

This document consists of THREE (3) parts:

**Part A:** English Half Thesis (Creative Work)

**Part B:** IsiXhosa Half Thesis (Creative Work)

**Part C:** Portfolio

# **Part A:**

## **Shoutfighting and other fiction**

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Nonqubela Evelyn Rasmeni

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# **Shoutfighting and other fiction.**

**By Nonqubela Rasmeni**

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### **Thunder, Lightning, Rain.**

My mother is crying, the room is dark, the cat is crying. I am hungry. The baby is not crying, father is sad. The sound of thunder is frightening. My intestines are crying. I want them to stop. They cry, again and again. I want my mother to stop crying and give me food. She sits in the dark room and watches the baby. The baby is not playing, is not laughing, not crying. Only sleeping. Both my mother and father are not talking. Why are they not talking to me? They did not eat. I want my mother to prepare food for me. My father is not smoking his pipe. Why? I don't know. The lightning is lighting the dark room. I see my mother crying. The lightning stops. I don't see her, I hear her sobbing. I want to eat but no one is giving me food. I go to the kitchen. It is dark. The lightning is lighting the kitchen. I open the fridge. The fridge is not singing. The thunder roars. I close the fridge. It is dark in the kitchen. The water is making noise on the roof. Too much noise. The small stones are falling. I want to go out and take some for myself. I am scared. My mother said it is not good to eat rain stones. She is not looking. She is crying in her bedroom. I open the door slowly not to let them see me. The lightning is too big. They see me. It lights the kitchen, the room, the other room, the other room, bathroom, the toilet. The house is very white and shaking. The water is falling. Rain stones are running to the kitchen veranda. The lightning is lighting. It is dark and I cannot see. The dog is hiding under the bed. My bed. Why? The thunder roars again. The dog is groaning under the bed. I run to the room. I cover myself with the fleece blanket.

The ambulance is crying, the neighbours are sad. There is no thunder, no lightning. The rain is small now. The ambulance men are taking my little brother. He is not crying. My mother is wearing her black dress and black coat. I don't like black clothes. When my mother wears that dress there is death. She is going with the ambulance. Aunt Pearl is whispering to my mother. She is my mother's friend. She is not going with my mother. My father is wearing his brown long coat. He is not talking. He gets into the ambulance. The ambulance is crying and goes. I don't like the crying of an ambulance. Neighbours are going. They are not talking to each other. They are sad. There is no sun outside. Only small rain.

### **My new friends**

I am happy today. Three girls are playing with me at the back of my school. I give them sweets. Noma is jealousing me. She is not playing with me and my new friends. My old friend is shy now that I have three friends. I don't want him to leave but he is playing with two boys. I want them to come play with us girls. We are playing three tins. The boys are looking at us with smiley faces. They come running and kick the tins. I am happy they are playing with us but Nozi is not happy. She does not like to play with boys. She sits down and folds her arms. I want her to play with us. My friend runs to me and tickles me. I laugh and laugh and laugh. My other friend tickles Nozi. She giggles and falls in a small hole. There are papers and small pieces of chalk in that hole. Two big boys are pulling her out. The bell rings. The lunch break is over. Noma runs towards me. She pushes me with her two hands. I fall. Noma and my two new friends laugh at me. Noma is always mean to me when she is with her friends. When they are mean to her she is my friend. I want Noma to be nice to me. I give her sweets as my friend but when her friends come she is mean to me. I cry because my white socks are not white now. There is mud on my black shoes. My old friend who is always nice to me comes running. He wipes away my tears and brushes my gym dress with his right hand. He takes off my shoes and wipes them on the grass. My socks are wet. The teacher calls us. We run to her. The teacher asks me what happened to my socks. I tell her. She calls Noma and tells her to be nice to me. Noma agrees with the teacher. On our way back home she teases me with her friends.

## Dream

My friends and I are playing *upuca*. Celiwe is cheating as always. She is mean. My friends are not stopping her from cheating. She does not want to play right with us girls. I am frowning to her, she is not looking to see my frown, she is playing. My frown is not stopping her from playing. My friends are not frowning with me to stop Celiwe from playing the game. The game I am supposed to play not her. It is my turn. They are smiling at her. Are they scared of her? I don't know, but I am not. I want them to frownfight Celiwe with me. I am frowning alone. My frown is not enough to stop the cheating Celiwe. I want my many friends to frown many frowns with me to defeat Celiwe.

Not looking at my frown, she is playing the game. The urge to wee is burning me. I am folding my legs and waiting for my turn to play. I do not want to leave. What if Celiwe stops playing while I am away weeing? The wee is not waiting for me. I close my eyes for the wee to stop coming. It does not stop coming. I do not want my many friends to laugh at me when the wee comes. I open my eyes and run very fast to the backyard to wee. I wee. My mother called me with a sharp voice like a crowing rooster. She slaps my buttocks.

“*Nwabisa, Nwabisa, uchamelani emin' apha?*” she takes away the blankets. It is warm under my left side. It is my wee. Celiwe is not playing *upuca*. My friends are not watching Celiwe cheating. I did not go to the backyard to wee. I am sleeping with my mother in her bed. I am dreaming. The floral bottom sheet is wet. My mother is angry. She changed her bed in the morning before the night. She called me to sleep on her bed with her and the baby. Before the moon is in the sky, she is waiting for my father to come home from work. My father is not sleeping on my mother's bed. My father is working at the mines in Welkom, my mother told me. His *baasboy* is not letting him come home. He promised to buy many sweets for me if I don't cry when he left us. I slept on my mother's bed when there was a moon in the sky. My mother told me before we ate our supper that my father is not coming. She cried and pretended it was onion. I know it was not onion. Our supper was *umvubo* that night. She did not want me to see that she was crying. I pretended I don't see her crying. I played with my little brother. He was not crying. He was pulling my hair. I did not cry. My mother was crying because my father is not coming. The baby's saliva fell to my yellow dress. It is not yellow when there is no sun. My wee is cold because my mother took the blankets.

### **My little brother**

It is early in the morning about half past five. My mother is holding the child in her arms. My sister is snoring and farting. She is fast asleep. The paraffin lamp is so dim; it is running out of paraffin. I don't want my mother to see that I am awake. It is very cold. If I wake she will ask me to fill the paraffin heater and the lamp. I don't like the smell when I pour paraffin into the heater. Last night it was my turn to fill it up. My mother has been up most of the night, I think. When I wake up to wee at night she is up holding the child. The heater and the lamp run out of paraffin because my mother kept them on for a long time. The rooster is making too much noise. I cannot sleep because my mother is sad. The urge to wee is strong. I don't want to wake up. The wind is whizzing outside. My little brother is not crying. He is breathing heavily and funny. He is choking. My father is not at home. He is working in Westonaria Gold Mines. He told us when he left that he is going to bring us nice clothes, sweets and money.

My elder sister is lazy. My mother is moving up and down with the baby on her chest. Tears are rolling down her cheeks. I pretend to be asleep. I want to cry under my blanket. My mother is sad. She is not crying out loud. I see drops of tears flowing down to her chest. I feel sad when my mother is not happy. She is a good mother to us, her children. Her tears are falling to my little brother's face. I want to wake up and wipe her tears. I wish my father was here. I hate this work he is doing away from us. He comes home after a long time. I wish he was working in town. My friend's father works in town. He goes to town every day. He shouts at us kids when we play. He beats mama Thembi. Her eyes are swollen. His friend is ugly. He wants to give us money. My mother told me not to take it. He is not talking to us when he is not drinking. He drinks a bitter drink with his friends. His stomach is big. I don't like his beard. It is very bushy. He is not combing it. He talks too much when he is drinking. He snores. My friend told me. My father does not drink bitter drinks, he is a good father.

My sister is not farting and snoring now, she wakes up. She is older than me. She is filling the heater and the lamp. She lights the heater outside. My mother puts the baby on the mat. The mat is cold. Why is she putting him down? The child is choking. I wake up and wee. I sit on the mat next to my little brother. My mother moves me away from him. She is crying and my sister is crying. I cry.

### **My mean big aunt**

My mother is rolling on the floor crying. Other mothers are trying to console her. They are sad. They move out the table and chairs. Why are they taking them out? I don't know. My big aunt is mean. She is telling us to go to her homestead. I don't want to go I want to see what they are planning to do in our home. I cry. She does not care. She is forcing me to go and play with her children. There are many boys in her home. I don't like to play with boys. My sister is crying holding my hand. I sit down to show her that I don't want to go. My mean aunt looks at me with angry eyes. I look to my mother because I want her to know she is not my mother. My mother is not looking at me. She is covered with a brown blanket. The blanket is so big. I hate these mothers who are telling my mother what to do in her own home. Why is she doing what they want? My sister is standing next to me with her pleading eyes. I hold her hand. We are walking slowly to my big aunt's home. We want these mothers to feel sorry for us and stop us from leaving our mother alone with them. No one is stopping us. I wish my father was here with us. These mothers from other homesteads are not stopping our aunt from chasing us. The rain is small and there are clouds in the sky. The birds are singing in the trees. Other children are going to school. They look at us with sorrow in their eyes.

"I am sorry that your little brother is dead" said Philiswa.

"Dead?" I asked her.

"Yes. Your little brother is dead I heard my mother telling my father." I cry.

### **The brown box**

Many mothers are wearing black skirts and black dresses. They are singing with sad voices, “*Mayenzek’ intando yakho.*” My mother is sitting next to my mean aunt. Tears are rolling down her cheeks. Aunt Fufu wipes my mother’s tears with a brown striped face towel. My mother is shaking. My mean aunt is not consoling her. Why is she sitting next to her but not consoling her? I cry very loud. Many eyes are looking at me. I run to my mother and roll myself on the floor. A car comes in front of our house. I stand up and look outside. This is the same car that came and took away my little brother. Are they bringing my brother back now? I don’t know. Why is my mother crying uncontrollably? She wants to see her baby boy I think. I stop crying. Two fathers, the driver and another father come out of the car. They are wearing long white coats. They talk to the fathers outside next to the kraal. Two fathers are following them. These two fathers are taking off *izankwane zabo*. The driver and the other father open the back of the car. They open the brown box. The two fathers from the kraal are looking in the brown box and look at each other and nod. They are not talking. They take the brown box from the car. Other fathers from many homesteads are taking off their hats and join the two fathers. They are meeting two fathers from the car. The two fathers give the brown box to many fathers.

Noma’s mother starts a song, “*Zolo namhla naphakade Yesu usenjalo. Zonk’ izinto ziguquka, Yesu usenjalo. Yesu uenjalo, Yesu usnjalo. Izolo namhla naphakade uYesu usenjalo.*” Many voices are singing along. I cannot see my mother now. Many legs are standing and my mother’s legs I don’t see. The other fathers enter with the brown box. They are singing the way fathers sing. They look sad. Where is my brother? One of the fathers lifts up his hand and the singing stops. He tells us to close our eyes. He is the only one talking to God, the Father. I did not know that fathers can pray I never saw them praying. Mothers are crying as he prays. He is talking very loud. His voice is big like the voice of the principal from my school. I close my eyes with my hands. I look through my fingers; I want to see this praying father. My sister screams. I move my hands from my eyes. I want to sit next to her and console her. I cannot move to where she is. Many mothers are standing in my way. My eyes are still wet. The praying father stops and mothers and fathers say Amen at the same time. Aunt Fufu starts another song, “*Mayenzk’ intando yakho mayenzek’ intando yakho mayenzek’ intando yakho.*” Mothers are singing along with her. Some are clapping hands as they sing. I look at the clapping mothers are they happy? Why are they clapping hands when my mother is crying? There are many wet eyes in the house. The fathers are leaving the brown box in the

middle of the house with singing mothers. Other mothers are singing with mouths wide open. Other mothers are singing with crying voices. My mother is crying out loud lifting her hands towards the brown box. I can see her now. I cry because my mother is crying. I wish my father was here to console my mother.

### **Balloon game.**

I am sleeping in my small bed. My blankets are wet. It is dark in the room. My sister is not sleeping in her bed. Where is she? The windows are still open. The light is small. It is coming from one window. I jump down my bed. I walk slowly to the small table to light the candle. The candlestick is there but the candle is finished. I walk slowly in the dark to close the window. I hear my sister laughing from outside. I listen again. I hear her friend coughing. It is him. I know his voice. He is always in our room at night playing with my sister the balloon game. His mother is a nurse. He gives them balloons to play with. They play with their balloons when I am asleep. In the morning I see many balloons with dribble inside. They blow balloons when I am asleep and throw them under the bed. I want to play balloon game like my sister. My sister does not want to play balloon game with me. She says I am still a child. When I am fifteen years old I want to have a friend to play with. My sister plays with her coughing friend always. She tells me to sleep when they are playing. They play with many balloons at night. They are happy. I wish my mother is here. She lives with my father in *Skoomplaas*. She comes home after a long time.

Other girls are mean to me. They are not playing with me. They say I am ugly and smelly. When I have money to buy sweets they play with me. There is this boy in my class who likes to play with me. We play hide and seek. I want to play balloon game with him. He is nine years old and I am eight years old. I want my sister and her friend to teach us how to play balloons. My sister and her friend sleep in her bed. They eat together and play together. His mother gives him money. They buy fish and fat cakes. They share with me when they want me go and play outside. My mother writes letters to my sister and my sister reads them to me. I want my mother to write to me. I want to show other girls that my mother loves me. They think my mother does not love me. They say I am ugly that is why my mother left me with my sister. They say my sister is not a girl like other girls. They are jealousing her. Other girls have no friends like my sister. Her friend is that coughing thin boy who sleeps in her bed at night. My sister warned me not to tell my mother that they play balloons with her friend. She said I must never tell. If I tell she will leave me and I will not have someone to stay with me when my mother goes again to live with my father. I want my father stop working far away from me. Other children' fathers are not working. They stay at home and drink bitter drinks. They talk loudly when they drink.

They talk about Mandela and jail and argue about it. They sing badly. They sing about Oliver Tambo and shout Viva. I wish my father was here to tell me more about Mandela's jail Oliver

Tambo. They say he is their hero. Who is this Mandela? I don't know. When the police van comes they stop singing and arguing about Mandela. Why are they scared? I wish they can tell me more about Mandela Oliver Tambo jail.

### **Other mothers**

Other mothers from other homesteads are not good to me and my sister. They are mothering other girls from other homesteads. They are always mean to us. I want to play with their kids but they tell me to go away. They say I will teach their kids bad manners because my mother did not teach me good manners. She is not teaching me because she is always away from home. Why are they blaming me for her absentness? I don't know. Why is their mothering so choosy? They do not mind mothering their friend's children. They are nice and friendly to their friends but not to my mother. They collect fire wood and dry cow dung together. My mother cooks with a paraffin stove when she is home. They say she thinks she is better. I think they are jealous because my mother is more beautiful than them. Her face is whiter than theirs. Her clothes are new and smell nice. Their faces are light but their necks and hands are very dark. They want to be white like my mother but their hands are like baboon's hands. When they touch their white faces it is like a baboon is touching them. I don't blame them I blame the *eskamel* they smear on their faces. It smells very bad. Noma's mother is different from other mothers who are mean to me. She is dark and does not put any *eskamel* on her face. Her face hands and legs are dark but beautiful.

These other mothers wear ugly clothes. They smell like smoke from dry cow dung. When they cook their food they make fire from dry cow dung. Their food is nice but the fire is smelly. The bread they bake is very nice. My friend from my class shares his lunch with me. He is nice to me. We play together and go home together. Noma does not want to play with me when she is with her friends. She only plays with me when they are not playing with her.

These ugly mothers are always mean to my sister. They say she is a bad influence to their girls. When their girls are walking with my sister they always call them angrily. My sister does not mind them. She laughs at them when they are mean to her. Noma's mother is better than others. She is a church mother. She always takes me to their children's church. My sister is not children churching. When I go to church she cooks nice food and eats with her friend who plays balloons with her always. When I come home feeling good from churching they are playing. I want to write a letter to my mother and tell her to come home and mother me like other mothers. She sings like a radio person. If she can come to my church she will talk bible words like Noma's mother. Noma's mother cries when she prays. She prays for mines to stop falling. She cries when she prays about people in jails and hospitals. She never prays without calling "Our Father in heaven". When I am all alone I talk to Our Father in heaven. I don't want my sister to hear me when I pray. I pray when she is not listening. When I am

scared in my sleep I pray to Our Father in heaven. I tell Him I am scared. If I whisper to Him under my blanket He hears me.

### **Mean friends**

Noma is crying. Her bundle of firewood is broken into two bundles. The big and small girls leave her behind. The clouds are coming down towards us. I want to wait for her.

She is my friend. When clouds are down we cannot see our way home. Thunder and lightning are following us from a distance. I put my firewood bundle down. I help Noma with her broken bundle of firewood. I untie the first rope, the second rope and the third rope. I scatter the firewood. I pull the ropes from the firewood. I see ants falling from a big rotten firewood stick. I throw it away. I place the ropes down like the lines of a zebra. I take a long stick of firewood. I put it on the ropes. I take the second one and the third one. All of them are long. Noma is not crying now. She watches me as I make the bundle. I tell her to watch me and learn how to make a strong bundle of firewood. My bundle is strong because my sister taught me how to make a tight bundle. I place all the small firewood sticks on top of the long sticks. The bundle is not big. I decide to leave the short firewood sticks behind. I tie the bundle. The short firewood sticks are not good at all because they cause the bundle to break. They cause the bundle to break into two. I don't see the other girls. They are mean like other mothers. Noma is smiling now. I want her to see that I am a friend to her. I don't leave her when she needs me. Her other friends are mean to her. They play with her when it is sunny. When the clouds are darkening the sun they run with the big girls. They are not helping her like friends. I don't like mean friends. A lightning from the sky crosses the road. I close my eyes and my ears. I open my eyes. Noma carries her bundle. She walks away without me. Why is she mean to me? I don't know. I want to understand why she is doing this but I have to carry my bundle and walk as fast as I can. She leaves me behind. I start to roll my old towel and place it on my head. I pick up my bundle and put it on the towel. I walk fast because I want to leave Noma behind. I walk past her. She tries to catch me but my legs are longer than hers. She screams at me but I do not listen. The thunder strikes and a tree falls. There is a fire in the tree. Big rain drops fall on me and the rain stones hit me. I cannot see Noma. Where is she? What will I say to her mother? I want to wait for her but I am afraid. A frog comes jumping and crosses in front of me. I also jump and the bundle of wood falls. A snake comes running, chasing the frog. The frog quickly hides under the bundle. The snake crawls over the bundle. I decide to run away leaving my towel behind. I arrive at the river. The river is full I cannot cross. I run down the river bank. I try to cross. I stumble on a stone and badly fall. I am wet. I hear a voice of a boy calling others.

“Hey, come and help.” My sister’s coughing friend comes running. I begin to cry. They try to pull me out of the water. He is very sorry for me. He carries me on his back and takes me home. When we arrive Noma’s mother is already at home. “Where is Noma?” she asks.

“I do not know where she is,” I cry as I speak. Without asking anymore questions she left. My pink dress is wet and my sister’s friend is wet. I take off my dress and wipe my wet body with a dry towel. I put on my warm yellow night dress. My sister covers her friend with a blanket as he takes off his wet jeans and a hood. She does not want me to see him without clothes. I am not afraid of taking off my wet clothes in front of him and neither is my sister. Why is she covering him when he takes off his clothes? I am not looking at him. I close my eyes with my hands. I look through my fingers. I don’t see anything. My sister is giggling. I want to see what makes her giggle. I stand up and walk slowly towards the door. I turn back quickly and look at them. They are giggling under the blanket. My sister’s friend is kind to me. I don’t mind anymore if he spends every day’s night in my home.

### **Other girls**

It is very cold today. My sister starts to make a fire. The firewood is wet. I am very hungry. The rain is causing the firewood to produce smoke. My eyes itch from the smoke. Tears roll out of my eyes down to my cheeks. I am not crying. Smoke from this fire is causing more tears to come. My sister is angry. She is trying to make the fire burn. She is angry, very angry. She takes one big firewood stick and hits the fire. The firewood scatters all over the place. The fumes from the firewood spread over the kitchen. The tablecloth shrinks. I quickly run to pick the firewood under the tablecloth. I take a tumbler with water and throw the water over the tablecloth. My eyes are itching. I get out of the kitchen. My sister is still angry and crying.

Other girls from other homesteads arrive at our home. They call my sister and shout at her. My sister ignores them. Thembi is the one who comes first and pulls my sister by her hair. She is wearing a short blue dress. The other girls do not stop her. My sister does not fight back. I want her anger to rise and fight this girl. I take a five litre bucket with urine and throw it at Thembi. It has been in our room the whole night. We wee in that bucket at night. The other girls run away. My sister takes one stick of firewood and hits Thembi. Thembi cannot run she is blinded by the urine I threw at her. I dance with joy, our enemy is defeated. Other girls are shouting from outside the gate. They are swearing at my sister. She does not mind them. The more they swear the more my sister hits Thembi with the stick. I come closer to the gate and make faces at the girls. They keep swearing. My face making does not stop them from making noise. My sister's coughing friend comes running. She takes the stick from my sister. My sister is angry at him. Why is he defending Thembi? My sister is his friend not Thembi. Thembi's friends come running and grab Thembi. They are not fighting back, they are cowards. They only shout but cannot fight my sister when she is angry. My sister is angry and cries. Her friend is holding her very tight and brushing her back. Her cries subdue. Thembi does not want to go. She looks at my sister and points at her with her pointing finger and shakes her head. She is very angry now. She is leaving her friends behind. They are following her. They are not talking to each other.

## **Shoutfighting**

There is no school today. Older girls and boys are singing very loud on the streets. They are jumpdancing. Their legs are kicking the air. They sing funny songs. I want to follow them. My big sister is jealousing me. She does not want me to go with them. She is not my mother. I follow them. A tall boy is lifting his fist shouting “Amandla”. His head is big. They are shouting at him “Ngawethu” Why are they shouting him? He is not scared of them. He is shouting again and again. They are shouting him back. I am so scared. There are no smiles on their faces. They are shoutfighting him. He is not scared of them. He is standing in front of them. I want them to stop gangshouting him. I close my ears. He is calling “Viva”. Viva is not deaf. Why is he shouting him? I hide myself behind the big tree. I don’t want him to call me. I cannot hear him now. I don’t like jealous people. Why are they jealousing Viva? They keep shouting his name. I am happy he went to the farm this morning.

They are singing again. Their jumpdance is making dust. I am not going to follow them. I am going to the farm to join Viva. I am scared of these shouting boys. Maybe my sister was right when she said I must stay home. I am running up the hill. The cold is mean to me. The wind is blowing. The rain is small. The cold is pinching my legs. My feet are sore. I put them in some cow dung. It is warm. I am shivering. The pieces of cold are growing. I don’t see Viva. I am starving. I walk slowly to the fig tree to get some figs to eat. There are many red figs under this tree. I pick about ten of them. I open the first one. There are small ants inside. I open the second one. There are maggots inside. I close my eyes and eat my figs without opening them. I don’t want to see any insects now. I open my eyes. I pick up more red figs from the ground. The birds are watching me from the tree. They eat figs from the tree. They are not opening the figs. I wish I was a bird. They eat any fruit from any tree. The ants are pinching me. I wipe them off with my hands. They are falling to the ground. I don’t mean to kill them. I just want them to leave me alone.

My sister is lazy. She cooks only when she is hungry. I wish my mother is staying with us and cooks food for us. I cry and she teases me to stop crying. Today she did not give me any food. She left early to sing on the streets with many boys and girls. I see a strawberry tree from a distance.

I hear the noise of thunder. I lie down. I hear many footsteps and cries. The thunder is raining more terrifying sounds. I hear a sound of a police van. It is coming closer. The tall boy is hiding behind the fig tree. Many boys and girls are running and falling. The police are making more thunder and smoke. The smoke is choking me. I see girls coughing and falling.

My ears are closed now I cannot hear anything. My clothes are warm now. Is it because of the thunder? I don't know.

The tall boy is bleeding from his left arm. He is not crying. I want to help him, my class teacher told us to help each other. I need a cloth to cover his bleeding arm. The police are running after them. I am trying to stand up. My clothes are wet. The rain is too small to wet my clothes. It's my wee. When did I wee? I don't know. I am shy to go near the tall boy. I don't want him to see that I still wee when I am asleep. When did I sleep? I don't know.

## Wheelbarrow

Big boys and girls are singing on the car gravel road. They kick the air with their legs. There are no cars on the road. They lift their fists. The dust is flying on the air. They sing, "*Khululu Mandela khululu Mandela.*" I am afraid when they call this name. My friend's father stops calling Mandela when the police van comes. A big police van comes towards them, "*Weeeeweee-weeee-weeee-weeee-weeee.*" I hide myself under the wheelbarrow. I sprain my legs they become sore. I sweat. There is no singing now. The thunder is making too much noise. The girls cry. I hear footsteps. I hear something falling on the wheelbarrow. I don't hear any footsteps now. I breathe fast. My chest moves up and down. The police van is singing that ugly song again, "*Weeee-weeee-weeee-weeee-weeee-weeee*" I don't want to breathe. My breathing is making noise. I hear a sharp voice of a crying girl. It is my sister's voice. Why is she crying? I try to lift the wheelbarrow with my two hands. It is heavy. I try again it does not move. I hear many crying voices. I cry to myself. I want to get out of this wheelbarrow. I try to turn and kneel on my knees my hands on the ground like a piglet. My legs are stiff from sprain. My voice does not come out. I want to call somebody to lift the wheelbarrow. I push my back upwards. It does not move. I hear many footsteps coming closer. There are many cries now. The footsteps and the cries are getting closer. I hear Noma's mother singing I know her voice. "*Yiva imithandazo yethu Nkosi sikelela thina lusapho lwayo. Yihla Moya yihla Moya oyingcwele. Usikelele thina lusapho lwayo.*" I hear many voices singing along in a sorrowful way. The way mothers and fathers sang when my baby brother is dead in my home. I want to sing along with them but crying does not allow me. I feel sorrow in my chest I cry and cry to myself. Why are they doing this to me? Am I dead or alive? They sing this way when there is a brown box in my home. When my mother cries and lifts her hands towards the box. I want to shout at them and let them know that I am alive. My sister loves me I think. She is crying because she thinks I am dead.

I did not know that she loves me this much. I hear a police van again. It is coming very close now. I hear doors banging. Noma's mother is praying now. Many voices groan as she prays and cry in between. She mentions Xola's name and the cries are many now. What happened to Xola? He is my sister's coughing friend. I want to hear but there is too much crying. She says Amen and many voices are following her with their Amen. I hear hands touching the wheelbarrow. I try to push it up again. I come out of the wheelbarrow. Their eyes are wide open. My sister comes running to hug me. My legs are stiff. I see two policemen. They are carrying my sister's coughing friend. He is bleeding. A girl is singing with a sorrowful voice,

*“Senzeni na? Senzeni na? Senzeni na? Senzeni na? Senzeni na? Senzeni na? Senzeni na? Senzeni na? Senzeni na?”* The singing makes me cry. I look at my sister. Tears are rolling down her face. I wipe them with my jersey’s sleeve. I hear the voice of a crying mother. A sharp voice. The crying mother is rolling down the floor. I want to see who is this crying mother. Her white dress is dirty with dust now. I move slowly to see this rolling mother. It is her, yes. I know her. I saw her the other day giving money to my sister’s coughing friend. It’s his mother. Her set of teeth are on the floor. She does not mind that she has no teeth now. Her voice covers the singing of many mothers and school children.

