Emathunjini omhlaba kuhlala abantu

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Abstract

My short stories are about the circumstances in which black gold miners in Welkom in the 1980s and 1990s found themselves. These mineworkers – I was one of them – made up a large, uneducated segment of personnel because our work required strength and good health only. We came from all over the African continent. The places we had to live in were like jails or military barracks, sometimes with twenty or more of us sharing a single room. Because of these conditions, we shared our pains, and the pains of wives, children and relatives of those who were killed or disabled by their work, the repatriation of those who lost their capacity to continue working because of accidents and work, and work-related illnesses. We did not share the same language, and so we had to learn *Fanakalo*, the language of South African mine workers. My stories show how pain and happiness rub shoulders with each other in the miners' life, because besides the dangerous work there was also cultural entertainment, religious practices, robbery by tsotsis, and many prostitutes. The book *Buzani Kubawo* by Witness K. Tamsanqa has been an important influence on my writing. Other influences have been L.L. Sebe's *Ucamngco* and P.T. Mtuze's *Alitshoni Lingaphumi.*

La mabali angeemeko zabembi-migodi baseWelkom phaya kwiminyaka ephakathi koo-1980 noo-1990. Aba basebenzi, endandingomnye wabo, babeliqela elivisayo elingafundanga—bezingca ngamandla. Sasiphuma mbombo zonke zeli lase-Afrika. Indawo esasihlala kuyo ibifana nqwa nezisele zentolongo okanye izindlu zasemkhosini. Amashumi amabini amadoda elala ndlwini – nye. Ngenxa yaloo meko sachubelana amabali ngeemeko zobomi bethu, ngabafazi nabantwana, nezizalwane, nangeengozi esasingena kuzo nokugoduswa kwabo bagulayo. Kwathi kuba sasithetha iilwimi ngeelwimi safundiswa isiFanakalo. Amabali am abonisa iintlungu ezayame kulonwabo kuloo meko yasemigodini kuba yayikho nemidlalo nemigcobo ezonwabisayo ngokweentlanga ngeentlanga. Sasikwajongene nootsotsi kunye neentwazana ezithengisa ngemizimba. Ababhali abathe banefuthe ekubhaleni kwam baquka aba: uW.K. Thamsanqa ngencwadi yakhe ethi "Buzani kubawo," uP.T. Mtuze ngeyakhe ethi "Alitshoni Lingaphumi," kunye no L.L. Sebe ngencwadi yakhe ethi "Ucamngco."

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UNqentsu

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Iqala-Goli

Unyana kaMfundisi uLetha, uNqentsu, ebesebenze nje ngetoliki kamantyi ixesha elide. Wayesoloko ewonwabele umsebenzi wakhe engazenzisi, igama lakhe lidumile kwingingqi yakwa Centane. Kodwa uthe xa engena kunyaka weshumi kulo msebenzi wakhe wobutoliki, kwacaca ngelimhlophe ukuba ukhona undonakele, suka wabonakala uNqentsu engonwabanga nje ngesiqhelo. Wasuka lo mfo wehla nalapha esiqwini. Wayehleli engumntu onebala elihle ke yena umthetho wakhe, kuba kwabanyana baphaya emaNtakwendeni akulelali yakwa Nxokwana nguyena uye kakhulu kuyise, ingakumbi ukusondela kwela bala labamhlophe ngokukhanya kolusu lwakhe.

Ebegqwesile kumsebenzi wakhe, ezinikele ukodlula bonke abasebenzi kwinkundla zamatyala kuCentane. Uve xa etolika ude abe neendawo zoku ngathi uza kugweba ngokwakhe, kangangokuba ngenye imini omnye umfo awayemtolikela wathi ukuphuma kwenkundla waya nqo eziseleni, apho kugcinwa abagwetyiweyo kuphela; xa ebuzwa phaya entolongweni ukuba ufuna ntoni uthi itoliki ithe kuthiwa ngumantyi makayokulala phaya avuke ngomso aye enkundleni. Kwathiwa entolongweni makahambe emke, aze abuyele enkundleni ngemini yamatyala. Nanko lo mfo ekhala kumagosa asentolongweni ngelithi makasele emnceda ke ngendawo yokulala kuba iibhasi eziya eQombolo kowabo ziphelile! Uyasibeka isizathu sakhe, uthi ngenxa yomlalelo ovela kuNqentsu nje ngetoliki kamantyi, endaweni yokuya ezibhasini kwangethuba lakumiswa ityala lakhe yena wakheth’ indlela emsa kulo ntolongo. Kwathiwa akukho ndawo yomntu ongagwetywanga phaya, ngoko makahambe. Warhuqa iinyawo zakhe ukuphindela edolophini yakuCentane, eshiya eso sakhiwo samabanjwa esikula ndlela iya kwaMacibe, noko sibu qelele edolophini yakuCentane.

Wambombozela lo mfo ukubheka kuCentane, engazi ukuba uza kulala phi na. Kodwa ke yona idolophu le yakwaCentane yayihleli iphuphuma ngabantu abanobubele, ngoko lalikhona ithemba.

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Abamelwane balo mzi wakwaLetha yayingooKhwemnta. Ngenye imini umama walapha, uNonkitha, notata walapha, uMzini, bancokola bobabini besekoyini. Apha encokweni yabo bothuka xa befumanisa ukuba lo mntwana wakwammelwane wabo sele kuqingqitha iinyanga ngoku ekho, kanti wayethe usekhefini lethutyana nje.

Ngoku, uphi undonakele?

“Tata, lo nyana walapha ebumelwaneni bethu kutheni ingathi alide liphele nje eli khefu lakhe, ingathi kudala ekho?” wabuza uNonkitha.

Bobabini baqhumisa imibheka-phesheya yabo.

“Hayi kaloku, mna nkosikazi andizazi ezi zinto zaba bantwana beli xesha,” waphendula utat’ ekhaya. “Kum ukuba imfuyo yam iphelele, andiyazi eny’ into.”

“Loo nto ubhityile ngoku,” watsho uNonkitha, “kwaye kuphele nelaa bala lakhe limhlophe njengelikayise.”

Kwathi kusenjalo besancokola zatsho ukukhonkotha izinja phandle. Zatsho, zatsho, zatsho zade zangathi ziyayijikeleza indlu le bakuyo. Yathi gqada phandle intwana yalapha kodwa emva kwemizuzu ethile yaphinda yabuya, isithi ayiboni nto phandle. Wabe naye utata kwelakhe icala emane eyiqongqotha inqawe yakhe, andule ukuyihlohla icuba kwakhona, aphinde athi xa ethe wayiqhumisa kubonakale ukuba ngoku inqawe yenza umsebenzi wayo.

Kuthe kusenjalo kwavakala kukho mntu uthile unkqonkqoza emnyango.

Lathi lakuvulwa ucango kwangena isiqququ somfo owawunokucinga ukuba ngunothimba xa wawungamazi. Kanti ngutata omncinci welo khaya uManditye, usuka kowakhe umzi. Kaloku qho yena xa ethatha uhambo wayeqala ngokuza kubuza impilo kumkhuluwa wakhe, nje ngokuba notat’ uMzini wayesenza njalo kumninawa wakhe xa inguye onohambo.

Ngale mini uManditye ufika umkhuluwa wakhe encokola nenkosikazi yakhe nanjengokuba bengakhange banqumame kwincoko yabo. Uthe wakufika phakathi kwabo uManditye naye wazeka mzekweni, wancedisa naye ekuqhumiseleni iinyosi kwaba yiloo nto ke kuloo ndlu.

Wasukuma kwesosithuba uNonkitha, ekhumbulile, wakhawulezisa ukujonga imbiza yakhe yemifino ekwakusele kulithuba imile phezu komlilo.

Azange kubekudala, utat’ uMzini wavusa incoko yakhe nomfazi ngonyana kaLetha; akuziva ezo ndaba ngoNqentsu, waba ngathi ebezise zona uManditye.

“Anazi nto nina,” wavakala esitsho uManditye, “lo mfana nithetha ngaye akasaphangeli. Wabanjwa; xa kungoku nje uxoxa ityala, utyholwa ngokurhwaphiliza.” Bothuke bobabini uMzini noNonkitha, bebonakalisa ukungazikholelwa ezi ndaba ngoNqentsu kwaphela.

“Intoni?” utsho utat’ uMzini. “Uthi kutheni?”

“Niyayazi into yokuba ebeyitoliki enkulu apha enkundleni kamantyi?” ubuzile umninawa wakhe. “Kuvakala into yokuba ubhaqiwe kubuqhophololo bakhe bokuthatha iimali zabantu, esithi uzakubacimela amatyala abo. Kaloku nabani na xa efuna ityala lakhe liphele, wawumnika nje imali engayephi, liphelele emoyeni elo tyala.”

Kukhuze utat’ uMzini kwakhona.

“Anisaboni na ukuba ayipheli inyama kula mzi, nithi imali ivela phi engaka? Zezi mali zenu zerhafu ninyobe ngazo lo mntana.”

Kungenelele uMzini, ephanda isixhaxha njalo abe engamanga ukuthetha: “Kowu! Kanene wena mfo wakuthi uzithatha phi ezi ndaba wena wedwa?”

Ebasa eyakhe inqawe, ze ayitsale ixesha elide, umsi uphuma ngeempumlo, umphendule ngokukhuleka uManditye, ngelithi: “Le nto yakho yokungaseli, nto yakuthi, iza kukuvimbisa ngeendaba. Yeka le cawe yakho, ayikusi ndawo.”

