, but the business side is what helps you turn that creativity into something sustainable.

“Learning how to balance both is what will really help you thrive in this industry,” she continued.

That’s how she has always seen Elizabeth Morr. The boldness, the diversity, the scale: they didn’t manufacture those things along the way. They were always in the DNA of the brand. They simply kept nurturing the seed.

“Elizabeth Morr doesn’t know another way but to grow.”

Deany and Lebo are continually creating themselves and walking in grace, because how else can you explain how great they look? “We actually love going on walks together,” Lebo says. “That’s probably our favourite way of staying active, along with trying to maintain a good, balanced diet. It’s also our time to talk, catch up and just enjoy being together.”

There is something lovely about hearing this from a mother and daughter who work together. Their relationship exists outside the boardroom and the studio. There are walks, conversations, meals and the ordinary rituals of family life.

When it comes to cooking, Deany says it’s her mom that taught her everything she knows. She also admits that Mom is definitely the best cook! However, these days she finds herself cooking more often, and Lebo cooks on special occasions.

Apparently, when she does, you know it’s going to be good.

“One of my favourite things to make is tomato soup. It’s honestly incredible! And a meal we both absolutely love is oxtail. My mom taught me how to make it, but I have to admit, she still makes the best oxtail ever.”





“We are Christians, and Christianity is at the centre of our lives. I got saved in 1999, and Deany was raised in the Christian faith, so prayer has always been a very important part of our home, our lives and even the way we approach our work and our designs.” -

**Lebo Mojaki**





Lebo and I took a moment and spoke about balance and mental health, and I love how openly she spoke to me about her faith.

“We are Christians, and Christianity is at the centre of our lives. I got saved in 1999, and Deany was raised in the Christian faith, so prayer has always been a very important part of our home, our lives and even the way we approach our work and our designs.”

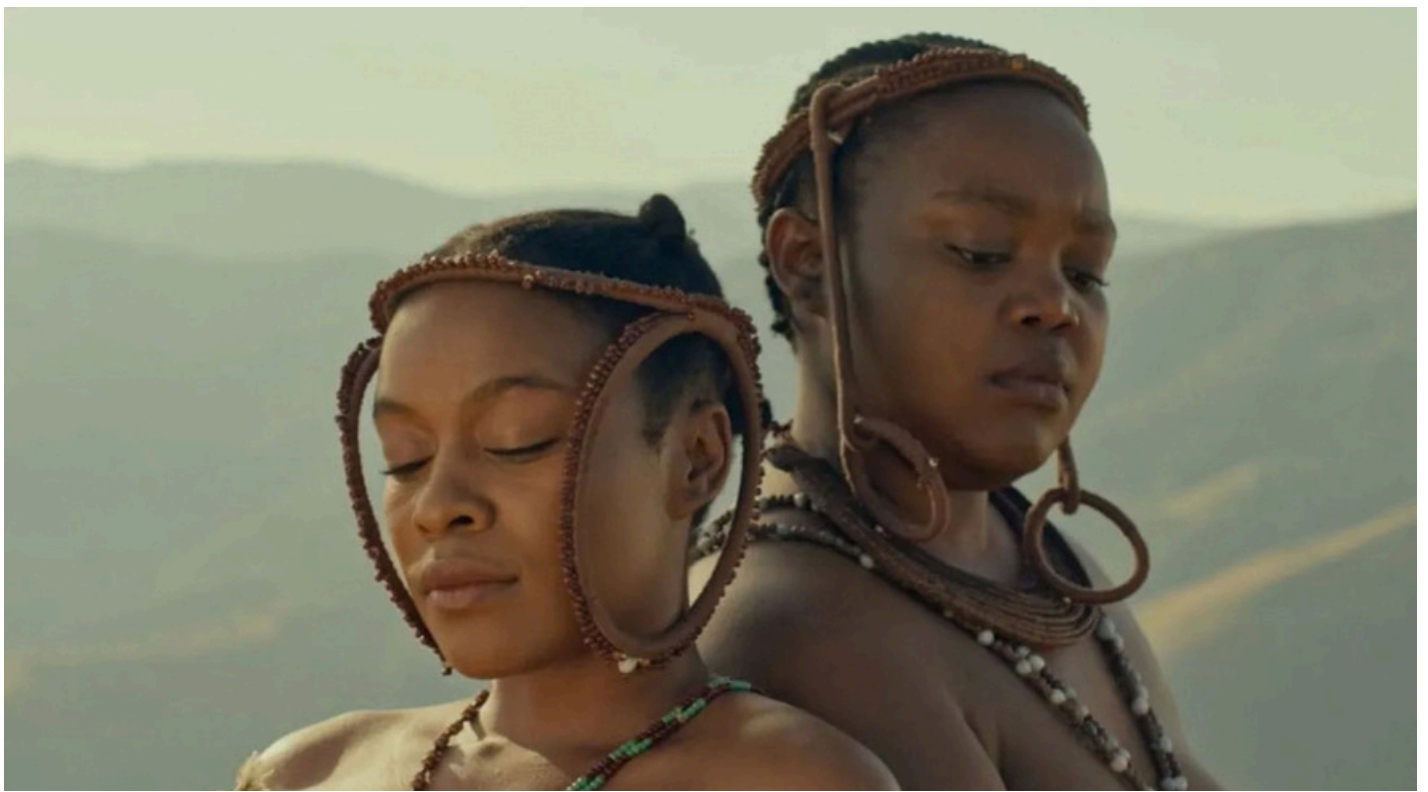
This gave me goosebumps because it clarifies so much. They understood the raw material God gave them, they understood the seed and they stewarded it, and it produced their fruit. Lebo did not sit waiting for the finished product from God. She did the work.

I love literate people, and books are such a beautiful social connection point at times. It's been a great icebreaker for me on many occasions, so I was curious about what they love to read.

“We both read many different books, but the one book that has remained constant for both of us over the years is the Bible. It is the book we return to for wisdom, comfort, direction and peace.”

I love this. I often hear people talking about scripture, debating different points of view and celebrating the fact that they love similar verses. For Lebo, the Bible is clearly part of the foundation from which she has built her life, her family and her business.





**“It was actually really fun growing up around Elizabeth Morr. My mom started the brand when I was 16, so I was already very aware of what was happening and able to appreciate the process.”**

## DEANY MOJAKI

I first encountered the name Elizabeth Morr on set. When I was preparing outfits for my character, Queen Ntombazi on *Shaka Mlembe*, and for the amazing Nomzamo Mbatha’s character, Queen Nandi, I would hear the name “Elizabeth Morr”. I immediately loved the sound of it. It’s elegant, timeless and international. I had to ask: what inspired this great iconic name?

“Elizabeth Morr is inspired by my mother’s name. Her names were Elizabeth Maureen, and people affectionately called her “Morr.” So, when she started the brand, it felt natural to name it after her because so much of what she built Elizabeth Morr on, came from the values, principles and morals she taught her.

“The name has always represented much more than jewellery. It represents legacy, family, character and the things that are passed from one generation to the next,” she affectionately explained.

And there it is again: legacy. The name carries the memory of Lebo’s mother, the brand carries Lebo’s vision, and now Deany is carrying the responsibility of taking it forward. The story keeps moving from one generation to the next.



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Of course, I excitedly needed to know what’s next for Elizabeth Morr, Miss Lebo and Deany.

“Looking ahead, I’m excited to spend more time developing the couture side of Elizabeth Morr in an even more artistic, bold and expressive direction,” Lebo says.

She will also be focusing more of her energy on the Fashion Council and the work she wants to do within the broader fashion industry. I personally cannot wait for this.

And for Deany?

“My mom has now handed me the responsibility of running Elizabeth Morr.”

She says her goal is to allow more women to experience the brand. She will be focusing strongly on growing the ready-to-wear side while still protecting everything that makes Elizabeth Morr special. While doing all of this, this young superwoman says she will be growing her career as a content creator.

“For me this next chapter is about building both worlds alongside each other. We’re also exploring other products that could naturally live within both worlds.”





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What excites them is that Elizabeth Morr is now growing in two directions: Miss Lebo taking couture into a more artistic and daring space, and Deany growing the ready-to-wear side into something more women can experience and wear.

This has been such an inspiring conversation. I pray for more powerful legacies like these in our country. This strengthens family values and improves self-sustainability.

I can tell you this much: Elizabeth Morr will live on as that flagship company that inspires across race, gender, sexuality, culture and more! This is about family. This is love. This is legacy!





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# LOVE VE

YOUR BEARD





# BEST FOOD 4

## *Mental Health*

What we eat can influence how we feel, think and function. **Dr October Boyles** explores the connection between nutrition and mental wellbeing, highlighting ten foods that can support brain health, mood and emotional resilience, and showing how simple choices can become part of a more nourishing everyday diet.





What you put on your plate doesn't just fuel your body — it directly impacts your brain and emotional well-being.

Research consistently shows a strong link between food and mental health, highlighting how certain nutrients can regulate mood, improve concentration, and support resilience against stress.

If you've ever wondered which foods are good for mental health or which choices truly qualify as the best foods for mental health, you're not alone.

From omega-3-rich fish to antioxidant-packed berries, science points to clear dietary patterns that act as natural foods that improve mood.

The trend of healthy food is now starting to be very popular with many people, besides now there are many variations of healthy food which of course tastes no less delicious than junk food

## THE LINK BETWEEN FOOD AND MENTAL HEALTH

The connection between diet and mental well-being goes far beyond old sayings like "you are what you eat."

Modern studies confirm that specific dietary choices influence neurotransmitter production, brain inflammation, and even the gut-brain axis — all of which play a role in emotional stability and cognitive function.

In fact, many clinicians now emphasize that the link between food and mental health is a critical piece of holistic care.

Diets rich in whole foods, healthy fats, and probiotics are consistently associated with lower rates of depression and anxiety, while highly processed foods are linked to worsened mood and fatigue.

By understanding how foods that improve mood work biologically — from boosting serotonin to reducing oxidative stress — both individuals and mental health professionals can use nutrition as a practical tool for promoting long-term well-being.

## HEALTHY CHOICES

I recently spoke to a few of my dance class students about the importance of a body mind and soul balance, is it even attainable?