I bend down and pick up her teeth. I pat her on the shoulder. My sister pulls me. Why is she pulling me? I am trying to help.

## **New baby boy**

The sun is up. I hear. I listen again. There are no sounds now. I see a black cat chasing me. My heart beats very fast. I become afraid. I run towards the vegetable garden. I trip over a tree trunk. I fall. I quickly stand up. My knee is bruised. I look at the cat. It is coming towards me. I sleep on my back. I close my eyes. I hear the funny sound again very close this time. My chest moves up and down. I want it to stop. I don't want the cat to see that I am alive. The cat scratches the ground next to me. I am afraid. It cries and scratches at the same time. I try to die so that the cat can leave me alone. I hear a dog barking and running towards me. They fight and fight. The dog lifts its left back leg and wees on my face. I want to wake up and run but I am afraid. I hear my father's voice from a distance. The dog runs to my father. The cat rubs itself against my body. I open my eyes and the cat lies and folds itself next to me. It is quiet now. Whose cat is this? I don't like cats at all.

I move slowly from the ground. I stand up and run to meet my father. He opens his arms, "Tata, tata." My father lifts me up and I giggle. My mother is wearing a long *tshikiza* and *nam ndiyatitsha* jersey. Aunt Fufu is carrying a baby with a blue fleece blanket. A tall man is driving a wheelbarrow. My mother is smiling at me. I jump off from my father and go to my mother. My knee is sore. I am limping now. She hugs me and kisses me on my cheeks. I show her my bruised knee. She opens the door. My sister is not in the house.

The ashes are all over the place. The smell of burnt *mphokoqo* is in the air. Dirty dishes are in a twenty five litre bucket. Small flies are buzzing on the kitchen table. The five litre bucket is still in our room. Our beds are not made. My mother frowns and asks where my sister is. I cannot tell my mother that she left early in the morning with her coughing friend. I pretend I don't know. I cannot tell my mother she will be angry. My sister warned me that I must never tell my mother about her friend who always sleeps in our room. The baby cries. My mother takes the baby from aunt Fufu. She sits on the edge of the bed, opens her jersey takes out her breast and gives it to the baby. The baby is not crying now. Aunt Fufu makes our beds. She takes out the smelly blankets and hangs them on the garden fence. The balloons fall from my sister's bed. I run to take them and hide them under my pillow. Aunt Fufu takes them from under the pillow. My sister comes in smiling and winks to aunt Fufu. Aunt Fufu is not smiling back. My mother calls my sister. "Where are you coming from? Why is my house so dirty? Wash those dishes and help Fufu."

My big brother from another mother comes in without knocking. He does not have manners; his mother did not teach him. He greets my father only with his right hand. My father is not

pleased. He tells him to greet my mother, his small other mother. He is cheeky. My father tells him to get out and come back when he has manners. He makes noise with his teeth and points at my mother with one finger and leaves angrily. My mother is changing the baby's nappy. I look at the baby to see if it is a boy or girl. It is a boy again. I am happy and not happy. A boy is not a good baby. When there is a baby boy in my home there is always crying. Many mothers from other homesteads will come wearing black dresses and sing with crying voices. My mother will cry at night when the baby is not crying. My mean aunt will come to my home and tell us to leave again. Other mothers will tell us what to do. My father will not be home when the baby is sleeping on the cold mat. I don't like my mother to have a baby boy. I love my little brother but baby brothers always disappear from our home. Other children will say my brother is dead. I will cry again.

### **Churching mothers**

Noma's mother churches every day now. My friends and I go to her church on Sundays. She is kind to us children with no churching mothers and churching fathers. She teaches us Bible words and gives us golden nuts, sweets, oranges and apples. We sing church songs on our way home. We are friends when we church and not friends when we are at school. My sister is always crying. She is not going to school anymore now. I ask her to come to church with me. My sister's coughing friend does not come and sleep in our room now. They are not playing balloons anymore. My sister is lonely. Her friend is playing with Thembi now.

Thembi and her friends are happy now that my sister's friend is not playing with her. Thembi and her friends laugh at my sister when she walks alone. The other mothers wear black skirts and white shirts and go churching with Noma's mother. They are not mean now. My sister cries when I ask her what happened to her coughing friend. Aunt Fufu consoles her. Her stomach is big now. She looks at her stomach and cries. My mother does not console her when she cries. My father is angry at her. Other mothers wear old shoes with nylon socks, mother's socks. My mother does not go with them. I want my mother to sing and pray like Noma's mother. Noma's homestead is not far from my home. Many mothers cry when they pray at Noma's home. I hear them. They pray for school boys and girls in jail.

I heard my friend's father talking about jail Mandela Oliver Tambo. Where is jail and what is jail? Churching mothers talk the mother's talk and they sing, "*Bomama be-Afrika masithandazeleni Afrika. Lizwe lethu Lizwe lethu Lizwe lethu Lizwe lethu i-Afrika.*" They sing and cry at the same time. They pray and cry like my little brother when he is drowsy. I like to listen to their singing but not their praying. When they are not praying they cook food and travel to jail to give the food to school children. They are sad because they are not allowed to see the boys and girls who were singing "Khululu Mandela". The policemen are not telling them where they are. The policemen throw away the food they prepared for the children. The policemen are mean to them. Why do they throw away food? Churching mothers are not giving up. They come back and meet again at Noma's home and pray. They pray at night. When I sleep I can still hear them praying and singing.

## Fridays

I did not want to go to school on Fridays. On Fridays, our female teachers were not coming to classes. They eat their lunch in the morning in the staff room and discuss their love affairs and laugh out very loud. Nokuzola is their favourite. She would not stay in class like us. Never. She was always making tea for them. She was very clever in our class. She was always leading us in position number 1. Thoko was the opposite. She was always number last in the positioning of performance. She always saw an opportunity to shine by lording over us. She was very fat and tall with big breasts. Too old for our class and unfriendly to us. She did not have a tunic like us girls. She wore a long *gabatin* skirt and a long-sleeved shirt. Her double lensed eye glasses were too big for her face. If us girls talk to each other, girls talk of our age, she would write down our names as noise makers. She did not have friends. Even her desk mate was not her friend. She was lonely, not talking to anybody and always mean to us. She was not our prefect. No, we never voted for her. She was mean. Even if I don't talk, my name was always on the list of noise makers. For that reason, I did not want to go to school on Fridays.

At 10 am on Fridays, all the boys from the noise makers list were to remove the desks and pack them outside the class. It was our duty as girls to divide ourselves. The first group would go to the dam to get some water to sprinkle the water on the dusty floor to reduce the dust before we sweep the floors. The second group sweep the floors with homemade grass brooms. The third group would go to nearby homesteads to ask for cow dung to smear our mud floor class. It was tiring to do these chores because those who were not on the list of noise makers were playing *upuca, skurum, hide and seek*. One Thursday night, my mother wanted a volunteer to accompany her to her childhood home in Mbhangcolo. I volunteered. I was so happy that night. I was singing as I washed the dishes. I did not worry about being absent in class that Friday. I was happy that I was not going to be the noise maker. I was free from smearing cow dung on the floor. That night I took my blue fine point pen and removed its head. I took the ink and applied the blue ink on my finger nails. I wanted my cousins to see that I am a big girl now. The ink was all over my hands. I ended up with blue inked hands and fingers. My mother almost caught me in the act. I covered myself with the blanket and pretended to be asleep. At night I kept waking up and looked at the time from my wrist watch. I woke up three times that Thursday night.

At about 5 am in the morning I woke up again. At last it was Friday morning, I was so excited. I brushed my teeth and rushed to the small *rondavel* to prepare firewood for the fire.

I was in a good mood. When I washed my hands, the blue ink from my nails came out and changed the water to blue. I did not worry about it. It was not *Cutex* anyway. The fire I prepared was so big and the water was warm and ready very quick. I poured it into the plastic washing basin. I took it to my mother and I went back to the *rondavel* to prepare *mealie meal* soft porridge for breakfast. I did not wait for the porridge to be ready; I poured some warm water into the children's washing basin. I washed very fast and put on my *Mum* roll on. I applied my *Dolly Vardin* pure glycerine on my body. I put on my round pleated red dress. I felt so good. I turned around in front of the mirror. I went back to the *rondavel* to fetch the porridge pot. I served my mother and my siblings. I did not finish my porridge. I did not want to feel the urge to urinate in the bus. I went back to our room to have the last look in the mirror. My hair. I applied *Hairglo* to my afro. I afro combed my hair backward.

We travelled on a 7:00 am bus in the morning. The driver was a short man with a bald head, long black beard and long front teeth on dark gums. His stomach was big like a pregnant woman. His stomach was suffocating me. I looked down avoiding looking at his stomach. My mother took her Standard bank money bag from her bag. She took out a five rands paper note, two rands paper notes and one rand coin. It was not enough but that was all she had. The man was too kind to my mother; he did not take the money but allowed us to come in. This funny bald-headed old man smiled to my mother and my mother smiled back to him. I pretended I was not looking. I was thinking to myself, maybe he was my mother's childhood boyfriend. He was not related to my mother, no. I know my mother's brothers. This man was not one of them. Does that mean he wants to be my mother's boyfriend? My father was a very good-looking man compared to this bus driver. Why my mother smiled to him? I don't know. I jealoused this long-bearded man. The conductor showed us where to sit. The bus was bumping up and down on the dusty gravel road. The road was full of deep potholes. The door was making a noisy sound and it was not tightly closed. The dust was getting in through the gap under the door. At 8:00 o'clock, the bus stopped at Mkhwane bus stop. Three teachers from my school got in the bus. I looked down; I did not want them to see me. Miss Tholeni came straight to sit next to me.

“Good morning Nwabisa how are you today?” Miss Tholeni asked.

“Good morning Miss, I am very well Miss. Thank you” I responded.

Where are you going to Nwabisa?”

“I am accompanying my mother to....” I replied.

Before we finished our conversation, we were interrupted by a boy of about three years old. He vomited not far from us. The vomit splattered to my dress. Misfortunes of Fridays were following me. Without saying sorry, the mother of the boy took an off-white old napkin from a *no problem* plastic bag and wiped my dress. The napkin was smelly like a damp dark room. The smell from the vomit was so terrible. I closed my mouth and my nose. My mother was sitting next to the window the vomit did not affect her except for the smell.

An old man with white hair, beard, and a stick. He was carrying an old red lip isiXhosa bible in his left hand. He stood up and started a church song. His long white duster coat was ironed and starched nicely. Old people in the bus sang along. They sang in the old people's way. They were beating the insides of the bus. I was not comfortable with the noise they were making. I was thinking of Thoko and her list of noise makers. He lifted up his stick indicating the end of the song.

“Let us close our eyes and pray”. The old man said and he started to pray. He prayed for a long time. My mother and I did not see that we passed the bus stop where we were supposed to jump off. The old man finished praying about five kilometres from our bus stop. My mother opened her eyes and saw that we had missed our destination. We rushed to the front next to the driver. I was so angry at the old man for praying for a long time that we missed our destination. We jumped off about nine kilometres from our destination. We had to hitch hike back to Mbangcolo location. It was still early in the morning and there were no cars to Mbangcolo at that time. We had to walk our way back. I was limping from the cone from my left foot. My dress was smelly from the vomit.

Fridays are always trouble for me.

### **My bad day**

My sister and I are playing hide and seek. My pink dress is too small and it tears. I want to run fast before my sister finishes counting. My little dog is running and barking after me. The sun is closer to me. I sweat as I run. I hide under *igoqo*. My dog is pulling my dress.

“Shhh! Stop the noise Shorty.” I am whispering to my dog. The dog does not listen. The ants are pinching my buns. The bees are buzzing around my head. One sting causes me to give a loud cry. I hear my sister’s footsteps coming closer. She quickly calls “I see you.” She pats me on the shoulder and runs back. She hits the wall three times. She is not aware that I am in pain. I cry again. I am unable to count to thirty. She begins to worry. “What’s wrong why are you crying?” She discovers that I have covered my left eye. She quickly pulls my right hand and sees that my eye is swelling and quickly gives alarm. Mother comes out running.

“What is happening?” she asks.

“She has been stung by a bee” replies my sister. My mother quickly smears some Zambuk ointment and tries to pull out the sting. I want my mother to stop the pulling. It is painful. My dog looks at me as if it understands my pain. It rubs its body against me. My knee is bleeding. She washes my knee with warm water and Dettol. It is itching. I pull out my leg from my mother’s hand. She pleads with me to be patient. She puts on the Zambuk. My mother leaves us to go and fetch water from the river. She leaves the baby with my sister. She walks down the hill. I decide to follow her. I do not feel the pain now. My big brother from another mother appears carrying *ucelemba*. He is sulky and his cheeks are moving with anger. He looks very ugly. Why is he not smiling at us? I ask myself. He rushes to my mother. He raises up *ucelemba*.

“Die witch” he shouts.

“Noooo.” I scream. My mother falls and her yellow bucket rolls down. Within minutes she is in a pool of blood. Other mothers come running.

“*UKoko umbulel’ uNosecond*” they scream loudly.

I freeze with shock. The crying does not come. I shiver with fear. Aunt Fufu picks me up and holds me tight to her breast. She rubs my back up and down with her right hand. Within a short time the place is full with people.

My father's horse appears. The dust is spreading all over as it gallops. The sun is very hot. There is the smell of sweat. My father gets down from the horse and rushes to my mother. He kneels down over my mother and gives a loud cry of shock. Other fathers come running also. They pick up my father. He pushes them away. Uncle Tom falls back. Other fathers drag my father by force. He cannot stop crying and shouting.

*"Yhooooooooo."*

*"Nosecond, Nosecond, yhini mfazi wam! Wenzen' umfazi wam?"*

I want to jump off aunt Fufu. I don't know what to do. I think I am losing my mind. My mother is covered with *ixakatho*. I want to remove it. It is very hot. Another father comes to my father and talks to him father talk. My father nods at this father talk. This other father takes my father's horse and rides it. The horse gallops to the south direction.

I hear a sad sound of the police van from a distance. Mothers and fathers are sad on their faces. The mothers are crying and their hands are on their heads. Maybe they loved my mother. My big brother from another mother is tied with rope. He tried to flee but many fathers caught him. He is shouting at them. His face is very ugly.

*"I killed the witch, I killed her."*

I rush to him. I spit in his face and run to my father. My father takes me in his arms. The policeman removes all the mothers and fathers from where my mother is lying. They put a yellow tape all around the place where my mother lies. I want to go home and be with my sister and my little brother. My father holds me tight to his chest. Tears are rolling down his face. Another mother from another homestead is brushing my father's back. I am jealousing her. Why is she brushing my father's back with her hand? I pretend like I hold my father at the back. I move her hand from my father's back. The ambulance is making noise from a distance. It is closer now. I close my ears. The ambulance men are taking my mother. I want to stop them from taking my mother. I want to go with my mother. I cry. My father brushes my back. His tears are rolling down to his chin. I feel sorry for my father. I want to do something to console him. He is my father. I need to do something to console him. It is not nice to see him crying. I wipe his tears with my jersey's sleeve.

### **At home**

My sister is carrying my brother on her back. She sings a children's song to make my little brother sleep. Tears are rolling down her cheeks as she sings. My baby brother is crying the sobbing is making him break and cry. Maybe he is hungry he wants to drink his milk from my mother's breast. Many mothers tried to calm him but he cries very loud. My mother did not come back home. The ambulance man did not come to my home. There are many mothers in my home now. They are cooking food for many fathers and grandmothers from other homesteads. They are cleaning my home. My mean aunt lives with us in my home now. Another aunt is very nice to me. She gives me sweets when I cry. I cry when I want her to give me sweets. When she takes my little brother from my sister my brother sniffs her breast and cries. She brushes his back with her right hand but my little brother is crying too loud. My father is sad. He looks at my crying little brother's face. Tears are flowing like balls down my father's face. Both of them now are crying. My father is not crying out loud but my baby brother is crying out very loud. His little mouth is wide open and dribbles are flowing to his chest. His baby romper is wet now from sweat. His hair on the soft spot is moving up and down. My sister takes the baby and brushes his soft spot.

My mean aunt looks at the baby with ugly eyes. She opens an old tin of ointment. I sneeze from the smell coming from the old tin. She rubs the ointment on my baby brother's soft spot. She is not smiling at the baby. She closes her tin and drinks her black rooibos tea. My little brother is drowsy now. He is crying very softly now. He stops and cries again very slowly now. His voice is shaking. The hair on the soft spot is not moving now. The ointment smells bad but it is good for my brother. He sleeps in my sister's arms. My other aunt who gives me sweets when I cry takes the baby from my sister and puts him on the small mattress next to her. There is singing in the house. Churching mothers are singing in a sorrowful way. Their voices are shaking as they sing.

### **New mother**

There is a new mother in my home now. She cooks nice food. She is very short with big, beautiful eyes. My father is always happy when he speaks to her. She looks down when she speaks to my father. My father is not working in the mines now. He works in the vegetable garden and sells vegetables to the shops in town. My father keeps many chickens at home to sell. My new mother does not like to talk when my other big mother is talking. She makes tea for her. She drinks her tea and always leaves without shouting at my new mother. I miss my real mother. My father told me that she lives in the sky now with many stars. At night I look up to the sky to see my mother. I don't like my new mother to know that I miss my real mother. She is nice to me and makes me her child. I cry when I think about my real mother and pretend my stomach is sore. She gives me aloe juice. It is bitter. I drink it and sleep under my blanket and cry when she is not looking at me.

She bakes nice bread for us. Other mothers are not talking to her. They are jealousing her. She is not old like them. She has a small waist like an ant. She is dark and her legs are not long like Noma's mother. Her eyes smile. Her cheeks are soft like tomatoes. She smiles to us her children from my real mother. She sings baby songs for my baby brother when he cries. My baby brother stops crying and smiles with tears on his cheeks. He listens to my new mother and makes sounds like my new mother.

## Cry

My sister hits me with a stone on my left eye. I cry and she apologises. My new mother calls me. She rubs my left eye with her right hand. I scream. It is painful. My sister is sorry. She pats my back with her left hand and wipes my tears with her right hand. Her hand is smaller than my new mother's hand. My sister gives me her orange. I smile and take it. I am not crying now. I peel the orange with my finger nails. My tears roll down my cheeks. I try to smile so my sister can see that I am not crying. This orange is causing my tears to come. My new mother is cooking *umphokoqo*. I play with my little brother. He pulls my hair. I want to cry but I don't want my little brother to see me crying. I put my baby brother in a small brown cardboard and pull him. He is giggling. He is happy that I pull the cardboard. My new mother looks at us and smiles a kind smile. She loves us I think. My father arrives with a bag full of guavas, oranges, bananas, apples, raisins, peanuts, brown bread and cheese. My new mother smiles at my father when we are not looking at them. They are happy I think. My father is not crying anymore he smiles and plays with us, his children. My new mother does not have a baby like my real mother. She makes tea for my father. She kneels down when she gives him food. Why is she doing this? I don't know. My father lifts her up. She gives us apples and raisins.

It is dark now. There is no sun, only stars. I pretend I want to go to the toilet outside. My sister does not want to go with me. I am not afraid I tell my new mother. I tell her not to worry. I walk slowly to the toilet outside. I look at the stars, looking for my mother as I walk. I am not afraid at night. My father told me that she is looking after me in the sky. I want to tell my real mother that she must not worry about us we are happy. Our new mother cooks for us. She does not shout at us like my mean big aunt. Our little brother sleeps in their room. I don't want her to think I don't love her anymore. She is my mother my real mother. I am not crying but tears are flowing as I look up on the sky. "I am not crying mama. My father tells us not to cry because we are making your heart sore." I tell my mother.

### **My father's friend**

My father's friend comes to my home every day and talks to my father about many things. He talks about Mandela. I listen. He talks about how he fights in jail for people. My new mother calls me. I pretend I don't hear her I want to hear more about this Mandela jail. My father tells me to go to my new mother and hear what she wants to say. I walk slowly to my new mother. My father's friend is talking very soft now only my father can hear. I love my new mother but I am angry at her because she called me. Why is she calling me now? My father's friend does not have a horse like my father. He rides my father's other horse the black one. When he takes some chicken eggs to the shops he rides on my father's black horse. He helps my father with chicken feeding. He gives purple water to the chickens. I watch him closely when he is alone with my father's chickens. I pretend I am learning from him. I want to see what he is feeding my father's chickens. I don't want him to feed my father's chickens with the bitter drinks he drinks. I don't watch very close when my father is with him.

He does not have a horse like my father. He rides my father's other horse, the black one. When he takes some chicken eggs to the shops he rides my father's black horse. He helps my father with chicken feeding. He gives purple water to the chickens. I watch him closely when he is alone with my father's chickens. He drinks bitter drinks when there is no school. My father does not drink bitter drinks but he talks to him when he drinks. He eats our food with my father. My new mother gives him *amarhewu* and baked bread he claps his hands and takes the food from my new mother. He smiles to my new mother when my father is not looking. He likes her I think. When he drinks his bitter drinks alone he calls me and my friend Nozi. He does not drink when my father is working chicken eggs. He works with him. He does not call us when he is not drinking his bitter drink. I run to my new mother when he calls us but my friend Nozi goes to him. He touches her buttocks and kisses her on her mouth. Noma says his mouth is bitter like the drink he drinks.

My new mother told me to run away when another father calls me and touches me like that. She told me that my body is my body no one must touch me like that. Nozi is not afraid. She does not mind him at all. I tell her to run but she does not listen to me. He gives her some money. I don't want his money. My father gives me money. Nozi does not have a father. Her ugly uncle touches her like that always. He always talks out loud and sings ugly songs on his way home. His beard is very long and ugly. Nozi's mother sells oranges, bananas and apples at the school gate. She does not have many friends. She wears old dresses. I wish my new mother can be her friend. Other mothers are mean to her. They are not churching with her.

She does not have a churching friend. I don't know why Noma's mother is not churching with her. Nozi is children churching with us.

# Part B:

## **Ingqokelela Yeentsomi-Mabali**

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## **IMBULA-MBETHE**

Le thisisi ingokuvuselelwa nokubaliswa kweentsomi zesiXhosa eziveza imilando ngeziganeko nenkcubeko yakwaXhosa. Kule thisisi kusetyenziswe iintsomi ezingazange zibhalwe inkoliso yazo, ze ngobuchule zaxutywa namabali anjongo ikukufundisa, ngenjongo yokuvuselela iintsomi kwinkcubeko yakwaXhosa. Ababhali nabaqokeleli beentsomi zesiXhosa nezinye iilwimi abafana noG. V Mona, Kholeka Sigenu, Yolisa Madolo, Amos Tutuola, noCarmen Gimenez, babe nefuthe kule thisisi nangona iintsomi zabo zingazisebenzisi zonke esi sakhono sokuxuba amabali neentsomi. Likho ithemba lokuba esi sakhono sisetyenzisiweyo kule thisisi siya kuvuselela umdla osele ufuna ukunqaba ezintomini. Ukudodobala kweentsomi kukudodobala kwenkcubeko yesiXhosa, oko kukuthi ukuvuselelwa kweentsomi kukuvuselelwa kolwimi lwesiXhosa nenkcubeko yakwaXhosa.

Kuphando endilwenzileyo ndifunde incwadi ngokubhalwa ngu R.Siyongwana. Ndiyithandle indlela abhale ngayo le ncwadi udibanise ibali kunye nentsomi kuba izinja ngokolwazi lwam azikwazi kuthetha uLwimi olusetyenziswa ngabantu. Umbhali kule ncwadi usebenzise ubuchule ekubaliseni ngendlela izinja eziva ngayo nendlela ezilumke ngayo. Ndifunde kuye indlela yokubalisa ibali elibuye libeyintsomi. Ndiza kukhe ndilizame eli linge xa sele ndibhala incwadi yam yeentsomi. Zikhona nezinye iincwadi endizifundileyo zabanye ababhali endingabalula kubo u-Amos Tutuola kwincwadi yakhe ethi, *The Palm-Wine Drinkard*. Kolo phando bendilwenza ngokufunda iincwadi ezibhalwe ngobuchule ziincutshe zokubhala ndifunde nenye incwadi ebhalwe ngu Carmen Gimenez ethi, *My mother she killed me, my father he ate me*. Uyibhale ngendlela ebonisa ubuchule bakhe ekubaliseni ibali elibuye libeyi ntsomi ngaxeshanye. Kundivule amehlo ukufunda iincwadi ezibhalwe ngale ndlela kuba mna bendisazi ukuba xa ubalisa intsomi uqala ngokuthi, kwathi ke kaloku ngantsomi.

Ndifunde imibongo ebhalwe nguJ.J.R. Jolobe, owokuqala uthi, “UNomhi” ndiyayithanda kakhulu indlela amzoba ngayo umlinganiswa wakhe. Umzoba ngendlela enika umdla nendifundise ukubaluleka kokumzoba umlinganiswa xa ndibhala. Kwilinge lam lokubalisa intsomi ndiyisebenzisile le ndlela yokubazoba abalinganiswa bam.

## ISIKHALO SIKANONTWIKUNINA

“Yiza kumama, Ntwikunina kamama,” Watsho uNohamile evule izandla ekekelise intamo, uncumo lutsale izidlele zaya kuma ngeendlebe.

“Mama, nditsho kangaphi ukuba andifuni kutshata noMpikayise? Kunini mama ndikuxelela ukuba yohlukanani nam? Otatomncinci mabendisele iintombi zabo kweli joyini mna ndinesoka lam uBhayilam.” Watsho uNontwikunina efinge iintshiya, enyevulela unina, iinyembezi zomsindo zingcolise eso sifuba saloo lokhwe yakhe yayimthubi. Eloo bheqeza lasesifubeni wawungenakulazi nokuba libomvu na okanye lilubhelu. Ezo ziqholo zobuso zazilidyobhe yangathi linxitywe lusana olutyekazayo.

Waphuma engakhange aphenhule uSolakhe uyisemncinci kaNontwikunina. Wayejonge phantsi yonke loo ndlela igodukayo. Wothuswa kukuhlangana noyise kaBhayilam sele embiza ngomkhozi. Babengazange bayihlalela inyewe yokwendiselana ngaphambili. Akazange aphenhule uSolakhe wamgxezula kakubi akugqiba wamlingisa ngaloo ntonga wayesimelela ngayo. Babedume kakubi ke abazali bakaBhayilam ngokuba imfuyo bayithengise.