Abenendawo encumayo, emthe ntsho utat’ uMzini.

“Qho wena yonke into eyenzekayo apha elalini uyiva ngam. Yeka le cawe yakho! Sifuna abantu abaliqela phaya etywaleni ukwenzela into yokuba sithethe izinto zelali.”

Wasuka wahleka uManditye, wabonakala notat’ uMzini engakhubekanga kuqhula kwakhe.

“Hayi ke uqalile nokubhuda kwakho,” uvakale esitsho utat’ uMzini, watsho naye ukuhleka.

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Kwakusele kuyintsimbi yesithoba enkundleni kamantyi kwaCentane, xeshikweni kuvakala ipolisa lenkundla likhwaza, “Inzolo eNkundleni! Inzolo eNkundleni! Phakamani nonke!” phofu oku likwenza ngenzame zokunika imbeko kumantyi xa engena ngaphakathi. Ngenene noluntu olwalungaphaki apho lwayalela lomazwi elogosa lenkundla, enjenjalo ukusukuma, de wabe kanti uhlala esihlalweni sakhe umantyi, bandula ke abantu ukubuyela kwezabo izihlalo.

Koolo luntu lwazifumana luhambele enkundleni ngaloo ntsasa kwakukho umntu ongumama notata, bona bengabazali bommangalelwa, uNqentsu, yena wazibhaqa esenkundleni yamatyala hayi kuba ephangela njengetoliki yaloo nkundla, kodwa kuba emangalelwa ngobuqhophololo.

Umama wommangalelwa waboleka itshefu kwezinye zezihlobo zosapho lwakhe, wamane ezosula iinyembezi ngayo.

“Ingathi ngomnye umantyi lo uzokuwisa isigwebo namhlanje,” uvakale esitsho unina kaNqentsu. “Uphi lo obekade exoxa eli tyala? Hayi bangamenzi loo nto umntwana wam. Lo mtsha akalazi eli tyala, hayi khona. Ndiyala.”

Igosa leNkundla lalihleli libeke amehlo kuye wonke ubani owayeze kuzimasa ityala ngaloo mini, maxa wambi lijikeleza phakathi kwabantu de lityityimbise umnwe kulowo uthe wabhaqwa ethethela phezulu.

Waqala ngesihle ke umsebenzi kamantyi, laba nokuqhuba ityala likaNqentsu ngaphandle kwempazamo.

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Emveni kokuba egxothiwe emsebenzini wakhe wobutoliki uNqentsu, umfazi wakhe uNomeva wamthi mbende ngo-TEBA kuba esithi yena akanakulamba enendoda, ukusuka apho uya kubona ukuba wenza ntoni na. Wamane ke lo mfo evukela kwa-TEBA edolophini kwaCentane, kodwa abuye nembande yesikhova qho. Ngenye imini ude wathi umfazi kuye, “Uyaqonda phofu ndodandini ukuba siyalamba, siyadlakazela ekhay’ apha. Ziyaguga zonke ezaa mpahla wawundithengele zona usaphangela. Uyayazi into yokuba mna ndiyitshintsha kahlanu impahla ngemini? Phofu uzivile ezakho impahla ukuba zinuka ukungunda ngoku? Uthi ufuna ijoyini kodwa ubuya ungayifumanaga qho kodwa ubuya unxilile qho. Uyithatha phi le yotywala imali? Kwaye bonke abantu oya nabo kwa-TEBA ababuyi bona, bayayifumana ijoyini. Ukuba uphinde wabuya ungafumananga joyini uza kundibona into endibhinqa ngayo.”

Akazange abenantloni zokuhleka uNqentsu, kubonakala ukuba akawathatheli ngqalelo amazwi kaNomeva.

“Sukuhleka, uyandiva Nqentsu?” wavakala esitsho. “NdinguNomeva igama lama lalapha emzini ndibona ingathi undilibele, Nqentsu.”

Wabonakala ebuyisa isiqhazolo sakhe uNqentsu, kodwa kubonakala ukuba umumathe into.

“Khona,” utshilo uNomeva, “ndiza kuzala nini Nqentsu? Kunini ndikulo mzi? Ngunyaka wesine lo. Oko wawufotyoza phezu kwam usafotyoza nangoku. Khona ucinga ukuba ungenza abantwana unxila kangaka? Andazi ke ngoku kuba uphelile naloo msetyenzana wakho wawundiqhayisela ngawo.”

Akazange azame nokuphendula uNqentsu, kubonakala ukuba akazimiselanga kwaphela ukukhawulelana nomfazi wakhe. KuNomeva umyeni wakhe wayebonakala engawavi tu amazwi akhe, engasikwa yinimba kukulila nokubanomsindo kukaNomeva. Kulapho wasuka uNomeva wambamba ngomqala uNqentsu evutha ngumsindo, eba ufuna bajongane ngamehlo, wavakala esithi, “Uyakhumbula into yokuba bonke aba bafazana ndandende nabo bayalekelisa bona kulo nyaka kodwa mna xa ndihamba nawe iba ngathi kuhamba amadoda amabini? Jonga khona ngoku ukuba ude wayifumana ijoyini uza kuya eGoli, ndiza kumithiswa ngubani? Hi!”

Wathula uNqentsu, engashukumi nakweeso sihlalo setafile yasekhitshini awayekuso, umfazi wakhe eme ecaleni kwakhe.

“Phendula, ndiza kumithiswa ngubani? Andisakwazi ukuhamba nabafazana endanditshate nabo.”

Uqale apho uduntsu-duntsu, ingulo ezama ukubonakalisa amandla akhe, umfazi eqinisile ekumbambeni uNqentsu, ibe indoda yona izama ngandlela zonke ukuphuncuka. Ngethamsanqa wabe ngenene uyaphuncuka uNqentsu engakhange abe kanti ushiywa ngumsindo.

Ngosuku olulandelayo, ngokwesiqhelo uNqentsu wavukela kwidolophu yakwaCentena, kodwa lathi xa litshona ilanga, kwafana nezolo, wabuya engayifumenanga ijoyini leyo ebehambele yona edolophini. Akazange akwazi nokubuza ngento esiwa phantsi komlomo uNqentsu kuba wayesele eyiqhela kancinci-kancinci imikhuba emitsha kaNomeva; lo mfazi wayesele enento yokuthi xa elambile uNqentsu aze acele ukutya kuye, athi, “Masiye ebhedini kuqala.” Abaleke xa kunjalo ke uNqentsu aye apho kukho iitshomi zakhe. Amshiye apho lo mfazi elibele kukukhulula. Ngenye imini lo mfazi wangena ebhedeni walinda indoda ithe iyeza, kanti ulinde ukuza kukaNxele. Nangoku waphela encama, wavuka waphinda wanxiba, sele uphele tu naloo mdla wayenawo.

Ngamini ithile kwehle siganeko sibunje kanye, uNqentsu evukele edolophini, ze wabuya engayifumenanga ijoyini; bayaxabana nomfazi kwakhona, naanko ukubalekela ebuyela apho ebevela, edolophini kwaCentane, uNqentsu, ibe sele ilixesha lokubuya kweenkomo kwaye neenqwelo esisinge khona sele zinqongophele. Ngethamsanqa, wakwazi ukufumana into ekhwelwayo, wahamba ukuya edolophini, apho wathi kungekudala egxidikile kwinqwelo, wangena esitalatweni efuna angayaziyo, waze wadibana nomnye wabahlobo bakhe uThemba.

UThemba lo wayesebenza kwa-TEBA. Bavuyelana kakhulu ukuhlangana kwabo, uThemba wothuka ukuba kanti akasaphangeli kwaye ufuna ijoyini ngoku uNqentsu. Kulapho wathi uThemba kuye maze badibane kwindawo ekuthiwa yi-Royal Hotel emva kwentsimbi yesihlanu. Futhi angaphindi azihluphe ngokufuna ijoyini uza kumkhangelela imigodi ekhanyayo.

Badibana nyani ngaloo mini, bazinika apha etywaleni bomlungu, bade bathi zakuvalwa iihotele benza ugqogqa ezirhoxweni ubusuku bonke.

Bothuka sele kusile, bobabini bengakhange babubone ubuthongo; xa ephangela lo mfo wakwa-TEBA, kwaye kwanyanzeleka ukuba uNqentsu aye ezilalini, wakwazi ukuyakufika kungekasengwa neemazi kwaNxokwana.

Xa efika endlwini wamganga emnyango umfazi, yaqala inkathazo ngoko nangoko.

"Uyafika ekuseni unxilile," watsho uNomeva. Akazange amphe nethuba lokuphendula uNqentsu. "Uthi kukhona uza kulala ngoku? Ngamany' amazwi, awuzukufuna joyini namhlanje?" Wonela nje ukuba anyikinye intloko umyeni wakhe. "Ubuphi ke ebusuku, bekutheni ukuze ungalali kule ndawo usuka kuyo?" wabuza uNomeva. "Yintoni eyenza ukuba ungabuyi, uthi mna mandilale nabani? Khona wena ubulele nabani? Phendula wethu?"

Wazama kangangoko uNqentsu ukubalisa ngesehlo sezolo, esithi udibene noThemba umhobo wakhe, bathi ekonwabeni kwabo wala tu ukumvumela ukuba akhululeke ahambe agoduke, abuyele ekhaya. Konela nje lo mazwi, wavakala umfazi emtshutshumbisa, esithi, "Masihambe sobabini ngoku siye kwa-TEBA ndizibonele, ngokwam lo mfo uthetha ngaye."