After our tough slightly depressing debate about the realities of life, lack of time to exercise, to cook etc, we agreed it's actually tough and to be healthy which often leads to depression.

We don't realise how eating a balanced diet impacts our mental health.

Eating a balanced diet rich in whole foods can support brain function, reduce inflammation, and help regulate mood.





# 10 TOP FOODS THAT CAN BENEFIT YOUR MENTAL HEALTH

**Nuts and Seeds:** Walnuts, almonds, flaxseeds, and chia seeds offer healthy fats, zinc, and magnesium to ease stress and anxiety.

**Fermented Foods:** Yoghurt, kefir, kimchi, and sauerkraut introduce probiotics that nurture the gut-brain connection and improve mood.

**Dark Chocolate:** High-cocoa dark chocolate contains flavonoids and tryptophan, which stimulate endorphins and serotonin production.



**Whole Grains:** Oats, brown rice, and whole-wheat bread supply steady energy and help the brain produce serotonin without causing sugar crashes.

**Eggs:** Egg yolks provide choline and vitamin B12, which support neurological function and healthy neurotransmitter signaling.

**Bananas:** They contain vitamin B6 and natural tryptophan to help your body manufacture feel-good hormones.

**Turmeric:** This bright spice contains curcumin, an active compound studied for its potential to lower inflammation and alleviate depression symptoms.



**Fatty Fish:** Salmon, mackerel, and sardines are packed with omega-3 fatty acids, which lower inflammation and support brain health.

**Dark Leafy Greens:** Spinach, kale, and Swiss chard provide folate and magnesium, which help produce mood-boosting neurotransmitters like serotonin.

**Berries:** Blueberries and strawberries contain rich antioxidants that protect brain cells from oxidative stress and cognitive decline.



ARE THESE FOODS ALREADY PART OF YOUR DIET? IF NOT, WHICH ONES ARE BEING ADDED TO YOUR SHOPPING CART AS YOU READ YOUR KHANATURAL MAGAZINE?





# WHAT KIND OF A PERSON AM I? HOW FEAR AND REJECTION CAN UNDERPIN OCD

BY KELVIN (SHIU FUNG) WONG & ISABELLA GOMEZ

When you think about obsessive-compulsive disorder, or OCD, does being a “neat freak” or “germaphobe” come to mind?

In fact, OCD is not a personality quirk. It’s a distressing and disabling psychiatric condition that affects around one in 50 of us.

But up to half of those with OCD who receive the best psychological treatments don’t significantly benefit from them. This is likely because our understanding of OCD is incomplete.

It’s unclear what causes the disorder, and is likely a combination of genes, biology, and environment, including traumatic or stressful experiences.

In a recent study, we interviewed 16 adults with OCD. Our findings point to the role early experiences of rejection and trauma can play, for some people, in developing the disorder.

## What is OCD, really?

OCD is characterised by obsessions, compulsions, or both.

Obsessions are recurring, unwanted and intrusive thoughts, images or urges.

They commonly centre on contamination, harm, symmetry, or repugnant themes such as unwanted sexual or violent thoughts.



Compulsions are repetitive behaviours (such as checking and re-checking the car is locked, or arranging objects so they're "just right") or mental acts (such as repeating certain numbers in your head). People perform these to directly address the feared consequences of the obsession and to ease distress.

For example, someone with OCD might believe someone they love will die or be injured if they don't pray in a certain way or if they step on footpath cracks.

The disorder typically begins around age 20 and, without treatment, tends to be lifelong.

### What's behind intrusive thoughts?

Psychological theories have traditionally suggested that everyone has random, intrusive thoughts. What makes them obsessions is their frequency, the distress they cause, and how much they interfere in daily life.

But a more recent theory suggests intrusive thoughts and obsessions in OCD are not always random. For some people, they stem from core beliefs about who they are or dread becoming – their "feared self". If someone believes, "I am a dangerous person" or "I might be immoral," for example, intrusive violent thoughts can feel like evidence of this feared self.

Compulsions can become desperate attempts to disprove it, by controlling the thoughts. The feared self model is not the only account for what causes and maintains OCD symptoms.

But there is evidence to suggest people who view themselves in this way are more likely to experience OCD symptoms.

### What we did

We wanted to explore the feared self theory in people with OCD.

We interviewed 16 Australian adults, mostly women, with a current, formally confirmed diagnosis of OCD. They had a range of symptoms (moderate to extreme) and the full spectrum of obsessions (contamination, harm, symmetry and repugnant thoughts).

We asked them about their sense of self and the life experiences they felt had shaped it. Two major themes emerged.







## 1. Most had experienced childhood trauma

These experiences often happened within the family, and included sexual, physical or emotional abuse, harassment or bullying, and parental neglect.

Many feared they could become a bad person – capable of the very harm done to them. One man described how, after his parents' divorce, his father: became very verbally abusive towards me [...] just became a really angry person [...] I'm just so scared that [...] I'll do something like my dad.

Another participant, whose father was "quite violent and an alcoholic", told us: I'd never wanted to drink on my own because I worry that I'd just become dependent.

Harassment and bullying planted similar seeds of doubt. As one participant put it: I guess it makes you question, what you're capable of, what you're not capable of. Parental neglect also fed the fear of being negligent or irresponsible.

One participant remembered checking the house as a child because their parents wouldn't: I would sort of go downstairs to make sure that everything had been locked, like the stove was off [...] I'd do that so I could feel more safe.

For many participants, taking on responsibilities well beyond their years in childhood became the template for their obsessions and compulsions as adults.

## 2. Rejection can be formative

The second theme was rejection – feeling dismissed, betrayed, or not good enough. This could mean a sense of failing to live up to parental expectations – for example, about getting high marks at school – no matter what they did. Emotional coldness from parents also played a role.

One participant described a mother who was very up and down [...] you never knew when she was going to be nice to you [...] she would say things that indicated that I was a bad person [...] bring up tiny mistakes.

Early experiences of rejection could lead to an unstable and vulnerable sense of self, becoming the fertile ground for a feared self to take root.







### What this means

Our findings strengthen the theory that, for some people, OCD is rooted in a “feared self” developed through experiences of trauma and rejection.

Understanding this may lead to better OCD treatments that target deeply held beliefs. For example, [imagery rescripting](#) is an established technique used to help people revisit and “rewrite” the meaning attached to negative memories, which could be effective for challenging “feared self” beliefs in OCD.

More broadly, a trauma-informed approach may help clinicians and clients understand that terrifying “what if I’m dangerous?” thoughts often say more about a person’s past wounds than their present character.

And if these experiences are risk factors, identifying them early could inform prevention.

### the takeaway

This was a small, in-depth study – rich in detail, but not designed to generalise. It relied on people recalling childhood experiences, which can come with memory bias. As such, we can’t yet say these experiences cause OCD. And not all OCD has its roots in trauma.

Future research should test these links in larger, more diverse samples, and examine whether treatments that directly target these formative experiences reduce OCD symptoms

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- [Kelvin \(Shiu Fung\) Wong](#) is a Senior Lecturer in Clinical Psychology, Swinburne University of Technology
- [Isabella Gomez](#) is a PhD Candidate of Health Sciences, Swinburne University of Technology



# WEDDING SEASON SHOULDN'T LEAVE YOU BROKE



Being there for the people you love can get expensive. As wedding season begins, it may be time to rethink what being a “good guest” actually requires.

BY KHANATURAL TEAM





There is a particular kind of excitement that comes with receiving a wedding invitation. Someone you love has found their person.

There will be music, good food, photographs, speeches that make everyone cry and a dance floor that becomes increasingly questionable as the night goes on. You want to be there. Then you start doing the maths.

There is the outfit. The gift. Your hair and makeup. Transport. Accommodation. Perhaps a flight if the wedding is in another city. Then there are the celebrations around the wedding: the bridal shower, the bachelor or bachelorette weekend, welcome drinks and brunch the following morning. One invitation can quietly become several expenses.

We often talk about the cost of getting married, but there is another side to wedding season: the cost of being a guest.

For many people, that cost can create a difficult tension. You want to celebrate your friend, sibling, cousin or colleague wholeheartedly, while also trying to be responsible with your own money. Both matter.

So, here's how to survive wedding season without needing a hefty loan (or credit card debt!)





## Re-Style Your Existing Clothes

There is also something wonderfully freeing about wearing what you already own.

The dress you wore to your cousin's wedding two years ago may still be beautiful. The suit in the back of your wardrobe may only need a different shirt. A pair of earrings, a new hairstyle or a borrowed accessory can completely change an outfit.

We sometimes forget that clothes are meant to be lived in.

Your friends are unlikely to remember whether you wore something new. They are much more likely to remember that you were there, laughing with them, dancing with them and helping them celebrate.



## Gift Smartly

There is a quiet pressure around wedding gifts that can make people spend beyond their means. Don't.

Give thoughtfully. Give within your budget. If you are attending several weddings in one year, decide what you can comfortably allocate across all of them rather than making every invitation a financial emergency.

Your friendship is not measured by the price of the gift.

## Choose which moments to attend

If the destination bachelorette weekend is outside your budget, perhaps you join the bridal shower instead.

If you cannot manage the welcome dinner after travelling, you can arrive for the wedding rested and ready to celebrate.

There are many ways to show someone you care.

Sometimes that looks like being physically present. Sometimes it looks like sending a thoughtful message, making a phone call or finding another way to mark the occasion.

A healthy friendship has room for honesty.



## Be Responsible

Ultimately, being a wedding guest is an act of generosity. You are giving your time, your presence, your energy and often a considerable amount of money to be part of someone's milestone.

That generosity should have boundaries.

Because there is another kind of love worth practising during wedding season: the kind that remembers you have a life, responsibilities and a future to look after too.





# PLACES TO GO WHEN YOU NEED TO SWITCH OFF

KHANATURAL TRAVEL WRITER





# AFRICAN ESCAPES FOR WHEN YOUR MIND, BODY AND SPIRIT NEED SOME QUIET

You wake up at 4am, but there is no alarm. No email has landed. No meeting is waiting for you. Nothing needs your attention. It is simply quiet.

The kind of quiet that makes you lie still for a moment because you can hear things you usually miss. The wind moving through the trees. A bird calling somewhere in the distance. The rustle of something moving beyond your window. Perhaps even your own breathing. For a moment, there is nowhere else to be.