Waphuma uNontwikunina wathi chu ukuya kuhlangabeza isoka lakhe ephethe ityesi encinane eneempahla zakhe. Wayetsho ngeso sinqana sasingathi sesikanomeva ngobuncinane. Loo mehlwana akhe mancinane ayedumbe okungathi utyiwe ngoonomanxelana. Ukulila kwakummoshele nobo buso bakhe wayebulungisile. Wabonwa lisoka lakhe esekude lamhlangabeza sele ligxanyaza okungathi libala ii-ankile. Wayemilele phezulu kambe uBhayilam etsho ngaloo milenze imide ingathi imile esinqeni.

Wayeyingqolosi ngenene. Iinwele zaziqala ebunzi zize zehle ngeetuma ukuyongenelela apho kuqala khona iintshebe. Umlomo wayengakuthandi kakhulu ukuwuvula, naloo mazinyo ophukileyo ngaphambili ayesisisulu sokubethwa ngumoya. Wayehlala enxibe iimpahla ezimnyama ezinombhalo waloo nkampani wayesebenza kuyo yamalahlle. Sathi chu eso sibini sibambene ngezandla, simana ukuma sijongane ebusweni. Saya kutshona kumlambo mkhulu owawungawelwa ngenxa yeengwenya ezaye zihlala apho. Wabulala umbundlwana uBhayilam wathabatha inyama yayo wayihloma eluthini wayiphakamisela phezulu. Ngephanyazo, kwathi gqi ingwenya enkulu kakhulu,

“Molweni zihlobo zam, niya kweliphi icala namhlanje? Yabuza ingwenya sele ivuza izinkcwe kukurhalela loo nyama yombundlana.

“Siya pheshaya komlambo, ungasinceda usileqise khona, umrhumo siwuphethe.” Waphendula sele okhe amaxhaka uBhayilam.

“Ndisisicaka sakho Mhlekezazi masiyeni.” Yatshe ingwenya isondela elunxwemeni lomlambo. Bakhwela emqolo wengwenya yadada phezu kwamanzi nabo ingwenya. Wayevuya kakhulu uNontwikunina iphupha lakhe lalizaliseka. Wayemane ecimela abuye ajonge eziphekuza ngesandla emana ukuncumela elo soka lakhe. Wayezibona sele ezonwabele nesithandwa sentliziyo yakhe nabantwana babo ngaphandle kokuphazanyiswa ngabazali ababemkhetela isoka. Wayenomfanekiso ngqondweni welizwe abaya kulo elingenazithintelo kulonwabo lwakhe. Nangona sasihlaba isikhumba sengwenya, wayengakuveli ntweni oko kuhlatywa ngamaqoqo esikhumba sengwenya. Uvuyo nothando awayenalo lwalugubungele yonke into. Wayenengoma awayeyivuma kamnandana.

Emva ekhaya bashiyeka befunisa abazali bakaNontwikunina bancama kungekho mntu unamkhondo. Usizana olungunina lwagula sisifo sentliziyo ukususela koko kulahlekelwa kwaso yintombi yaso. Iphupha lakhe lokuzibona enomkhwenyana osisityebi lalinyamalele.

UNontwikunina noBhaylam baya kuhlala kwidolophana enomgodi wamaladle. UBhayilam wayevuka kwangentseni ahlambe anxibe iimpahla zokusebenza ezinombala omnyama. Wayevuka kwakusasa uNontwikunina alungiselele umyeni wakhe ukutya aza kuphatha emsebenzini. Babesele benabantwana abathathu abalinganayo. Waqala umkhuba wokungabuyi ngolwezihlanu xa erholile uBhayilam. Yayimkhathaza le nto uNontwikunina ahlale elila. Babelila nabantwana bakhe xa bembona elila. Babengenazo iimpahla ezaneleyo abantwana bakaNontwikunina babenxiba iihentshana ezinde nebhulukhwana zobusana. Wayesele wanciphayo emzimbeni engathi lintshontshwana lentaka elinethwe yimvula.

Ngenye intsini wavuka ekuseni uNontwikunina esosula ezo nyembezi, ezithethela. “Uyabona, ndigqibile ukulila ngoku. Asoze ndiphinde ndililiswe nanini na. Ndiyintombi kaNtsumpa mna, ndiza kwenzela ukutya ndoda. Kunjalonje okona kwakhe kwamnandi.” Ayothule phezulu intsini elungisa eso sidlo somyeni wakhe, akugqiba amfakele ebhegini yakhe yokuphatha.

“Sithandwa sam, naku ukutya kwakho ukonwabele, ndikulungiselele ngothando.” Watshe uNontwikunina emanga ngobubele lo gama uBhayilam ethe ng’ a loo mlomo wakhe kuvele ezo zirhezu zamazinyo.

Lafika ixesha lokuba kutyiwe ngexesha ledinala. Wakhupha isitya sakhe ngamabhongo amakhulu uBhayilam. Wayehleli phakathi kwamanye amadoda ngeli xesha akhupha isitya sakhe. Wayethembise umhlobo wakhe awaye esebenza naye ukuba uza kumpha xa esitya isidlo sasemini. Babevumelene ngolo hlobo njengoko babetye kunye ngexesha leti yentlazane. Wathi esalungiselela ukuvula isitya sakhe kwavakala ilizwi lomhlobo wakhe.

“Yhe Bhayi mfondini sakhangeleka sisihle esi sitya sakho, ungandilibali.” “Ndingakulibala njani mfondini emva kokutya amaqebengwane akho amnandi kangaka. Yiza mfondini masitye.”

Wasivula ngegugu uBhayilam isitya sakhe, gqi ngamalahle amnyama ebengezela. Wavutha umsindo kaBhayilam wasilahla kude lee eso sitya. Ukusukela ngaloo mini akazange aphinde abuyele endlwini yakhe uBhayilam.

Emva kweentsukwana ezimbalwa engasabuyi uBhayilam, uNontwikunina wazixelela ukuba uza kumfundisa isifundo uBhayilam kunye noogxa bakhe. Wanduluka kwangentseni uNontwikunina waya emsebenzini kaBhayilam. Wafika kanye ngexesha leti yentlazane. Wangeniswa ezi-ofisini wachaza isizekabani sokundwendwela kwakhe apho. Wabizwa uBhayilam weza. Wabuzwa ukuba uyamazi na loo mfazi, walandula uBhayilam esithi akazange wambona nasemdudweni. Bamhesha okomshologu abaphathi bakaBhayilam uNontwikunina bemtyhola ngokubachithela ixesha. Wahamba ngomva ukubheka emnyango, waphinda wangena engxame okwenkunzi yegusha. Suka wavuthamelana okwendubule. Bathi besamangalisiwe, waya evuthamelana, besathe nta amehlo bemangalisiwe, wasothula isikhalo uNontwikunina bavala iindlebe abaphathi bakaBhayilam. Ngenxa yengxolo yesikhalo sikaNontwikunina zavaleka mba iindlebe zabasebenzi bonke ababesenza noBhayilam. Ukusukela loo mini abazange baphinde beve ngeendlebe abantu baloo nkampani yayisebenza uBhayilam. Kwabakho ingxaki enkulu apho, bonke abantu babengeva ngeendlebe. Kwacaca ukuba indlela enokubancedisa kukubhala yonke into phantsi xa bethetha. Abaphathi benkampani bafunda ukusihoya isikhalo somfazi. Isikhalo sikaNontwikunina sayitshintsha indlela ababejongwa ngayo abafazi kuloo nkampani.

## UXAMANA NENTOMBI YOMVUNDLA.

Akukho nto ikuzoboza kamnandi ngathi kukugcakamela ilanga. Ndathi ndisagcakamele njalo ematyeni kumlambo okufutshane nasekhaya. Cum... yoyi, ndabiwa bubuthongo obumnandi, *Rrrhhh...Rhooo...Rrrhhh*, wena wakha wasiva isandi sokurhuqwa kwamafele omileyo. *Rrrhhh* "...tyhini madoda! Ndiphi? Ndim lo? Ndingumkhaphi? Umama uyatshata?" Ndisacinga njalo, gqi intombi yamaphupha am inkosazana yesizwe sakwaMvundla. UNobuhle ngenkangeleko. Ingelosi ehamba emhlabeni. Ubuhle bayo le nkosazana ingathi ayiyi kuzenza mfutshane. Sele ihamba, umhlaba uyakuvuyela ukunyathela kwayo. Ezo ndletyana zintle ngokungathi kwathathwa usuku lonke mhla zazisenziwa. Loo mlonyana mhle ngathi awushukunyiswa yintshukumo yokuzalisa isisu. Amehlwana ale nzwakazi awafani nawo onke endakha ndawabona, afana odwa ngobuhle.

"Ndichulile, ndibanjwe ngumama wam, sibetha kuhle ukuya ngaphambili. Makube ke ndim lo utshata nale nzwakazi." Kwezo ngcinga, ndaphazanyiswa lilizwi likamama, "halala nyana, namhlanje uyindoda emadodeni." Watsho endiphaxula ngobubele ngaloo msila wakhe njengokuba wayeqhele ukwenza xa enemincili, wandiqobela neliso, wancuma. Wayenxibe eyona yakhe yakudidi oluphezulu ilokhwe. Yayinombala ozitshintshayo, obengezela mfusa suke wakusondela kuye, ujike ube bulembu. Sabetha kuhle ukunyathela oku. Loo mthika wayewuthe wambu emagxeni wamtsho wangathi yikumkanikazi. Wayenxibe iindidi ezimbini zezihlangu. Esasekunene sasimfusa, esasekhohlo sibulembu. Yayintle inkosikazi katata madoda inyathela kancinci ngokungathi yiyo eza kuthi "ndiya kwenjenjalo." Wasuke wandikhumbuza ongasekhoyo, utata wam. Isuti yam yayinemigca eluhlaza namthubi, ndinyathela ngezihlangu zam ezibomvu okwetumata, zitsolo ngaphambili, wena wakha wazibona izihlangu zomfundisi wecawe yomoya.

"*Kata-kata, kiti-ki*" Yatsho ikatala kamzala wam uNkawana yangathi wazalelwa ukubetha yona, ade ayibethe nangela gqajolo lakhe lomsila. Wayekekelise loo ntloko yakhe ejonge ngaphaya kweendondo okungathi ngutishala uNdlulamthi. Ibhulukhwe yakhe engqoqo eyayiveze amaqatha ngaphandle, yayixhaswe ngeentanjana ezityheli, ebetha ngehemphe emhlophe qhwa, nomnqwazi omnyama. Abakhaphi bam babenxibe iisuti ezimthubi naluhlaza, bebahle abahlobo bam bobahlanu. UNgwenya yena wayengumkhaphi wam ophambili. Isuti yakhe yayimsobo ngombala inebhatyana ende ngasemva, ithe yatya phezu komsila ze ibe mfutshane ngaphambili oku kukaJobela, inamaqhosha amhlophe.

"*Zvwi-ntswi-ntswi, zvwi-mvfw-mvfw*" Yatsho intsholo yekostina isitsho ngasemnyango. Yatsho kwavaleka iindlebe zam vingci andabiseva naloo katala ibibethwa ngumzala. Zangena

iimpelesi zikaMvundlazana zinxibe iilokhwe eziluhlaza okwesibhakabhaka, zimfutshane zinemisila erhuqa phantsi. Zazizibhijabhija iimpelesi zilandela loo ngoma yayidlalwa ngekostina nguloo mfo wayenezisini. Kwahamba ixesha engade avele uMvundlazana. Ndandijonge emnyango ndilangazelela ukumbona othandwa yintliziyo yam. Emva kwesiqingatha seyure, wangena owentliziyo yam emhle okungathi kukuphuma kwelanga. Wayenxibe ilokhwe emhlophe khazimlayo inde irhuqa phantsi. Wayebanjwe nguninalume uMfene. Babengathi abasafiki kum kangangendlela endandingxame ngayo. Ndaqalisa ukudanisa ndilandela ingoma leyo yekostina. Indlela endadanisa ngayo ndandiqala ukuyidanisa. Uthando lunemimangaliso, lunezinto olukwaziyo ukuzenza lona esingakwaziyo thina ukuzenza. Ndithe ndisadanisa njalo, suka bonke ababelapho bandiqhwabela izandla, nkqu nomtshakazi. Kuthe kanti bayandithuma, ndawulahla mpela umlenze. Zisatsho njalo izandla, suka yaphela intswahla kwangathi kuqhwaba umtshakazi kuphela.

Kuthe kanti loo mdaniso awuphelelanga ephupheni kuphela, kwaye ezo zandla sele izezentombi yekumkani; inkosazana yesizwe sooXam, eyothuswe koko kugqushalaza kwam kodwa ndilele. “Awu madoda, ndiselapha kula matye kanti?” Ndafane ndee nkebe kukudana ndakothuka kwelo phupha. Zaziphithizela izicakazana zenkosazana.

Yayindibunguzelela inkosazana indicela ukuba mandincede ndivume ukuba ngumfundisi mdaniso kwisikolo sakhe sokuphuhlisa izakhono zolutsha. Ndayebeyebeza kodwa ndavuma kuba ndingafuni ukumphoxa. Yenyuka nengalo intombi yasemzini okomfana owenze nzima intombi. “Ndiyakubona ukuba unguXam onobubele nolungileyo, ndicela wamkele esi sicelo sisuka emazantsi entliziyo yam. Ndicela ukuba ube lundwendwe lwam olubekekileyo kwisidlo sasemini ebhotwe,” yancumeza yatsho inkosazana. Yonke le nto yayisenzeka ngequbuliso yayingandiniki thuba lakucingisisa. Kwakucela intombi yekumkani, ndandingenandlela endandingaphepha ngayo isicelo sohlonitshwayo. Nangona ndandifile ziintloni nomothuko, ndavuma.

Ndenjenjeya ukubuyela ekhaya ndisiya kuzilungisa ndinxibe ngendlela efanele isidlo nenkosazana. “Kukuthini ukuwelwa ngumqa esandleni kanye xa ndingazimiselanga kufumana mqa? Uwela esandleni sam kuba kutheni? Ubungenakuwela kwabo bawulambeleyo? Ubomi abunamfobe ngenene. Ngoku ndinqwenela ukuhlala ndizonwabise ngala mboniso wasephupheni, imeko indinyanzelisa ukuba mandithathe isimemo endingasinqweneliyo. Akwaba ibinguMvundlazana ke lo undimemayo. Ukuba inkosazana ingafuna ukunditshata ndingalandula njani kanene? Ngumgibe wantoni na lo ndizibona ndigangxeleka kuwo?”

Ndisekwezo ngcinga zinzulu ndothuswe sisandi somntu obalekayo emva kwam. Xa ndijika ndijonga. “Nkosi yam, yiba netarhu kum. Obunje bona ubuhle?” Wena wakha wawabona amafu entshonalanga, babunjalo ubuhle bale ntwazana yayibaleka apha ezithendeni zam. Umlomo wam wabasengxakini yokuvuleka ngaphezulu komlinganiselo ofanelwe kukuvuleka ngawo. Izidlele zam zazingathi ziza kukrazuka luncumo endandinalo. Ndatshintsha nendlela yokunyathela ndabhampa, izandla ndazifaka ezipokothweni. Ndathi xa ndinyeka kuba ndingasaziva izingqi ndalubona uvuyo lweliso lam mgama luzivonyavonya, luzibhijabhija lusenza imithambo. Ndakhe ndema ndibukele obunjalo ubuhle bendalo. Ndawavala amehlo am ndabuya ndawavula ngelifuna ukuqiniseka ukuba andiphuphi kwakhona. Ndathi xa ndiwavula amehlo am ndafika isenza imithambo intombi yomvundla ingahoyanga. Wabuya umboniso wasephupheni xa ndibona obunjalo ubuhle. Ingaba ukubona eli gqiyazana ngeli xesha kanye emva kokuliphupha sisiqinisekiso sokuba ngowam ngenene? Ndasondela kancinane kuMvundlazana ndabulisa ngobubelekazi, nembeko enkulu. Wavuma uMvundlazana engayekanga ukuzibhijabhija.

“Kunjani nkosazana?”

“Ndiyaphila bhuti unjani wena?”

“Hayi ndiyagula nkosazana, ndiguliswa luthando, ndiyakuthanda.”

“Uthetha ukuthini bhuti ukuthi uguliswa luthando?”

“Ndinyanisile nkosazana yesizwe semivundla. Wena ungothandwa ndim ngenene, ndicela undinike intliziyo yakho ibe yeyam, neyam ibe yeyakho.”

Kwathi engekandiphenduli uMvundlazana waphazanyiswa kukufika kukaNgada ebaleka ephethe iselula kaMvundlazana. Wayekhefuzela uNgada kubonakala ukuba kudala ebaleka.

“Mzala...ndi-zoku-kunika i-i-ise-se-lula yakho kudala i-i-i-ikhala u-u-uNgwemebalabala kudala e-e-e-ekufuna. Ndi-zamile u-u-u-ukumxelela ukuba awukho uyishiye etshajeni ise-se-lula suke abeke phantsi engaphe-phe-phe-phenkulanga. Oko esenza eso sithukuthezi de ndabona kulungile ukuba ndiyikhuphe iselula yakho nokuba ayikagwali.” Utshilo uNgada esakhefuzela.

Uthathe iselula yakhe uMvundlazana encumencumeza ngokungathi ujonge kulowo wayemliliselwa ngeselula. Loo mlonyana wakhe umhle ngokwenene ubunjwe ngobunono edlala ngawo uMvundlazana. Ndayibukela le ntwazana indidlwengule umxhelo ibobotheka kodwa

ingabobothekiswa ndim. Ndandinqwenela ukuba ibe ndim oyenza ive ngaloo ndlela. Uthando lwalubhalwe ebusweni baloo nzwakazi. Ndandidanile, ndiziva ukuba ndiye ndikhathazeka koku kufika kweselula eyayingathi sisithunywa sokufa. Ewe yayisisithunywa sokufa kuba yalibulala lafa tu ithemba lokuhoywa lelo gqiyazana. Yaphinda yakhala iselula kaMvundlazana.

“Molo mhlobo wam. Ndiyaxolisa iselula yam bendiyishiye etshajeni. ...Ewe ndisakhuba kakuhle. Ndiyakuthanda nam sithandwa sam. Mamele thandwayo, ndisaxakekile okwangoku ndisazilolonga... hahaha.... Ewe mnqathe wam. Iselula yakho iza kuliliswa yeyam xa sele ndigqibile ukuzivocavoca. Bhayibhayi Sentliziyo yam” Wayesele encume ngathi uyambona uNgwemabalabala.

“Kazi ndakubanawo na amendu okushiyisela le ngwe, xa imabalabala ingandenyusa eqhineni.”

“Uxolo wethu bhuti, ubusathini kanene?” Wabuza uMvundlazana eyimvuzemvuze bububele emva kwaloo ncoko yakhe. Uthando belubhalwe ebusweni kuMvundlazana. Ebeqhwanazisa amehlo emana ukudlala ngezo ndletyana zakhe zintle kunene.

“Masiphinde sithethe gqiyazana, ndinedinga nenkosazana yesizwe sooXam.” Ndatsho ndihamba ndijonge phambili ndingafuni kuphoxeka. Ndandidanile noko yile ndlela enze ngayo uMvundlazana. Ndathi makhe ndinyeke kancinane ndixolise amehlo am. Wayekwelinye iqondo lolonwabo uMvundlazana. Wayesenza umdaniso, echopha aphinde aphakame ngokukhawuleza, ivosho, engaboni nokukhathazeka kwam. Ndafaka izandla zam ezipokothweni ndabhampa ukuhamba oku ndizincumisile ndabe ndililaxa ngaphakathi kukudana.

### **Endleleni eya Ebhotwe**

“Andisiboni isidingo sokubasahambela phambili nokuthabatha eminye imifanekiso. Lo mfanekiso ndiwuthathileyo wanele.”

Ucinge ngaloo ndlela uNkosazana Xam. Waxelela iimpelesi zakhe ukuba mabagoduke babuyele ebhotwe. Abahambanga mgama mde badlula kwimalike ethengisa imifuno neziqhamo. Uxelele impelesi yakhe ephatha ingxowa yakhe yemali ukuba mayithenge iziqhamo nemifuno. Wajijitheka uNomqolomba akubona ukuba loo mfazana uthengisela apho nguXameka intombi eyamshiya kwisoka lakhe awayelithanda ngokwenene.

“Zintshwencile Nkosazana ezi ziqhamo, masithenge phaya kweziya zingaphesheya.”  
Wacebisa watsho uNomqolomba. Engaphendulanga uNkosazana uthathe isingxotyana wafaka ezo ziqhamo ebezifuna kuloo tafilana kaXameka.

“Bendingaceli luvo lwakho ntombi bendikuyalela. Kwixa elizayo ungabophendulana nam phambi kwabantu ubokwenza ngokomyalelo wam. Ufuna bacinge ntoni ngam abantu? Inkosazana ndigqibele indim, kutshintshe ntoni ngoku kuwe, ndim ndehlile wena wenyukela?”

“Ndicela uxolo Nkosazana andikube ndiphinde ndiphazame.”

Wayengasavuyi uXameka kukufumana engako imali ngexesha elinye. Wayibala loo mali waphelwa ngamanani okubala. Wabulela kuNkosazana ngokumnceda kangako. Wayevova apha the kuguqa ngamadolo. Koko kuguqa ngamadolo kwakhe uXameka kungenelele nabanye oonomalike baguqa ngamadolo ukunika imbeko kwinkosazana yabo. Yanyibilika intliziyo kaNkosazana wathenga kubo bonke ngokulinganayo.

Endleleni egodukayo uNkosazana uhlangatyezwe ngumculo woonoplatana ulutsha lwamasele bebethelwa ikatala ngunonkala. Babezivonya oogive, amasele edanisa evuyela ukubona inkosazana yawo. Wathi akusondela kubo behlukana phakathi abanye kwelinye icala abanye kwelinye ngendlela enika imbeko. Kwaphuma imbongi yecikilishe yabonga, yatsho ngezidlwengul’ umxhelo zona izibongo ezi. Yayityityimba loo dyongwana ibonga iphathe kurhubuluza ngesisu ibuye ime ngomsila. Yayichukumisekile inkosazana lolunjalo ulwamkelo.

Yana imvula yamehlo kaNkosazana akuva izibongo zaloo dyongwana. Yayiphatha kukikizela loo dyongwana ibuye icengceleze ngolwimi lwasemzini. Yazibona sele ihleka inkosazana ubuso bona baye buseyingxididi yiloo mvula yayikhutshwa ngamehlo ayo. Zaxakwa iimpelesi ukuba ziyisule ubuso na okanye ziyilinde. Kaloku yayingafuni kuntantazelelwa ngokokude yosulwe nobuso. Yayihlala ibakhalimela abancedisi bayo ukuba mabangayenzeli yonke into. Babumabalabala ubuso benkosazana ngenxa yeenyembezi zidibene nezo zithambiso zokwengeza ubuhle.

Yayikuphiwe ukubonga loo dyongwana yayimtyibela, iphathe kuvuma ingonyana yomlozi engaqhelekanga. Iimbongi ke ziyavuseleleka kukubonga kwenye imbongi. Kwaphakama iqina likanomadudwane lisitsho ngolwimi lwakowalo. Loo ntsholo wayeyenza unomadudwane yazitsho zavaleka iindlebe zenkosazana. Yayingakuthandi ukucalula ngokobuzwe kodwa yayingamameleki loo ngxolo yayisenziwa ngunomadudwane. Wayevakala ukuba usemncilini kuba wayephatha kunyusa loo msila wakhe aphekuze ngawo ababukeli. Zayana ngamehlo ezo ntwazana zazimpelesa inkosazana. Yajonga phambili inkosazana yaqalisa ukuhamba ibonakala

ukuba ayonelisekanga yiloo mbongi yayithetha ulwimi olwalufuna itoliki. ISizwe soonomaDudwane sasingalandeli ngokupheleleyo singahoyanga naloo mfundo na kanene. Sesinye seZizwe esasingabathumeli abantwana baso esikolweni ngelithi asifuni bantwana baza kukhula bezilibele ukuba bangoobani. Bahambe bade baya kufika komkhulu bengayekanga ukucula oonoplatana. Laqhubeka iqela lomxhentso weenkonde samasele. Yayingasavakali loo ngxolo yayisenziwa lelo qina lalibonga ngesiDudwane.

Kwathi ukuba kufikwe komkhulu yatshintsha ingoma zombela ngoma yimbi iinkawu ezazinxibe ngokufanayo izihlangu ezimbejembeje zomdaniso. Iibhulukhwana ezimfutshane ezinombala wemango evuthiweyo. Zazidanisa elo vosho ngokokutsho kwazo zibile zibaleka amanzi.

Yathabatheka inkosazana lolo hlobo lomdaniso. Yaqubula iselula yayo, yacofa iqhosha lokushicilela ivido. Yayimana ukunqwala ngentloko inkosazana uncumo lugcwalise obo buso bayo babusele bubuhle kwakhona buhlanjiwe loo mibalabala. Yashicilela inkosazana imana ukuvova kancinane xa bevova onkawana abo babedanisa. Wafika ukumkanikazi ngokungxama ebizwe sisicakazana sakhe ukuba makaze kubukela loo mbhiyozo wawusenziwa. Wayengenalusini ukumkanikazi wayefinge ezo ntshiya zakhe zazizotywe okungathi yindlela eya edolophini. Loo misebe yayifakelwe yayijinga phumayo kubonakala ukuba uyingo lweentshiya lonakalise loo misebe yemboleko. Yayibaxiwe loo mizobo yamashiya kakumkanikazi. Wayewunduzelisa ilokhwe yakhe etyheli ephethe elo tshoba lakhe eliphosa ngasekhohlo abuye aliphose ngasekunene.

Waba nenhenhe loo mdaniso wevosho kukumkanikazi. Wayeyintokazi ezitshaya phambili ukumkanikazi lowo wayengayifuni into enokubathobela umgangatho. Umdaniso wevosho obusenziwa ziinkawu ububukeka kakhulu. Le Nkosazana yayingafane ibonakale ekuhlaleni, kwakuthi apho ibonakele khona ibe ngala mayeyeye, iphelekwe de iye kufakwa ebhotwe.

## **Ekhaya**

Andinakuphosisa, ndabanako ukukhweleta okuthile ndakubona indlela athandwa ngayo uNgwemalabala nguMvundlazana, ndizithuthuzele ngokuzikhumbuza ngesimemo seNkosazana. Ndifike ekhaya ndangqala egumbini lam, ndikhathazeke ndinjalo kwaye ndingafuni ukuba umama andibone ndikulo meko. Kuthe kanti ndiqhitele ngokungqala egumbini lam kuba yiloo nto kanye eyenze umama ukuba abe nesikrokro. Ndiva ngaye sele ethethela kufutshane nomnyango,

“Xamana wam, kunjani ndoda? Kutheni ungaqalanga endlwin’ enkulu ufumane isidlo sasemini? Kowu! Inokuba ufile yindlala. Ndikulungiselele isidlo sakho osithandayo, amaqanda enciniba kunye nentlanzi.”