Bengekaphumi endlwini bafumana umnxeba uvela kwa-TEBA, izindaba zokuba uNqentsu makeze neempahla zakhe uyifumene ijoyini. Pho kubonakala ukuba le iyimigushuzo kaThemba, nto leyo eyaye yamxolisa umfazi.

Kwangaloo mini, walungisa uNqentsu ngokukhawuleza, kanti uza kube esinge eGoli okokuqala ebomini bakhe. Wakhawulezisa wabe kanti kwangalo mini ufika kwa-TEBA, apho wanikwa amaphepha, isonka netoti yeSalidana. Yantyuntya naye ibhasi ukuya kwelaseGoli.

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Bayinikela umva idolophu yakwaCentane ngexesha lokunqanqaza koonogqaza emathafeni, bafika eWelkom ngentsimbi yokuqala ebusuku. Babekhwele ibhasi ka-South African Railways. Le bhasi ke yayibomvu krwe ngebala. U-TEBA noSouth African Railways babe nesivumelwano sokuthutha abasebenzi bomgodi phantsi ko-TEBA, abantu abafumene ijoyini ukutsho. Le bhasi ke yayiyintloko etsala umgqomo omde, lo ulayisha abantu, maxesha onke ihleli igcwele ngamadoda asinge eGoli, esithi aya kukhangela indlela yokuphila. Kwakungekho qhagamshelwano phakathi kwabakhweli nomqhubi kunye nomncedisi womqhubi. Nanichama kuphela xa ithe yamisa. Abaqhubi yayisoloko iba zizigantsontso ezimhlophe zaseRhawutini ezingasaziyo neso siXhosa, kodwa babethetha iFanakalo, yona yayivakala kancinci emaXhoseni awayeqala ukuya kuphangela emigodini.

Xa ifika le bhasi eGoli ngentsimbi yokuqala ebusuku, yafikela kwindawo eyayibizwa ngokuba kukwaMzilikazi. Bathi xa befika ke kuloo dolophu abe amadolo ebudinwa yihambo, amathe la

wabo phantse ajiyile, iindlebe ezi zinento engaqhelekanga ethi weye-weye-weye-weye, kutsho kuthi lwili, uqaphele into yokuba awuseva neso siXhosa kuba esaphaya ayisiso esi sakowenu. Kodwa wawunyanzeleka ukuba uyive into ethethwayo apho nakanjani na.

UMzilikazi yayiyindawo apho zazifikela khona zonke iibhasi zakwa South African Railways ezizise abantu abaye eGoli ngejoyini eya emigodini. Apho eMzilikazi ikakhulu kwakukho ikliniki, isibhedlele esikhulu, kunye neeofisi ezithumela abantu kwimiigodi ngemiigodi, indoda nganye kulo mgodi ize kuwo ngokwempepha zayo.

Xa nisohlika kwezo bhasi nenza imigca emide eliqela, kukhangelwe ubume bempilo yendoda nganye nganye. Ukuba ke uphilile, uthunyelwa kwibhasi eya kumgodi wakho. Xa nisiya kugqirha nikhulula nihambeze. Iimpahla zakho uzifaka apha ekhwapheni uye kugqirha akuxilonge, amane ekungomba apha esifubeni, ajonge nqu nala amalungu omzimba agqunywayo. Xa uphilile ugqirha wayethi abhale kwimpepha zakho, andule athi ungaya emgodini lowo uza kuphangela kuwo; ukanti wayekuyalela ukuba akaxolanga yimpilo yakho, atsho ukuba wena ufanelwe kukuqeshwa kumsebenzi wangaphandle komgodi.

UNqentsu, ngomhla wokufika kwakhe waze wabonana nogqirha walapho eMzilikazi, wantswayiza naye, ehamba ngaze.

Ngelishwa ke yena wafumana ugqirha owayengumfazi womntu omhlophe. Kwakuthethwa isiFanakalo kuphela kuba noogqirha babesuka kula mazwe angenaso isiNgesi. Xa exilonga uNqentsu ugqirha ufumanisa ukuba unesifo asisulelwe ngumntu obhinqileyo wokugqibela ukulala naye.

Ngoku ke athi ugqirha ngeFanakalo, “Madoda lo mthondo ka wena yena hayi khona straight mina lalisa wena lapha sibhedlele kalo kungisa yena, kusasa kalo 08h00 mina buya lungisa yena.”

Xa engqengqile kule ndawo alaliswa kuyo uNqentsu, uqhaphela izixhobo sokukhanda iinqwelo, izipanela, amacingo amakhulu egolide, kunye neehamile ezinkulu ezimenyezelayo, zonke zikwakweligumbi likagqirha; kulapho avela wawuva umzimba wakhe ugcwele yinkwanca, aqonde ukuba ubudoda bakhe buza kukhandwa ngezo hamile futhi butsalwe ngezo pintshasi zazimenyezela apho. Wayebona intlungu ezinganyamezelekiyo kwaphela!

Wathi engekenziwa nto ngugqirha, wavuka ngokungxama uNqentsu, wanxiba iimpahla zakhe waphuma nje kakuhle, wathi kuba wayenayo imalana, kwangalo mini wazimela waphindela ekhaya kwaCentane.

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Wothuka waphantse ukufa umfazi xa ebona le ndoda ifika. Wakhefuzela eyiminxisela ngemibuzo.

Yathi indoda, “Ndibuyile mfazi, kuthiwe phaya i-weight yam ayibaxolisi, ke andinakuya emgodini. Kufuneka kuqala yolulwe kuqala i-weight yam.”

“Yhe wethu,” watsho enomsindo uNomeva, “akukho mntu apha ongayaziyo into yokuba i-weight yakho igoso. Kaloku watya imali karhulumente. Ngenxa yaloo nto ke akukho nenye

indawo onokuze usebenze kuyo ngaphandle kwemigodi. Mna andizukuhlala nendoda engasebenziyo. Phindela ngomso lo usayo, uye kwaTEBA, uthi ubuzolungisa i-weight yakho egoso, ze ngoko nangoko bakubuyisele eWelkom."

Yangathi akathethanga kuNqentsu.

"Uthi ungenwe yintoni kakade Nqentsu?" watsho ukuqhubeka uNomeva. "Abanye abafazi endandende nabo bakude bona ngoku njengokuba wena ulibele kukudlala nje. Hamba ngoku uphindele emigodini."

Inene ngentseni ngosuku olulandelayo, wanyoshoza ukuya kwa-TEBA edolophini uNqentsu, apho wafika bamphindisela kwakhona eGoli.

Enkomponi uyagula kwaye uyafa

Ekubeni uNqentsu egxothwe kakubi ngumfazi wakhe emzini wabo ngaloo mini, nditsho ukugityiselwa ngezamiso nguNomeva, nkqu necephe eli le mbala, wakwazi ukuphuncula aye edolophini, wade wabe uyokufika kwa-TEBA. Kwakumalanga xeshikweni enyuka ngendlela yenqwelo ejonge kuCentane; kuba ezakhe ingcinga zasisele ziphelele ekulungiseni imo yakhe yomsebenzi, akazange ayiqaphele inqwelo eyayithwele amagosa akwa-TEBA esinge kwilali yakhe iNxokwana, phofu behambele kuye kanye uNqentsu.

Ayengamazi nokumazi la magosa ebusweni uNqentsu, nawo engazange abonwa ekhay'apha, nto leyo ethi xa efika emzini kaNqentsu ubani wayengayenza impazamo yokubacingela ngelithi inqwelo le yabo ithwele ababolekisi-mali, bona bashishina ngokugqogqa imizi, bekoleka imali zamatyala.

Afika kukho uNomeva umfazi kaNqentsu endlwini la magosa akwa-TEBA. Akuvulwa amacango enqelwo, kwabonakala kusehla amadoda amathathu namanenekazi amabini, ze owayebonakala inguye okhokela eli gqiza wabuza uNqentsu kuNomeva. Akazange axoke umfazi kaNqentsu, suka watsho ngokuphandle ukuba akamazi apho aye khona umyeni wakhe, nto nje uphume ngelithi usaya edolophini ukuyokuphanda ngezinto zomsebenzi. Xa ebabuza uNomeva aba bantu ukuba bangoobani bevela phi, futhi bemfunela ntoni uNqentsu, bathi bangabahlobo bakhe. Bathi makabajikelezise izindlu zonke ukuze baxole ukuba akekho. Wavuma ke uNomeva, ebangenisa kuzo zonke ezo zindlu nezo ngxande zelo khaya.

Ebesathi uNomeva ubalisela ezi "zihlobo" zikaNqentsu ngengxabano yabo yaloo ntsasa, yona ethe yakhokhela ukuba uNqentsu aphindele apho 'bevela khona, kubonakala gosa lithile liguqa ngamadolo, de likhangela phantsi kwebhedi, lifuna uNqentsu, wavela waqonda ngoko nangoko uNomeva ukuba ayizizo izihlobo zikaNqentsu ezi, kuba akukho sihlobo sinokuze sikhangele isihlobo saso phantsi kwebhedi yenyi ndoda, u-"akekho" bekufanele into yokuba wonele. Loo magosa ke athi akubona ukuba nyhani akafumaneki uNqentsu, abe nomfazi wakhe ayakholwa ukuba uthethe inyaso, aqala ukuzazisa kuNomeva ukuba angamagosa azobamba uNqentsu kuba ekhutshelwe umyalelo ziziphathi zakwa TEBA ukuba ahambe aye kubamba uNqentsu ngenxa yokwaphula isivumelwano sakhe no-TEBA.