There is something sacred about that kind of stillness. Away from the rush, you begin to notice the details: the way morning light falls across the landscape, the shape of a leaf, the sound of water moving over rocks.

You see the artistry in creation and remember that God made the world with intention. As the Book of Genesis 1:31 puts it, it was good.

Our lives rarely leave much room for this kind of noticing. We move from one notification to the next, one deadline to another, filling every quiet space because we have become so accustomed to noise. Perhaps we need more stillness.

More mornings without an agenda. More walks without our phones. More time watching the sun rise without immediately reaching for a camera. More opportunities to let the mind settle, the body breathe and the spirit become attentive again.

Across South Africa and the continent, there are places that make this easier. Places where the landscape sets the pace and where a day can be shaped by birdsong, water, wildlife, good food and the changing light.

Here are five places to go when you need to switch off and remember what it feels like to simply be.



# MALELANE, SOUTH AFRICA

There is something about being in the bush before sunrise. In Malelane, the small satellite camp sits on the southern boundary of Kruger National Park, beside the Crocodile River. With fewer guests than the park's larger camps, it offers a quieter bush experience.

This is where the 4am wake-up starts to make sense. Head out for an early morning drive or walk and watch the landscape slowly reveal itself. The bush is already awake. You simply have to be quiet enough to notice.

**Go for:** early mornings, wildlife, open skies and the rare luxury of having nowhere urgent to be.

# KOSI BAY, SOUTH AFRICA

At the northern tip of iSimangaliso Wetland Park, four interconnected lakes and waterways flow towards the Indian Ocean. Kosi Bay is also home to centuries-old Thonga fishing traditions, including the intricate fish traps that continue to be used today.

You can explore the waterways by canoe, snorkel, take a guided walk or learn about the traditional fish traps. During turtle season, guided night walks offer another way to experience the coastline.

There is something restorative about being somewhere that asks you to pay attention. To the water. To the birds. To the people who have understood this landscape for generations.

**Go for:** kayaking, coastal walks, wildlife, water and a deeper connection to place.



# LIKOMA ISLAND, MALAWAI

A few kilometres from Mozambique, Likoma Island sits in the northern part of Lake Malawi.

The island is small, with sandy paths, mango trees, baobabs and villages, and life moves at an unhurried pace.

The lake becomes your horizon. You can snorkel, kayak, walk through the villages, visit St Peter's Cathedral or take a boat across to Chizumulu Island. Or you can simply swim, read and watch the light change over the water.

This is the kind of place that reminds you a day does not need to be packed to be worthwhile.

**Go for:** lake views, swimming, village walks, water sports and beautifully slow days.

# KASANE, BOTSWANA

Wake early in Kasane and the day already feels different. The air is cool, the bush is beginning to stir and the Chobe River moves quietly alongside the landscape.

Kasane is the gateway to Chobe National Park, known for its remarkable wildlife and large elephant population.

Spend the morning on a game drive, then take to the river in the afternoon. From the water, you can watch elephants gathering along the banks, listen to birds calling from the trees and follow the changing light as the day begins to soften.

**Go for:** elephants, river safaris, early mornings, extraordinary sunsets and the luxury of slowing down.



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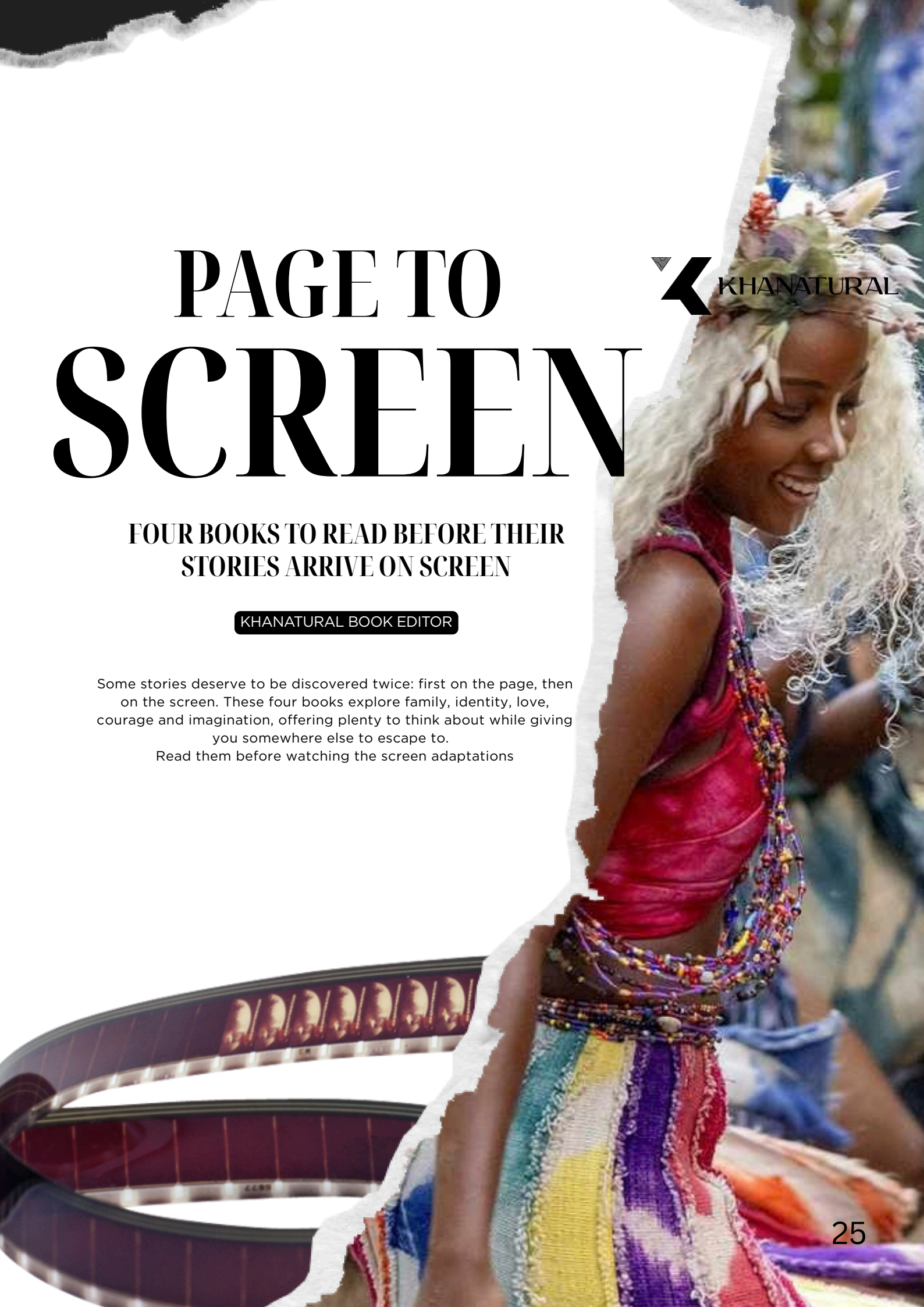
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**FOUR BOOKS TO READ BEFORE THEIR  
STORIES ARRIVE ON SCREEN**

**KHANATURAL BOOK EDITOR**

Some stories deserve to be discovered twice: first on the page, then on the screen. These four books explore family, identity, love, courage and imagination, offering plenty to think about while giving you somewhere else to escape to.

Read them before watching the screen adaptations







## EAST OF EDEN BY JOHN STEINBECK

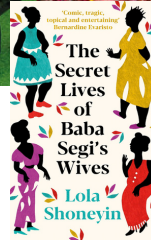
**First published:** 1952

**Screen adaptation:** Netflix series, 1 October 2026

**Starring:** Florence Pugh, Christopher Abbott, Mike Faist, Hoon Lee, Ciarán Hinds and Martha Plimpton

*East of Eden* follows two families across generations, exploring love, rivalry, morality and the ways we inherit parts of the people who came before us. Inspired partly by Steinbeck's own family history and the story of Cain and Abel, the novel asks how much of our lives is shaped by inheritance and how much we can choose for ourselves.

**Read it for:** family, identity, complicated relationships and emotional depth.



## THE SECRET LIVES OF BABA SEGI'S WIVES BY LOLA SHONEYIN

**First published:** 2010

**Screen adaptation:** Film, 4 December 2026

**Starring:** Odunlade Adekola, Omowunmi Dada, Iyabo Ojo, Mercy Aigbe and Bimbo Ademoye

*The Secret Lives of Baba Segi's Wives* takes us into the complicated household of Baba Segi, where four wives navigate marriage, jealousy, fertility and family expectations. When Bolanle, his youngest wife, joins the family, long-held secrets begin to surface. Shoneyin's debut novel combines humour, drama and sharp observations about womanhood, power and belonging.

**Read it for:** African literature, family, womanhood and secrets.



## CHILDREN OF BLOOD AND BONE BY TOMI ADEYEMI

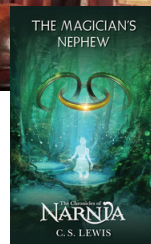
**First published:** 2018

**Screen adaptation:** Film, 15 January 2027

**Starring:** Thuso Mbedu, Damson Idris, Amandla Stenberg, Tosin Cole, Cynthia Erivo, Regina King, Idris Elba and Viola Davis

In *Children of Blood and Bone*, Zélie Adebola lives in a world where magic has been violently taken from her people. When she gets the chance to bring it back, she embarks on a dangerous journey that tests her courage, identity and understanding of power.

**Read it for:** African-inspired fantasy, courage, identity and power.



## THE MAGICIAN'S NEPHEW BY C. S. LEWIS

**First published:** 1955

**Screen adaptation:** Film, 12 February 2027

**Starring:** Emma Mackey, Carey Mulligan, Daniel Craig, Meryl Streep, Kobna Holdbrook-Smith, David McKenna and Beatrice Campbell

Before there was the *Lion*, *The Witch & the Wardrobe*, there was *The Magician's Nephew*. C. S. Lewis's story follows Digory and Polly as their curiosity takes them beyond their own world and into the creation of Narnia.