Utsho umama sele endiphulula intloko oku ngathi uphulula intloko yosana. Nangona bendingayithandi loo nto kodwa ndiye ndathula ndingafuni ukumvisa kabuhlungu. Ndiyindoda ekwizinga lokutshata. Ebekekelise intloko emana ukuyisondeza kuye esifubeni, abuye andiphulule iindevu.

“Hayi nozala sukuzikhathaza wena bendifuna ukuqala ndihlambe, ndinxibe kakuhle ndinedinga nenkosazana.”

“Halala, halala, awuboni ke indodana yam bafazi! Halala... umfazi ongazelanga makabeleke ilitye...” Ebegida umama, ekhulule ijezi ebheshuza ngayo. Kweso sithuba sokukikizela kwakhe kuvakele ukhelekenkce phantsi, xa ndisithi mandijonge, nango amazinyo kamama emboleko phantsi. Loo golide ahombise ngayo ibitake kude lee. Ndikrukruthekile yintsini ndingafuni ukuba andibone ukuba ndiyahleka. Khange ahoje loo nto owam umama, uthathe loo mazinyo wakhe wawafaka epokothweni yelokhwe yakhe waqhubeka nokuvuya umama. Inyibilikile intliziyo yam xa ndibona ubunyulu bothando andithanda ngalo owandikhulisayo. Inyamalele ngaloo mzuzu loo nkxwaleko bendifike nayo. Besele kuisankxwe kungenelele nezinja zikhonkotha, imiqhagi ikhonya, izikhukukazi zisitsho ngeyazo intsholo zincedisa unozala, engayekanga ke naye ukuteketa. Ndidanise itwalatsa ndibetha ukhwelo kukuvuya. Senze loo ntsholo imnandi ebize nabamelwane abafike ababuza nto nabo bangenelela kuloo mbhiozo besikuwo. Bendibaleka amanzi umzimba wonke, iyabilisa itwalatsa. Kuphela kwento endizingca ngayo ke le yokuba kwisizwe sooXam, kulula ukuba sizonwabise kwaye nabamelwane abalindeli simemo, ukuba beva konwatywe, nabo ababuzi koko bayancedisa, bengakhathalelanga nokuba kubhiozelwa into engekho.

### **Ukukhala kweselula**

Ndiphunyuzwe kukufika kukadadewethu omdala eze kutya idinala. Ebesebenza kwisikolo esingekude kuyaphi. Ngendingazange ndimbone naye ukuba wayengandikrwecanga endinika iselula yam. Yayilile yaphinda yathula. Yayinenombolo ekubonakala ukuba izame ukundifowunela izihlandlo ezilishumi. Ndiyithathe ndisakhefuzela ndabuyela kuloo nombolo yayinditsalele kalishumi ingaphendulwa. Ikhale kwakanye yaphendulwa lilizwi elalisitsho ngokungathi kukhala umculo ezindlebeni zam. Ndandincume imilebe ivuleke ngokungathi iza kukrazuka. Ndandothuswe kukufonelwa nguMvundlazana exolisa ngokungandiniki xesha

lakuzandlala imvakalelo yam ngaye. Wayexolisa edomboza ngokudlala ngomkhunya kulanjwa. Ndaakekelisa intloko ndinqwala kwangaxeshanye, ndiwuva nomsila wam ukuba uyapitshoza. Wandicacisela ukuba uNgwemabalabala wayelisoka anyanzelwa ngabazali ukuba atshate nalo. Abazali bakaMvundlana, ngelabo babelungiselela intombi yabo ikamva njengoko uMvundlazazna yayikuphela kwentombi yabo. UNgwemabalabala wayengusomashishini oveleleyo kwezoshishino. Abazali bakaMvundlaana babengabahlobo babazali bakaNgwemabalabala. Wacela uMvundlazana ukuba sibonane ngentsimbi yesithandathu emalanga. Ndavumela phezulu sele ndiwubona loo mtshato wasephupheni lam uza kuzaliseka. Savalelisa nothandwa ndim. Usakhumbula ngokuya besisuke sabhiyoza nabamelwane, sajuxuza kwamnandi? Yinto eqhelekileyo ke leyo yokuba sibhiyoze singazi ncam ukuba sibhiyozela ntoni kanti isizathu sokubhiyoza siza mva.

Ndakhawulezisa ukuhlamba eshaweni ndaziqhola ngeziqholo ezinuka kamnandi. Ndandinomthandwazana apha ngaphakathi wokuba ingathathi xesha lide loo dinala kaNkosazana. Ndarhubuluza, ndibugabadula, ndithatha indlela enqumla emlanjeni khonukuze ndifike ngokukhawuleza. Ndandimane ndikhupha iselula yam ndijonge ixesha. Laliselihle noko kuba zazinyukela intsimbi yokuqala. Ndahlangana nomhlobo wam osenyongweni uFudwazana xa kanye ndiza kuwelela ngaphesheya. Sangena ixesha elide sibukana. Wayefike ngaloo ntseni ukuvela Phesheya. Wayenxibe iibhutsi ezinde ezimhlophe entloko ethwele umnqwazi otyheli okwentyatyambo yasehlotyeni. Wayefike ezithengele inqwelomafutha encinane. Imincili endandinayo kukudibana nomhlobo wam weminyaka. Ndamcela ukuba ahambe nam ukuya komkhulu. Zange alandule wavumelana nam sahamba ngaloo nqwelana yakhe.

Sathi sisekude sakhawulelwa yintsholo yomculo wegqom ulandelwa ngamazwi abadanisi. Sawuvala lowo wethu sasiwukhalisa noFudwazana. Wakhupha iindondo zelanga uFudwazana nam ndanxiba ezam. Sakhawulelwa zizicaka zakomhkulu zasibonisa indawo yokumisa imoto. Wayiqhuba uFudwazana wayokumisa kuloo ndawo sasiyiboniswa sisicaka eso. Saphuma apho sifake izandla ezipokothweni, iindondo ezimnyama zelanga emehlweni.

### **Isidlo nenkosazana**

Kwakuphithizela apho ziintokazi ezintle zilungiselela isidlo eso sedinga. Yangena inkosazana itsho ngaloo lokhwe inde isikiweyo emacaleni ibomvu okweengwenye ezivuthiweyo. Entloko wayethwele iwigi eneenwele eziyephuyephu okobulembu bombona omtsha. Kwakusitsho indyondyo yepiyano ngendlela ethozamisayo. Yangena ngomdaniso inkosazana amacikilise

esenza umdaniso welima lezifuba. Ayetsho ngento ebukelekayo ke loo matyendyana nezo ntombi zawo. Umbala wezobhulukhwe babezinxibile wawuhobe iishethi zimhlophe iibhulukhwe zixhaswe ngamakhrisibhanti amnyama. Zona iinzwakazi zazibetha ngeelokhwana ezimfutshane ezimnyama ezibhacekikeyo zathiwa khunkqu ngamabhanti amhlophe kwezo zinqana zazo. Watsho loo mdaniso qelele neetafile ezazizele zizibiliboco. Baphithizela abasebenzi abaziiweyitala bephinyela phakathi kwezo ndwendwe zazimenyiwe apho yinkosazana.

Kwangena uNgwemabalabala enyalasa kukuzithemba. Wayede abengathi unebhanyanisi nokuhamba oku ecuthe namehlo. Wayenxibe icici nebhulukhwe epitseneyo emazantsi imthubi ngombala nehentshana ephela entla kogqongo ethyeli. Wathi akubona loo nginginya imjongile, wafaka amazawadi amnyama elanga. Wadanisa isibhicongo sesiphithiphithi egila nezo weyitala.

Eso similo sikaNgwemabala yaba lisebe lenkawu kuMvundlazana, kuba wathi akanakuze atshate noNgwemabala ongenantlonipho. Yaba kukuqala kobomi obungunxantathu kuXamana kuba nenkosazana yayingayekanga ukumana immemela eBhotwe.

## UNOBUBELE NEHOTYAZANA

Uthando nenkosikazi yakhe uNobubele babezihlalela emazantsi entaba kufutshane nomfula onamanzi abalekayo. Babehlala bekulungele ukwamkela iindwendwe kuloo mzi wabo wawukubiza udlula ngendlela bubuhle. UNobubele wayekhuthela kakhulu elihomba kananjalo. Wayetsho ngaloo milenze mihle mikhulu naloo mpumlwana itsolo okweNgesikazi. Isinqana sakhe sasingawulingananga loo mzimba wakhe wawumkhulu ezantsi kwesinqe unciphile ngasentla. Unwele lwakhe lwalulude okungathi yintombi yeNdiya. Ezo nwele zakhe zazibetha emagxeni ziyephuyephu okobulembu bombona omtsha. Wayesithi xa ehamba kweloo bala lomzi wakhe unge umhlaba uyanqwala kukubetha kuhle konyawo lwakhe. Esi sibini sasingenabo abantwana. Sasizixolisa ngokwenzela ububele bonke abantu abagqithayo. Abancedisi babo babebaphethe kakuhle kakhulu ngokokude ubani acinge ukuba ngabantakwabo. Yayimhlupha ke uNobubele into yokungabinabantwana. Kuloo mfuyo yabo yayininzi kwakukho neentaka ababezifuyile. Hotyazana lithile elalimana ukufika liphiwe amazimba nguNobubele, laqaphela ukuba uNobubele iyamkhathaza le nto yokungafumani bantwana. Lagoduka labuyela emzini walo. Ngaminazana ithile laphinda lafika iHotyazana lacela intlanganiso noThando umyeni kaNobubele. Walungisa iziselo namaqebengwana uNobubele. Emini emaqanda lafika ihotyazana lihamba nomyeni walo.

Bankelwa ngobubele obukhulu oohotyazana nomyeni wakhe. Basela isiselo esihlwahlwazayo, batya namaqebengwane lawo ayelungiselelwe loo ntlanganiso. Bathi besahleli bothuswa sisithonga sokubhodla komyeni kaHotyazana etsarhwa nokutsarhwa kanti kukungaqheli isiselo esihlwahlwazayo. Waxolisa uHotyazana nguloo mbhodamo womyeni wakhe awayewenza ebhedulula namehlo okungathi uyafa ngaloo mzuzu. Wakhawuleza uHotyazana watsala iindletyana zomyeni wakhe watsho wee thimbilili umyeni lolo ncedo lokuqala likaHotyazana. La mahobe akhawuleza angina kumcimbi aze ngawo, “kubonakala nakuthathatha ukuba noko ukungafumani bantwana kuyanikhathaza.” Bacebisa uNobubele nomyeni wakhe ukuba baye kudibana nogqirha owayehlala kufutshane nabo owabancedayo nabo ukuze bafumane abantwana. “Ndiyanazi ke nina bantu, kuthiwa niyakuthanda ukuthandabuza ngakumbi xa uncedo lungaveli kwabanye abantu abafana nani. Ukuba nithe namthandabuza lo gqirha, hleze amayeza kagqirha angasebenzi ukuba nithe nathandabuza.” Bavuya kakhulu ooNobubele bakuva ukuba ukhona ugqirha onokubanceda bafumane abantwana. Bacela indlela ooHotyazana sele bephiwe nengxowa yamazimba bemka besintsitheka bevuya kukubalulutho kubahlobo babo.

## **Esejari KaQqr. Nkawana**

Bavuka ngentseni ooNobubele balungiselela ukuya kuloo dolophu yabo wayefumaneka kuyo ugqirha. Bakhwela inqwelo yamashi banduluka kusempondo zankomo. Bagaleleka edolophini malunga nentsimbi yethoba. Baya kuloo ndawo kagqirha baxelelwa ngumabhalana ukuba balinde ukufika kukagqirha baza kubizwa. Balinda ngomonde kwelo gunjana lokulinda. Babekhona nabanye abantu ababelinde ugqirha nabo kwakwelo gumbi. Malunga nentsimbi yeshumi, wafika ugqirha babizwa abantu ngokokufika kwabo.

Lade lafika ixesha lokungena kukaNobubele nomyeni wakhe uThando. Hayi ke mntakabawo, uQqr. Nkawana ehambela phezulu, athi elapha abe epha, “phefumla, phefumla. Yithi aah...” etsho ngegqajolo lomsila. Baxilongwa ngugqirha wajonga wathi uza kubanika iipilisi ezinomxube webhanana, ubusi kunye neenozo ezithile... namayeza ekufuneka bawasele ngokomyalelo owawubhalwe kuwo. Wabayalela ugqirha ukuba bawasele bawagqibe baza kumfumana umntwana. Baphuma apho bevuya ziindaba ezimnandi zokuba baza kumfumana umntwana. Bangena edolophini bathenga izimuncumuncu bagoduka bevuya.

## **Ukuzalwa Kosana**

Ngenene, emva kweenyanga ezilithoba, uThando noNobubele balizwa ngomntwana oyintombazana. Ngelishwa, uNobubele zange alifumane ithuba lokukhulisa le ntambazanana kuba wathi nje akubeleka, suka wasutywa kukufa. Yayibuhlungu intliziyo kaThando kukushiywa ngumama wosana lwakhe ekuphela kwalo. Kweenziwa amalungiselelo omngcwabo, wangcwatywa uNobubele ngaloo nkonziso yayilusizi. Kwafuneka ukuba uThando afune umntu wokulugcina usana lwakhe. Wafumana uNomaza, udade boNobubele owayemdala kunoNobubele. UNomaza wayenabantwana abangamantombazana ababini omnye eneminyaka elishumi, omnye eneminyaka emihlanu. Wavuya uThando kukufumana umntu ozalanayo nomkakhe okwaligazi lomkakhe. Wabonakalisa ububele obukhulu uNomaza, noThanda waziva exolile.

Lwaluluhle ke usana lukaNobubele lunezidlele ezikhulu ezinezinxonxo ezivothokayo xa luncuma. Lwalutsho ngaloo mehlo mahle ngathi ngama-apile agolide. Lwalunezandlana ezimhlophe ezincinci. Lwalusithi xa lukhala lube ngathi luyacula. Ngaminazana ithile, lwalulele usana kwibhedana yalo encinci uninakazi engekho. Kwafika iinyosi zihamba zicula ingoma emnandi. Lwamamela usana luyivela kudana le ngoma kuba kaloku lwalulele. Lwavula amehlo alo. Nazo iinyosi “...Bbbzzz bbbzz...” zicula zijikeleza usana. Lwancuma usana lwaphakamisa isandla lubulisa iinyosi ezo zazicula. Zancuma iinyosi zakubona ezo zinxonxo

kwezo zidlelana zintle zolo sana. Zasondela kulo zimana ukuluncamisa kwezo zidlelana zalo zintle. Lwagigitheka usana luvuya. Zamana ukuya iinyosi nganye nganye ukuya kubulisa usana ziluncamise. Zakhupha isitya zagalelela usana ubusi obumnandi. Lwavuya usana lwabulela lwacela ukuba zize zinganqabi iinyosi kuba sele zingabahlobo kulo. Zavuma iinyosi zacela indlela zisithi zileqa emsebenzini liphelile ixesha lazo ledinala. Zacula okokugqibela iinyosi zidanisa kamnandi. Emva kokudanisa zahamba iinyosi zabuyela emsebenzini zichwayitile.

Ngelo xesha, umakazi wolu sana uNomaza, intokazi eyayimnyamana, imfutshane, wawungacinga ukuba sisigaqa esithile xa umbonela kude. Ubuhle yayingabuphiwanga ncam, sele encumile, kwakuvula loo mazinyo axineneyo ngokungathi lowo wayewafaka wawalahla nje engajonganga.

Wabuya uNomaza egadini wafika usana luncumencumeza lusitya ubusi. Lwalundumzela ngelo lizwi lincinane loo ngoma lwaluyiculelwe ziinyosi. Walujonga uNomaza wanikina intloko. Wayeyifihla inzondo awaye enayo kolo sana lwaluluhle ngenyani. Lwalungumfanekiso kanina walo. Zange luhoye usana lwaqhubeka nokutya ubusi obo. Walujonga kwakhona uNomaza usana ngamehlo agcwele intiyo. Wacinga icebo lokuphelisa olo lonwabo lwalubhalwe ebusweni bolo sana. Wathatha incindi yekhala wayigalela kweso sitya sasinobusi. Lwathi xa luphinda lusikha usana lufaka emlonyeni lweva ubukrakra. Lwantlimpinika usana lwakuva obunjalo ubukrakra. Lwakhala kakhulu lwavula umlomo luzama ukukhupha obo busi babukrakra. Lwacela uninakazi ukuba aluphe amanzi, suke walujonga nje akaphendula. Lwavuzisa izinkcwe usana kwamanzi nezo mpahla zalo zintle lwaluzinxibile. Lwajweda ukukhala oku usana lucela uncedo. “Oh petuna, iyacula intana nze, izacula nebhendi nze” watsho uNomaza evulela phezulu unomathotholo ukuze singavakali isikhalo sosana. Babedanisa abantwana bakhe besenza ivosho. Wagalelela abantwana bakhe amasi akalupha usana. Lwakhala usana kwade kwatsha ilizwi.

### **Usana ezingcolweni**

Wavuka ekuseni uNomaza waqokeza elungiselela uThando isidlo sakusasa. Wathi ukugqiba kwakhe ukutya uThando waya emasimini. Wathi uNomaza akubona ukuba umkile uThando wathatha ingubo wasongela usana wankcunkca ukuya ngasemlanjeni. “Namhlanje uza kufunda ukuqhuba isikhephe, uza kundiza emanzini. Mhlawumbi ngenye iminni uya kuba ngumlawuli weenqanawe ezinkulu.” Watsho eteketisa uNomaza. Wafika wabhekabheka ukuba akukho mntu umbonayo na. Wathi akungaboni mntu walubeka apho ezingcongolweni, “ukrelekrele umntana kamakazi yho! Uyakwazi nokulawula isikhephe, iyho-yho! Bhabhayi *ntana*, ubuye

xa ugqibile va?” Wabaleka wabuyela ebantwaneni bakhe. Lwalulele usana lungazazi nokuba lubekwe endle. Emva kweeyure ezintathu lulele apho, lothuka lwakhala kuba lulambile. Kwathi cwaka akwabikho mntu uzayo ukuza kulupha ukutya. Lwavuma ingoma usana ngelizama ukufumana uncedo.

*“Mna ndashiywa ngumama, mna ndashiywa ngumama.*

*Andinamama, andinamama. Ncedani bo, ncedani bo”.*

“Khanimeni maselendini, niyayiva le ngoma itshoyo?” Kwabuza isele kwamanye amasele awayelungiselela ukhuphiswano lokudada.

“Hayi akukho ngoma apha qha inokuba wena udinwe kukudada.” Laphendula elinye lithe naa imilenzana lidadela phambili.

*“Mna ndashiywa ngumama, mna ndashiywa ngumama.*

*Andinamama, andinamama. Ncedani bo, ncedani bo.”* Iphinde yavakala ingoma isitsho.

“maselendini, niyayiva le ngoma itshoyo?” Liphinde labuza isele kubahlobo balo.

Emazantsi omlambo uNobikhwe wayexakekile ezama ukuzixhoma ngentambo. Wothuswa kukuva eso sikhalo sosan. Wabhuduzela ezama ukukhulula elo qhina wayesele elifaka entanyeni. Wayedunjelwe bubuso kukulila amehlo etshonile okungathi udliwe ngonomeva. Wathi xa ezama ukukhwaza, watshothozelisa ilizwi lingaphumi. Koko kubhuzuzela wayekwenza ezama ukukhulula iqhina, waya kuwa wabetheka elityeni ngobuso waphuma ingongoma ngoko nangoko. Laba likhulu ibunzi ngephanyazo lawogquma amehlo ebehleli ecuthekile kukudumba kobuso. Waphakama wabhekabheka ezama ukuva ukuba isikhalo siphuma kweliphi na icala. Sasingasavakali isikhalo sosana. Wachopha elityeni wazibuka kuloo manzi. Wothuswa kukubona obo buso babudumbe bungajongeki. Waphakama wasimbela isinqe ebaleka loo mntu ambone emanzini. Waleka engaphumli ukusinga amazantsi omlambo. Wayebetheka emithini yimbi imkrwela, wayengeva zintlungu zangaphandle eyona ntlungu yakhe yayisemphefumleni. Wathi xa ekufutshane nomlambo efuna ukuziphosa, wabona umnyazi odada emanzini ungade utshone. Wangena emanzini engakhululanga nezo mpahla. Wathi xa ekude kufuphi nosana weva uphaxaphaxa wamanzi umhlangabeza. Waphakamisa amehlo, nanko uxam ephaxuza ewuvule ng’ a umlomo.

“Mholo nkosikazi, ungaxhalabi wena ndizakunceda. Kudala ndikulindile ukuba uze kuluthatha usana lwakho.” Watsho uxam esondela kuloo mnyazi wawudada emanzini. “Ndiyabulela kakhulu sihlobo sam.” Watsho uNobikhwe engangcazelisa ilizwi, eginya kaninzi. “Utheni

nkosikazi ingathi unxunguphele nje, ulinyazwe yintoni? Yiza ndikumasaje ubuso andizukuhlawulisa.” Watsho uxam sele emthi bimbilili uNobikhwe. Wadada uxam waya kufika kwilizwe eliluhlaza elinezitalato zikhazimlayo. Wahlangatyezwa ngamantombazana anamehlo amancinci nemilenze emifutshane. Ayenxibe iilokhwe ezmfutshane ezimhlophe. Wangeniswa kwigumbi elinebhedi ezondlulwe ngamashiti amhlophe. Kwakukho iqela lomculo elalidlala uhadi, umrhubhe, imarimba, amagubu, ipiyano, amaxilongo. Babedlala ngendlela ethozamisa umphefumlo. Phakathi kwakhe nabo kwakukho isihluzo esikhulu sokuhluzela loo mculo wawusenziwa zezo zixhobo ukuze ufike kuye uyinto enye edibeneyo. Wawuhluzekile ke loo mculo undindene ungenakutsho ukuba kudibene izixhobo ezininzi ngolo hlobo. Walaliswa kwenye yezo bhedi uNobikhwe. Elinye igqiyazana laye limkhulula zonke ezo mpahla wayezinxibile wasala ngesuti yesele. Kwangena ufafa olude lomfana onxibe iimpahla ezimhlophe. “Ungoyiki nkosikazi, andinabungozi ndilithenwa. Ngumsebenzi wam ukukolula imizimba edubekileyo, ngokukodwa emphefumlweni. Ndiyazi ukuba ubunqwenela ukufa ngenxa yobuhlungu bokungafumani bantwana. Ukuchukuluzwa ngumninawakazi wakho bekuyenza ibembi mpela imeko yakho. Ukumkani uzamile ukukuthuthuzela, kodwa amazwi akhe atsho kwintliziyo elihlwili.” Waphakamisa amehlo uNobikhwe wazama ukuphakama. Olo fafa lude lwambambazela uNobikhwe walala yoyi.

Wothuka sele umzimba wakhe udlamkile, ubuso bakhe babuthambile bugudile bungathi bobo sana. Wayezibuka phambi kwso sipili sasikho macala onke elo gumbi. Wayenxityiswe ilokhwe ende enomsila orhuqayo, iinwele zakhe zazolulwe kakuhle zatsho zayephuyephu ubude bazo bubetha emagxeni. Wayethwaliswe isithsaba segolide senkosazana. Wacimela ezama ukucinga ukuba inokuba uphi na. Wathi esamangaliswe bobo buhle kwangena intombazana ebonakala ngathi ikwiminyaka engamashumi amabini. Yafika yaguqa kuye yagobisa intloko, “Ndingakwenzela ntoni nkosazana yam entle?” Yatsho lontombi ijonge phantsi ingawaphakamisanga amehlo idlala ngezandla. “Ndiphi apha? Ingaba ndisephupheni okanye ndiseZulwini?” Watsho uNobikhwe engaqinisekanga nokuba makavuye na okanye alile. Wayeziva edlamke okungathi uzelve ngokutsha. Wayengasakhumbuli nokuba wayede wafa na ngokuya wayezama ukuzibulala. “Ukwilizwe lokuvuya nokuthuthuzelwa. Ulile kakhulu kwilizwe lakho lokuzalwa iintlungu zomphefumlo zikuxikixa zingakuphi sithuba.” Kwaphendula umfo owayengazange ambone naxa engena kweloo gumbi. Wayemde enerhwanqa, enxibe impahla engaqhelekanga kodwa ebonakalayo ukuba yeyomntu omkhulu. Ingubo ende emhlophe erhuqa phantsi yayimenza angabonakali ezinyaweni. Ngaphezulu yelekwe ngomxwayo ogolide, entloko enesithsaba segolide esikhulu kuneso wasithwalisiwe yena. Ilizwi lakhe lalizele luthando lingathi liyamnyumbaza ngendlela emnandi. Wathi guqaqa

ngamadolo phantsi uNobikhwe, wazogquma ubuso. “Phakama ntombazana yam encinci, andizelanga kukoyikisa, ndizokwamkela, wamkelekile ekhaya.” Watsho loo mfo wayemhle ngokungaqhelekanga. Wamolulela isandla, waphakama uNobikhwe wabambeleva ngesosandla. Wathi xa ezijonga kweso sipili wabona intombi encinane ekhangeleka ineminyaka elishumi elinethoba. Wakhe wawavala amehlo, wabuye wawavula. Wayeyikhumbula kakuhle loo ntwezana yayimi phambi kwakhe. Ewe, yayinguNobikhwe ngokuya wayeseyintombi. Waphinda waphakamisa amehlo eqwalasela loo mfo wayemi phambi kwakhe. Akazange ade amazi ukuba umazelaphi na kanene.

“Ntombi yam encinci, isikhalo sakho seminyaka sivakele kwaye ukuxhwaleka kwakho kundibangele ukuba ndithumele isicaka sam ukuba siye kukulanda. Ukukubona ulila ngala ndlela ubulila ngayo imihla ngemihla kuyichukumisile intliziyo yam ndaziva ndingenakwenza ngandlela yimbi ngaphandle kokulanda emhlabeni ubuye ndizokuthuzela ngokwam.” Zathi waxa iinyembezi emehlweni kaNobikhwe zawela kweso sandla sasizikhongozele. Wabona iinyembezi zifika esandleni zibe ngumbhalo ofundekayo othetha loo nto aliliswa yiyo. Walila kakhulu uNobikhwe akubona loo mmangaliso. Wambamba ngesandla wamsondeza esifubeni sakhe. Zazingathi zivulelwe iinyembezi zakhe uNobikhwe. Zazifika zibhale yonke intlungu awayeyiphile ukusukela ebuntwaneni bakhe ukuya kutsho kubomi awayebuphile emzini. Zabhaleka kwaphuma incwadi enamaphepha alikhulu. Emva koko kulila waziva egcwaliswa luxolo, uvuyo olwamenza wahleka. Zaphinda zaphuma iinyembezi zafika zabhala kwakhona kodwa zabhala ubumnandi awayebuva naloo ntsini wayeyihleka yayibhaleka kweso sandla zaziwela kuso.