Kulapha ke waphinda watsho uNomeva ukuba ngenene umyeni wakhe ebekho ngentseni yaloo mini, nto nje kuba engavuyanga yena ukumbona, baye baxabana waze uNomeva wamkhupha kakubi, esithi uNqentsu makaphindele kwa-TEBA.

"Buyelani khona nina," wavakala esitsho uNomeva, ebucaphuka yimikhuba yalamagosa namaqhinga abo, "kufanele ukuba niza kumfumana khona."

Ayebuyela kwinqwelo yawo lo magosa, ebulela ngoncedo luka Nomeva, wafuna ukwazi ke yena umfazi kaNqentsu ukuba kakade ebeza kukhwela phi uNqentsu kuba inqwelo leyo yawo kwakubonakala mhlophe ukuba igcwele ngabo kuphela, akukho ndawo iseleyo enokusingatha mntu wumbi.

Elinye lawo laphendula, alabinazo intloni zokuthi, “Kaloku uNqentsu ebezakukhwela emva, apho kuhlala khona impahla.”

“Hayi ke ngoku”, watsho ukukhuza, eqhwaba izandla uNomeva, “ngumhlola ke lo uwuthethayo. Hayi hambani tata, hambana nibuyel’ apho benivela.”

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Aleqa kwa-TEBA ngoko nangoko la magosa. Zange kubekudala, akhawuleza afika. Kodwa ngelishwa nangethamsanqa, azange kubekho sidingo sokumbamba uNqentsu kuba athi xa egaleleka apho kwa-TEBA abe sele esaziswa ukuba afika ezithendeni zikaNqentsu, kuba ibhasi leyo wayekhwele kuyo kwakusele kulithuba iphumile, ikuhambo oluphela kwimigodi yakwanyam’ ayipheli, suka kuphel’ izinyo lendoda.

Kodwa ke kuba umthetho ingumthetho, akazange afune ukwamnkela lo mazwi la magosa; suka agqiba kwelokuba mawafake isicelo kumphathi sitishi sakuCentane ukuba ayalele zonke izikhululo zamapolisa ukusuka eGcuwa ukuya eKomani, ukuba enze uvalo-ndlela, amise zonke iinqwelo koohola bendlela ngelinge lokukhangela uNqentsu, bambi besithi akathembekanga, kwaye kukrokreleka ngathi uyabandakanyeka kwezomlo wepolitiki, ubuxoki nje obabulungiselelwe ukukhohlisa umphathi-sitishi waloo ngingqi ze avume isicelo salamagosa akwa TEBA. Ngenene kwabanjalo. Ukusuka kwaCentane ukuya kutsho kuKomani kwakumiswa kwanto ehamba ngepetroli ne dizili, nazo iibhasi zika South African Railways azange zisinde. Wonke ubani wayekhala lo luvalo-ndlela, ikakhulu kuba ukuvalwa kwendlela ithutyana ngelinge lokukhangela uNqentsu kwakubalibazisa kakhulu, ingakumbi xa kwakubonakala lo magosa esokola ukuba ade afumane lo bamfunayo.

Yathi yakumisa ibhasi ka-Railway kuKomani, amajoyini olula imilenze, ilithuba lawo eli ukuba bathenge into esiwa phantsi kwempumlo, emva koko baphindele ebhasini. Kuthe koo lo lolulo lweenyawo amagosa akwa TEBA ambona uNqentsu esiya ebhasini ekekele zizinto azithengileyo. Bambamba apho uNqentsu!

Atsho ukuqhayisa ngesigunyaziso sokubanjwa kwakhe. Wabangathi kuwo uNqentsu, “Ndiyavuma, ndonile madoda, kodwa ibani novelwano, oku kokuba ndiye kulanda izinto zam ebhasini.” Kodwa hayi, akafuna tu ukumamela, ngelithi zinzame zakhe uNqentsu zokukhangela indlela anokuthi aqhweshe ngayo. Wathathwa apho uNqentsu, ebambisene ngaye lamagosa, atsho ukuya naye kwinqwelo yawo, bathi nalapha ekumphoseni ngasemva, abonisa ukungabinambeko, bemgoba intloko, bemtyhalela ngaphakathi okwesilwanyana esidlokovayo.

Izikhalo zika Nqentsu zawela phantsi, ekhala ngosizi, esithi, “Madoda, yonke impahla yam ikulaa bhasi. Khona ndiza kutshintsha ngantoni ngomso xa ndisiya kuvela kwaMantyi?”

Elinye lalomagosa, lona kubonakala ukuba lalinemincili ekufumanekeni ku kaNqentsu ukodlula oogxa balo, latsho kuqala ukuphendula, “Ulibele Nqentsu ukuba awusenguye utoliki ngoku. Ucinga ukuba kungookuya wawugeza gqitha, usithi wena ulisekela likamantyi?” Inyembezi kwakusondele ukuba ziwe emehlweni kaNqentsu ngoku. “Uza kulala eziseleni ngokuhlwa nje, ze ngomso udibane nomantyi asuse esisigunyaziso sokubanjwa.” Azange atshintshe nto lo mazwi eloo gosa, nto nje ukongeza kwintlungu kaNqentsu. “Uphindela kwa-

TEBA ntanga," liqhube latsho eligosa, "emva koko uyokutya amakhwenkwe eGoli, thina sishiyeke ngasemva sibone ngomkakho!" Ahleka amanye waloo magosa, kubonakala ukuba onwabile kukubona uNqentsu, itoliki yodumo iyinto yokuhlekisa. Neloo gosa linentlonti legeza lalingekoneli; nalo lisongeza wambi amazwi, phofu ikwa sisigezo neso: "Sidenge ndini, kudala ucinga ukuba uhlakaniphile kwezi nkundla zamatyala zakuCentane! Namhlanje yimini yakho. Ngena!"

Mbakra! ukuvalwa kocango, yatsala inqwelo ukubuyela kwaCentane.

Wathathwa ngenene uNqentsu, wabuchithela kwisikhululo samapolisa kwaCentane ubusuku bakhe; wavela kumantyi kusuku olandelayo.

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Ath' amaXhosa iindaba aziwazi umbethe. Zange kwanele xesha lide, ihlazo lokubanjwa okwesibini kuka Nqentsu lagqiba indawo yonke, nditsho uNonkitha noMzini baziva ezi indaba ngomakhelwane wabo bengazibuzanga, kaloku nqu uManditye azange zimphose.

Ngaloo mini yetyala lika Nqentsu, yagcwala inkundla yema ngeembambo. Loo nto ke aba bantu bonke babengazi ukuba uNqentsu wenze ntoni na kanye kanye. Abanye babegqibele esaxoxa amatyala obusela, besithi mhlawumbi kuvele bantu bambi, bembamba ngokutya iimali zabo. Abanye babesithi uza kuthi shu uNqentsu, wayecinga ukuba akazukubonwa esitya iimali zabantu abazisokolelayo, eyeka ukubulela umsebenzi lo wakhe!

Ngethamsanqa ngalomini, ityala lakhe uNqentsu laba lelokuqala.

Uthe xa emjonga umantyi uMthwalo wanikina intloko, ebona umntu owayesakuba yitoliki yakhe sele eyinto eshwatywaniswe yijele. Wavakala esithi umantyi, "Ndiyasirhoxisa esi sigunyaziso sokubanjwa ku kaNqentsu kuba uthi umtshutshisi kukho ubungqina bokuba umrhanelwa uphindele kwa-TEBA, apho ebemangalelwe khona." Woleka ngeengcebiso umantyi, "Ulutsha malu qiqe ngokuba lunamandla, eli lizwe ngomso liza kuxhomekeka kulo. Mabasoloko besenza izinto eziza kubanika ingomso eliqaqambileyo."

Wonela ngokubhekisa kumrhanelwa, wenjenje, "Wena ubufanele ukuba ungumzekelo ngokuba uyawazi umthetho."

Xa egqiba apho umantyi wathi makungene ityala elilandelayo.

Waba ke njalo uNqentsu uphindela kuhambo lwakhe.

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Kwanyanzeleka ke ukuba uNqentsu ahambe ade ayokufika kwaMzilikazi apho wathi waxilongwa khona ngokupheleleyo, waza wafunyaniswa ukuba ukulungele ukusebenza emathunjini omhlaba. Yamthatha ke inqwelo yomgodi apho kwagqirha yatsho ukumsa kumgodi wakhe, wona ubizwa i-St. Helena Gold Mine.