**Read it for:** wonder, imagination, friendship, escapism and nostalgia.





*trending*

YOUNG TALENTED WITH VALUES

ONE TO WATCH  
BO MOLEFE



"Art is more than performance—it is a way of connecting with people, exploring identity and creating moments that allow others to feel something."

## Bo Molefe

Bo Molefe is a South African multidisciplinary performing artist whose work spans acting, singing, dance, choreography and acrobatics.

A graduate of StageWorx School of Performing Arts, Bo has established himself as a dynamic presence within South Africa's performing arts landscape, bringing an instinctive blend of theatricality, movement, musicality and individuality to every space he enters.

His theatre credits include productions such as *Pretty Woman: The Musical*, *Semi-Soet Die Musiekblyspel*, *Peter Pan*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *Pinocchio*, as well as the *Michael Jackson Tribute Show*.

Beyond performing, Bo has worked extensively as a choreographer and creative collaborator across theatre, corporate entertainment, commercial productions and live events.

Here he shares, in his own words, about his journey in the entertainment industry.

## BO ON TALENT

I don't know if there was ever one specific moment where I thought, "Oh, I'm talented." I think I've always known that I have an ability to perform, but recognising that and actually believing in it are two very different things. I was always the kid who wanted to perform, create, imitate, dance, sing. Pretty much anything that allowed me to express something.

But the more I trained and worked, the more I realised that talent isn't really the thing that carries you. It's the willingness to keep learning, to be uncomfortable, to be corrected and to come back the next day and try again.

I think I've become much more confident in my abilities with age, but I'm still very much a student of my craft. I can watch somebody dance and immediately think, "Oh my God, I want to learn how they do that." So I suppose I know I'm good at what I do, but I don't want to become so convinced of that that I stop being curious.

For me, being a beast isn't about thinking you're the best person in the room. It's about being willing to work until you become better than the person you were yesterday.



## INDUSTRY MATTERS

This is probably one of the most important conversations we can have about being a performer. The industry can make you feel like your worth is constantly being measured by whether you got the job, whether somebody called you back, whether you're being seen, whether someone else is doing better than you, or whether you're currently "relevant."

I've had to learn that my career cannot be the only place I get my sense of worth. I try to remind myself that rejection is information, not a definition of me. Sometimes you simply weren't right for something. Sometimes the timing isn't right. Sometimes things happen because of circumstances that have absolutely nothing to do with your ability.

I also think you have to learn when to step away. I love this industry deeply, but I don't need to consume it 24/7. I need silence, I need people who know me outside of what I do, and I need moments where I'm just Bo, not a performer trying to prove something. And I'm learning to actually talk when things aren't okay.

There's so much pressure in our industry to be resilient and "push through," but being strong doesn't mean pretending you're unaffected. For me, protecting my mental health means knowing when to work, when to rest, when to ask for support and when to remind myself that I am a whole person before I am an artist.



# His Genes

Firstly, I would like to thank mommy and daddy for their contribution. But honestly, I think it's a combination. I'm naturally quite lean, but dancing has absolutely shaped the way my body moves and functions.

As performers, we ask our bodies to do some pretty ridiculous things, sometimes eight shows a week, while still needing to look effortless. I don't really train because I'm chasing a particular aesthetic.

I train because my body is my instrument. I need strength, mobility, stamina, coordination and enough awareness of my body to know when I'm pushing it too far. And I think looking after your body is also about what happens offstage like sleep, hydration, eating properly, recovery and actually listening when your body tells you something.

So yes, let's give the genetics their flowers; but dancing, discipline and taking care of myself definitely deserve some credit too.



# Friendships

I absolutely believe genuine friendships exist in this industry, but I also think you have to be discerning. We're all working in an environment where relationships can sometimes become transactional. You meet someone because you need something, or because they can open a door, or because you're both attached to the same production. That doesn't automatically make the relationship fake, but I think there's a difference between knowing someone professionally and actually knowing someone personally.

The people I value most are the ones where the work eventually becomes secondary. People I can laugh with, disagree with, sit in silence with, and still be friends when neither of us has anything to offer the other professionally. I've also learned that not every colleague needs to become a friend, and that's okay.

You can respect somebody, work beautifully with them and still maintain a healthy boundary.

Ultimately, I want to build relationships that survive outside of the room where we met. If the connection disappears the moment the contract ends, then maybe it was a professional connection and there's nothing wrong with that either.







# INVESTING IN THE ARTS

I think we're lacking enough infrastructure around the artist as a whole person. We have incredible talent in South Africa. The problem isn't a lack of artists. It's that talent doesn't always have the systems, resources, education or opportunities necessary to sustain a career.

I'd love to see more investment in artist development, particularly for young performers. Not just training in singing, dancing or acting, but education around contracts, finances, mental health, intellectual property, branding, entrepreneurship and what it actually means to build a sustainable career.

I'd also love to see more collaboration between different corners of the industry. Theatre, music, film, fashion, dance and digital media don't need to exist in separate boxes.

Most importantly, I'd like us to create an environment where artists don't have to be struggling to be considered authentic. You should be able to make ambitious work, earn a living, take care of yourself and still be deeply passionate about your art.

I don't think the answer is one person coming in and "fixing" the industry. It has to be a collective shift in how we value artists, treat artists and invest in artists.

# HEALTHY CHOICES

When I'm in rehearsal mode, my biggest challenge isn't necessarily knowing what to eat, it's remembering to eat before I've become so hungry that I'll eat absolutely anything within a five-metre radius.

I try to keep things relatively simple: protein, carbohydrates, fruit and vegetables, plenty of water, and enough food to actually fuel what I'm asking my body to do.

When you're dancing, singing and running around for hours, surviving on coffee and vibes is not a sustainable meal plan. I'm definitely not someone who believes in being extremely restrictive with food. I love food!

I think wellness should be about nourishing yourself rather than punishing yourself. When I have time, I enjoy cooking, but during intense rehearsal periods convenience becomes important. I'll absolutely buy something if it means I'm going to eat a proper meal rather than skip one.

And my biggest wellness rule is probably the least glamorous one: listen to your body. If you're exhausted, eat. If you're thirsty, drink water. If you're sore, recover.

Your body is literally the thing carrying your career.

# THE FUTURE

Right now I'm moving between a few different worlds, which is honestly where I love being. I'm currently involved in this year's Panto which is *Alice In Wonderland*, so the next few months are going to be very much filled with theatre, movement, music and a little bit of controlled chaos.

Beyond performing, I'm exploring my own music more intentionally. I don't want to be limited to one medium. I love acting, I love dancing, I love singing, I love creating movement and I'm interested in seeing what happens when all of those things start informing each other.

So you'll probably catch me somewhere on a stage, somewhere in a rehearsal studio, somewhere making something, or occasionally wondering why I agreed to do all of it at the same time lol.

But that's the exciting part for me cause there's still so much of Bo that hasn't been seen yet.





MAN TO SELF



# A WOMAN'S NO IS NOT AN ATTACK ON YOUR MANHOOD

Mokwadi wa Mompedi writes on rejection, male entitlement,  
and the courage to respect a woman's choice



There is something deeply troubling about a world in which a woman can reject a man and still have to wonder whether she will make it home safely.

A woman says no, and suddenly her decision becomes an insult. Her boundaries become disrespect. Her independence becomes arrogance. Her refusal becomes a challenge to a man's authority, as though her right to choose is somehow a declaration of war against his existence.

We have seen the headlines. We have heard the stories. Women threatened for refusing advances. Women attacked for ending relationships. Women killed by men who could not accept that love, attention, affection, or access to another human being is never something they are owed.

As men, we need to ask ourselves an uncomfortable question: What does it say about a man's understanding of his own worth when a woman's refusal feels like a threat to his identity?

## When Rejection Becomes an Injury to the Ego

Rejection is painful; there is no need to pretend otherwise. Being turned down by someone you desire can bruise your confidence. Being left by someone you love can leave you questioning your worth. Even a simple refusal can awaken insecurities we thought we had buried.

But pain is not permission. A bruised ego does not justify a threatening message. Heartbreak does not justify intimidation. Embarrassment does not justify humiliation, stalking, coercion, or violence.

Somewhere along the way, too many boys are taught that masculinity is measured by how many women they can attract, how much control they can maintain, and how little rejection they can tolerate. We celebrate the man who "gets the girl" but rarely teach the boy how to accept that she may not want him.

We teach boys to pursue, but not always to respect a boundary.

We teach them to be persistent, but sometimes fail to explain when persistence becomes harassment. We tell them to be strong, but leave them without the emotional tools to handle disappointment.

And then we act surprised when a grown man mistakes a woman's autonomy for disrespect.

The problem is not that men experience rejection. The problem is when a man believes his pain gives him authority over the person who rejected him.

## A Woman Is Not Responsible for Protecting Your Ego

A woman does not owe you a softer rejection because you are struggling to accept it.

She does not owe you a second chance because you bought her dinner. She does not owe you a relationship because you have been friends for years. She does not owe you affection because you believe you are a good man.

And she certainly does not owe you access to her body, her time, or her life simply because you desire it.

A woman should be able to say, "I'm not interested," without having to calculate whether those words might place her in danger.

She should not have to invent a boyfriend to make her refusal seem legitimate. She should not have to apologise repeatedly for a decision she has every right to make. She should not have to smile through discomfort, entertain unwanted attention, or carefully manage a man's emotions just to get home safely.

Her no is enough. It does not need to be justified by another man's presence. It does not need to be softened by a fabricated excuse. It does not need to be negotiated until the man feels satisfied.

Consent is not a reward for persistence, and rejection is not an invitation to negotiate.





## The Dangerous Myth of the Disrespected Man

One of the most concerning ways we excuse male aggression is by describing a man as having been “disrespected.”

A woman rejects him, and we ask what she said. She leaves him, and we wonder whether she embarrassed him. She establishes a boundary, and we debate whether she could have handled it better.

Of course, people can be unkind to one another. Men can experience cruelty, humiliation, manipulation, and emotional abuse. Those experiences deserve to be taken seriously.

But there is a difference between being hurt and being entitled to retaliate.

A woman’s decision to reject a man is not automatically disrespect. Ending a relationship is not an act of violence against him. Refusing intimacy is not an attempt to emasculate him.

We must be careful not to turn a man’s interpretation of an event into a justification for what he chooses to do next.