## UVETHANDA

“Mninawa, ndiza kukhe ndiye kukhangela umfazi kweza lali zingaphesheya phaya. Nceda ke mninawa ujonge ikhaya eli nemfuyo. Ndidiniwe kukusoloko ndihlekwa ziintombi zale lali zindibabaza ububi. Ndithi ndisazithethelela suke intombi indiheshe ithi ndiza kuyiphuphisa kakubi. Ndingxoliswe olo hlobo na mninawa? Bayaliwa yimbarh’ ethengelayo, ndakugqiba ukubenzela inceba yokubanyusela. Zidudelwe nokududelwa kunjalonje.” Watsho uVethanda ejalile ebusweni efinye iintshiya. Wakhulula i-ovalolo yakhe wanxiba idangari nehemphe emsobo ishwabene injalo. Wakhulula amaquza akhe ezihlangu wanxiba igambhutsi zakhe ezimhlophe. Waya eziko wakha uthuthu walola amazinyo akhe. Wajikela emva kwendlu wafika wema phezu kwedama lamanzi wazibuka. Inwele zakhe zazingamaqiqisholo angakanywanga. Wangena endlwini wathatha ikama wabuyela kweloo dama wema wazibuka ekama inwele zakhe. Wathatha intonga yakhe wangena endleleni. Wagxanyaza ngaloo milenze yakhe mide ngenene okungathi ubala ii-ankile. Wakhawuleza waya kutshonela ezibukweni.

Amanzi ayemdaka ephuphumela ngaphandle kudada izikhuni ngaphezu kwamanzi. Kwakungabonakali ndawo yakuwela. Wayesabeke isandla emlonyeni emangalisiwe, weva ilizwi elincinane lisithi, “Uyaphi na Vethanda mhlobo wam?” Wakhawuleza wajonga ngasekhohlo apho laliphuma khona ilizwi. Amehlo akhe angqamana nawesele lichophe phezu kwelitye liwakhuphe azingqanda amehlo, isifuba sisihla sinyuka. “Ndiya ebukhweni phesheya komlambo.” Waphendula uVethanda esondela emanzini.

“Hayi mhlobo wam ungazami ukuwela kula manzi anobungozi xa enje. Yiza kum ndikuncede ndikuweze, uze ke wena undenze umhlobo wakho osenyongweni. Latsho lisondele kuVethanda lingalindelanga nokuva impendulo. “Beleka apha kum emqolo mhlobo wam, siye ebukhweni.” Latsho sele limi phambi kwakhe. Walijonga elo sele uVethanda ngaloo mehlo abomvu eloyikisa. Suka lazivuthela isele, lalikhulu, laphinda lazivuthela. Wathi ng’ a umlomo uVethanda emangaliswe bobo bukhulu beloo sele ngephanyazo. Wathi xa ephakamisa umlenze wasekhohlo kuba ezakukhwela, wakruneka edolweni kabuhlungu wancwina. Wagoba ezama ukuluphulula, suke kwakruneka nowasekunene, weva isandi esinqeni isinqe siqhokreka. Wapenapena engasazazi ukuba makathini.

Waphakamisa amehlo labe isele limjonge ngoncumo, limqobela iliso, suke avaleka omabini amehlo esele libhidwa kukuqoba iliso. Wagigitheka uVethanda wavuleka umlomo wakhe wee nkenye ezo zimanyhula zakhe zimuncu. Lavula amehlo ngokukhawuleza isele laxhuma umtsi wamnye lasondela kuVethanda. “Uvezelwe ni na Vethanda wahleka kangaka? Lo nto

ukhamise kakhulu intliziyo izakugodola, vala umlomo ungabe uzibhidliza apha utsho ngezimanyhula ngathi lisango laboni.” Latsho isele lidikiwe loo maqhakuva alo engathi ampontshiwe ubukhulu obu. Wavala umlomo uVethanda akugqiba wajingxela esiya kuloo mhlobo wakhe wayemphoxa. Lakhomba emqolo kulo isele, zange aphendule uVethanda waqabela phezu kwaloo mqolo wawusele umkhulu ngathi ngowengwenya. Lathi lwatyu isele kabini kathathu phezu kwamanzi labe sele lifikile ngaphesheya. Bathi bakufika ngaphesheya komlambo wehlika uVethanda emqolweni wesele. Lakhamisa isele, kwaphuma loo moya wawuligcwalisile laswama ngephanyazo labuyela kula mzinjana walo wangaphambili. Wazolula uVethanda kwavakala ukrunqurunqu wokoluleka kwesinqe namadolo zazingasavakali iintlungu. Wathi xa esusa unyawo lokuqala, lavakala isele lithi, “Kanjalo nje Vethanda, umkhomb’ ubhembesile apha kuwe hi? Ukusukela namhlanje singabahlobo abasenyongweni besivumelene, akunjalo?” Latsho isele lixhuma lingena epokothweni yehempe. Wawakhupa azingqanda uVethanda othuswe koko kutshintsha komhlobo wakhe ngokukhawuleza. Wathi engekaphenduli laphinda lamkhumbuza isele, “Masambe singashiywa lixesha lo mcimbi siwuhambelayo ufuna siwutshaye usaqhuma.” Latsho isele likrobe kuloo pokotho lalingene kuyo.

Wagxanyaza uVethanda ukulandela indledlana eyayisiya ngasekhohlo. Wabonela mgama iinkawu zidlala emthini. Zathi ukuba zimbone zehla ngokukhawuleza zamhlangabeza zikhwaza, “Mholo Vethanda, uya ngaphi na mhlobo?” Latsho iqhajazana lenkawu elalikhokele ezinye. “Ndiya ebukhweni.” Waphendula uVethanda. Uthe esathetha njalo waxhuma ebambe esifubeni, wathi ng’ a umlomo ngelizama ukuthetha, “siya ebukhweni, siya ebukhweni mna nomhlobo wam.” Uthe engekagqibi ukuthetha laphuma isele lachopha kuye egxalabeni, “Mholweni zihlotyana, siya ebukhweni” Latsho isele liqoba iliso liwuvule ng’ a umlomo walo.

“Xa kunjalo ke masikukhapse kuba le ndlela yaziwa sithi, anonakulunga ukuhamba nodwa. Shiyekani nina nkosikazi.” Yatsho inkawu ijonge kwinkosikazi yayo. Yasondela inkosikazi yenkawu yanga umyeni wayo, “Nihambe kakuhle tatabo, sizakukhumbula, uncede ubuye kwamsinya.” Yatsho loo nkosikazi kankawu incumele umyeni wayo. “Sizamela wena Vethanda mhobo wethu, usemtsha wena kwezi zinto zothando awazi nto tu. Thina ke singamagqala mfondini, ndiza kufundisa ukuthanda inkosikazi yakho.” Yatsho le nkawu itsala inkosikazi yayo ebisele ihamba, zangana kwakhona iinkawu. Wayekhamisile uVethanda ebukele evule umlomo, zazehlela izinkcwe. Wothuswa ngumhobo wakhe ngokumvuthela emlonyeni, “Sukuwuvula kangaka umlomo intliziyo izakugodola.” Laqhula latsho isele.

Bahamba bobathathu inkawu ikhokhele phambili. Yayimana ikhwela kuloo mithi yayisecaleni kwendlela ikhe iziqhamo iziphose kuVethanda azigange. Bahamba latshona ilanga besekude nemizi. Babonela mgama isibane esikhanyisileyo. Bahamba ngokungxama befuna ukude bafike apho kuloo mzi wawukhanyisile. Bafike babona isango elivuliweyo, bangena. Batsalwe livumba elimnandi lokutya. Bangena ngaphakathi endlwini bafika kungekho mntu kodwa ukutya kukhona ezimbizeni kuqhuma bubushushu. Ayekhala amathumbu kaVethanda. Wangena kumagumbi onke aloo ndlu engade abone mntu. Wajonga naphantsi kwebhedi kodwa akabona mntu. Waphuma phandle kobo bumnyama ekhwaza, “Baphi na abantu balapha?” Weva ilizwi lisithi, “Baphi na abantu balapha?” Wajikela emva kwendlu ekhangela loo mntu wayemva ekhwaza. Ngokuye ekhwaza laliye limlinganisa ilizwi.

Wade wancama wabuyela ngaphakathi kuloo ndlu wayefike inokutya. Wathatha izitya waphakela yena nabahlobo bakhe batya. Bathe besatya weva ingonyana isitsholo kufutshane nendlu. Kwamothusa ukuva loo ngonyana ilizwi lomntu owaye evuma lalifana nelika nina owayesele eneminyaka wemkayo esithi uya kubona abantu bakowabo. Batya bade bagqiba lingayekanga ilizwi. Waqokelela izitya uVethanda waya kuzihlamba kwisitya esasisikhulu sinamanzi ashushu anogwebu lwesepha yezitya. Wade wagqiba ukuhlamba izitya kungade kungene mntu kodwa yona ingoma isatsho kamnandi kufutshane nendlu. Latshintsha ilizwi lacula ngoma yimbi eyayimozelisa ngokusisimanga. Elo lizwi lalacula lamkhumbuza imihla yokukhula kwakhe nomntakwabo. Wajonga emnyango kodwa akwade kungene mntu. Waye sele ehebhuza bubuthongo uVethanda nakukudinwa, emana ukunqwaleka ngentloko, amehlo ewavale mba, izinkcwe zizehlela umlomo uthe ng’ a. Lasondela kuye emlonyeni isele lamvuthela zoma nko ezo zinkcwe. Wothuka uVethanda waya kuhlaba ngentloko phantsi. Wazama ukuphakamisa intloko inesiyezi, kujikeleza yonke into eyayikuloo ndlu. Wabonela kude intombi enemilebe emngqindilili, eqatywe mnyama okungathi iqatywe intshongo. Yayibetha ngesuti yesele, inemilenze empuluswa, amehlo ayo emakhulu. Yasondela kuye, yambamba ngesandla yamphakamisa yamsondeza kuyo, yamanga. Yamkhulula impahla impahla nganye nganye wada wasala eze njengayo. Yambamba intombazana yamsebezela ezindlebeni, wagigitheka uVethanda emana ukusebeza naye.

Yamthi chu ngengalo intombazana yaya kungena naye kwigumbi elinezibane ecaleni kwebhedi. Ibhedi yayondlunlwe ngamashithi amhlophe. Yaphinda yasondela kuye ezindlebeni intombazana yamsebezela kwakhona. Wagigitheka kwakhona uVethanda wayokuwa ngomqolo kuloo bhedi yawa phezu kwakhe intombazana. Ekuseni uve into emqhwethayo emagxeni. Wavula amehlo akabona nto kodwa wabona itafile enokutya kwakusasa kusaqhuma kunjalonje. Wosula iintongo ngezandla zozibini emana ukutyikitya amehlo. Wacimela wabuya

wawavula amehlo. Waphakama kuloo bhedi yayinamashithi amhlophe, waziqwalasela wafika umzimba wakhe uze. Wajonga ecaleni kwebhedi kwakukho isitya esinamanzi anogwebu lwesepha yokuhlamba izitya, ecaleni kwaso kukho itawuli emhlophe engenkulu kuyaphi. Wasondela kuyo wahlamba izandla nobuso kweso sitya wosula ngaloo tawuli yayibekwe apho. Wantswayiza waya kuthabatha ibhulukhwe yakhe ezantsi kwebhedi. Yayisongwe kakuhle nehemphe yakhe yayibekwe apho ihlanjiwe yaza yolulwa kakuhle. Ivumba lesoseji lamtsala akabisanxiba wangqala ekutyeni entswayiza enjalo. Waqala ngesoseji wayingxala emlonyeni wagcwala qhu umlomo waxakwa kukuyihlafuna. Wayikhupha emlonyeni wayibuyisela esityeni waphinda waqala phantsi ukuyiluma kancinane. Wayelaqaza uvalo lubetha ngamandla. Weva amanwele esithi hlathuhlathu. Wahlafuna ngokukhawuleza ezama ukubimbiliza loo soseji yayisemlonyeni. Yaphinda yatsho ingoma yezolo isitsholo kufutshane.

*“Wamkelekile sthandwa, wamkelekile sthandwa sam.*

*Kudala ndikulindile sthandwa sam, ufikile ekhaya sthandwa sam.”*

Yatsho ingoma kufutshane nendlebe yakhe yasekunene. Wayeka ukuhlafuna wakhe wamamela, umlomo usagcwele umthamo. Wancuma, wavuleka umlomo, wagigitheka uVethanda naloo mthamo wawugcwalise umlomo. Wabimbiliza loo mthamo engakhange abesawuhlafunisisa. Wagigitheka phuhlileyo uVethanda engakwazi ukuzibamba. Wawungcangcazela umzimba wonke ehleka okungathi kukho umntu omnyumbazayo. Wothuswa kweloo theko wayezidlela lona kukutsiba kwesele lathi gxumpu kuloo jagi yayinesiselo. Weva ugwantyagwantya Phakathi ejagini. “Yhu, ndiphantse ndafa lunxano.” Latsho isele litsiba ukuphuma kuloo jagi lathi lakantyu umtsi wamnye laya kuthi thaca phakathi esityeni sikaVethanda. Wathabatha iqanda wafaka emlonyeni lawutsho wagcwala umlomo wakhe. Wahlafuna ngokukhawuleza ejonge esityeni eso. Yangena inkawu iphethe ibhanana evuliweyo ihamba ihlafuna. Yasondela esityeni nayo yabeka eloo xolo lebhanana kwalapho esityeni.

Wavula umlomo uVethanda kwathi momfu loo mthamo wokutya wawugcwalise umlomo. “Vala umlomo Vethanda, zange ufundiswe ukuba awuvulwa umlomo usitya?” Latsho isele lithe gqa amehlo limjongele kufutshane. Watsarhwa uVethanda xa kanye ezama ukuphendula isele. Wayebhedulula amehlo ekhohlela engayeki, emana ukukhomba ijagi. Lazityela itheko isele nenkawu kokokutya kukaVethanda lingamnanzanga. Watsarhwa wade waphuma iinyembezi emehlweni, kwaphuma oko kutya kwawela esityeni eso. Latsiba isele umtsi wamnye labuyela ejagini. Yavula iimpumlo inkawu isonyanya loo mthamo wawuwele koko

kutya babekutya. Yatsiba owenkawu inkawu ukuya kuphuma ngomnyango bemshiya apho uVethanda ebhedulula amehlo.

## USABELO NONOMALIZO

“Kowu hotyazana lam, itsho kamnandi le mpepho yale njikalanga.” Utshilo uSabelo ejonge inkosikazi yakhe uNomalizo.

“Itsho uphinde tata ingase ndihlale kulo Mthunzi ndingenzi kwanto. Ntonje imisetyenzana yam ndifuna ukuyigqiba ngokukhawuleza.”

“Khawuze kuphumla kancinci qunube lam apha ecaleni kwam.” Utshilo uSabelo ekekelise loo ntloko yakhe ngelicengayo.

“Ukuba nje besele ndigqibile ukucoca la magumbi eendwendwe bendiya kuza kuphumla nawe thanga lam elimkhuma. Kaloku kula magumbi endwendwe andifuni sandla samncedisi ndikholwa kukuqiniseka ukuba yonke into iyazanelisa iindwendwe zethu. Ngubani owaziyo, mhlawumbi singazibona sele sifikelwa ziingelosi.” Ebevontshiza uNomalizo kwezo zindlu zakhe zaziliqela etsho ngeso siqana sakhe sasingawulingananga loo mzimba wakhe wawumkhulu ezantsi kwesinqe unciphile ngasentla. Unwele lwakhe lwalulude okungathi yintombi yeNdiya. Ezo nwele zakhe zazibetha emagxeni ziyephuyephu okobulembu bombona omtsha. Wayesithi xa ehamba kweloo bala lomzi wakhe unge umhlaba uyanqwala kukubetha kuhle konyawo lwakhe.

“Ndiyakuva vatala yam. Ndikuncedise phi mna kulo msebenzi wakho?” Ubuzile uSabelo sele emi ngeenyawo.

“Hayi wethu myenam, phumla wena akukho nto ingako kukuphathaphatha ezo ndawana zidinga isandla sam. Ndithanda ukuba iindwendwe zethu zizive zisekhaya xa zilapha.” Utshilo uNomalizo encumile.

“Undenzela isazela ntandane yam xa ungaziphi thuba ngolu hlobo. Uyakudinga ukuphumla sinabo abantu bokusincedisa kunjalonje bakhuthele. Ndiyakwazi Mthunzi wam ukuba awufuni bazibone njengamakhoboka abancedisi bethu.” Utshilo uSabelo sele embambe ngesandla emqwalasele ebusweni.

“Xa ndisebenza, ingqondo yam iyazilibala izinto ezindivisa ubuhlungu. Kuza kude kube nini ndingade nditeketise owam umntwana? Uyazi ukuba xa ndibona abantwana noonina babo ibangathi bayandiqhayisela? Ndiyazi ukuba akunjalo kodwa ndiye ndive kabuhlungu.” Utshilo uNomalizo sele ziqengqeleka iinyembezi.

“Ngxe kubetha kwentliziyo yam, ngxe lonwabo lwam. Ndicela intliziyo yakho ingakhathazeki.” Ucenge watsho uSabelo sele ephulula ezo nwele zinde zenkosikazi yakhe.

Esi sibini sasingenabo abantwana. Sasizixolisa ngokwenzela ububele bonke abantu abagqithayo. Yayiyintlungu kakhulu kuNomalizo into yokungabinabantwana.

### **Ilizwi eliphilisayo**

Ngaminazana ithile, uNomalizo esipha iintaka amazimba njengesiqhelo suka weva ilizwi lisithi, “Nomalizo, ntomb’ eyimvuzemvuze bububele.”

Yawa phantsi loo ngobozana yayinamazimba wayeyiphethe, athi saa phantsi loo mazimba. Zangungelana iintaka ukuya kuloo ndawo ayechitheke amaninzi kuyo. Wajika uNomalizo wajonga kweloo cala lalisitsho ngakhona ilizwi.

“Musa ukothuka kaloku mvuzemvuze yoluntu.” Latsho ilizwi engekabonakali umninilo.

Walaqaza uNomalizo ekhangela umnini lizwi. Wangancangazelisa ilizwi kukothuka,

“Andoyiki... uphi Mhlekazi? Ndingwenela ukuthetha nawe ndikubona ubuso ngobuso.”

“Ayikabi loxesha lokukubonisa ukuba ndingubani eli kodwa liza kufika ithuba lokuba undibone. Isikhalo sakho semihla ngemihla sokungafumani bantwana sivakele, uza kubafumana abantwana.” Liphinde latsho ilizwi lomntu.

Ebesele egaqe ngamadolo uNomalizo wangancangazelisa ilizwi kwakhona,

“Ndiyabulela lizwi eliphilisayo.” Watsho uNomalizo esagaqe ngamadolo njalo. Kwavakala isandi somoya odlula apho ngakuye kunjalonje wawuva ukuba udlula neloo lizwi wayeliva. Wacimela uNomalizo engafuni kujonga. Wayengancangazela imilebe ishukuma ngokungathi uyathetha. Kwakungekho mazwi aphumayo emlonyeni ngaphandle kwaloo ntshukumo yayisenziwa yimilebe yakhe. Weva ilizwi lomyeni wakhe limkhwazela kufutshane naloo ndawo wayeguqe kuyo.

“Tumato yam, ukweliphi icala? Ndikuphathele amaqunube asendle, kanye la uwathandayo amnyama.” Ayetyebe etelezela lo maqunube amnyama okungathi sisiphingo. Wavula amehlo kancinci uNomalizo wawasula ngezandla zozibini. Waasondela kuye uSabelo wabeka loo mnyazana wawunamaqunube phantsi.

“Yiza qunube lam, yiza kum. Kutheni ingathi uyalila nje, kukho nto ikukhathazileyo? Kwenzeke ntoni amazimba abubusaza, uwile?” Wayesele egaqe ecaleni kwenkosikazi yakhe. Zawela esifubeni sikaNomalizo iinyembezi zikaSabelo. Wamanga ixesha elide, elo flerho linye leentshebe zakhe lalimanzi toxo. Bangana ixesha elide kungekho uthethayo. Iinyembezi zabo

zazisiwa ngokungathi kuwa amaqabaza amakhulu emvula. Kuloo ndawo babeguqe kuyo bothuswa lilizwi lisithi,

“Isikhalo senu sivakele, niza kubafumana abantwana. Nize nihlale nithandana ngale ndlela nithandana ngayo, ngokwenza njalo niya kufumana abantwana abaninzi.” Latsholo kufutshane ilizwi kodwa engabonakali umnikazi walo.

Babhekabheka ngaxeshanye uSabelo nowakwakhe. Zange babone mntu kodwa beva umoya obabetha ebusweni ngendlela emnandi. Ngephanyazo, zoma nko iinyemembezi emehlweni abo, yoma intshebe kaSabelo, koma nezo zifuba zabo zazisele zimanzi.

Tyhini, ngesiqophe bahleka ngexesha elinye bagigitheka okungathi kukho umntu obanyumbazayo. Waphakama uNomalizo esahleka engcangcazela umzimba wonke. Wahleka akayeka de waya kungena endlwini esahleka. Wakhupha iimpahla ezntle awayesandula kuzithenga wazifaka kwizingxotyana ezintlanu. Isiqhuma ngasinye sasineepere ezimbini zezihlangu. Wayengekayeki ukuhleka ngalo lonke eli xesha. Wabiza abancedisi bakhe bobahlanu. Wayengakwazi ukuthetha kodwa izandla zakhe zazibakhweba ngabanye ngabanye. Wayehleka ngendlela eyonwabisayo komameleyo.

### **Ingoma kaNomalizo.**

“Ncomeka, Ndyebokazi, Thembisa, Ncumisa, nawe Nontombi, enkosi kakhulu ngoncedo lwenu eniye nasinceda ngalo. Nisebenze ngokuzinikela iminyaka emithandathu, namhlanje ndiyabulela kuni. Ndiza kuninika intlawulo yeminyaka emithathu ukuze nikwazi ukuziqalela ubomi. Ndinifundisile ukushishina, nantoni enixakayo endleleni nihlale nisazi ukuba umyeni wam nam siya kuhlala sizivulile izandla ukuze sibe luncedo kuni.” Wayencume okungathi uzelwe ngokutsha uNomalizo.

“Sisi, unyanisile?” Wabuza uNdyebokazi iinyembezi zicengceleza ukuhla ngezidlele.

*“Ndiphendulwe, nam ndiyimpendulo...ndiphendulwe, nam ndiyimpendulo.*

*Ukuphendulwa kukwenz’ ubeyimpendulo, ukuphendulwa kukwenz’ ubeyimpendulo.*

*Hayiyo ukuphendulwa kukwenz’ ubeyimpendulo, hayohayo ndiphendulwe, nam ndiyimpendulo.”*

Wacula uNomalizo engqisha egqiba indlu yonke izandla eziphakamisele phezulu. Kungenelele abancedisi bakhe belandela ngendlela emnandi. Kungene uSabelo watsibela ipiyano wayinyumbaza yatsho ngaloo ndyondyo imnandi idlwengula umxhelo. Kwangena uNkebeza

ephefumlela phezulu, ebaleka amanzi ebusweni. Loo hempe wayeyinxibile yayimanzi emakhwapheni nasemqolo. Wayesehla esenyuka uNkebeza engqisha ngomlenze omnye ukulandela ingoma leyo. Wayebetha ikhwelo abuye ombele yilozayo imincili yayimphethe. Emnyango izinja zasisenza eyazo nazo zivuya zikhonkotha, ziphathe kubaleka zileqana, zibuye zenze umkhulungwane. Latshona elaloo mini ilanga kuyimincili yodwa kwaSabelo. Bonke abalusi ababesele bebadala banikwa iinkomo, iibhokhwe, iigusha, iidonki, iihagu, amahashe, kunye nembewu baze bakhululwa nabo. Kwalalwa kuyimincili kwaSabelo. Babevuya kakhulu abelusi abadala bakwaSabelo zezo zinwe babezenzelwe nguSabelo. Oko kuphendulwa kukaSabelo kwamkhubekisa kakhulu uSonkwenkwe owayefike kuqala kunabanye abasebenzi. Wayenamashumi amathathu anesihlanu esebenzela uSabelo. Wayefike wasebenzela abazali bakaSabelo ngaphambili.

Bavuka ezinzulwini zobusuku ooSankwenkwe namakhosikazi akhe omahlanu. Bavusa abantwana babo, nezinja zabo, nemfuyo yonke kaSabelo. Imfuduko yabo yayibonakala ukuba kudala bayicwangcisa. USonkwenkwe wathi phambi kokuba banduluke wema esizikithini sebala wathetha wenjenje,

“Mhlaba omkhulu nezindlu ezikuwo, zintlanti, nani madama amanzi hambani niyokuma phesheya komlambo omkhulu. Mhlatyana omncinane, nkqantosi endayishiyelwa ngabazali bam, zingxondorha zangasekhaya, mzana wam endawushiyelwa ngabazali bam, tshintshana nalo mhlaba nako konke okukuwo. Wona mawuye kuma apho ikhaya lam limi khona, ikhaya lam lize kuma apha libe likhaya likaSabelo nomkakhe. Ndlwana yam encinane yokulala, funquka uze kuma apha kule ndawo ibinalo mzi kaSabelo.” Zasuka iintlanti, amadama amanzi, loo mhlaba wawumkhulu kaSabelo, wathi thwasu waphakama wahamba nezindlu nayo yonke into ebingaphakathi ezindlwini. Endleleni kwakulayite izibane zakwaSabelo njengoko umhlaba, izindlu zazikhokele nako konke okwakukuzo.

## **Kuyagwetywa**

“Mama, mama, yizobona kuyagwetywa. Iinkomo ziyabhabha.” Wagibiseleka emnyango uNana ewakhuphe azingqanda amehlo. Wayeguqe elityeni lokusila uNomayini unina ka Nana ebile xhopho kuthe saa iinkozo zombona ezazitaka koko kusila wayekwenza. Waphakamisa amehlo uNomayini, “Uthi kutheni na Nana?” Wabuza unina esosula ukubila ngesandla sasekunene aphose ecaleni loo mbilo wakhe. “Iinkomo... mama zi...yabhabha.” Wathintitha watsho uNana ekhomba ngenqindi phezulu ethetha ephuma ngomnyango. Wathi thwasu unina ematshekile waphuma phandle engakhange abesavala nolo cango lwangezantsi. Wathi nje ukuba athi jaju phandle yangena imazi yehagu namantshontsho ayo yazenzela kuloo mgubo wawusesithebeni, naloo mbona wawusele. Zazingxola iihagu zivunduzo naloo mithwane yayisengobozini naloo mabolosa ayekwalapho. Zachiha loo manzi ayeseemphandeni kwayiloo nto ngephanyazo.