Njengokuba umgodi lo i-St. Helena wawunentlaninge yeentlanga ngeentlanga, uhlanga ngalunye lwalunendoda eyayimele bonke abantu beloo hlanga, lo mfo ke kwakusithiwa yiNduna. UNqentsu ke wasiwa kuloo ndoda yinqelo leyo yomgodi. Igama leNduna yamaXhosa

kwakusithiwa nguGalelebhayini, kodwa kusithiwa nguBhayi ziintlanga nabelungu. UNqentsu ke wathathwa ngamagosa omgodi ngokuyalelwa yiNduna ukuba amnike zonke imfanelo zakhe. Wasiwa kumphathi weHostele apho wafika wafungiswa nabanye *ooqala-Goli*. Emva koko basiwa kwi-ofisi apho baye banikwa amabhanti esihlahla amhlophe. Wonke umntu ofikayo wayethi afumane ibhanti eli mhlophe ukwenzela nokuba ungaya phi esanxibe eloo bhanti limhlophe, athi akufunyanwa ngabakwantsasana akwazi ukuphindiswela lula apho asebenza khona, konke oko ngenxa yeloo bhanti lesihlahla. Nje ngokuba kwakunjalo kuNqentsu, wathi emva kokuba efumene eli bhanti limhlophe, wathunyelwa kumasiza, yena wayeligosa elijongene nokunikezela ingqesho kubasebenzi bomgodi qho xa kufika amadoda amatsha; wawuthi ke unikwe ke eyona bhanti iza kuba yeyakho isigxina ngokuba umbala weli ibhanti wawohlukile ne lo lokuqala ngokuba wona wakwehlula kwabanye abasebenzi ngokweendawo osebenza kuyo. UNqentsu ke wanikwa inombolo eyayingu-12399. Wanikwa ii-gumboots, i-overall, ibhanti lasesinqeni, umnqwazi wentsimbi, impempe, iigogles, ii-earplugs, icephe, iplate, imagi njalo-njalo. Wasiwa egumbini lokulala apho, ngelishwa waye wafumana ibhedi ephezulu. Kaloku iibhedi zakhona zazikhwelene, isine ukusuka ezantsi ukuya phezulu. Ezo ziphezulu zazingafunwa ngabaninzi, nto leyo ethi *ooqala-Goli* babesoloko befika sele kusele zona. Nje ngomnye woo*qala-Goli* abavela kwelase Mpuma Koloni, uNqentsu waxelelwa ukuba apha alala khona uza kuhlala namadoda angamaXhosa. Waboniswa apho kunxityelwa khona, indawo eyayisetyenziswa nje ngeklinikhi, waboniswa apho kuthengiswa khona utywala, izikroxo ezilapha ngaphakathi enkomponi ukutsho, indawo yokutyela, iholo elalinomabonakude, namanye amaholo anjengowokuhlamba iimpahla nomzimba.

Emva koko ke xa wonke umntu ebuyile emsebenzini nakwisidlo sasebusuku, uNqentsu wadityaniswa nesibonda sendlu. Apho ke wanikwa imithetho yalapho endlwini, exelelwa ukuba akubuywa ebusuku kulo ndlu kuba ingxolo ayifuneki, kwaye kufuneka kulalwe ngexesha kuba kukho amadoda aphangela kwiindawo ezivukelayo.

“Awunalungelo lokukhalisa unomathotholo wakho ngokuba ukhona owalapha emgodini ovalwayo ngexesha elithile,” watsho uGalelebhayini. “Izibane ke apha endlwini zisoloko zilayitile, zicinywa yi-*hostel officer* ngethuba elibekiweyo.”

Walala uNqentsu exelelwe ukuba uzakulandwa kusuku olulandelayo ukuze kuqhutyekwe naye ngokuba zininzi izinto ekufuneka ezenzile, ezinjengokulanda amalahla embawula ngokuba yena ngu *qali-Goli*, ayokukha untshayi-ntshayi, ade alande umxhaxheni, bona ibutywala bamahala, obungarholelwayo, suka bufumaneka mahala, kwaye wonke umsebenzi womgodi ethanda ukuba buhlale bukho maxesha onke endlini, ukunceda onke la madoda abenokufumana ukuphumla qho xa ebuyile ekuphangeleni. Utywala bamahala bona babuphisa kuba abaphathi babefuna abasebenzi balibale tu ngeentsana nabafazi babo nangeengxaki zabo. Lo msebenzi wawusenziwa ngabafikayo emigodini, *ooqali-Goli* aba ke. Kwakufuneka enze njalo ke uNqentsu, nqu nditsho nokuhamba azibone eyokuthengela uSibonda wendlu yakhe uzagiya, umabil’ ebanda wala pho, nqu nezinto zokuhlamba umzimba okanye ukucoca into zendlu.

Kwakugcwele zizinto ke ngaphakathi enkomponi: imihlakulo nemigqomo emnyama, iimihlakulo ezifolokhwe, iintsontelo nezinye izixhobo zokusebenza. Udonga lwakhona lwalungathi aluzange nakanye lwatyatyekwa ngepeyinti. Into eyayixhaphakile eludongeni

ziintlobo-ntlobo zezinambuzane ezinje ngamaphela ongazange wawabona ukubamakhulu nokoyikeka oko wazalwa, iincukuthu zakhona zazithekeza igazi ngokuba zazizondla ngale mizimba ilala apha. Ezo zigantsontso zamadoda zazisithi xa zingena ezingubeni zidlobadlobe ezo zinambuzane ezazibonwa apho, kanga ngokuba izigulo ezisulelayo zazixhaphake kakhulu apho kwihostela yase St Helena.

Uze ukhumbule ukuba aba bantu balala neza mpahla zigcwele umhlaba wasemgodini, ubusuku obu barhogola olwaa thuli lomgodi. Yiyo le nto wawufumanisa into yokuba babesoloko begula abantu bomgodi ngokuba babephefumla uthuli emgodini nasezindlwini abalala kuzo. Ii-gumboots zabo zazinuka phu. Ngelinye ixesha kwakungathusi ukuva ukuva ubani ebe ebehambele apho ehostele, endwendwele umalume okanye uyihlo, waze waphuma kwindlu sele esulelwe ngesifo esithile, uve sele kusithiwa uphelele esibhedlele. Baninzi abantu ababebulawa zizifo zeenkomponi, njengomsi wamalahla nezinye.

Xa unikwa ibhedi kwakungajongwa ukuba uneminyaka emingaphi na, yayinikwa indoda ibhedi ngokufika kuqala, ibe nguloo mgushuzo qho ebusuku xa lowo uthe wanelishwa lokufumana ibhedi yokugqibela ephezulu kufuneka aye kulala.

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Ngenye imini omnye umfana owayeneminyaka engamashumi amabini anesihlanu waxabana nelinye ixhego elali nesithandathu samashumi eminyaka. Lo mfana ufika ebusuku sele kulelwe. Yena wayevela esirhoxweni ekhalisela phezulu unomathotholo wakhe. Eli xhego lamcela kakuhle ukuba awucime unomathotholo wakhe kuba esothuswe ebuthongweni yingxolo ewenzayo. Lo ntwana leyo azange ibhekise nelinye, suka yaliqhokra ngentsimbi eloo xhego elo liphezulu kweyokugqibela ibhedi, layokuwa phantsi elo xhego ngeyona ndlela imanyukunyezi. Kwafunyaniswsa ukuba kwindawo ezimbalwa amathambo omzimba walo ayesele ephukile, ingakumbi amadolo nembambo. Bavuka buphuthu-phuthu bonke abantu ababelele. Zange babuze, yaba ngulowo nalowo, umbhodamo ukuya emnyango, onke amanye la amadoda ebaleka ngelithi asindisa ubomi bawo.

Lo ntwana leyo yaye yashiyeka neloo xhego sele likhala, ngoku lisithi, “Uxolo mntwana wam, ungawukhalisa unomathotholo wakho. Andisokube ndiphinde ndikunqande kwakhona.”

Ithe le ntwana yakubona ukuba ishiyeke nelixhego kuphela, kwaye nalo liyagqushalaza phantsi liyafa zintlungu, yathatha isarha eyayisetyenziswa ekusarheni iinkuni zokuphemba umlilo wamalahle, yatsho ukulonzakalisa ngokungabisasizi elo xhego, ukusebenzisa isarha leyo yabangathi usisilwanyana utata lo umdala. Lavakala likhwaza umfazi walo eloxhego, nditsho wonke ubani owayeligazi linye nalo: abaninawa balo, abantwana balo, nabazukulwana balo.

Ezoo ndaba ke zadizwa sisibonda sendlu; kwathi kanti sona zange sibaleke, koko sasithe ncwaba ukuzimela phantsi kwefesitile yendlu leyo, sakwazi ukubhala loo miyolelo yelo xhego elagqiba iminyaka engamashumi mane liphoswa ngamatye phantsi komhlaba kanti lizakubulawa ngendlela engenalusizi yidyongwana ingenayo nekati le xa kwaku phandwa ngayo.

Ngethamsanqa amagosa omthetho enkomponi nabakwantsasana baye bafika ngokukhawuleza, bakwazi ukuyibamba loo ntwana ingeka qhawuli emveni kwokwenza elo nyala layo.

Unqentsu unikwa umsebenzi

UNqentsu use ofisini ka masiza uNdade, uhleli esitulweni kwitafile le yo ka masiza, bajongene nqo emehlweni. Lo masiza wakhe yingxwayi-ngxwayi yomfo waseLesotho, umfo lo wo wayenesiphiwo sokwazi iilwimi ezininzi, kodwa esaziwa ngokungabinabo tu ububele kubasebenzi bomgodi, ingakumbi koo *qali-Goli* abafana noNqentsu.