Because when we describe violence as the understandable consequence of a woman’s rejection, we quietly move responsibility away from the person who chose to threaten or harm her.

No matter how painful the rejection, the responsibility for violence belongs to the person who commits it.

### What Are We Teaching Our Boys?

This conversation cannot begin only when a man has already threatened a woman. By then, the damage may already be unfolding.

It must begin much earlier—in our homes, our schools, our friendships, our churches, our social circles, and the everyday conversations through which boys learn what it means to be men.

We need to teach boys that confidence is not the ability to command a woman’s attention. It is the ability to remain secure when that attention is not given.

We need to teach them that emotional strength includes tolerating disappointment without turning it into somebody else’s suffering.

We need to challenge the jokes that portray women as property, the conversations that celebrate coercive persistence, and the language that frames a woman’s independence as an insult to men.



And we need to stop congratulating men for accepting boundaries as though basic respect is an extraordinary achievement. Respecting a woman’s no is not weakness. It is not surrender. It is not a loss of masculinity. It is the minimum standard of being a decent human being.

### The Responsibility of Men Who Would Never Raise a Hand

Many men reading this may say, “I would never hurt a woman.” I hope that is true. But perhaps the question cannot end there.

What do we do when a friend refuses to accept a woman’s rejection? What do we say when a man boasts about threatening an ex-partner? Do we challenge him, or do we laugh it off as typical male behaviour?

When a woman tells us she is afraid of someone we know, do we listen, or do we immediately defend him because he has always been a good friend to us?

When men speak about women as though they are possessions to be won, controlled, or punished, do we remain silent because confronting them might make the room uncomfortable?



Not every man is violent. Not every man is abusive. But the absence of personal violence is not the only measure of our responsibility.

We can refuse to normalise the attitudes that make violence easier to excuse. We can support women when they speak about their experiences. We can take threats seriously. We can challenge the men in our lives without waiting for a tragedy to make the conversation urgent.

And when a woman tells us that a man's behaviour frightens her, we can begin by listening rather than demanding that she prove her fear to us.

We do not have to be perpetrators to have a role in changing the culture that excuses them.

## A Different Kind of Manhood

Perhaps one of the most important lessons a man can learn is that he is allowed to be disappointed without becoming dangerous.

He can desire a woman without believing he is entitled to her. He can love her and still accept that she may not choose him. He can be rejected without turning rejection into revenge.

His worth is not diminished by a woman's refusal. His masculinity is not threatened by her independence. His dignity does not require her submission.

There is a kind of strength in walking away from what does not want you. There is maturity in allowing another person to make a choice you do not like. There is dignity in feeling the sting of rejection and refusing to pass that pain on to someone else.

We need more men who understand that self-control is not about controlling women. It is about taking responsibility for ourselves.

Because the measure of a man is not how a woman behaves when she wants him.

It is also how he behaves when she does not.



## Let Her Say No!

A woman's no is not an attack on your manhood.

It is not a declaration that you are worthless. It is not a challenge that must be defeated. It is not an invitation to prove how persistent, powerful, or intimidating you can be.

It is a boundary. And a boundary does not need your approval to deserve respect.

At a time when women continue to live with the fear of harassment, coercion, and gender-based violence, men must do more than insist that we are not all the same.

We must demonstrate, in our words and actions, that a woman's freedom is not conditional on a man's approval.

Let her reject you.  
Let her leave.  
Let her choose differently.

And let us raise a generation of men who understand that a woman's freedom to say no is not a threat to their manhood—but a test of whether they have learned what manhood truly means.

Mokwadi is a writer, business strategist, and lawyer by training. He is passionate about the intersection of African identity, wellness, and digital storytelling. When he's not helping creatives build impactful brands, he's writing stories that challenge the status quo and inspire new ways of thinking.







EDITOR IN CHIEF - K. Q.

CONTENT RESEARCH -  
KHANATURAL TEAM

WELLNESS FEATURE -  
KHABONINA Q.

MEN TO SELF FEATURE -  
MOKWADI WA MOMPEDI

ART DIRECTION - K.Q &  
B.M

MODELS & FEATURED  
ARTISTS: LEBO MOJAKI  
AND DEANY MOJAKI

PICTURE CREDITS :  
IMAGES SUPPLIED BY  
DEANY MOJAKI

COVER PAGE AND MAIN  
FEATURE : DEANY AND  
LEBO MOJAKI

ONE TO WATCH  
FEATURE : BO MOLEFE

MAGAZINE CO-EDITOR:  
K.Q & B.M

WEB EDITOR - MELUSI  
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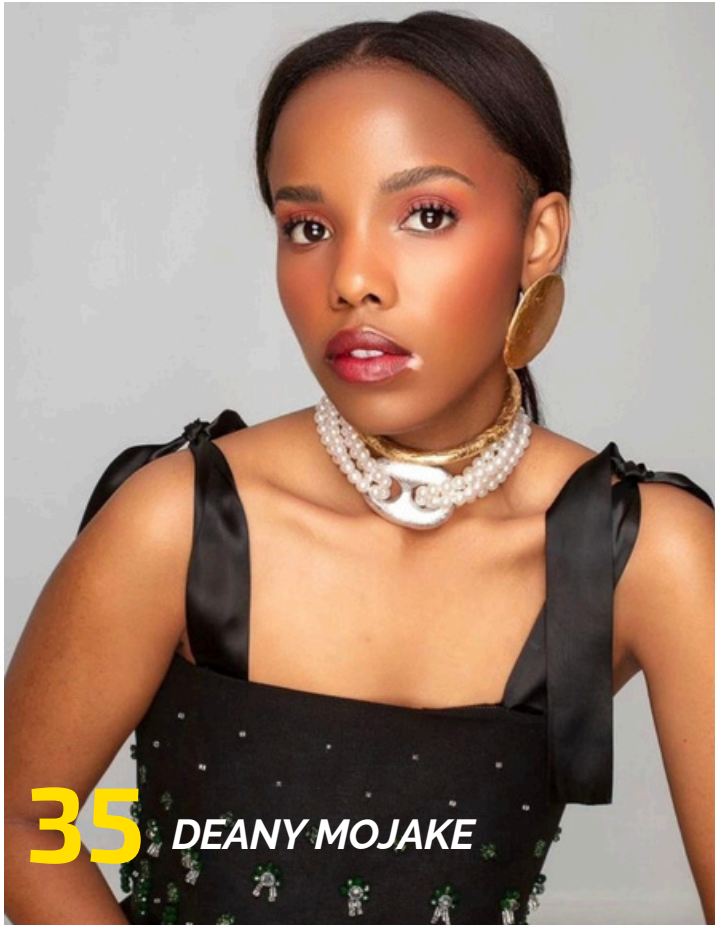
EST. 2010

# ELIZABETH MORR

The legacy issue



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**"CHRISTIANITY IS AT  
THE CENTER OF OUR  
LIVES" - LEBO MOJAKE**

**18** RUN WITH PURPOSE

**27** 1000 MILES



SALES@KHANATURAL.COM



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# Editor's Note

KHANATURAL MAGAZINE



## In this issue

October is a month that invites us to pause, reflect and pay closer attention to our mental and emotional well-being. As we observe Mental Health Awareness Month, we are reminded of the importance of creating spaces where mental health can be discussed openly, with compassion, understanding and without stigma.

At KHA'Natural, we believe that wellness is a journey that embraces the mind, body and soul. Through the stories we share, we hope to encourage meaningful conversations, challenge misconceptions surrounding mental illness and inspire our readers to explore healthy, holistic approaches to well-being. As we mark World Mental Health Day on 10 October, may we continue to remind one another that mental health matters, that seeking support is a sign of strength, and that no one should have to navigate their journey alone.

Our magazine continues to reach new audiences, and for that, we are deeply grateful. Thank you for your continued love, support and for welcoming KHA'Natural into your lives. Every page we create is a celebration of you, our readers, and the beautiful community we continue to build together.

This October issue promises to take you on an emotional rollercoaster, filled with stories that will make you think, feel, reflect, laugh and perhaps even shed a tear. We hope you find inspiration, comfort and something meaningful to carry with you long after turning the final page.

May this month bring you peace, renewed strength and beautiful moments of connection.

Have a blessed October, and happy reading!

This October, Khanatural Magazine brings you stories of creativity, culture, wellness and inspiration. Mother-daughter duo Lebo Mojake and Deany Mojake take us behind the scenes of their legendary brand, Elizabeth Morr, sharing the journey behind their remarkable legacy. We explore the connection between food and mental wellness, discovering how what we eat can nourish both the body and the mind, while Bo Molefe reminds us why his talent knows no bounds.

In his thought-provoking column, Mkwadi tackles a powerful and relevant topic: "A Woman's NO Is Not an Attack on Your Manhood." An important conversation that deserves to be read, reflected upon and shared.

And, as always, travel with us through the pages of our editors' book selections, celebrating stories that inspire, enlighten and take us beyond the ordinary.

Welcome to our October issue. There is so much to discover!



# LOVE YOUR SYSTEM



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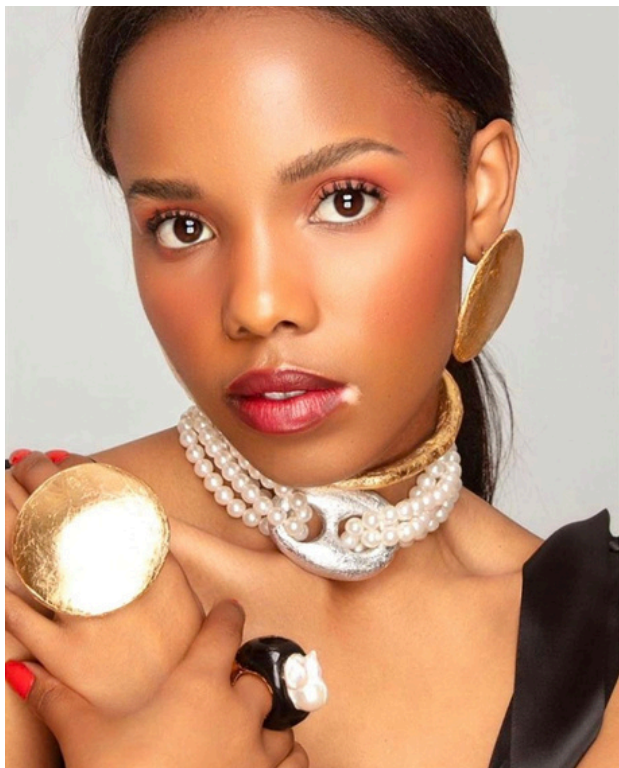




BEYOND THE  
BRAND

ELIZABETH  
MORR





# LIVE YOUR PURPOSE.

I had one of the most satisfying conversations with the beauties behind Elizabeth Morr. We talked legacy, generational wealth and natural succession. I asked the creator Miss Lebo Mojake if she knew how great this brand would become while she was in the building stages, “Oh yes”, she happily responded, “Elizabeth Morr was always meant to be big. I often think of the mustard seed analogy: when you place something so small into the ground, everything it needs to become is already within it. Its nature is to grow.”