“Yehe, yehe... ngumgwebo, ngumgwebo. Kanti la magqobhoka ayesithi kuzakugwetya ayenyanisile? Yhini Bawo ndingekaguquki? Ndiyaguquka Nkosi ndiyoyika ukutshabalala.” Watsho uNomayini eguqe ngamadolo ezogqume ubuso ngezandla. “Ndicela uxolo Bawo ngokubahleka abashumayeli ababesithi kuzakugwetywa.” Wayesele eyingxididi uNomayini esazogqumile amehlo. Wathi guqaqa uNana ecaleni konini elinganisa yonke loo nto yayisenziwa ngunina. Malunga nesiqingatha seyure babesawavale mba amehlo bewogqume ngezandla. Bothuswa lilizwi lomyeni wakhe, “Nina kantamekwana, khawundenzele ikofu ndomile mfazi wakowethu.” Bathi balulu amehlo ngaxeshanye nonyana wakhe. Wayesele ekufutshane nomnyango wendlu. Wazivuthulula uNomayini engasakholelwa nokuba uyaphupha na okanye usesephupheni. Wazitswikila izidlele zozibini, wazibetha ngempama ezama ukuvuka. “Wenzani na Nakwekwe? Wabuza umyeni wakhe emjonge ntsho emehlweni. Walahla phantsi loo mbabala wayeyityathile wangena endlwini. “Kwenzeka ntoni na ekhapha Nakwekwe, bubusaza bantoni obu bukule ndlu? Amanzi la achitheke xa bekutheni?” Wayesele enyuse impumlo umyeni wakhe engathi uyanukiselwa.

“Yhu, yile hagu inamantshontsho Sekakwekwe.” Watsho uNomayini ephakama evuthulula loo mhlaba wawusemadolweni. Wangena endlini sele efinyeze ilokhwe. “Khange uyibone le nto besiyibona noKwekwe na sekaNtamekwana? Amadama, iinkomo umhlaba ububhabha emoyeni. Besicinga ukuba ngenene inokuba kuyagwetywa njengokutsho kwamagqobhoka.” Watsho uNomayini egaqe ngamadolo ebutha loo manzi ayedame kuloo ndlu. Wagcampuza kuwo uNana waya kuthabatha ibhekile yamarhewu wayisa kuyise. Zange athethe uyise wayithatha wayivula wasela engaphumli nokuphumla.

## **Ndimfumen' umntanam**

Malunga nentsimbi yesithandathu kusasa, wavuka uSabelo ngeliya kuchitha amanzi. Wayengafuni kuwavula amehlo kuba engafuni kuphelelwa bubuthongo. Wehla kancinane ebhedini, suke waya kubetheka kwinto eyomeleleyo. Wawavula amehlo akhe akuva ubuhlungu koko kubetheka. Wawavula amehlo ukuze abone. Kwakumnyama engaboni kakuhle. Watyikitya amehlo, wajonga. Wacothoza ngeliya kuvula ucango. Umnyango waloo ndlu babelele kuyo wawukufutshane naloo bhedi babelele kuyo. Wacimela, wabuye wajonga.

“Nkosikazi khawundivuse ndiphupha kakubi.” Watsho uSabelo ezitswikila amathanga. Wayekobude ubuthongo uNomalizo zange aphenndule. Waphinda waqwalasela uSabelo, wabona umngxunyana oseludongeni owawuzisa ukukhanya kuloo ndlu. Wasondela kancinane, wabetheka kwakhona embandeni yomlenze wasekunene kwenye into eyomeleleyo. Wancwinela ngaphandle waya kuwa isiqaqqa. Kweso siqaqqa wothuswa yingqele sele kumhlophe kubonakala ukuba sele kusile. Wazama ukukhumbula ukuba uphi na kanene, ebeze njani na apho. Iintakumba zazisihla zinyuka ngemilenze, ngeengalo, umzimba wonke.

Wazithwisha uSabelo erhawuzelwa umzimba wonke. Iintakumba zezongubo zazimbuza imvelaphi. Wathi ezonwaya intloko, wabe emisa ibhasi ephakamisele isandla sasekunxele phezulu, ngesasekunene aziqhawisa ezimbanjeni. Wayezonwaya intloko, abuye onwaye ezondevu zakhe, walikhulula elo flerho linye, wachopha phezu kwalo bhedana babezibona belele kuyo wazithwisha ezindeveni. Wabonela mgama ikama yentsimbi, wayithatha wazixhwitha ezo ndevu zakhe. Loo bhedana babelele kuyo yayiliqonga elenziwe ngezikhuni zemithi, impehla yayenze imvuthuluka apho phantsi kwebhedi. Iingutyana iyimirhajana okungathi zeza ngutyana bebelalisa kuzo izinja. Waziqwalsela esiqwini, wayesanxibe iimpahla zakhe zokulala zexabiso. UNomalizo wayesanxibe ezo mpahla zakhe zokulala zesilika.

“Nkosikazi... siphilapha?” wabuza uSabelo ephaphazela.

“Andazi myenam, size njani apha?” Waphendula uNomalizo iinyembezi zizehlela.

Wehlika uNomalizo wanyathela phantsi, iziliphasi zakhe zazingekho, ecaleni kweloo qonga babevuka kulo kwakukho ingxowa endala yomgubo wombona. Wathi makakhe aphume phandle. Wathi xa ebamba ucango, leza kuye lonke nomgubasi.

“Yhu! Ndincede myenam...” Wayesele ephantsi eloo cango naloo mgubasi ziphezu kwakhe.

“Sele ndifikile nkosikazi yam.” Watsho uSabelo sele emi phezu kwakhe ngesandla sasekhohlo ezama ukususa eloo cango, ngesasekunene exakekile ekama iindevu zakhe. Zazigcwele loo kama wayeyiphethe esopha esilevini nangona wayengaziboni.

Waphakama uNomalizo wonda ngomnyango owawusele ungumngxunya oneentanda ezinkulu. Wothuswa kukuphuma kweenkuma zilandelwa ngunomadudwane. Akazange abesajonga kwezo zirhubuluzi, wasimbela isinqe eshiya uSabelo esakama iindevu.

Wabaleka wayonqandwa ziindonga ezazikude kufuphi naloo ndlu babezibona belele kuyo. Iphika lalimvalile, wahlala phantsi enqwenela ukuthi kanti uphupha kakubi. Esathe natya kwezo ngxondorha, wothuswa kukukhohlela komntu kude kufuphi naye. Waphakamisa amehlo wajonga. Kwakumi kude kufuphi naye ixhegokazi elalishwabene ebusweni. Laphakamisa isandla limbulisa.

“Mholo ntwazana yam entle. Ndiyavuya ukukubona kudala ndikukhangela. Ekugqibeleni ude wafika.” Latsho ixhegokazi lisondelela kufuphi. Wazama ukuthetha uNomalizo kodwa ilizwi alakhe litsho ukuphuma. Wazama ukuphakama, nkqi inkantsi yayimbambe umzimba wonke. Lade lafika kuye eloo xhegwazana lamncamisa izidlele zozibini lamqhwaba ngempama kabini. Lancuma ixhekazana izidlele zashwabana ngokuye lincuma. Lavuma ingonyana, lingqisha ngodondolo phantsi.

*“Ndimfumene umntanam, ndimfumene umntanam.*

*Halala hoyi, umntanam, halala hoyi, umntanam.*

*Kumnandi kum ngomntanam, kumnandi kum, ngomntanam.*

*Halala hoyi ngomntanam, halala hoyi, ngomntanam”*

Lamfunqula ngezo zandla zazishwabene kodwa zomelele. Lambophelela ngetyali emqolo lingayekanga ukombela. Waba lelo gqajolo lude uNomalizo kuloo mqolo ugobileyo welo xhegwazana. Lasuka lalide ixhegwazana ngephanyazo, wancipha yena ngephanyazo. Wathi xa ezijonga uNomalizo wabona imilenze yakhe imifutshane, iinyawana zakhe zilingana nezosana. Ngenxa yokothuka awayekothukile, waphakamisa izandla zazilingana nezosana. Wazama ukuluma umqolo welo xhegwazana. Wayengenamazinyo, wayeneentsini ezifana nezosana. Wasethula phezulu isikhalo uNomalizo. Kwasikhalo eso yayisesosana.

*“Thula bhabh’ omncinci. Thula san’ oluncinci.*

*Thula sana lwam, ndiza kuncancas’ ubisi.*

*Yhe...yhe...yhe...yhe”*

Lacula ixhegwazana limana ukujikeleza isiduli seentubi. Kumjikelo wesixhenkxe lajika ixhegwazana langumtshakazana omhle onxibe amajelumani.

Wayezidluthuluza uNomalizo ezama ukohluka kuloo mqolo. Ngokuye ezama ukuzidluthuluza, laliye liqina iqhina elalibotshwe lixhegwazana.

Wafika uSabelo emaphikana, “Somtshakazi, khange umbone umfazi wam?”

“Hayi bhuti andikhange ndimbone.” Waphendula umtshakazi esashushuzela umntwana engamanga ndaweni nye.

“Hatata, hatata, tata.” Latsho ilizwi lomntwana emqolo ekhwaza ekhabalaza ezamazama ukwehlika.

“Hatatataatata...” Wayekhabalaza umntwana emqolo ecaphuka ekhwaza nokulila kwakulapho.

“Luhle ke Somtshakazi olu sana lwakho, kodwa lubonakala lufuna ukwehlika. Alulambanga kodwa?” Wabuza uSabelo ejonge kolo sana lwalugqushalaza kuloo mqolo womtshakazi.

“Ungazikhathazi wena bhuti, luyozela, luhlala lusenza le nto xa lozelayo.” Watsho unina wosana esaxhentsa ezama ukuthuzela usana olo.

Wayikhangela inkosikazi yakhe uSabelo kwezo ndonga, aphakamise amatye, aphice nezicithi zengca. Wahlala phantsi wavuma ingoma wathi,

*“Tumato yam ethandwa ndim, tumato yam ethandwa ndim...”*

*Buyela kum, uthandwa ndim, buyela kum, uthandwa ndim...*

*Lonwabo lwam, uthandwa ndim, lonwabo lwam, uthandwa ndim...*

*Buthongo bam, uthandwa uthandwa ndim, buthongo bam, uthandwa ndim...”*

Wathi akuvuma loo ngoma uSabelo, lwalila kakhulu usana emqolo kumtshakazi.

“Kunlungile bhuti mandikushiye usana lwam lulambile.” Watsho umtshakazi ebhumbutha usana ngesandla sasekunene. Wahamba kuloo ngca efathula. Wayesithi akunyathela itshe ngoko nangoko ingca kubengathi kubekwe intsimbi etshisayo yashiya umzobo wonyawo. Wazama ukulandela uSabelo ezinyaweni zomtshakazi. Wathi xa ebeka unyawo lokuqala phezu kweloo lalizotywe lunyawo lomtshakazi, waxhuma wangciphula ngomlenze omnye eluphakamisele phezulu unyawo lwakhe. Wahlala phantsi walujonga, lwalunamadyungudyungu okutsha. Waphakamisa amehlo emva kwemizuzu elishumi ejonga umtshakazi, wayengasabonakali nangotshengele.

Wathi esahleli apho ephulula loo madyungudyungu, wothuswa ziingcongconi zisombelela kufutshane nendlebe zakhe. Wazama ukuziphekuza suke athi xa ephekuza ngesandla sasekhohlo kwindlebe yasekunene, ngesasekunene ebambe unyawo lwasekhohlo. Lwatsho ulwamvila waxhuma uSabelo wayeka neloo nyawo wayelubambile laya kuhlabeke ezingcongolweni ezazikude kufuphi naye. Ngokuqhanyaza kwemehlo, atsaza amanzi ukuphuma kolo nyawo lwakhe. Ageleza aya kungena kweloo chibi lalisele liqhekekile kukungabinamanzi.

Abhobhoza ukuphuma kolo nyawo amanzi wamangaliswa uSabelo kukugcwala kweloo dami ngephanyazo. Atsama amadyungudyungu, ngephanyazo aphela kwangathi alukhange lubenamadyungudyungu unyawo.

Wazitswikila uSabelo egakholelwa ukuba ngenene usephupheni na. Wacimela, wabuya wavula amehlo. Lalithe thwayiba kukuzala idama. Wothuswa sisandi samarhanisi esiza ngakuye ebaleka ephakamise amaphiko. Angena kwelo dama asela, abuye adada kwalapho. Elimye laloo marhanisi lalimana ukutsala intamo likhamise ngokungathi liyathetha. Walijonga emangalisiwe uSabelo. Wancuma wasondela kulo. Lamana ukwalatha ngentloko ukuba makajonge ngasekunene. Wothuswa kukubona izilwanyana zihamba nentsapho zazo. Ihagu ihamba nomyeni wayo namantshontsho ayo. Injakazi ihamba nomyeni wayo nemibundlwana ibuthuza ecaleni kwabazali bayo. Ibhokhwe nayo ihamba nolwayo usapho. Zazilapho into iinkomo nazo zithe chu ukusinga edamini. Iinkawu nazo zimana ukutsibatsiba kuloo ndlela. Zathi xa zizakufika kuSabelo, ze nqumama zajonga kwelo dada lalikhombise uSabelo. Zavova zonke ezo zilwanyana kuSabelo. Wathi nkebe loo mlomo wawungemncinci kuyaphi uSabelo. Zaququzela izilwanyana zilungiselela uSabelo isidlo seziqhamo zasendle. Wayenqwenela ukulwazi ulwimi lwezozilwanyana uSabelo. Kwatsiba iqhajazana elingumvundlana lathi liyazinikela ekufundiseni ukumkani wazo uSabelo lowo. Wothuka uSabelo akuva ukuba umvundlana uyalwazi ulwimi oluthethwa nguSabelo. Wathi nta ezo ndlebe zakhe umvundlana ephethwe litshamba lokuba likhankatha lekumkani. Amahashe amabini eza sele erhuqa inqwelo eyayihonjiswe ngentyatyambo ezizintlobontlobo. Waphakama umvundlana wacela uSabelo ukuba aye kukhwela. Zange abuze uSabelo wathi chu ukuya enqwelweni. Aphala kuhle amahashe kukho unkawana emana ukuphakamisa isabhokhwana akhombe indlela. Umvundlana wayemana ukutsibatsiba kuloo nqwelo imihlali ingamphumlisi kwaphela.

Emva kwemizuzu engamashumi amathathu yagaleleka inqwelo yomvundlana kwisakhiwo esihle esibiyelwe kakuhle ngezitena ezibomvu. Wahlangatyezwa uSabelo lixhego lemfene lisimelela ngomsimbithi. Wehlika enqweleni uSabelo wema apho ephunguphunguza. Waye

sele ephantsi umvundlana ephithizela okungathi ubhujelwe lixhegwazana. Lafika lamxhawula ixhego lemfene uSabelo, naye waxhawula. Kuphume imbila ezintathu enye ibetha ikostina, enye ibetha igubu, enye ityityimba. Wathi ng' a umlomo uSabelo. Obunjalo ubuchule bomdaniso owawudaniswa yiloo mbila. Wayemana ukunqwala uSabelo angqishe ngonyawo olunye. Lancuma ixhego lemfene nalo latotoba lisiya lidanisa limana ukulingisa phezulu ngaloo ntonga yalo. Kwathi kanti akakaboni nto uSabelo kuba kwaphuma iigusha nazo zisenza owazo umdaniso. “Ndiphi na apha?” Uzibuze watsho uSabelo. “Ungoyiki Mhlekezi, yonke le mibhiyozo yeyokwamkela wena. Oko sakulinda ukufika kwakho singayekanga ukwenza amalungiselelo olu suku. Nam kwaye kwafuneka ndiye esikolweni ndiye kufundela ukuba likhankatha lakho.” Wabuyisa umva intloko, wakhupha amehlo uSabelo. “Ungothuki wena Mhlekezi, yinyaniso engangxengwangwa le ithethwa nguMvundlazana. Kudala sikulindlele apha, nenkondekazi zalapha ezingasakwaziyo ukuhamba zihleli kwela gumbi lazo, zilinde wena.” Latsho ixhego lemfene kubonakala ukuba lithetha isintu ngamatshamba. “Ingathi wothukile kukundiva ndithetha isintu Mhlekezi, kaloku abanye bethu bafunde kwiziko loqeqesho lweelwimi zabantu. Bakhona ke kodwa Mhlekezi abangakwaziyo ukuthetha isintu abathetha isilwanyana kuphela. Zange bayamkele bonke inkqubela phambili. Mna ndibe ngumfundisi-ntsapho weelwimi zabantu iminyaka engamashumi amathathu. Umvundlana lo umbonayo uqeqeshelwe ukuba yitolika yokutolikela wena xa kuthetha abangafundanga.” Lachaza latsho ixhwgo lemfene. Lithe lisachaza kwathi gqi ixhegokazi lemfene eliguge ngokwenyani lantotholozela ukusondela kuSabelo. Lifike lamqhwaba kabini kwizidlele zozibini. Waziphulula uSabelo ezo zidlele zazitshotshozela zezompama. “Ngumfazi wam ke lo ukubulisayo mhlekazi ungamboni egugile. Wayendifundisa kwimfundo yamabanga aphakamileyo. Kwathi kanti undithandile, wacela ukuba ndimtshate. Nangon ndandisengumfana osemntsha sele etshatyelwe ngamadoda amabini yena. Ndavuma ukumtshata. Kowu! Satsho ngowawunjani wona umtshato Mhlekezi wam, kwema izikolo ngalo mini azabikho zonke izilwanyana zize kubukela umtshato wethu. Wayeqala kaloku unkosikazi ukutshata ufafa. Loo madoda akhe angaphambili ayemadala kuye, kutshiwo.” Watsho umfene eqoba iliso lasekhohlo. “Sanikwa iqhuzu elihamba noxanduva lokufundisa abatshati uthando.” Wayesele encumile umfene izidlele zibaleke zaya kuma ngendlebe. Le ndlela akubulisa ngayo yindlela esibulisa ngayo siziimfene.” Lasondela kumfene lowo wayethetha elo xhegwazana lemfene. Lasondeza umlomo walo kowemfene leyo yayithetha layincamisa uncamiso olwakhumbuza uSabelo ngokulahlekelwa kwakhe nguNomalizo. Lasebeza endlebeni yemfene ixhegwazana lakwamfene. Lancuma ixhego lemfene laqoba iliso lasekhoho liqobela ixhegokazi elo.



Ngelingeni kuphume ingonyama nowakwayo, bathi chu ukuza kuhlangebeza uSabelo. Uvalo kuSabelo lwalungongoza lubetha oku kwegubu lamaziyoni. Sasishukuma isifuba sishuma bonakalayo. Wayezincumancumisa unkabi koko kuzincumisa kwakhe wakrotyelwa ngumvundlana ukuba uyoyika. Yavakala ingonyama isitsho ngelizwi elingqokolayo, “Siyakwamkela kumkani yethu, kudala sikulindile. Itheko lokumamkela lizakuqala kungekudala. Masiqale simbulise ngala mbuliso walapha ekhaya. Ingathi akenzanga, intombi zizibonakalise kangangoko bethu” Yatsho ingonyama iqoba iliso lasekhohlo, idlalisa ngomsila wayo. Zange kube kudala yavela sele iveza loo mibala yayo imbejembeje ipikoko. Yayinyathela kancinane okungathi ukukhuphiswano lonobuhle. Zazibukele ezinye izilwanyana neentaka ziwakhuphe azingqanda amehlo.

Yanquntsuza ipikoko izozidlulisa ngakuSabelo. Wanqwala uSabelo waphakamisa isandla ebulisa. Wabonisa ngomlenze wasekunene wangaphambili umvundlana ukuba mayigqithe ipikoko iboniwe ingadlula. Yajika ipikoko yaya kuqala ekuqaleni ukuza kuzidlulisa sele iwurhuqa loo msila wayo okungathi ngumtshakazi. Wayecaphuka umvundla emana ukushukumisa loo mlonyana wawo. Wayede wakekelisa ontloko uSabelo evule naloo mlomo wakhe uthe ng’ a, izinkcwe zizihambela. Waphakamisa iindlebe umvundlana ephekuza uSabelo. Wothuka wabeka isandla emlonyeni zabe izinkcwe zihleli kwezo ndevu zazirhonorhono ligazi elomileyo. Wayekwelinye ilizwe uSabelo wayengakholelwa ukuba ngenene uyaphila okanye ukwelinye ilizwe lasemaphupheni. Kungene inciniba sele itsho ngezongcondo zayo iqhwayiza ijonge phezulu. Yasondela kuSabelo yafika yathoba intloko, wayiphulula uSabelo, yaphakamisa intloko yedlula. Kuvakele isandi sokushukuma komhlaba wajonga uSabelo kwelo cala izingqi beziphuma ngakulo, gqi indlovu ihamba nowakwayo ehombe ngentyatyambo ezindlebeni. Bathi chu ukuza ngakuSabelo bengangxamanga. Babenomdaniso ababewenza ngemiboko bayiphithanise, babuye bangqishe phantsi ngamanqina angaphambili. Bathathe imizuzu ukuza kufika kuSabelo, bathi sele beza kufika, bangqishe babuye umva behamba ngamanqina angasemva kuphela. Waqhweba izandla uSabelo yimincili yokubona onjalo umdaniso wezithandani. Loo mdaniso wendlovu nendlovukazi wavumbulula imfene nayo yabamba imazi yakwayo badanisa ngaloo milenze mithathu, emibini yangasemva, nomnye wangaphambili. Batsho ngomdaniso obukekayo, kuqhuma uthuli. Wamemeza umvundlana, “Enkosi zinkosi, enkosi ningabuyela ezindaweni zen uke ngoku. Ikumkani ifuna ukukhe iphumle kancinane, ibuye sele izilungiselele itheko.” Wadlala ngendlebe umvundlana. Zaphinda zaphakamisa isitulo iindlulamthi, zenjenjeya ukuya kwindlu yekumkani.

“Mkhulule ahambe akanatyala.” Lavakala ela lizwi babelivile libathembisa ngabantwana oSabelo. Ngesiquphe, washwabana umtshakazi walixhegwazana eliya ebelilo ngaphambili, gqojo usana emqolo lwabuyela ebuntwini obudala. Wawa isiqqa uSabelo akubona loo mtshakazi ejika esiba lixhegwazana. Waziphosa uNomalizo phezu komyeni wakhe wambamba wamsondeza kuye. Eso silevu sika Sabelo sasirhaphilili ligazi elomileyo kwezo ntshetyana zazingalingani kukuxhwithwa ngekama. Latshona ilanga engade avuke uSabelo. Wayezimbolambola phezu kwakhe uNomalizo, aphaathe kumkhulula ezo mpahla zokulala amphekuze. Aphinde azame ukumphefumlela emlonyeni. Xa kanye kuqala ukurhatyela wajonga phezulu wabona, nazo izindlu zakhe, iinkomo zakhe, iintlanti zakhe, amadama amnzi, amasimi, zimile phezu kwakhe. Wahlabela ingoma wathi,

*“Andenzanga nto, andinatyala, Bawo ndiphendulele.*

*Ndigwebele Bawo olilungisa andenzanga nto.”*

Giligidi wawa umhlaba nazo zonke izinto ezazikuwo, ngesiquphe ezo Ndonga zagutyungelwa ngumhlaba oluhlaza, amadama azibonela indawo yokuma. Baphuma ezindlini abasebenzi bakaNomalizo bamthabatha uSabelo bamngenisa kula ndlu inepiyano wayinyumbaza uNkebeza. Waqala washukumisa iminwe uSabelo okungathi udlala ipiyano. Wakhabalazisa iinyawo, elandela loo ngoma. Wasuka waphakama wazityikitya amehlo.

# Part C:

## **Portfolio**

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master

of Arts in Creative Writing

of

Rhodes University

by

Nonqubela Evelyn Rasmeni

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## Introduction

This portfolio is the reflection and the story of my journey during my time of study in the MA in Creative Writing Course. It includes my reflective journals during this journey. My reflective journals contain impressions of writings I read from other writers; writings that challenged and influenced me as a writer. It is through this journey that I learned more from other writers and about various styles of writing. Some of these writers are Peter Markus *We make mud*, Adania Shibli *Touch*, Irenosen Okojie (*Gigantular*) and Joel Matlou *Life at home and other stories*. These are not the only writers I read during my study.

This portfolio includes my Poetics and Narrative Essay, book reviews and a brief report on my community engagement with learners from a primary school in East London. The feedback I received from the reader was very encouraging and constructive. One of her comments concerned the order of my fragments which were not in the right sequence according to the events. I rearranged them according to the right sequence of the events. As my thesis project is crafted in a young girl's voice, she picked up some errors but those are not errors, I put them that way deliberately. It is my way of showing how this young girl narrator thinks and speak in her own village English. The thinking, the language and the actions are a way of showing the reader that this narrator is a young girl whose mother tongue is IsiXhosa. It is a way of showing how we play around with words when trying to create our own English, our original words. *Frightfighting* is one of those original words I used and it excites me to hear from the reader that my creativity is working well.

## Reflective Journal

### Intensive Week One 12<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> February

The seminar was an eye opener for me. It gave me an idea of what to expect from this course. As a budding writer it challenged me to be more creative and speed up my pace. I enjoyed the free writing session a lot. It challenged the writer in me. It gave me an opportunity to write in response to random titles such as these:

- ***I remember:*** We were given just a few minutes to respond to this prompt. I was so excited by this approach It reminded me of my school days when the teacher would give us a title that we as students were to write about. The exercise was good for me. Listening to other group members reading their own stories was good. Listening to other group members gave me an opportunity to listen and then in turn give them my personal feedback.
- ***The beloved duck cooked by mistake,*** this title triggered my creativity in narrating a story. We were told to write and not to stop and then read what we wrote. I wrote as fast as I could. In this one I increased my writing pace. It was an amazing experience for me. It challenged me in my pace when I am writing a story. This experience will surely help me in my writing career.
- ***The closest I ever felt with God,*** for this one I was challenged to write about nonfiction. It helped me because it forced me to come out of my comfort zone. I'm used to writing fiction and I can write, and write, and write fiction. From this exercise I got the courage to write non-fiction. In this exercise I learned how to write a memoir and a fiction in one. In my future writings I will experiment with this.
- ***How I got here?*** To me the title was a question which required me to be more personal in my writing. Though we were not given much time to write on this, I managed to write an essay. I personally saw an opportunity for me to write an essay. For me the whole exercise of free writing from the first prompt to the last one showed me something in me I did not know that I had.

The free writing exercise gave me an opportunity to write and challenged me to come out of my comfort zone. From this exercise I gained a lot as I mentioned for each of the titles we were given. In my assignment, where I read a piece of work from my portfolio, I received feedback from the group. Some of the comments helped me a lot, such as how to use short sentences effectively. I think I like that idea and I will try to experiment with that in my writing. One of the comments from the feedback was about showing the details of the story, like what was the atmosphere and what other activities were taking place at the same time in the story. The movement must be seen in the story, the colour and all the details must be shown in the story. This feedback gave me an idea of what readers want to get from a story. I like this feedback, though it made me uncomfortable, it will help me in the future.