"Nqentsu mfo ka bawo, apha ndinemisebenzi emininzi," utsho uNdade. "Eminye isezantsi emgodini, eminye ilapha phezu komgodi. Ke ukuba uzakuthatha umsebenzi womgodi uzakuqala esikolweni somgodi, emva koko uyokulungiswa de uqhele ubushushu bomgodi ozakudibana nabo wakuqala umsebenzi bantsi ngomhlaba. Ukuba uza kukhetha umsebenzi ophezulu komgodi, uza kuya kuwo ngoku. Okanye ndikunike ithuba ucinge?"

Wavela wema ngeenyawo uNqentsu, kubonakala uziva emkhulu, yena akadingi nathuba lokucinga, sele esenzile isigqibo sakhe.

"Ndifuna umsebenzi walapha phezu komgodi," utsho njalo esamile uNqentsu. "Andinakulunga tu emathunjini omhlaba."

Ubuzile uNdade, esothuka ngalamazwi nokuzithemba ku kaNqentsu, "Yintoni eyenza ukuba ukhethe umsebenzi walapha phezu komgodi?"

"Mna andiloqaba," utsho uNqentsu ukuphendula, okomntu lo uqhayisayo. "Nasekhaya akukho qaba. Utata wam nguMfundisi! Kwaye kule nyanga iphelileyo ebenikwa isidanga sobuBhishophu yidyunivesithi yaseMthatha!"

Uphakama kwesosithuba uNdade, ze anqande ngelithi, "Wowu! Khawuyeke ukundixelela ngabazali bakho. Apha ndizakuqesha wena, hayi bona! Khawuthethe ngawe. Yintoni eyenza ukuba ufune ukusebenza phezu komgodi?"

Nanko ekrwempa intloko uNqentsu, ukuzithemba kuphelile; akubalekwa yinto yokuthetha ukhupha usiba lwakhe nephepha, andule athi: "Mna kaloku, mhlekazi, ndaphantse ndaba ngumantyi. Ndimile apho, bhala."

Unikina intloko uNdade, kubonakala ukuba akakholwa ncam kwaphela le ndoda inguNqentsu.

"Yintoni eyenze ukuba ushiye ubumantyi uze emgodini, emaqabeni ke?" uyabuza uNdade, ze abuyele esihlalweni sakhe.

Unantoni uhleka nje uNqentsu, ade akhuphe icuba lakhe kodwa angade aqhumise?

"Hayi, mhlekazi soze ndiyenze mna into yokufela emathunjeni omgodi," uvakala esitsho. "Kaloku esam isono yaba kukuphuma emsebenzini kungekafiki ixesha la lo nto. Ndabona iitshomi zam zisiya kusela. Ndathi xa ndibona ixesha, ndaqonda ukuba andinakukwazi ukuphoswa. Ndayishiya kwangoko inkundla yakwamantyi, ndakheth' utywala."

“Hheeeee,” ukukhuza uNdala, oku ngathi uyazibuza ukuba ndoda yaphi le izekuye ukuzakuqhayisa ngobumuncu bayo!

Kunaphi ukuba uNqentsu aqaphele impazamo yakhe, athethe nto yimbi? Suka aqhubeke ngokugxothwa kakhwe.

Uthi xa ethetha, “Ilishwa xa ebuyela enkundleni umantyi emveni kwesidlo sasemini noludwe lwakhe lwamatyala lamaphepha athwele inkukacha ngamatyala aze kuwo, waqaphela ukungabikho kwam phakathi kwabasebenzi. Ndabe ndiyagxothwa ke njalo. Injalo ke into yam.”

UNdade ubonakala mhlophe ukuba umnqwazi wakhe awuqini.

Uthi: “Ndifumanisa ukuba uyindoda engathembekanga. Ngekuba ndikusa emgodini ngoku. Phaya ubuzakulunga ingaphelanga le veki. Bendizakuyalela ngoku ukuba unikwe izixhobo zokomba amatye, ufundiswe emsebenzini wakho. Kodwa ke ndiyasihlonipha isicelo sakho sokukhetha ukusebenza apha phezu komgodi.”

Uncumile luvuyo uNqentsu. Nako ekhawuleza ukuqumba akuva into ethethwa nguNdala.

“Umsebenzi endinawo apha phezu komgodi ngowokuchola amaphepha.”

“Hhiii?!”

“Uzakuqala apha phambi kwale ofisi yam.”

“Hayi khona, hayi khona.”

“Emva koko ujikeleze yonke le nkomponi.”

“Hayi noko bendingathethi lo nto, mfo kaNdala.”

“Xa uzakuqalisa ngoMvulo, uze uqale apha kum ndikunike izinto ozakusebenza ngazo.”

Tu ukuthetha uNqentsu, emangalisiwe kukuzibona eyindumasi yakuCentane, suka ngoku uva kusithiwa uzakuchola amapheka, elohlazo! Kunokuba athethe suka aphakame aphume ngomnyango.

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“Toliki, kutheni wathula kangaka namhlanje?” itsho ukumbuza enye yalamadoda ahlala kunye nawo uNqentsu kwigumbi lakhe kwihostele, uMangaliso. Sele litshonile ilanga, onke amadoda asebenza kulomgodi i-St Helena abuyile empangelweni. UMangaliso owayelala phantsi koNqentsu, kuba kakade sele ilixesha lokusondela ezingubeni. “Sidla ngokungalali apha sihlekiswa nguwe. Aphelile na amabali asezinkundleni zase Transkei? Siyawathanda amabali akho mfondini ngoba asikhumbuza emakhaya.”

Kubonwa ngoNqentsu esehla ebhedeni, ze emveni koko anyathelele ngasembawuleni, uthi akufumana ilahle lokuqhumisa icuba elibotshiweyo, enjenjalo ukumpakuza, etshaya.

Uphendula emveni koko, esithi: “Mfondini, Mangaliso, izinto ezibuhlungu azipheli.”

“Oh, uthini na apha kum mfondini?”

“Ewe nto yakuthi. Umasiza wam uNdade undinike umsebenzi wokuchola amaphepha. Uthe, emva kwale mpela-veki, ze ndiye e-ofisini yakhe andinike izinto zokusebenza. Yhazi, mfo wakuthi, ibingathi ndingakhala.”

“Bekutheni wena uze ungathi makakunike umsebenzi womgodi?” utsho uMangaliso.

Uthi uNqentsu, “Mfondini, la mfo undibuze ukuba bendisebenza ntoni na eTranskei. Ndatsho, ndamxelela zonke izinto endandizenza. Ndaqwela ke ngokuthi ndandiyitoliki kamantyi. Ndimbona emane enqwala intloko qho, emva koko wabuza ukuba ndifuna ukusebenza emgodini okanye apha ngaphandle. Ndathi ke mna ngaphandle. Isizathu sokuba nditsho njalo kukuba bendincwase iofisi. Kanti ndizikhande ngenyheke elityeni.”

Uthe akutsho njalo kwagcwala intsini kwindlu yonke.

Bambi babesothuswa kukungxamela izinto ezikude kukaNqentsu, bambi bembuza ukuba angathini ufuna umsebenzi we ofisi efika, kakade akaya ukuba kufuneka uqale ubhale uvavanyo lokuba ngumabhalana? Nalo elo vavanyo ulenza xa ugqibe unyaka usebenza nzima emgodini. Ukuba awufuni ukuqala emgodini, soze balenze olo vavanyo kuwe. Ndoda ithile yalikhupha laphelele, ngelibhekisa kuNqentsu, isithi: “Uzakugugela kuloo maphepha wena.”

NguMangaliso oza necebo lokuba ngoMvulo aze afike athi ku mazisa uNdade, afuna ukuya emgodini ngoba uvile ukuba incinci imali yangaphandle komgodi, kwaye yena ufuna imali apha, hayi ulonwabo.

Emva koko kwalalwa, bonke kuloo ndlu bemangalisiwe ukuva amabhongo kaNqentsu.

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Ngenj’ixukuxa ngoMvulo, uNqentsu wabe sele ethe nca ecangweni le ofisi ka masiza uNdade.

“Mfondini, Nqentsu, ubulele apha na?” ubuzile uNdade akubona uNqentsu eme phambi kwe-ofisi yakhe. “Ukuba bendiyazile lo nto ngendikunike izitshixo ze ofisi khon’ ukuze ulale ngaphakathi noko. Jonga ngoku uyaqhaqhazela.”

“Hayi mhlekazi bendingalelanga apha, ndiyafika nam ngoku. Qha ndiyagodola.”

Uvule umnyango uNdade, emva koko wathatha izinto zokuchola amaphepha, kuquka nezi nxitywa ezandleni, wazinika uNqentsu.

Ucelile uNqentsu ukuba mabathethe.

Akhange afune ukummamela uNdade.

“Ungadlali apha. Mna ndizokusebenza.” Utsho nje ulahla izixhobo zokusebenza kufuphi nomhlaba apho ame khona uNqentsu. “Xa ungafuni ukwenza into endithi yenze, goduka ngoku. Kugcwele ngabantu esangweni lomgodi abafuna umsebenzi, njengokuba wena udlalisa nje.”

Akhange ayazi uNdade ukuba neenkani kwakhe uNqentsu; ubona ngokulandelwa ngumNtakwende, angene naye xa ebuyela ngaphakathi e-ofisini uNdade.

“Khawulezisa uthethe le nto ufuna ukuyithetha,” utsho uNdade. “Ndixakekile mna.”

Esaqhaqhazela amazinyo wakhe yingqele, uNqentsu ukhale ngelithi: "Mhlekazi andisafuni ukusebenza phezu komgodi. Ndifuna ukuya emgodini."