That’s how she has always seen Elizabeth Morr. The boldness, the diversity, the scale - they didn’t manufacture those things along the way. They were always in the DNA of the brand. They simply kept nurturing the seed.

“Elizabeth Morr doesn’t know another way but to grow.”





“We are Christians, and Christianity is at the centre of our lives. I got saved in 1999, and Deany was raised in the Christian faith, so prayer has always been a very important part of our home, our lives and even the way we approach our work and our designs.” - Lebo Mojake





I had to bring Deany into the conversation, she's Lebo's daughter, the new CEO of the business. Deany watched it all happen and I'm interested in her point of view. She watched her mom curate Elizabeth Morr while growing up.

"It was actually really fun growing up around Elizabeth Morr. My mom started the brand when I was 16, so I was already very aware of what was happening and able to appreciate the process."

Deany says she has always loved fashion, and both her mom and late father loved fashion too, so being around that world felt very natural and exciting to her. She loved watching how her mom creates, where her inspiration comes from, and how an idea slowly becomes a finished piece.

"I think the biggest thing young people need to understand about the jewellery and accessories space is that it takes a lot of work. You almost need to have two brains – a creative brain and a business brain."

I agree with her completely. Creativity helps you make something beautiful and original, but the business side is what helps you turn that creativity into something sustainable. "Learning how to balance both is what will really help you thrive in this industry." She continued.





# MOJAKES IN BALANCE

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Deany and her mom are not just brilliant creatives, they are continually creating themselves and walking in grace, because how else can you explain how great they look. “We actually love going on walks together. That’s probably our favourite way of staying active, along with trying to maintain a good, balanced diet. It’s also our time to talk, catch up and just enjoy being together.”

When it comes to cooking, Deany says it’s her mom that taught her everything she knows. She also admits that moms is definitely the best cook! However, these days she finds herself cooking more often, and mom Lebo cooks on special occasions – and apparently when she does, you know it’s going to be good. Ok, I am now officially waiting for that dinner invitation. Lol.

“One of my favourite things to make is tomato soup. It’s honestly incredible! And a meal we both absolutely love is oxtail. My mom taught me how to make it, but I have to admit, she still makes the best oxtail ever.”





# A N I C O N

Lebo and I took a moment and we spoke about balance and mental health and I love how she opened up to me about her faith. “We are Christians, and Christianity is at the centre of our lives. I got saved in 1999, and Deany was raised in the Christian faith, so prayer has always been a very important part of our home, our lives and even the way we approach our work and our designs.” This gave me goosebumps because it clarifies so much. They understood the raw material God gave them, they understood the seed and they stewarded it and it produced their fruit. Lebo did not sit waiting for the finished product from God. She did the work. Thank you Queen.

I love literate people and books are such a beautiful social connection point at times. It’s been a great ice breaker for me on many occasions, I was curious about what they love to read. Lebo said: “We both read many different books, but the one book that has remained constant for both of us over the years is the Bible. It is the book we return to for wisdom, comfort, direction and peace.” I love this. I often hear people talking scripture, debating different point of views and celebrating the fact that they love similar verses.

“For us, prayer is not just something we do when life becomes difficult — it is part of how we live. Our faith keeps us grounded, helps us stay mentally and spiritually balanced, and reminds us where our strength comes from.” Lebo has laid a beautiful foundation in Christ for her own family.



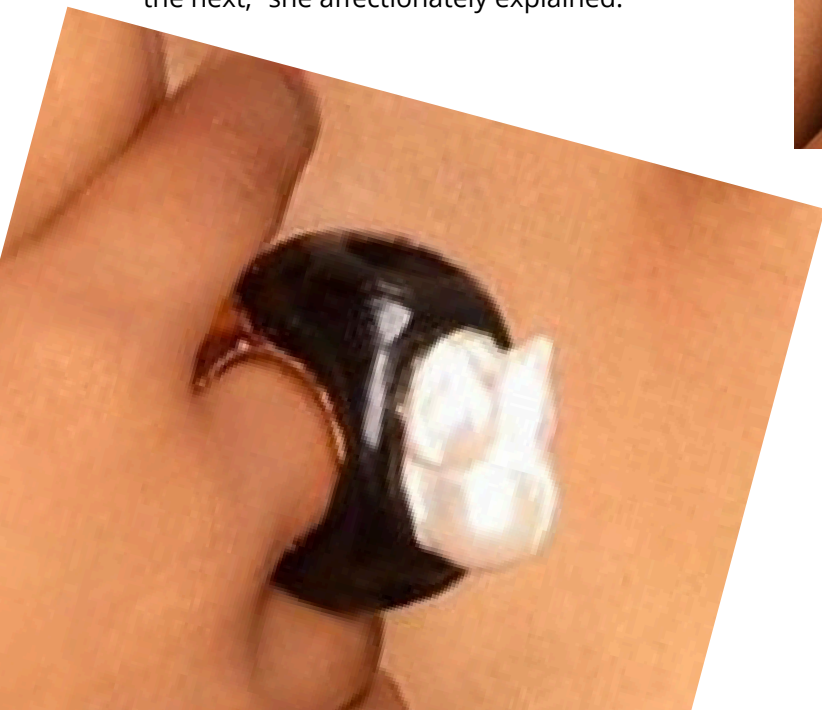
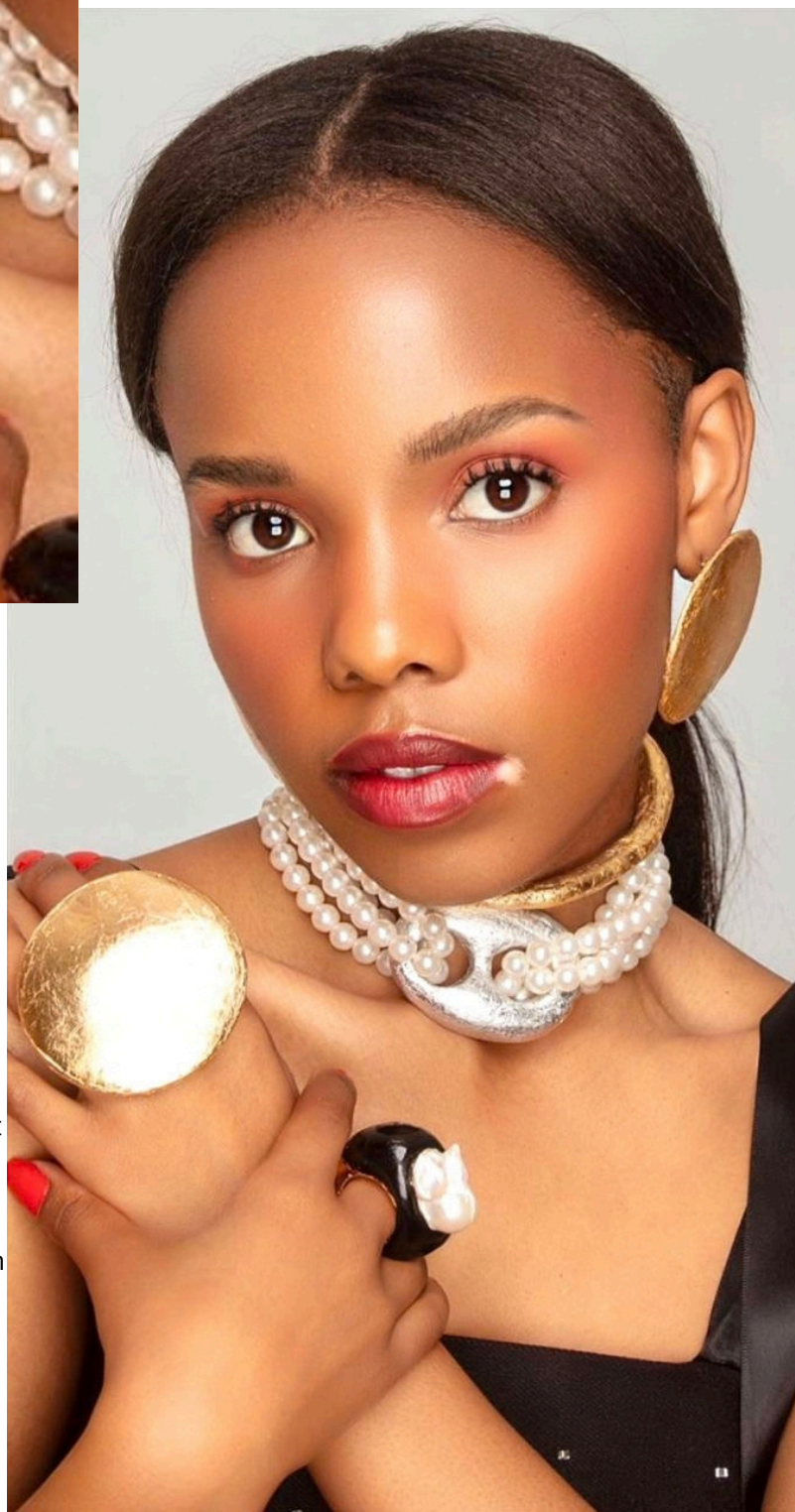


When I was on set, preparing outfits for my character Queen Ntombazi, & for the amazing Nomzamo Mbatha's character Queen Nandi, I would hear the name "Elizabeth Morr". I immediately loved the sound of it. It's elegant, timeless and international. I had to ask, what inspired this great iconic name?