Having some titles to read and review as my assignment was new and an exciting experience for me and gave me the opportunity to look at various titles and styles of other writers. It also gave me an idea of creating writing. There were books that spoke to me in the sense that they challenged me to be more creative in narrating a story or poem. Reading some folktales was something I have not done in a while. I do have an interest in writing folktales as a way of preserving our stories. These books encouraged me and they spoke to me as someone who grew

up in a home where it was a tradition to tell folktales at night. The truth is I am so motivated by these stories. In my research I read a number of books:

- *The village witch doctor and other stories* by Amos Tutuola
- *The palm-wine drinkard* by Amos Tutuola
- *The opposite house* by Helen Oyeyemi
- *What we lose* by Zinzi Clemmons
- *My mother killed me, my father ate me* by Kate Bernheimer □ *Senselessness* by Horacio Castellanos Moya

I am planning to read prose and poetry. I am trying to learn to choose which style of writing inspires me more and follow that route. I have learned that in poetry I do not need to imitate what other writers have written but I can be creative using my own words. I always believed that I cannot write poetry due to the fact that I always thought there is a certain way of rhyming, and sermonizing of words.

The poems that we read in our reading groups were not like ones I was used to, and for that reason I will be able to write poems experimenting with what I have learned from those reading sessions. The feedback group was helpful. Such feedback is especially helpful in the sense that more people contribute and tell you what you could not see as a writer. When I read the piece of writing I prepared for my portfolio, they gave me feedback on how best to narrate the story. In the story I gave a lot of background and the dialogue was too much. The group advised me to give my story colour, in a way where the reader can see the story. And they advised me about sound, where the reader can hear the details as they read the story. Details of each action and of other things that are taking place in the same scene must be there for a reader to have a clear picture of the story. The sentences must be short and show instead of telling the story. The group feedback was helpful as it gave me a sense of how to narrate my story.

## Politics and Poetics of Punctuation 19<sup>th</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup> February

In this week's seminar I learned about the Politics and Poetics of Punctuation. I felt like the technicalities of language is good and bad. It has a way of changing us to write in a way that suits their programmed formats. For example, the novel of Mathias Enard Zone, which was submitted by Open Letter Books to Apple for conversion to iBook in 2013 was rejected. In this particular book the writer was deliberate in writing the book in the manner mentioned above. There was a message the writer was trying to put across by writing that way. There was a deliberate meaning behind this form of writing. I fully agree with the creative use of punctuation, but do not believe it must be a stumbling block to our creativity. Punctuation ought to serve writing and not the other way around. Looking at the rejection of this book by iBook, it suggests that a lot of books have been rejected, and will continue to be rejected by companies like this one.

It was interesting to see how other writers use punctuation in a creative way, such as the piece of writing from Carver's story titled, "*I could see the smallest things*". In this story the writer used short sentences to add rhythm to the words, which encouraged me to keep on reading. We read various pieces of writing, some with no punctuation at all. What challenged me the most was the way punctuation is being used by various writers. I was shocked to hear that press associations in the USA have laid down a readability table. Their survey shows that readers find sentences of eight words or less very easy to read. Eleven words, easy to read, fourteen words, fairly easy to read, seventeen words as a standard to read, twenty five as difficult, and twenty nine or more as very difficult. This survey suggested I be more cautious when I use punctuation and bear in mind the readers I am targeting. Clearly, writers can use punctuation in very creative ways. The rhythm it creates can draw a reader in or suspend the reader. Punctuation can serve the meaning of what is being said by the writer. As someone who writes prose, it was an interesting moment for me to see the creativity in those pieces. I was not impressed with these pieces of writings where vulgar language dominates the message of the writer. To me this form of writing does not necessarily enhance the creative element in the writing. I find the use of such language as clumsy and had no desire to practice it. I was fascinated by short sentences and I will try to experiment with this style in my future writings.

In this week's assignment I tried to write a poem as an experiment of what I've learned from the poetry readings. I challenged myself by coming out of my comfort zone and writing something I am not always keen to write. I used punctuation as an experiment to practise what I've learned from the poetry we have read. It did work wonders for me judging from the feedback I received from the group. I got a warm response from the group and they encouraged me to write more poems. The piece of writing I presented to the group energised me. More poetry is coming, watch this space!

In terms of reading, I devoted my attention to an anthology of stories titled PP/FF. Some of these stories are very short. Some are long and their meaning is hidden. The anthology includes the following stories:

- *The wedding of Zein* by Tayeb Salih
- *Walker on water* by Kristina Ehin
- *Wayward girls and wicked women* by Angela Carter
- *Short* by Alan Ziegler

I focussed on “*Walker on water.*” and looked at the way the writer narrates this story. When I read the story, I was following this young lady who is married to a highly educated man Jaan. It sounded like a normal couple until the narrator woke me from that mentality. The husband is highly educated but when he is at home after a tiring day at work, he takes his brains out. As much as this sounds like a folktale, the narrator challenges me in terms of searching for the meaning of the story. For me, the story is about how a couple can seem to be living happily to outsiders, yet they are just pretending. Taking out brains when he is home to me is like what happens in reality. Highly educated men spend and use their brains in their work places and come home tired or come home with lots of work. The partners of such highly educated men suffer in the process. In the near future I will write a book like this. I like the way the story is narrated. It keeps one’s mind awake by the way it is narrated. It is a unique style of addressing critical topics without offending readers. It is written in the form of a folktale, hence as I said, the meaning is hidden and it can say many things to many readers. I enjoy this style of narration. Some topics are sensitive and need to be written in ways that do not offend the reader as they tell stories that capture the reader’s attention.

## 26<sup>th</sup> February – 4<sup>th</sup> March

This seminar was interesting to me. It encouraged me to practice free writing. I read fragments of prose written by Samuel Beckett which showed his unique style of writing. I like the way his stories are narrated. This style of narrative is new to me and very interesting. The narrator has a funny way of narrating his story. I find it challenging because sometimes I don't know what the narrator is talking about and am not sure whether that was the idea of the narrator or not. I just assume that the narrator is narrating a story of someone who is mentally disturbed judging by the way he narrates the story. There are a lot of things he seems not to be sure of in his narration. To me it sounds like the narrator is taking us through the journey of someone who is recovering from a serious mental illness. He is not sure how he ended up in his mother's room, and the mention of an ambulance gives me the clue that he might be in a medical care centre. When he talks about his mother, he seems to not be sure of whether she is dead or even whether she is buried yet. A lot of things he can't remember. I felt that I can use this style of writing. In this week I tried to achieve writing a story by playing with the narrative voice. It worked for me because I feel the need to come out of my comfort zone and try other styles of writing. On the basis of one of the books I read I saw the need to grow. I also wrote a story with a theme, setting, character, and incident. I think I achieved that judging from the feedback from the group. Yes, they showed me some areas for improvement.

The reading group was very helpful and interesting to me. It gave me an opportunity of narrating a structured story with a character, theme, incident and setting. An example of this narrative is a story by Anton Krueger, *Killed*. The story is about a white street boy by the name of Dirk, who was abused in his childhood and decided to run away from home. When this little boy established himself into the street life another challenge came. A gang of street kids came and the leader of the group Lebo made his life miserable. Dirk felt the need to belong, but it was not for free. He had to kill a white man in order to belong to the group. As difficult as it was for him, it was the price for belonging. He killed an innocent man who happened to be Mrs Thompson's son.

I like the way the story is narrated. When the narrator describes Mrs Thompson, it was like she would kill the boy as he killed her son. It is creative and amazing to see how the narrator played with the story. The meaning of the story is surprising and the style is distinctive. Playing with the theme in such a creative way is wonderful. The character, which is Mrs Thompson, assured Dirk that she is going to kill him. When Dirk was sent to a juvenile detention centre in Hilcrest, he had no one to visit him like other boys. Mrs Thompson surprised Dirk. She visited him. Mrs Thompson did the opposite by showing motherly love to the boy who killed her son. You would think of the worst in relation to what Mrs Thompson said during the trial. However, what she does to Dirk is the opposite of what she said she would on the day he was sentenced. At the beginning of the story we see the devastated mother, but what happened at the end was the opposite of my expectation.

At the end of the story the meaning is totally different from what I thought it would be. At the end of the story Mrs Thompson remind Dirk about what she said on the day of a trial. As a reader I thought she was about to kill him for killing her son. But no, the meaning was that she killed *that* boy in him; the boy who had killed her son. I feel challenged by this piece of writing. It challenged me in a positive way to use more than one meaning for theme. I will experiment this creative strategy in my writing. Although the story is highly creative, I feel that the author

did not do thorough research in terms of using more than one language. For example, the way he used the word **Isifebe** looks inappropriate. In that sentence, he writes:

“You thought you were the Chiefs, but now look at you? You nothing! Ja, Mugabe- he knows what to do with you. Isifebe!” It would sound better if he had written, “Mugabe-he knows what to do with you, sfebe!” In the use of other languages, a narrator needs to research the way in which words are used. I like his piece of writing except for this part.

As for my other reading research I am reading *Short* an anthology edited by Alan Ziegler. It's a book of short stories, very short stories. I am planning to read more stories in this book as it consists of many stories. I am looking at the narrative styles of these writers with a view to experimenting with some of these styles. As someone who writes prose, this will help me in developing my writing skills.

The feedback from the group is helping me in areas where I need to improve. On my structured narrative I received feedback which shows how the readers view my work. It is not always easy to review your own work but having a group of reviewers is helpful. I did some revision and correction on my assignment.

### 5<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> March

This seminar was helpful to me. It emphasized the importance of being professional in writing and being prepared to write about any given topic. It also emphasized the importance of being honest when writing a book. The honesty must be shown by the way of writing about the environment and the normal activities of one's daily life. To me it meant that it is easier to write about what you know than to write about what you have heard. It is interesting to know that some stories can be told by means of drawing cartoons. It would be a challenge to me because I am not good with drawings. In my assignment I was trying to write a piece of writing showing the story and the situation in the story. It did work judging from the feedback from the group and the teachers.

In the group reading one of the stories that caught my attention was from the book by Amos Tutuola, titled *Under African Skies*. The short story was about a complete gentleman. I like the mode of narration and the creativity in narrating a story of a complete gentleman who looked perfect to people's eyes yet in reality he rented all the body parts except the skull. When a certain lady noticed him, she decided to follow him without being invited. Even when this complete gentleman told her not to follow him, she did not listen. She followed him to the point of being in danger because the man gave back the body parts that attracted her. In the middle of the forest, the lady wanted to turn back, but it was too late, the complete gentleman did not allow her to go back. She learnt her lesson of not taking the word of her father who asked her to marry a man but she refused. The complete gentleman was a changed, terrible creature. Even the voice was terrible such that no one could hear the lady when he cried for help. When she began to run away in that forest for her life, the skull chased her and within a few yards, he caught her because he was very clever and smart as he was only a skull and he could jump a mile to the second before coming down. She was led to a hole, which was the home of the complete gentleman who was no longer a gentleman at all but a terrible creature. At his home he chained her, and she was forced to stay. Guarded by the brothers of this man who turned to be a skull, she could not do anything. Even her efforts were unsuccessful due to the fact that the forest was so big. They caught her before she could get out of it. The help came with a man who could do some magic to outsmart the complete gentleman and his family.

This story is narrated in a creative way such that one needs to interpret its meaning. It is narrated in the form of a folktale, but the meaning can teach anybody that falling in love with a stranger is a grave mistake. There are many women who fall in love with the structure of a man or what he has, not who the man is. Some man can pretend to be gentle and kind in order to lure naïve women. The lesson from the story is relevant to today's society. I like the style of the narrator and I will use it in some of my work. It can work even if I write something I don't want to be obvious to the readers. To me it is like a relationship where a woman just fell in love with someone she does not know. When the man shows his true colours it is already too late to escape. Most of the time the woman will need a skilled lawyer to rescue her out of that relationship. In this story the only person who managed to rescue the lady is the man who knew how to use juju. Even then she could not talk or eat.

Some women come out of abusive relationships with depression which causes them to be zombie-like. Counselling services helps there. In a similar way, I can write my own story of an abused woman who started naïve as this lady in the story. The narrator is good in his craft. Another story titled "We make mud" that I enjoyed is written by Peter Markus. The narrator

uses the language of a child in his story. There is a lot one can learn and experiment from with his style. It is not a familiar way of narrating for me, but I like it. It is simple and straight forward. Another story that caught my attention is a folktale of a man who could transform himself by Akamba. The narrator uses the ancient time and blended it with the modern time, using the images of a bird and a kite. The usage of these two images in the story is striking. I like the story and I can try it in my own stories.

In my own reading research I am reading *Stories* by a Ugandan writer, Taban lo Liyong. It's a book of short stories or folktales. I don't like his style of writing. His stories are not easy to follow. The other book I am still reading is an anthology called *Wreckage of reason* by Nava Renek. I like the variety of short stories in this book. It gives me a wide range of writing styles. It is written by women. I am planning to read South African short stories by Denis Hirson and Martin Trump.

The feedback group was helpful. It opened my eyes on areas where I could not see. In my piece of writing I made corrections according to the feedback I received from the group. I did some revision on my assignment and it made more sense to me when I fixed the areas that were highlighted by the group.

## Eros/ Desire 12<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> March

Last week's seminar has taught me how to write about Eros/Desire. It was very interesting to experiment with creative writing about desire where I had to write a love letter to an object and describe my desire. I thought it would be difficult to do so, but when I sat down to write, I was amazed at the creativity that came unexpectedly. I wrote a love letter to Time. I could not believe it myself. Yes, it stretched me and moved me from my comfort zone. Now I can write a love letter to any object. It feels good to be challenged to a point where you become more creative than you think you can be.

Another piece of writing was about sensations in relation to the same object, the way I feel about it in detail, and what it does to me. My mind got an exercise again and I enjoyed this exercise such that I wrote a piece of a poem. Again, I had to write another piece where there is no desire at all, only action. My mind and creativity was being challenged in positive way to work very hard but it was worth it. The last piece was about writing a poem or piece of prose where it shows unexpected love or unwelcomed love. It was such a challenging exercise for me. I gained something from that seminar because I would never have used that style and creativity without being taught how to do it.

In my assignment I wrote those four pieces trying to see how far I can go with what I was being taught. I was excited by the outcome. Judging from the group feedback, I was creative in doing that exercise. From what I have learned from that seminar, I saw how creative I can be with that writing style and I will surely practice it in my future writings.

From the group readings we had that week there were readings that were so interesting and funny to me. One of those writings was taken from the book, *30 Under 30* by Angi Becker Stevens titled "Blood not sap". I find her way of writing very funny. She writes about a widow who saw an old oak tree from her backyard turned into a man. It is a very funny story. To me it is like a folktale. To me she is portraying the desperation of a widow who is lonely and dreaming of having a man. The way she describes this tree who turned to be a man shows clearly that the desire drove her to an unreal world. The loneliness in this story is the driving factor. I will never write in this style because as funny as it is, it is very unreal.

Another story that was interesting to me was from *Short*. The story is untitled, written by Lyn Hejinian. It starts like a folktale by using "Once there was a girl". I like the way the girl is being portrayed by the writer. The way the young girl reasons in this story is interesting. She questions the shape of a round brown leaf instead of a brown round one to show the way a young mind looks at things and their description of shapes and sizes. The creativity in playing with words is what is interesting to me. I will try to use this style when I write books.

- In my reading research this week I read a book by Zinzi Clemmons titled "What we lose". She narrates her story in a funny way. She is all over the place. When you think you follow her story, she starts talking about something else. Yes, in her first chapters she writes about South Africa, comparing it to America. But even there she writes about things in a confusing manner. She talks about many things at the same time. She spends lot of time narrating in detail things that confuse the reader. If her story was a garden I would say there are too many weeds in it. The story is crowded with many unnecessary stories. If she could focus on one story at a time, she would do

much better I think. There are lots of bits of stories in her book that confuses the reader. The title is very interesting and promising, but when you read the book, its crowded. I will never use her style of telling a story. I spent a lot of time reading with the hope that maybe I will

get the story about her loss. If she can focus on one story at a time she can do better I think. She is trying to tell too many stories, which is confusing.

- I also started to read a book by Tina May Hall, titled *The Physical of Imaginary Objects*.

She describes everything in detail but not in a proper sequence. She speaks about many things at the same time. I am still reading the book and I am still interested to read more because it sounds interesting. I am learning from this writer the way she describes everything in her story in detail. It makes her story colourful like the way she describes the radio in the truck, or the radio reports.

- I am planning to read *Making Wolf* by Tade Thompson. It sounds interesting to me by reading the synopsis at the back of the book.

- My next book will be *Discomfort* by Evelyn Hampton.

The group feedback was helpful to my creative writing. For example, in my love letter to the object I chose to write about I was supposed to describe the feelings. In my revision I made some changes as I was advised by the group feedback. To have such a group of people who listen and edit your work is such a privilege. It gives me an opportunity to write more creative pieces of writing. A group of people are much better than one or two people.

## Psychology of writing 23<sup>rd</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup> April

This week's session was so overwhelming emotionally. The exercise of writing about a moment of upheaval in my life for four days was like removing dead skin from a healing wound. It was not easy at all, but healing is a need for writers. Writing is a very therapeutic way of healing our pain. There are some obstacles we face in our everyday lives as writers like pain from our past. It cripples most artists because as long as we carry pain from our past experiences we always produce sweet and sour fruits. As writers we need to learn to conduct our own craft so that our pain is revealed in a constructive manner. Any issues left unattended will show up one day if not properly dealt with. We are created in such a way that anything that comes in must have a way of coming out. Past pains may cause artists to produce crafts that are covered with blood from inward wounds. As a result, some artists never live to tell their tale due to the pain of what they went through. It is easy to identify a craft from a wounded soul, whether it is music, dance, poem, prose, etc. It is entirely up to the artist what they want to reveal to the world hence it is important to be the conductor of your own talent. We need to have a place where we can empty ourselves from all the negative energy and emotions within us before they destroy us and, sadly, our talent. Writing can be therapeutic in the sense that we can write about our pain and process everything as we read from time to time until we heal from it or by simply writing it down so that you may free yourself from it. As we read it, continually we become lighter emotionally because the more we cry, the more we release all the negative energy that comes from it. A healthy writer is more creative than the writer who is carrying a burden of hurt, pain, anger or bitterness.

When we are entirely healthy we impart healing to our audience. Our *duende* is struggling to blossom freely due to the fact that we need healing. The tears we didn't cry come out as we write our stories and become words. The clots from inside bleeding become words and the *duende* mixed with these tears and blood triggers emotions from the readers or audience. Instead of bringing healing to the readers or our audience we open wounds and leave them bleeding. There is power in what we write or what we perform as poets. When we don't have inner peace, we write as we feel inside. It is very important to identify the source of our emotion when we write, because each piece of writing reveals who we are, how we are, where we've been, and where we are now. Bitterness and anger destroy the crafter and the craft. We need healing as artists. Let us try to avoid premature death where we can by forgiving and releasing those who hurt us deliberately or without knowing. The exercise was very helpful for me.

We spoke again about the idea of *duende* as used by Federico Garcia Lorca. In his piece of writing about the theory and function of the *duende* Lorca mentioned that "The true struggle is with the *duende*". We may have various wordings for this *duende*, but the truth is that force is essential for an artist like a heartbeat in the human body. As long as the heart beats, there is still life. The same applies to the *duende* of an artist. This *duende* causes the artist to be creative and artistic; it is the core substance in each artist. It can be very destructive if not handled with care. It is the powerful force within an artist and the creative instrument that was deposited within the artist. It is the power that distinguishes between an artist and an ordinary person. This *duende* can be more dangerous to the artist as well because it is not a manmade theory, it is a powerful force. It can cause other artists to be more proud, arrogant and disrespectful. Some artists are puffed up because of this *duende*.

It is very painful to see a talented artist who is like a mad horse galloping with pride and arrogance, living life like there is another life stored somewhere when this one is over. This duende requires more discipline as it always draws more attention when it manifests in the life of an artist. It is a powerful spirit therefore without balancing it one can live like a walking zombie who lives the life of performing for the crowds. Whilst people celebrate and enjoy the fruits of duende, the artist will slowly succumb to a reckless life till he dies a miserable death. With duende you need to be able to stand up against adversaries because not everybody will celebrate and applaud for you. An artist needs to be grounded and healthy mentally, emotionally, spiritually and physically. Duende on its own cannot live a life without an artist just like an artist cannot be powerful and successful in their craft without duende. Balance is key for any artist. As we create writing, music, poetry, etc, we should also bear in our minds that we will leave one day and another generation will benefit from the legacy we leave behind. Whether you are a novelist, poet, musician, or artist, this duende will take you to a higher level where an ordinary person cannot go. Sometimes comparison will be used as a measure of our potential. It is not always accurate as we are unique in our crafts. As unique as we are, we are still carrying pieces of a bigger picture. Duende helps us to be effective and unique even in times in which we face competition. To me this means that we need not compete with each other as long we know that we have duende that helps us in our writing.

## Writing the body 7<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> May

This week's seminar involved explaining how emotions can affect our writing. I saw how true this is because I was going through something painful- a friend of mine dying. I was not sure how it would affect me. Maybe I was not expecting it at all because the last time I saw this friend I was still hoping that she would make it. I was emotionally disturbed by her passing. The seminar of this week was thus entirely relevant in my case. Even my focus was not the way it is normally. Now I had to pull myself together and make it in my writing.

The seminar highlighted to me that the spoken word can change the way I feel and the way I do things because of the effect of the words spoken to me. It is not always easy for me to write when I am emotionally disturbed. Words carry weight positively or negatively. In my case, this week I heard that someone I was helping financially betrayed me and it disturbed me such that I did not sleep well when I heard about what he said behind my back. This affected me in the sense that I felt betrayed, used, and I felt like a fool. The way I saw myself after hearing that, I wished I had a rubber to erase words from my memory. Words are powerful and can be hurtful.

The reading session was not talking to me at all. I was reading for the sake of reading. I cannot tell you what we read. I never put it in my mind. I don't know why the teacher chose these readings. I was like a nun in a brothel being forced to participate by reading what I was not comfortable to read. I did not bother to check who wrote those pieces. No. I did not bother. I was glad when at last the reading session was over. I will never use the writing style of the writers who wrote the pieces we were reading. They were not talking to me at all.

The book I read for this week is so interesting. It is titled *Speak Gigantular* by Irenosen Okojie. I like her style of writing especially her vocabulary. There are fascinating words like, "*I missedcalled him*". It is so interesting to see such words being used in a piece of writing. To me it gives an indication that the piece has been written in cellular times. Before the cellular invention, there would not be words like that. As a reader I have an idea of when the book was written without being told. It teaches me to bear in mind when I write that my readers need to see the era in which the story is set through my writing.

This week was so exciting to me. I was given a task or a challenge to experiment writing in the styles of the writers that speak to me in their writings. It was more exciting to me in the sense that it gave me an opportunity to play around with what fascinated me from the writers I read. My writing was influenced by Joel Matlou's book titled, *Life at home and other stories*. I cannot explain fully what I like about his writing, but his writing speaks to me. The simplicity and description in his writing are some of the attributes that inspire me. Showing even the smallest detail of what he writes about gives me an idea of how colourful my story can be if I use that attribute in my own writing. I like the way sentences are created and the exact times of the events. The sentences are not long. They are straight to the point. I experimented with this style in my writing for this week. When I read my writing during the group session, the feedback was positive. It gave me an interest to read more books from other writers who write similar to Matlou, in a way it fascinates me. The book I just read is titled *Touch* written by Adania Shibli. I enjoyed this book such that I could not sleep the night of the day it was loaned to me. The writer tells a story about a little girl. The events that happened in her childhood are narrated in a very funny way, in a child-like way of narrating the description of the colours, the fights with her siblings and the way she narrates the love story between the neighbour and the

little girl. Instead of writing love, she writes *evol*. She also uses a unique way of calculating the distance the ambulance will travel to her home with her brother. Instead of using kilometres, she uses the number of cars to show the distance. As a reader of the story I can tell the era and the beliefs of the writer without her telling me. She narrates in such a way that I see what she is talking about. I like this style of writing and I will experiment with it in the future.

There was a story I read from PFFF. The story is titled, “*We make mud*” by Peter Markus. I like the child-like language that is used in that story. In a way that I fail to describe, this book speaks to me in a fascinating manner. I experimented with the style Peter Markus used. The style inspires me to experiment in my future writing. I am planning to blend in my writing what I have seen from remarkable writers like Peter Markus. I think I am fascinated by the fact that the story is clear in the way it is. No complications and no bombastic words. I am falling in love with this unusual, funny, yet simple way of writing. I’ve been telling myself that I don’t write for children, but after this course I believe that I will be able to write books that can be able to speak to children in their own innocent voice. I will be telling stories in a child’s voice but writing for adults as well. The message in a child’s story is clear, colourful and real. They tell things the way they are. This course is taking me to another level in terms of creative writing. It reveals to me what I am capable of doing when given the space to be creative.

This week for me was exciting as we learnt more about poetry both in English and IsiXhosa. I learnt more about the power of sound in poetry and the working of music and rhythm. I read out some poems I wrote for the IsiXhosa assignment. The feedback was encouraging. They advised me to remove and change some words that were irrelevant and weak from the poems I wrote. I was so excited when the language itself was edited. For me no matter how good the writing is, if the standardised way of writing is being ignored, it loses its effectiveness. Maybe I believe this because throughout my life I have read books in which capital letters are used at the beginning of sentences and punctuation is used where appropriate. I may be wrong in this belief, but I believe the writing looks presentable and appealing to me when the basic rules of language are being used. What I mean by this is that in the process of my creativity I appreciate being corrected when I get carried away with creativity such that I leave the basics behind. For me, writing is my passion. I feel good when I get feedback on what I write.

## 14<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> May

This week's seminar was so fulfilling to me. I felt like a young girl in her school days. When we were discussing the poems I wrote, the group was not just listening for the sake of listening but their feedback was challenging. The feedback session is the most exciting part for me because when I write, I need someone else to read and listen with an editing eye and ear. Because of my personal experience I believe that it is better for my writing to be corrected by a few people who know me than being criticised out there by the public. Yes, I know that my writing is not everybody's cup of tea, but it gives me piece of mind when at least a group of people look into it before it goes out. I know that when we review the book as a group we don't look much at the content, but we look more at the style of writing. It tires me to read a book that is carelessly written in terms of not minding the basics of writing. This course is very interesting to me, you know? As I see a lot of books to read as part of the course, some books are not appealing at all to me. This gives me an idea of readers out there who will be looking at my books as a writer.

The way I view some books gives me a glimpse of the readers' eye on books. In a funny way this week reality struck me like never before. The reality of knowing that whatever I write is not for me but for the readers. This feeling left me trembling and with respect for my readers. It is clear to me that not every reader will be interested in the content, but the way I write matters. I am looking at the bigger picture of readers, and I'm like, oh my God! I need to consider the accepted way of using the language. Thanks to the presence of Dr Kunju in our session as I read my poems, I was reminded that it is important to mind the language and the accepted way of using it in my writing. As a budding writer who is dreaming of writing for schools, this is very important to me. It reminded me of what language specialists do when you submit your book for review. In order for your book to be prescribed for schools they go through it thoroughly. As someone who came to this course to learn more about writing, this is edifying to me. The session revived in me the love I have for language preservation; preservation in every respect.