Eyothukila naye uNdade, kodwa aphinde azibambe, engafuni ukubonakalisa ukothuka kwakhe.

"Wena ucinga ukuba ungumantyi nalapha," utsho ukumphendula. "Sele ndibhalile ezincwadini ukuba uza kusebenza apha phezu komgodi. Andinakuyitshintsha lo nto. Mhlawumbi wena ungeza emva kweenyanga ezintathu, sithethe. Oko wawuphethe eTranskei ufuna ukuphatha nalapha. Hamba!"

Wazibona sele ejika ajonge emnyango engafuni uNqentsu, wafana wazityhala, wathabatha izixhobo zokusebenza, waphuma ngomnyango.

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Ngamini ithile, sele kudala uNqentsu engumchola-choli maphepha, ungena e-ofisini ka Masiza enyoshoza. Uthi engekathethi uNqentsu, uNdade amankele ngematshisi neparafini, ze athi kuye: "Heke, ina, thatha apha, uhambe uye kubasa phandle. Kukho iindwendwe ezize ku mphathi wehostele."

Akaphumi ngokukhawuleza uNqentsu; uthi, "Kukho into endifuna ukuyithetha nawe."

"*Fokof maan*! Nywe, nywe, nywe! Ungubani wena xa unokufuna ukuthetha nam?" Ulugcwabevu ngumsindo uNdala. "Jonga, Nqentsu, apha kuseGoli. Akukho mntu uza kucengana nawe apha. Futhi akukho matyala anokuthethwa nguwe apha. Wagqibelisa ngalawo aseTranskei. Hamba uyobasa. Undixelele xa ulungile umlilo ndizokunika inyama yabelungu uyoje ngoku."

Wazirhuqa iinyawo zakhe ngokunjalo uNqentsu, wayokubasa umlilo. Xa ephemba wafumanisa ukuba iinkuni ezi azinikwe nguNdade zimanzi zonke. Lo nto yamenza ukuba athathe ixesha elide ukuvuthisa umlilo.

Wade wazogqogqwa ngu masiza, ofike watsho ukumtyabeka ngezithuko.

"Xa ungafuni ukusebenza Nqentsu, uhambe apha. Akukho mntu uzakucenga wena. Nalo mfundo yakho yasedyunivesithi asinaxesha layo thina apha. Jonga khona ngoku wohlulwa kukubasa umlilo kodwa unesidanga."

Uthe wakulunga umlilo, uNqentsu wanikwa inyama, wayoja. Emva koko ke uNdade wayisa kubaphathi benkomponi. Bayitya batsho bathi makubizwe lo mntu obeyoja. Walandwa uNqentsu.

"Mfondini, ndiyaqala ukuva inyama eyojiwe kamnandi ngolu hlobo. Uvelaphi?" Kutsho umphathi wenkomponi, aphendule noNqentsu ngesiNgesi.

Waba njalo ufumene ithuba lokuzithengisa kwabakhulu, bona abelungu. Waluveza nolwazi lwakhe lomthetho, wathi: *"I have a BA Degree in Law from the Justice College of UNISA. I have been a Court interpreter, acting prosecutor, acting magistrate and everything your worship in the Transkei Courts. I hate crime. I am diligent. I promise to be diligent here as well, Sir*."

Uthe esaqhubela phambili bamnqanda abelungu.

Umphathi wenkomponi wathi kuNdade: *"You must send this man to the training centre. I want him to be a machine operator."*

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Ngentseni yoMvulo olandelayo uNqentsu use training centre, uyokufundela umthetho wokugrumba amatye ngomtshini. Kweliholo baninzi, bengamadoda odwa. Kwakuthethwa ngesiFanakalo wonk' ubani kweli holo, nqu noNqentsu owayesele eqhela ukuphangela emgodini zange abe nabo ubunzima besiFanakalo ngoba singumxube wesiZulu, isiXhosa, isiNgesi, kunye nesiBhulu. Kaloku isiFanakalo senziwe ngokuthi kukhuthuzwe ulwazi kulamalwimi wabaNtsundu emzantsi Africa. Senzelwa nje ukuba abantu beentlanga ngeentlanga bakwazi ukuthetha ngezomsebeni. Eli lwimi lalenzelwe ukunyanzelisa umntu ukuba asebenze. Ngenene walufumana uqeqesho lwakhe uNqentsu.

Xa ebalisa ke kumadoda endlu yakhe emva kokuba waluluphumelela uvavanyo, eyona nto yayingamandla kolo qeqesho lwakhe yayikukulumkela iingozi.

Uthi phaya wafika kukho abantu ababekwinyanga yesithathu besohlulwa yile mithetho yokukhuselwa kwengozi emgodini. Aba bantu bona ke babeyifundiswa ngesiFanakalo. Yena wayifunda ngesiNgesi, waze wayazi ngoko nangoko. Babengamlibali abaqeqeshi bakhe ukuba nengqondo ebukhali ngolo hlobo.

Uthi uNqentsu inye kuphela into eyayingamonwabisanga kwela holo, i-training centre. Uthi xa ungena emnyango, phambi kokuba uye entla, kukho ibhokisi yomngcwabo ebekiweyo. Xa wayebuza ngayo koogxa bakhe bathi, yenzelwe ukubonisa umsebezi womgodi into yokuba xa uthe wophula la mithetho uyifundileyo phaya, uyakungena ubaleka kula bhokisi, sele uthule, kwaye ulele obentlombe ngecala.

Zaziliqela ke izizathu ezibangela ukuba umntu abenokulibaziseka phambi kokuba aye emathunjini omhlaba, aqalise emsebenzini wakhe. Ndingabalula ezi zilandelayo: Kufuneka umsebenzi aqhelane nalamo yangaphantsi komhlaba, uxinezelelo lomzimba nelengqondo olunokudodobalisa ukukhuthala komntu, ukutshisa okuthe chatha nokungaqhelekanga komoya ophantsi, iindawo ezimxinwa nezingamatye, ingxolo, ukushukuma komgodi, ukungabikho kukhanya kwendalo, njalonjalo. Olu xinezelelo lwenza ukuba umntu adinwe angabinamdla wakusebenza, umsebenzi azibone enyukelwa bubushushu bomzimba ngokukhawuleza. Ezi zinto ke nezinye zithathelwa ingqalelo ekumanqwanqwa aphezulu ngababaphathi bemigodi. Xa zithe zaqwalaselwa ezi zinto, ziphucula imeko yomsebenzi, kwande imveliso, kuphucuke nempilo yabasebenzi.

Xa efika kweli holo lomqhashiyo uNqentsu, wabona indlu enkulu ende engenazifesitle, ijikelezwe bubuxhakaxhaka angazange wawubona ebomini bakhe. Obobuxhoboxhobo babutsho ukungxola ukunganyamezeleki kofikayo emgodini. Kodwa ke, inkawu ityiwa ilila, waye zakuthini kakade yena uNqentsu!

Bathe bengekangeni ngaphakathi kwathiwa mabakhulule babeze. Iimpahla zabo bazishiya kwindlu yoku tshintsha esecaleni kwelo holo. Kwathiwa mabalandelelane ukuya kumnyango

welo holo. Phambi kokuba bangene kwelo holo kwakukho ugqirha obamnkela, engomnye weqela lo gqirha, abanye bengaphakathi. Lo gqirha wayejonga isini sobudoda balamadoda ukuba asivuzi na. Kwakuthi kwakufunyaniswa kukho undonakele uthunyelwa esibhedlele ukuya kuxilongwa ngokukhawuleza. UNqentsu waba ngowokugqibela kuloomadoda axilongwayo, kodwa ngethamsanqa obakhe ubudoda babome nko. Amanye amadoda ajikwa kwathiwa maka qale esibhedlele afumane uxilongo. Umchamo wakho kwakufuneka uwuyeke uzehlele. Kukho ke osisi abangabongikazi abajikelezayo benjonga imithondo, futhi bamane benifaka izinto apha phantsi kwelwimi besithi batshekisha ubushushu bomzimba. Imithondo babemane beyibetha nge ball pen.

Akudlula ngugqirha, uNqentsu wazibona eqhubekeka esiwa kwindawo apho kwakufuneka uxhentse. Indawo apho indoda yayihlolwa khona kwakhukho indawo yokuhamba enyukelayo, inyuka ngokunyuka ngamanqanaba. Kwakufuneka noNqentsu anyathele kuwo onke la manqanaba, kungabikho nalinye alitsibayo. Kwakukho isibane sogesi esikhanyayo, nesandi isikhalayo. Kufuneka ukunyathela kwakho kuhambe nesosandi kunye nesosibane sibomvu sikhanyayo. Elo xesha awumanzi ingathi ugalelwa amanzi nge emele, nonke nihamba ngaze.

Akuzange kubelula ukuqhubekeka noluvavanyo kuNqentsu; unqandwe emnyango esithi ufuna ukuphuma ityeli elinye, esithi uyazoyika izinto azibonayo phaya. Wayehlala elumkiswa na ngoogqirha ukuba xa ethe wafuna ukuphuma, ukuba kufuneka agqibe iiyure ezine engaphumlanga, kungenjalo akanakuwufumana umsebenzi.

Wawusithi ke xa uthe wagqiba kuvavanyo lwakho, usiwe kugqirha akunike isiqinisekiso sokuba uwuphumelele umqhashiyo. Unikwe ibhanti lesi hlahla elibomvu, elalithetha ukuba ungasebenza nakuyiphi na indawo phantsi komhlaba.