"Elizabeth Morr is inspired by my mother's name. Her names were Elizabeth Maureen, and people affectionately called her "Morr."

So, when she started the brand, it felt natural to name it after her because so much of what she built Elizabeth Morr on, came from the values, principles and morals she taught her.

"The name has always represented much more than jewellery. It represents legacy, family, character and the things that are passed from one generation to the next," she affectionately explained.



# MORR ON SET



# WE WANT MORR

## WHATS NEXT



Now, I excitedly need to know whats next for Elizabeth Morr, Miss Lebo and Deany, please.

"Looking ahead, I'm excited to spend more time developing the couture side of Elizabeth Morr in an even more artistic, bold and expressive direction."

Lebo says she'll also be focusing more of her energy on the Fashion Council and the work she wants to do within the broader fashion industry." I personally cannot wait for this.

This has been such an inspiring conversation. I pray for more powerful legacies like these in our country. This strengthens family values and improves self sustainability. I had to ask, whats next for ELIZABETH MORR? "My mom has now handed me the responsibility of running Elizabeth Morr." Gorgeous Deany responded enthusiastically. She says her goal is to allow more women to experience the brand. She will be focusing strongly on growing the ready-to-wear side while still protecting everything that makes Elizabeth Morr special.

While doing all of this, this young superwoman says she will be growing her career as a content creator. "For me this next chapter is about building both worlds alongside each other."

What excites them is that Elizabeth Morr is now growing in two directions: Miss Lebo taking couture into a more artistic and daring space, and Deany growing the ready-to-wear side into something more women can experience and wear. "We're also exploring other products that could naturally live within both worlds."

I can tell you this much, Elizabeth Morr will live on as that flagship company that inspires across race , gender, sexuality, culture and more ! This is about family. This is love.





#KhanaturalKitchen

# BEST FOOD

*Mental health*

By Dr October Boyles





## HEALTHY FOOD

What you put on your plate doesn't just fuel your body — it directly impacts your brain and emotional well-being. Research consistently shows a strong link between food and mental health, highlighting how certain nutrients can regulate mood, improve concentration, and support resilience against stress. If you've ever wondered which foods are good for mental health or which choices truly qualify as the best foods for mental health, you're not alone. From omega-3-rich fish to antioxidant-packed berries, science points to clear dietary patterns that act as natural foods that improve mood. In this guide, we'll explore ten powerful foods that boost your mood and explain how they can be incorporated into both everyday meals.

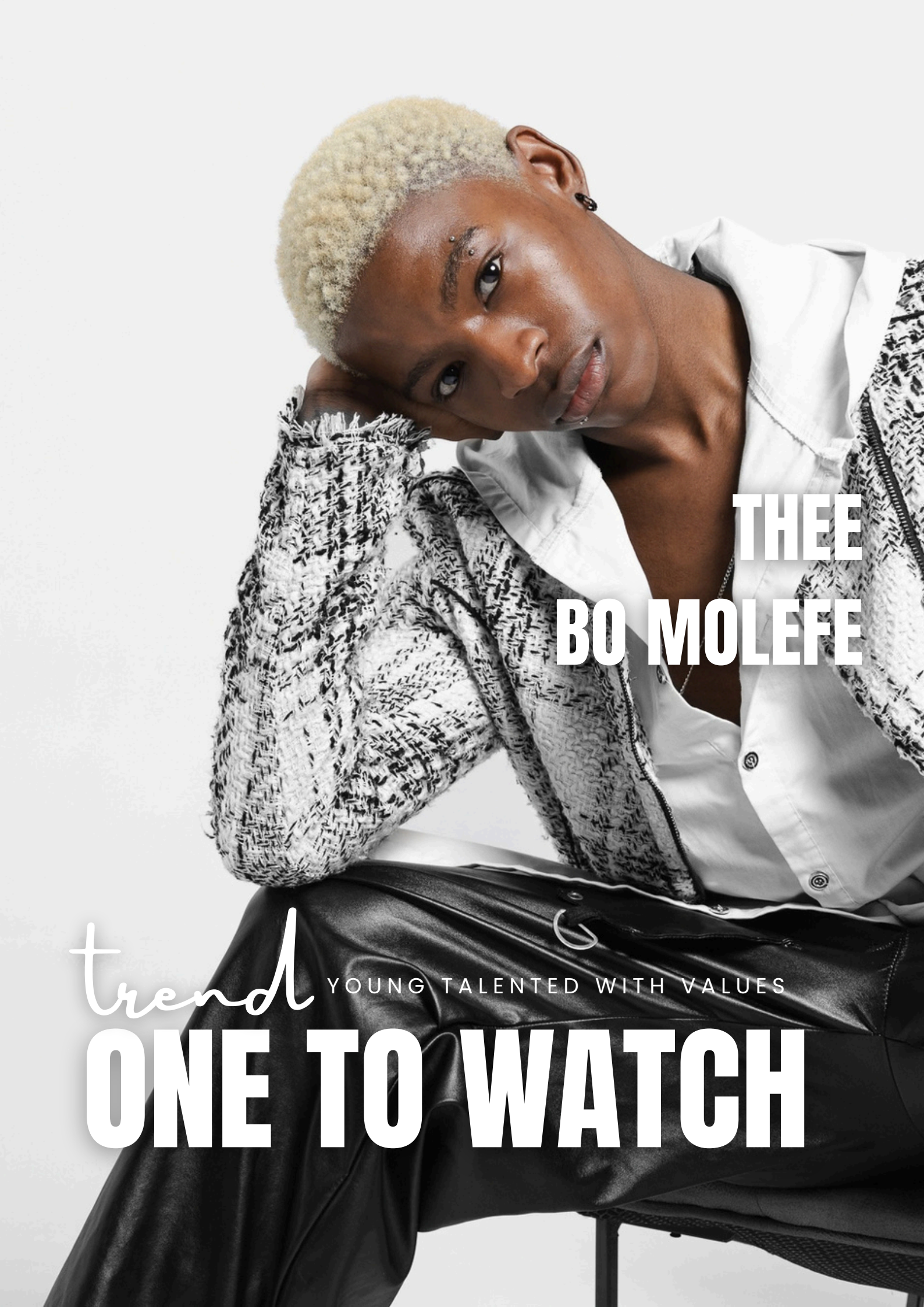
The trend of healthy food is now starting to be very popular with many people, besides now there are many variations of healthy food which of course tastes no less delicious than junk food

## THE LINK BETWEEN FOOD AND MENTAL HEALTH

The connection between diet and mental well-being goes far beyond old sayings like "you are what you eat." Modern studies confirm that specific dietary choices influence neurotransmitter production, brain inflammation, and even the gut-brain axis — all of which play a role in emotional stability and cognitive function. In fact, many clinicians now emphasize that the link between food and mental health is a critical piece of holistic care. Diets rich in whole foods, healthy fats, and probiotics are consistently associated with lower rates of depression and anxiety, while highly processed foods are linked to worsened mood and fatigue. By understanding how foods that improve mood work biologically — from boosting serotonin to reducing oxidative stress — both individuals and mental health professionals can use nutrition as a practical tool for promoting long-term well-being.







THEE  
BO MOLEFE

*trend* YOUNG TALENTED WITH VALUES  
**ONE TO WATCH**



# INTENTION DISCIPLINE AND AN UNAPOLOGETIC LOVE FOR THE ARTS.

"Art is more than performance—it is a way of connecting with people, exploring identity and creating moments that allow others to feel something."- Bo

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I don't know if there was ever one specific moment where I thought, "Oh, I'm talented." I think I've always known that I have an ability to perform, but recognising that and actually believing in it are two very different things. I was always the kid who wanted to perform, create, imitate, dance, sing. Pretty much anything that allowed me to express something. But the more I trained and worked, the more I realised that talent isn't really the thing that carries you. It's the willingness to keep learning, to be uncomfortable, to be corrected and to come back the next day and try again. I think I've become much more confident in my abilities with age, but I'm still very much a student of my craft. I can watch somebody dance and immediately think, "Oh my God, I want to learn how they do that." So I suppose I know I'm good at what I do, but I don't want to become so convinced of that that I stop being curious. For me, being a beast isn't about thinking you're the best person in the room. It's about being willing to work until you become better than the person you were yesterday.



## THE INDUSTRY

This is probably one of the most important conversations we can have about being a performer. The industry can make you feel like your worth is constantly being measured by whether you got the job, whether somebody called you back, whether you're being seen, whether someone else is doing better than you, or whether you're currently "relevant." I've had to learn that my career cannot be the only place I get my sense of worth. I try to remind myself that rejection is information, not a definition of me. Sometimes you simply weren't right for something. Sometimes the timing isn't right. Sometimes things happen because of circumstances that have absolutely nothing to do with your ability. I also think you have to learn when to step away. I love this industry deeply, but I don't need to consume it 24/7. I need silence, I need people who know me outside of what I do, and I need moments where I'm just Bo, not a performer trying to prove something. And I'm learning to actually talk when things aren't okay. There's so much pressure in our industry to be resilient and "push through," but being strong doesn't mean pretending you're unaffected. For me, protecting my mental health means knowing when to work, when to rest, when to ask for support and when to remind myself that I am a whole person before I am an artist.



# HIS GENES

Firstly, I would like to thank mommy and daddy for their contribution lol. But honestly, I think it's a combination. I'm naturally quite lean, but dancing has absolutely shaped the way my body moves and functions. As performers, we ask our bodies to do some pretty ridiculous things, sometimes eight shows a week, while still needing to look effortless. I don't really train because I'm chasing a particular aesthetic. I train because my body is my instrument. I need strength, mobility, stamina, coordination and enough awareness of my body to know when I'm pushing it too far. And I think looking after your body is also about what happens offstage like sleep, hydration, eating properly, recovery and actually listening when your body tells you something. So yes, let's give the genetics their flowers lol. But dancing, discipline and taking care of myself definitely deserve some credit too.