I got the shock of my life when I received the feedback on a piece of writing I submitted as an assignment. In that piece of writing I was experimenting with the style Samuel Beckett used in the piece I read. I was experimenting writing without thinking about the content and using short sentences. To me it was the worst of my writing so I could not believe it when I received the feedback that insisted on how good it was. It was also recommended that I continue with prose instead of poetry.

As much as I was taken up by poetry sessions and feedback from the teachers and classmates, I know that prose is what I have been doing. Even in my portfolio when I applied I supplied short stories. I fully agreed with this recommendation. For my reading this week I read a poetry book by Mzi Mahola, titled *Strange things*. I could not put it down because I was enjoying it. The style he used and the content kept me glued to the book. It's a collection of poems he wrote back in the early 90s. I really enjoyed reading the book and if I were to recommend a poetry book I would recommend this one. It speaks to me as I read it and some of the things he mentioned in his writing are familiar to me. The style is simple and readable yet the richness of poetry is there. The coding used in this book makes it colourful. If I were to do poetry he is the one of writers I would look up to. This week, as I was looking for books to read, I picked a book by Irenosen Okojie titled *Speak Gigantular*. I am enjoying the book though I am not

finished yet. The style of her writing is good and descriptive and I am learning from her how to describe a character for the reader. She writes in such a way that you can have a clear picture of what she is talking about.

### **The fictive quality of recollection 21<sup>st</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup> May**

This week's seminar was helpful to me. It was about memoir, autobiography, autofiction, metafiction, surfiction, faction, auto-narration, auto-fabulation, autobiographical novel, life writing, and biomythology. It gave me more ways of telling a story. I was so fascinated by the way Etel Adnan wrote her piece of writing titled *To be in a time of war*. The style she used in telling that story is very simple in the ways she tells and shows every detail on everything she was doing. I have not seen this way of writing before and I have not known that one can write a book like that. She used a very simple way of narrating every action by using *to* in most of her sentences. I like the style and I think I will use it in some of my writings. In my piece of work for the assignment I used this style combining it with other styles. There is another style of writing my life as a list I saw in *Autobiography* by Carmen Gimenez Smith. I like this style also. It is more like a list really. If I were to use this style I would write my life according to the dates, years, and the time if I still remember. I would use the style of narrating by Joel Matloe titled *Life at home and other stories*.

Nkunzemdaka gave us a seminar on composing songs. He told us that it is very important to write or record the story or a song as soon as it comes. I fully agreed with him on that because once the idea of a book comes and I ignore it as it comes, I lose that one forever. What he said was so relevant to me because there are lots of stories I could have written by now. The challenge with this one is that sometimes the idea comes and I am busy with something else. I will try to take the idea and write it down when it comes. He said there are times where a composer of music composes a song and the message in his song comes to pass. It is sad when the message in the song is about an unpleasant event of life. There is power in our tongue one of our teachers told us, which is very true. Sometimes we predict the future in our writing. This seminar speaks to me because I am familiar with what he was talking about. I composed a song in 2008 and in 2016 what I was singing in my song came to pass. I composed a song of positive influence. In his music Nkunzemdaka emphasises the practise and preservation of his culture and belief. I believe that when it comes to beliefs, everybody has a choice. That is where I knew that he was not talking to me in terms of belief. I used my discretion of taking what I want or what I can use from what he said. I was taught as a young girl not to argue with an elderly person. Sometimes when I am listening and not arguing I am misunderstood as one who agrees with everything an elderly person says. I believe that belief is my choice. No one can force me to believe whatever their belief is. I normally keep quiet about whether I agree or not when it comes to belief. One of the teachers in her seminar said a lot about her calling from the ancestors and tried to convince us that ancestral worship is the best because it keeps us African. I dwell on this part because I think it is not appropriate to criticize other people for not practising what you practice as a believer. I think it is not ethical also. I am not here to be criticised for what I believe in. What works for others does not make it a one size fits all kind of belief. I wish that criticism of Christianity (to be specific) can be put aside and in class we stick to what we said and what we came here for. I find it boring, and disrespectful when the "so called" creatives criticise Christian practices and think they are being creative.

In my reading, I am reading *PP/FF* by Peter Connors. I enjoy reading these short pieces. I was fascinated by a piece written by Peter Markus, titled "*We make mud.*" I like this style to such an extent that it is one of the styles I will experiment with in my thesis. The simplicity I find in a child's language is so inspiring to me.

The second book I am reading is titled, "*Land without thunder*" by Grace Ogot. What inspired me about this book is the way she mixed fiction with folklore like in her story "Tekayo". When I first read this one I thought it was a short story, but as I continued with reading the story I could see that it is a folktale. The bamboo hut is narrated in the same way and it speaks to me. The creativity she used is amazing. In my IsiXhosa thesis I will use her style because it is not far from the books I read by Amos Tutuola. The style is interesting because most folklore books are written in a way starting like, "kwathi ke kaloku ngantsomi." In her book of folklore titled, *Ezakowethu*, Kholeka Sigenu narrated her folklore in the way we used as kids hence it's titled *Ezakowethu*, and the stories she narrated are the same stories we read as kids at primary level. But with these writers, Grace and Tutuola, I am learning a new way of writing.

Other books I am planning to read are as follows;

- *Wayward girls and wicked woman* by Angela Carter. I have not started yet with this one but I will read it next week.
- *Short* by Alan Ziegler.
- *Satan's stones* by Moniru Ravanipur.

## Theorising the Archive 28<sup>th</sup> May – 1<sup>st</sup> June

This week's seminar was important. It was about how to write an oral archive. It can be recorded from people who I want to write about. It is very interesting and it gives me the idea of many books that are still to come from me. After this seminar I felt like it opened in me the archive that has been there for a long time. I believe that there is no way that I will run out of ideas on what to write about. As the seminar was about various archives to me it means many archives to be opened up and shared with my readers. There is so much to tell. That will be my next title influenced by this seminar.

I wrote an experiment of an oral archive by a young girl in her voice and using a naïve point of view. I am falling in love with this style of narrating stories every day. To me it is very fascinating. I was so excited when the group gave me the feedback on my piece of writing. It is encouraging to me to see where I am going and which styles I am planning to experiment with in my writing. There is a lot I learned this week. One of the group members wrote a piece of writing in a very creative way where a younger generation was writing a letter to an older Chief who died long before she was born. That kind of narrative is also fascinating to me. The seminar opened my eyes on many forms of narrating stories, like going to a post office and observing as a way of researching and writing a non-fiction story. In my case I saw an opportunity for my future writing projects. There are a lot of people who came to me requesting me to write their life stories. I kept postponing the recording of their stories for a long time. Before this seminar I never had any interest in writing documentaries I always refused to write those kinds of books. What I did not know was that I can write them as well.

The second poem we read is written by J.J.R. Jolobe titled "UNomhi." I like his description of his character. He used simple natural objects, insects and plants to show what he is talking about. The last poem we read by J.J.R.Jolobe is titled "Inyibiba." I like his style in this poem. He describes and shows the reader the small details of what *inyibiba* is like. He speaks of this flower in his poetic style and I can see the flower through his description though he used a language of a girl.

The first isiXhosa books I read this week was *Ubulumko bezinja* written by R. Siyongwana. It is a book of folklore but without much creativity though because it is written in the way of just making dogs speak. The style of writing the folklore I like because he mixed fiction with folklore. There is not much description in his fiction it is narrated more than showing.

The second isiXhosa book I read is written by A.P. Ngani *Umqol'uphandle*. I like the style the writer used in this book because it gives me the description of characters. I can have my own vision of the characters and places in the story. I can see them because of the creativity used in showing them. I can use this style of writing in my future writing projects.

The third book I read is written by G.V.Mona titled *Chos'ntsomi*. I am enjoying this book of folklore. I read some of the folktales in this book when I was a child in English reading books but now they are translated to isiXhosa like the story of "Umasilo noMasilonyana." I like the way these stories are narrated the only thing I don't like in my writing project is the way they start.

All of them starts with, kwathi ke kaloku ngantsomi. In my thesis I will use Mr R Siyongwana's style of mixing fiction and folklore. I like this style as I have drawn influence from writers like Amos Tutuola, *The Palm-Wine Drinkard* and, *My mother killed me, my father eat me* by Carmen Gimenez Smith. These writers are influencing me in my love for folklore. I am still reading the book titled, *Land without thunder* by Grace Ogot. What inspired me about this book is the way she mixed fiction with folklore. I will experiment her style of writing fiction folklore in my isiXhosa thesis.

I am still reading stories from *PP/FF*. I am learning and getting fascinated by the writers in that book. Writers from the book titled *Short* are more influential and fascinating. Writers like Simon Beckett in his way of telling stories. The style he uses in his stories is talking to me. His style of writing will be in my next project. It is descriptive and showing.

### **Poetics and narrative assignment 2018**

When we write we are taking our readers to a world only “we” know. A world that is only known by writers until they have revealed it in their own creative writings. I always see writers as visionaries. Writing is like a journey where you go alone and come back to narrate in writing what you’ve seen from the world revealed to you as a writer. It is a lonely journey if we want it to be lonely. It can also be an exciting journey when we understand the dynamics of being a writer. It can be very lonely if we don’t work with other fellow writers. We can work with other writers by reading their work. Loneliness can lead us to a world where we would die a miserable death. Balance is key in the life of a writer. For a writer this journey is exciting and demanding. We cannot live in a vacuum just because we are writers. We need to use our time wisely by managing it appropriately. As a writer you are part of the collective of writers. That is why it is key to always bear in mind that we belong to a big family of visionaries, writers.

“A writer’s life is a journey, it has to be a journey, it has to be a fate”, says Dambudzo Marechera in *The African Writer’s experience of European Literature*. I see the writer’s life as a journey like Marechera. It is a journey without shortcuts. It is not a one size fits all kind of journey; each writer has an audience. When I say there are no shortcuts I mean to say, if you write poetry, read other pieces of poetry from other poets. If you write prose, read more pieces of prose so that you can be able to identify which prose writer speaks to you. Once you master that, you will be able to feel that you belong to a certain category of writers. A sense of belonging is a basic need for every human being. Once we master the category we belong to, we will know who we are and what we are supposed to be doing in closing the gaps in that particular category as we write. You may find that there are good books that were written long ago by ancestors of writing which can be revived not by copying them as they are, but using the style of writing in them. Even when you read other pieces of writing by other writers, you will see something that speaks volumes to you as a writer. You might find that what you read triggers something in you at times. Even when we watch a movie or a live performance, there are always things we learn and something within us is invoked. Reading and writing form part of the muscles of a writer. Without venturing into other creative journeys, it is impossible to master your own. It becomes difficult to narrate what you’ve seen in your journey. This means each writer is a member of a large family of writers. No writer is an island. As we narrate our stories we are commanding the readers to look at what we’ve seen. When we do that we need tools from our fellow writers, ancient writers and modern writers. “Identify the writers or works you admire the most, and read them very slowly, as many times as necessary” says Linh Dinh. Reading other creative writings will inspire you as a writer and give you an idea of what other creatives are writing about and how they write.

What I mean is, when writing we leave our readers with a picture of what they could not see without us showing them through our stories or poems. Any writer who leaves this side of the planet without emptying himself or herself by writing what was deposited in him, has cheated the readers from seeing the bigger picture. Federico Garcia Lorca in his piece of writing about the Theory and Function of the Duende mentioned that “The true struggle is with the duende”. We may have various wordings for this duende, but the truth is that force is essential for an artist like a heartbeat in the human body. As long as the heart beats, there is life. The same

applies to the duende of an artist. This duende causes the artist to be creative and artistic, it is the core substance in each artist. It can be very destructive if not handled with care. It is the powerful force within an artist and the creative instrument that was deposited within the artist. It is the power that distinguishes between an artist and an ordinary person. This duende can be more dangerous to the artist as well because it is not man-made theory, it is a powerful force. It can cause other artists to be proud, arrogant and disrespectful. Some artists are puffed up because of this duende. It is very painful to see a talented artist who is like a mad horse galloping with pride and arrogance, living life like there is another life stored somewhere when this one is over. This duende requires more discipline as it always draws more attention when it manifests in the life of an artist. It is a powerful spirit therefore without balance one can live like a walking zombie who lives the life of performing for the crowds. Whilst people celebrate and enjoy the fruits of duende, the artist will slowly succumb to a reckless life till he dies a miserable death. With duende you need to be able to stand up to adversity because not everybody will celebrate and applaud for you. Linh Dinh said “Be prepared to be disappointed over and over”.

An artist needs to be grounded and healthy mentally, emotionally, spiritually and physically. Duende on its own cannot live a life without an artist just like an artist cannot be powerful and successful in their craft without duende. Balance is key for any artist. As we create writing, music, poetry, etc, we should also bear in mind that we will leave one day and another generation will benefit from the legacy we leave behind. Whether you are a writer, poet, musician, guitarist, pianist, etc, this duende will take you to a higher level where an ordinary person cannot go. Sometimes comparison will be used as a measure of our potential, it is not always accurate as we are unique in our crafts. As unique as we are, we are still carrying pieces of a bigger picture. We need not to be copies of other writers, or of other artists, but to add our contribution to the industry. Copying others kill the very creativity in us.

There are some obstacles we face in our everyday lives as writers like pain from our past. It cripples most artists because as long as we carry pain from our past experiences we always produce sweet and sour fruits. As artists we need to learn to conduct our own craft so that our pain is revealed in a constructive manner. Any issues left unattended will show up one day if not properly dealt with. We are created in such a way that anything that comes in must have a way of coming out. Past pains may cause artists to produce crafts that are covered with blood from inward wounds as a result some artists never lived to tell their tale due to the pain of what they went through. It is easy to identify a craft from a wounded soul whether music, dance, poem, prose, etc. It is entirely up to the artist what they want to reveal to the world hence it is important to be the conductor of your own talent. We need to have a place where we can empty ourselves from all the negative energy and emotions that yield within us before they destroy us and sadly our talent. Writing can be therapeutic in the sense that we can write about our pain and process everything as we read from time to time until we heal from it or by simply writing it down so that you may free yourself from it. As we read it continually we become lighter emotionally because the more we cry, the more we release all the negative energy that comes from it. A healthy writer or artist is more creative than a sick one. When we are entirely healthy we impart healing to our audience.

Does that mean the duende is not there when we are sick? No. It does not mean it is not there, it is there struggling to blossom freely. The tears we didn't cry come out as we write our stories

and they become words. The clots from inside bleeding become words and the duende mixed with these tears and blood triggers emotions from readers or audience. Instead of bringing healing to the readers or our audience we open wounds and leave them bleeding. There is power in what we write or what we perform as poets. When we don't have inner peace, we write as we feel inside. It is very key to identify the source of our emotion when we write, because each piece of writing reveals who we are, how we are, where we've been, and where we are now. Bitterness and anger destroys the crafter and the craft. We need healing as artists. Let us try to avoid premature death where we can by forgiving and releasing those who hurt us deliberately or without knowing.

In an interview by Allan Finlay, Phillip Zhuwao from Bleksem remarks that,

“Because he didn't live up to the society's dreams, society's hopes, the family's hope. According to the black family, once one has finished school, once one has finished university education, one should get a job, marry, buy a beautiful car, a beautiful house. But he didn't do that and society and his family felt betrayed. Suddenly they threw him out of society. But we can't live up to all these aspirations of society. We can't all marry the beautiful girl. We can't all own a beautiful BMW. We've got different destination, we've got different karmas. I think that's the problem with my career as a writer also. My family hope a lot. They thought that by educating me and being clever and all that, I ought to do something for them. A sort of repayment for their troubles. But then I discover I can't. I've got to live up to my own fantasies, my own poetry world. They say I'm not responsible, I'm selfish. This I don't understand. They say my poetry comes first, before my family, before my friends, before my career. At the end I'm damned”.

What Phillip Zhuwao said in this statement has affected most artists, and it kills them slowly and painfully. The society expect a one size fits all kind of pattern from all of us. The level of selfishness from our black families is too much. It's like when they take us to school they are investing for themselves or they are buying our destinies. They make us feel like we owe our whole beings to them. When one does not meet their expectations, it is like we failed in life. When they threw us out from the environment we are used to, we try every coping mechanism to survive the situations we find ourselves in. It hurts to the core to be disowned because of who we are. Most writers or poets end up living a hobo kind of life because of this. Some pretend they enjoy that kind of life. The truth is that everybody needs to belong, to be loved, to be understood, to be accepted, to be appreciated, and to be respected as an individual. When one does not get these things they become rebellious, defensive, hopeless, careless and sometimes lose themselves in the wrong career, relationship or even worse they pretend that they are fine without family and society. Sometimes one finds themselves in bad company who use dangerous substances to cope with rejection. Rejection is very painful and without being grounded one can die inside while pretending to be okay on the outside until they break into the worst case scenario. You can imagine what I mean. So, I think having an understanding amongst ourselves of how disappointing we are to our families and societies according to their judgement, we need to have mentors and advisers who know about these dynamics. Teachable spirit is key when it comes to mentor and mentee relationships. The truth is that we cannot change who we are and live fake lives just to please other people. We are here to leave a mark through our crafts.

In my mother tongue (IsiXhosa language) we say “*Inyathi ibuzwa kwabaphambili*” meaning there are people before you who walk on the same road you walk on. Their experiences can teach you one or two things about your journey. Even from their flaws and shortcomings is a lesson to be learned. It does not help to be arrogant and ignorant, we need to learn from those before us and those with us now and take what we can use and leave what we cannot use. The truth is (Akukho nzwana ingenasiphako) no one is perfect. That means we can learn from imperfect writers. Having said that, no one is forced to learn from anyone; it’s every individual’s choice just like we cannot force a horse to drink from a lake. Balancing is very important to any artist. Before we became artists, we are daughters, sons, uncles, aunts, mothers, grannies, grandfathers, and so on, the list is endless. We need to have a very good way of telling them about our gifts and talents. As artists we need to be more artistic in using the right words to win them because we need them. There are different cases where families are just not prepared to accept certain careers for their selfish reasons. But we must try to win our loved ones because we need their support as we all know that there are many disappointments in our industry. Patience and endurance is essential because the fruits we reap will come from mastering these two. Learn to be understanding so that you may be able to teach understanding about your craft to the people you care about. A support structure is what builds us to become our best. It strengthens us even at our weakest points.

“A maskandi artist tells his audience now and again that he comes from a certain rural land by the mountains, and he drank his water from a certain river” says Mxolisi Nyezwa in *I heard rhythms* -Unpublished MACAW dissertation 2015.

Maskandi artists are proud of their roots and not ashamed of whom they are. Knowing where you come from is essential because that is where your self-image is built. Without that knowledge an artist will be spineless trying to imitate and please others. It is easy to be influenced when you are not proud of who you are. Where you were raised carries a story of your life in terms of the belief system, culture, norms, etc. We don’t have a choice who gives birth to us, or who raised us, or where and when. We need to not be embarrassed by our parents and where we were raised. Originality is key to the life of an artist. There are people who draw strength from seeing you as an aspiring artist from the same location or village as theirs. The life of an artist is like the lily. Multitudes look up to you as a role model. Because of this reason whether you are young or old, your role in the society demands you to lead as an example. There are young people who admire you for what you do and wish to be like you. Even the way you dress, the way you socialise, the way you live; you are writing a book for your generation. It is up to you as an artist to leave a legacy worthy of honour, and not a legacy that will destroy the next generation. As an artist you have a responsibility to lead. Leadership calls for maturity.

“Suffering takes a man from known places to unknown places. Without suffering you are not a man. You will never suffer for the second time because you have learned to suffer,” from *Life at home & other stories* by Joel Matlou, COSAW, 1991.

Suffering is a school that teaches us things we would never learn anywhere else. It gives us experience we would never get without going through suffering. The way we take it will build or break us depending on our take because we are uniquely different. Unfortunately, not everybody takes it as a learning curve. Lamenting, murmuring and blame games are just excuses for failures in life. Playing victim does not work for everybody. If you choose to be a

victim because of any form of misfortune you will never be victorious in this life. You cannot be a victim and a victor at the same time; you choose which one you want. For positive people, suffering is like a ladder to success. The truth is, whether you succeed or not, suffering takes you through certain curves in life. You may feel delayed, but it does not mean you have failed. It is key to master every lesson from suffering and change it to work for you even if it was meant to destroy you. As artists we suffer in different ways. All successful artists have suffered in one way or another. Determination, courage, and focus are some of the ingredients that will shape and strengthen you as an artist in that season of suffering. There are leaders who were groomed through suffering and there are leaders who could not make it because of suffering. Suffering takes you out of your comfort zone to new horizons, depending on your take. If we could convert every negative to a positive it would work wonders for us.

## **Book Reviews**

### ***Life at home and other stories* by Joel Matlou**

The book is a collection of short stories by Joel Matlou. The stories are very interesting as they speak about life experiences. Matlou managed to mix fiction and folklore in a very creative way. The way he blended real life stories and fiction is amazing. This book is a must read. It is narrated in a descriptive way. It is a combination of reality and folklore. The life of mine workers is described in such a way that it leaves you with an idea of what it is like to live and work in the mines. It takes you step by step on how the processes are done and the life they live there, away from their communities. I enjoyed reading fiction combined with folklore.

The narrator is my favourite character. The way he describes things and places in detail, like when he describes the man who hires labourers. He draws the picture in a reader's mind of what the man was like, "the following day I went to the offices of R.P.M. I found work. The man who hires labourers was a black man with three missing upper teeth. I was told to come on Monday. Before I left I saw the sportsground, the mine hospital, a bar, a café, trucks, vans, buses, and a compound with many rooms and toilets." In these few lines you can see the picture even though you were not there. The character feels so real in the way he speaks. The time, the location and the activities that are taking place in the story are real. He gives the specifics of times, the atmosphere and the feeling he had, "there were lights all over Ga-Rankuwa, Zone 4. I went into the toilet at night but it was very dark inside. There were lights all over Ga-Rankuwa roads." The way he describes in detail draws a picture of this location in the mind of the reader.

He writes in a way that makes the story feel so real. The suspense makes you hold your breath and keeps you reading, such as phrases like "I thought I was in danger." It keeps you reading to find out more. I liked the movement of other things happening at the same time like buses that were hooting and people that started to walk on the roads. The story kept me reading. His short sentences make the reading flow, for example, "at about 5: 15 a.m. I felt cold." The way he plays with the numbers and words in his story is so fascinating: "After twenty minutes, the lift arrived. The ground opened door and we flowed in. The notice on the door said the lift took only twenty people but we were packed like fishes in a small can. At level 6 the guard opened the door and we came out, one by one, as the door is very small." As I read his story I was curious to know what would happen next.

The book is written particularly well, for example, there are tense moments where the writer shows that the situation was frightening. For example when he has to spend six days in the bush wondering. Matlou has a way of making the reader laugh, his sense of humour kept me reading and laughing at the same time.

***Land without thunder* by Grace Ogot**

The book is a collection of short fiction, and folktales. They are very interesting stories and her creativity is shown through her art of playing with words. She has a way of showing the reader a clear picture of what she is talking about. She narrates stories in a way that draws my curiosity. Ogot narrates her stories in a way that one can see how the belief systems of the people can derail the very development that is meant for their benefit. In one of her stories she shows us how powerful belief is. We see it in the story when nurses believe that some practices in nursing are not good and are not supposed to be part of their job. She portrays the way people stand up for what they believe in. I enjoyed reading her stories. I did not sleep the day I started her book. She writes the story of the old white witch in a way such that when I read her book I could see the picture of the hospital. She shows pictures in a form of writing. The ending of her story was frustrating. I was still hoping to hear more about the end of Monica and the white witch.

## Community Project Report

For my Community project I visited a primary school in East London. The staff warmly welcomed me and introduced me to the learners. The learners were excited when they heard that I will be doing a writing workshop with them. It was not easy to choose which ones will be partaking in the workshop. I felt that to be fair enough, I must come up with a plan because I didn't want to break those little hearts. I was given an opportunity to introduce myself to the learners who were more than twenty in number. In my introduction I explained to them the aim of my visit and gave them a brief background of how I fell in love with writing. As I was telling them that good writers are good readers, I shared with them that every writer belongs to a big family of writers who wrote before them. I shared with them my experience in reading other writings from other writers. I asked them about the books they read, and the books they were intending to read. They shared their experiences and their interest in books they were intending to read. Young minds are so brilliant. By doing this I was aiming at emphasizing the importance of reading culture. Free writing was the exercise of the day. I shared with them that free writing is very simple because it is the same exercise our school teachers taught us to write compositions from lower grades. I divided them into two small groups. I gave the first group a random title to write about. I gave them the title, *I remember*. I gave them fifteen minutes to write and I explained to them that they need not edit what they write.

After fifteen minutes, I reminded them that the time was over. I could sense the uneasiness when I asked volunteers to read. There were no volunteers. I assessed the situation and changed my strategy by asking them to read according to the seating arrangement. They read according to the seating, but some of them were not comfortable reading their pieces of writing. Their stories on what they remember were so touching, and moving but I had to keep my emotions to myself. One of the learners wrote about how her step mom killed her father. It was such a session with breaks in between the reader's stories. From that session I learned that children are like onions with many layers. As they read their stories it was like they are removing layers of pain from painful memories. To some of the learners it was therapeutic to write about that topic. Children are going through difficult challenges. Some learners lost their parents and are living with adopted parents. It was such an emotional moment when they read their stories. What I learned from that group is that, a simple topic can trigger different emotions from different individuals. I was hoping that the topic will bring out good memories of what they remember. The truth is that the society is sick. We need to avail ourselves to help where we can. I believe that I can't save the whole world, but I can touch one soul at a time.

I ended up giving them a word of encouragement as a mother. As a person I never knew what it is like to grow up without a biological parent. When some of the kids wrote their pain of growing up without love from their parents, I felt their pain. Some of the children were not keen to read what they remember. It dawned on me that some children opt for sugar mamas and sugar daddies because they want to close the hole in their hearts. From that experience I feel the need to do more workshops on writing as a way of encouraging people to write, and for people to pour out their pain in writing and reading.

With the second group I started by reading from one of my books, titled, *Obo busuku bunye busisidenge*. I gave them time to share their thoughts and what they felt about the story I read

to them. From their feedback I could see that they are good listeners and analysts too. It was amazing how intelligent children can be. I was so fascinated when one of them interpreted the story in a way that even I never imagined. It was like they are writing a different story all together. This feedback showed me that one story can give inspire different interpretations from different readers. I listened to all of them sharing their views on the story. Some of them were so sure that the story was about me and my life story. From this exercise I gave them a task of writing about their own unforgettable night. I gave them twenty minutes because I saw from the previous group that the time I gave them was not enough.

After twenty minutes I asked them to stop and asked a volunteer to read. The environment was lighter and different from the other group. Learners were excited about their writings and they read without the same uneasiness. The feedback time was more exciting and encouraging to the learners by other learners. From this exercise I learned that it was the best way to start by reading a story to the group because the outcome was totally different from the other group.