# FRIENDSHIPS

I absolutely believe genuine friendships exist in this industry, but I also think you have to be discerning. We're all working in an environment where relationships can sometimes become transactional. You meet someone because you need something, or because they can open a door, or because you're both attached to the same production. That doesn't automatically make the relationship fake, but I think there's a difference between knowing someone professionally and actually knowing someone personally. For me, the people I value most are the ones where the work eventually becomes secondary. People I can laugh with, disagree with, sit in silence with, and still be friends when neither of us has anything to offer the other professionally. I've also learned that not every colleague needs to become a friend, and that's okay. You can respect somebody, work beautifully with them and still maintain a healthy boundary. Ultimately, I want to build relationships that survive outside of the room where we met. If the connection disappears the moment the contract ends, then maybe it was a professional connection and there's nothing wrong with that either.







## BO BEYOND

Right now I'm moving between a few different worlds, which is honestly where I love being. I'm currently involved in this year's Panto which is Alice In Wonderland, so the next few months are going to be very much filled with theatre, movement, music and a little bit of controlled chaos. Beyond performing, I'm exploring my own music more intentionally. I don't want to be limited to one medium. I love acting, I love dancing, I love singing, I love creating movement and I'm interested in seeing what happens when all of those things start informing each other. So you'll probably catch me somewhere on a stage, somewhere in a rehearsal studio, somewhere making something, or occasionally wondering why I agreed to do all of it at the same time lol. But that's the exciting part for me cause there's still so much of Bo that hasn't been seen yet.

## INVESTING IN ART

I think we're lacking enough infrastructure around the artist as a whole person. We have incredible talent in South Africa. The problem isn't a lack of artists. It's that talent doesn't always have the systems, resources, education or opportunities necessary to sustain a career. I'd love to see more investment in artist development, particularly for young performers. Not just training in singing, dancing or acting, but education around contracts, finances, mental health, intellectual property, branding, entrepreneurship and what it actually means to build a sustainable career. I'd also love to see more collaboration between different corners of the industry. Theatre, music, film, fashion, dance and digital media don't need to exist in separate boxes. And perhaps most importantly, I'd like us to create an environment where artists don't have to be struggling to be considered authentic. You should be able to make ambitious work, earn a living, take care of yourself and still be deeply passionate about your art. I don't think the answer is one person coming in and "fixing" the industry. It has to be a collective shift in how we value artists, treat artists and invest in artists.

## HEALTHY OPTIONS

This question is exposing me lol. When I'm in rehearsal mode, my biggest challenge isn't necessarily knowing what to eat, it's remembering to eat before I've become so hungry that I'll eat absolutely anything within a five-metre radius. I try to keep things relatively simple: protein, carbohydrates, fruit and vegetables, plenty of water, and enough food to actually fuel what I'm asking my body to do. When you're dancing, singing and running around for hours, surviving on coffee and vibes is not a sustainable meal plan. I'm definitely not someone who believes in being extremely restrictive with food. I love food! I think wellness should be about nourishing yourself rather than punishing yourself. When I have time, I enjoy cooking, but during intense rehearsal periods convenience becomes important. I'll absolutely buy something if it means I'm going to eat a proper meal rather than skip one. And my biggest wellness rule is probably the least glamorous one: listen to your body. If you're exhausted, eat. If you're thirsty, drink water. If you're sore, recover. Your body is literally the thing carrying your career.



# A WOMAN'S NO IS NOT AN ATTACK ON YOUR MANHOOD

On rejection, male entitlement, and the courage to respect a woman's choice

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There is something deeply troubling about a world in which a woman can reject a man and still have to wonder whether she will make it home safely.

A woman says no, and suddenly her decision becomes an insult. Her boundaries become disrespect. Her independence becomes arrogance. Her refusal becomes a challenge to a man's authority, as though her right to choose is somehow a declaration of war against his existence.

We have seen the headlines. We have heard the stories. Women threatened for refusing advances. Women attacked for ending relationships. Women killed by men who could not accept that love, attention, affection, or access to another human being is never something they are owed.

And as men, we need to ask ourselves an uncomfortable question: What does it say about a man's understanding of his own worth when a woman's refusal feels like a threat to his identity?

When Rejection Becomes an Injury to the Ego

Rejection is painful. There is no need to pretend otherwise.

Being turned down by someone you desire can bruise your confidence. Being left by someone you love can leave you questioning your worth. Even a simple refusal can awaken insecurities we thought we had buried.



But pain is not permission.

A bruised ego does not justify a threatening message. Heartbreak does not justify intimidation. Embarrassment does not justify humiliation, stalking, coercion, or violence.

Somewhere along the way, too many boys are taught that masculinity is measured by how many women they can attract, how much control they can maintain, and how little rejection they can tolerate. We celebrate the man who “gets the girl” but rarely teach the boy how to accept that she may not want him.

We teach boys to pursue, but not always to respect a boundary. We teach them to be persistent, but sometimes fail to explain when persistence becomes harassment. We tell them to be strong, but leave them without the emotional tools to handle disappointment.

And then we act surprised when a grown man mistakes a woman's autonomy for disrespect.

The problem is not that men experience rejection. The problem is when a man believes his pain gives him authority over the person who rejected him.



# A WOMAN'S NO IS NOT AN ATTACK ON YOUR MANHOOD

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## Woman Is Not Responsible for Protecting Your Ego

A woman does not owe you a softer rejection because you are struggling to accept it.

She does not owe you a second chance because you bought her dinner. She does not owe you a relationship because you have been friends for years. She does not owe you affection because you believe you are a good man.

And she certainly does not owe you access to her body, her time, or her life simply because you desire it.

A woman should be able to say, “I’m not interested,” without having to calculate whether those words might place her in danger.

She should not have to invent a boyfriend to make her refusal seem legitimate. She should not have to apologise repeatedly for a decision she has every right to make. She should not have to smile through discomfort, entertain unwanted attention, or carefully manage a man’s emotions just to get home safely.

Her no is enough.

It does not need to be justified by another man’s presence. It does not need to be softened by a fabricated excuse. It does not need to be negotiated until the man feels satisfied.

Consent is not a reward for persistence, and rejection is not an invitation to negotiate.

## The Dangerous Myth of the Disrespected Man

One of the most concerning ways we excuse male aggression is by describing a man as having been “disrespected.”

A woman rejects him, and we ask what she said. She leaves him, and we wonder whether she embarrassed him. She establishes a boundary, and we debate whether she could have handled it better.

Of course, people can be unkind to one another. Men can experience cruelty, humiliation, manipulation, and emotional abuse. Those experiences deserve to be taken seriously.

But there is a difference between being hurt and being entitled to retaliate.

A woman’s decision to reject a man is not automatically disrespect. Ending a relationship is not an act of violence against him. Refusing intimacy is not an attempt to emasculate him.



# A WOMAN'S NO IS NOT AN ATTACK ON YOUR MANHOOD.

We must be careful not to turn a man's interpretation of an event into a justification for what he chooses to do next.

Because when we describe violence as the understandable consequence of a woman's rejection, we quietly move responsibility away from the person who chose to threaten or harm her.

No matter how painful the rejection, the responsibility for violence belongs to the person who commits it.

## What Are We Teaching Our Boys?

This conversation cannot begin only when a man has already threatened a woman. By then, the damage may already be unfolding.

It must begin much earlier—in our homes, our schools, our friendships, our churches, our social circles, and the everyday conversations through which boys learn what it means to be men.

We need to teach boys that confidence is not the ability to command a woman's attention. It is the ability to remain secure when that attention is not given.

We need to teach them that emotional strength includes tolerating disappointment without turning it into somebody else's suffering.

We need to challenge the jokes that portray women as property, the conversations that celebrate coercive persistence, and the language that frames a woman's independence as an insult to men.

And we need to stop congratulating men for accepting boundaries as though basic respect is an extraordinary achievement.

Respecting a woman's no is not weakness. It is not surrender. It is not a loss of masculinity.

It is the minimum standard of being a decent human being.

## The Responsibility of Men Who Would Never Raise a Hand

Many men reading this may say, "I would never hurt a woman."

I hope that is true.

But perhaps the question cannot end there.

What do we do when a friend refuses to accept a woman's rejection? What do we say when a man boasts about threatening an ex-partner? Do we challenge him, or do we laugh it off as typical male behaviour?

When a woman tells us she is afraid of someone we know, do we listen, or do we immediately defend him because he has always been a good friend to us?

When men speak about women as though they are possessions to be won, controlled, or punished, do we remain silent because confronting them might make the room uncomfortable?

Not every man is violent. Not every man is abusive. But the absence of personal violence is not the only measure of our responsibility.

We can refuse to normalise the attitudes that make violence easier to excuse. We can support women when they speak about their experiences. We can take threats seriously. We can challenge the men in our lives without waiting for a tragedy to make the conversation urgent.

And when a woman tells us that a man's behaviour frightens her, we can begin by listening rather than demanding that she prove her fear to us.

We do not have to be perpetrators to have a role in changing the culture that excuses them.



# A WOMAN'S NO IS NOT AN ATTACK ON YOUR MANHOOD.

## A Different Kind of Manhood

Perhaps one of the most important lessons a man can learn is that he is allowed to be disappointed without becoming dangerous.

He can desire a woman without believing he is entitled to her. He can love her and still accept that she may not choose him. He can be rejected without turning rejection into revenge.

His worth is not diminished by a woman's refusal. His masculinity is not threatened by her independence. His dignity does not require her submission.

There is a kind of strength in walking away from what does not want you. There is maturity in allowing another person to make a choice you do not like. There is dignity in feeling the sting of rejection and refusing to pass that pain on to someone else.

We need more men who understand that self-control is not about controlling women. It is about taking responsibility for ourselves.

Because the measure of a man is not how a woman behaves when she wants him.

It is also how he behaves when she does not.

## Let Her Say No

A woman's no is not an attack on your manhood.

It is not a declaration that you are worthless. It is not a challenge that must be defeated. It is not an invitation to prove how persistent, powerful, or intimidating you can be.

It is a boundary.

And a boundary does not need your approval to deserve respect.

At a time when women continue to live with the fear of harassment, coercion, and gender-based violence, men must do more than insist that we are not all the same. We must demonstrate, in our words and actions, that a woman's freedom is not conditional on a man's approval.

Let her reject you.

Let her leave.

Let her choose differently.

And let us raise a generation of men who understand that a woman's freedom to say no is not a threat to their manhood—but a test of whether they have learned what manhood truly means.

— Mokwadi