UNqentsu ke naye waye waphumelela, walifumana ibhanti lakhe elibomvu.

Phambi kokuba aye emgodini waye wasiwa kwi ofisi ebala abantu abaya emgodini naba phumayo. Apho wanikwa inani elilelakhe futhi azakwaziwa ngalo ezincwadid zomgodi. Elinani lalibonisa ukuba umntu unayo imvume yokuphangela emgodini.

Emva kokuba ephumelele uvavanyo, waze nogqirha wamkhulula, uNqentsu wasiwa kwindawo enezibane zokusebenza emgodini. Esisibane sinelahla elihlala apha esinqeni. Kubekho ugesi omkhulu osuka kweli lahle uye esibaneni esibekwa emnqwazini ngaphambili. Ukhanyiswelwa siso esisibane emgodini.

Kwabanjalo ke naku Nqentsu.

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UNqentsu uyafika endlini yakhe enkomponi. Ibilusuku lwakhe lokuqala efumene umsebenzi woku sebenza ngomtshini. Kunzima nokuthetha kukudinwa. Akukho ndawo ingemdakanga kuye. Iimpahla asebenza ngazo emgodini ingathi ebenyatheliswe ngamahlahla. Akukho nanye eyayingakrazukanga, kwaye zazimanzi tixi, zingcwele ngamafutha ayewasebenzisa kwisixhobo sokuqhekeza amatye.

Uthi: “Mangaliso fondini, zange ndasebenza ngolu hlobo oko ndazalwayo. Zange ndadinwa ngoluhlobo oko ndathi ndazalwa kweli hlabathi. Yho! Ntanga, zange ndiyibone into enje.”

"Ubucinga ukuba uza kutolika apha?" utsho ukuqhula uMangaliso. "Ja! Kudala nisihleka nisithi singamaJoyini ngaph' emakhaya. Kunjalo ke ukuba liJoyini. Kakade, kha utsho ntang' am, usebenza kowuphi umgangatho, kweyiphi indawo?"

Phambi kokuba aphendule uNqentsu, uye wangqengqa ngecala oku kwegusha enqunyulwayo.

"Ndikumgangatho wamashumi amabini anesine ukubheka ezantsi, mfo wakuthi."

Ngeli xesha atshoyo uNqentsu, wonke umntu wayekhona, emamele. Kaloku wayefike bonke abantu sele begqibe nokuhlamba, belungiselela ukuya kutya. Kodwa iindaba zika Nqentsu zabalibazisa. Babesele bemthanda uNqentsu, kubonakala ukuba bayakholwa nguye.

"Hayi, masiziyeke ezo Nqentsu," uvakale esitsho uMangaliso. "Kufuneka sityile madoda."

Bahamba ke bonke ukuya kufumana into etyiwayo. Afika lo madoda abanye babasebenzi sele begqibezela ukutya. UNqentsu kwakunzima ukuphakamisa nqu icephe kukudinwa, kodwa wazityhala, kuba indlala yona ingamameli kudinwa kwakhe.

Wathi akudibana neengubo zakhe, wavakala ebuhlungu yimeko azifumene kuyo, de alile umf' omkhulu, ngelithi, "Madoda! Andiyazi lento ingaka ndamenza yona uThixo, lento andohlwaya kangaka."

Kodwa zange bafune ukumthuthuzela kakulu ogxa bakhe, suka bathi kuye: "Ziinyembezi zabantu ezo. Khumbula ezamali wawuzithatha ebantwini, usithi uzakucima amatyala abo. Kukho abantu abasakhalayo nangoku, ngoba zange acinywe amatyala wabo."

Wawunokucinga ukuba uNqentsu ufumene umphanga wokushiywa nguLetha, uyihlo uqobo, xa wawunokungena kula ndlu yabo ngelixhesha akhala ngalo. UMangaliso, intanga ka Nqentsu, ibihleli imthuthuzele, ithembisa ngokuba kuza kulunga.

"Mfondini, kha ukhe uyeke ukulila ngathi ungumfazi. Kusemfazweni apha. Kha utsho usebenze njani. Injani la ndawo ubusebenza kuyo?"

Uvakale esehla apho uNqentsu, kwabona ngaye esula amehlo.

"Yho! Madoda! Zange ndayibona indawo etshisa njengaleya. Ndisebenza ndingqengqe ngecala. Lomtshini ndomba ngawo usebenza ngogesi kodwa awuxhuma-xhumi ye haa! Mna ndenza imingxunya le kuza kufakwa kuyo iziqhushumbisi, ze emva koko kutshiswe xa abantu bephume bonke emgodini. Kowu! Ndatsho ndacinga iNkundla kaMantyi yakuCentane, apho ndandithetha kume ngam. Kodwa ngoku ndiyinto nje emane ithukwa nayilantwana ndisebenza nayo. Kodwa ayizokuphela lenyanga ndisebenza phaya mna. Ndizakudibana nabelungu banditshintshe. Ndiyakwazi kaloku mna ukuthetha isiNgesi."

Atsho ukuhleka amadoda alo ndlu, kuvakala ukuba avuyisana naye.

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Ngorhatya mini ithile endlini kaNqentsu, amadoda adla imbadu. Kuthi kusenjalo kungene uMangaliso. Lo mfo namhlanje wangena ngathi yimbumbulu yompu, ethethela phezulu, enemibilili.

"Madoda uphi uNqentsu?" ubuzile. "Kutheni nasuka nandijonga, uphi uNqentsu?"

Enye yalamadoda ahlala noNqentsu, uFeni, yaphendula: "Ubusigcinise uNqentsu, na fondini? Awuyazi into yokuba lamfo usemtsha usafuna imali."

Azangakwazi nokucaphuka uMangaliso, kubonakala ngenene ukuba unexhala.

"Inoba usebenzela ixesha elongeziweyo ukwenzela into yokuba afumane imali ebonakalayo kule nyanga. Kaloku lamfo uyiqhelile imali. Ebenyobisa ngokuya wayeyitoliki."

Kuhlekwe endlini.

Kuthi kusenjalo kungene induna yamaXhosa, iphethe amaphepha, ithi: "Madoda, ingaba niphelele nonke, ndinendaba zenu apha kodwa ndifuna niphelele kuqala."

UFeni noMangaliso bagxalathelana kwelothuba.

Kodwa induna ide ivunyelwe ithethe, ze yathi: "Kukho umntu ongaphumanga emgodini namhlanje. Kuvakala ukuba uhlala kulendlu. Ingaba niphelele apha? Okanye mandithi, uphi uNqentsu?"

Yavungama indlu yonke yathi: "Akakafiki mhlekazi, oko ebephangele ekuseni. Kwenzeke ntoni?"

Yahambisa kwa oko induna ngelithi: "Uthi umphathi womgodi mandizokunazisa ukuba uvalelwe lilitye kula ndawo ebesomba kuyo ngomtshini wakhe. Ngoku kunzima ngoba xa linokutshiswa ela litye, kuza kutsha naye. Aboncedo elikhawulezayo nabo bathi bazakuligqobhoza ngomtshini ela litye, kodwa lo nto izakuthatha ixesha elide. Kodwa ke bathi lisavakala ilizwi lakhe ngoba uyakhala."

Babesothukile ngokungazenzisi bonke kulo ndlu.

"Ngoko ke madoda lalani ngenxeba, okwangoku sizakuphinda sinazise."

Yaba kanti iyemka ke induna ngolo hlobo.

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Kungentsuku zatywala aboncedo elikhawulezayo bade bamfumana uNqentsu.

Kodwa wayengakwazi nokuthetha. Wasiwa esibhedlele. Wanyangwa wade waphila. Uthe akuphuma esibhedlele waya nqo kwi ofisi yomqeshi, uVenter. Ufike ehleli yedwa. Kukho isitya esenziwe ngeengcingo phezu kwetafile yakhe namaphepha. Ecaleni kweso sitya yayiyinqawe eyayibonakala ukuba igqitywa kucinywa.

Uthe engekathethi uNqentsu kwakhala imfonomfono, waze wahoya ucingo ke uVenter. Uthe ngoku asalibele lucingo uVenter, uNqentsu wajonga amaphepha awayeseludongeni, wabona iphepha elalinabantu abanzakeleyo nabafileyo. Wabona nelakhe likhona apho phakwathi kwamanye.

Uthe akugqiba ukuthetha ngemfonomfono uVenter wathi kuNqentsu, "*You must be Nqentsu?*"

UNqentsu wahleka, wavuma, waze wathi: “*Yes Sir*.”

UVenter uthe akuqinisekisa ukuba uthetha noNqentsu ngenene, wangena emxholweni, ethetha isiNgesi, wathi kuNqentsu ufuna amve kakuhle. Yena uthunywe ngabaphathi balomgodi ukuba athethe naye. Uyaqhubekeka uVenter, uthi abaphathi bamthumile ukuba acele uNqentsu ukuba angayi kufaka isikhalazo malunga ne ngozi yakhe. Uthi kuye, Yiyeke njalo ngokungathi akukho nto yenzekileyo, ngoba ukuba ukhe wafaka isikhalazo, nonke kula ndawo nisebenza kuyo anizukufumana mrholo webhonasi. Nabelungu benu bonke, ukusuka kwi baasboy ukuya kutsho kumphathi wenu ngaphantsi komhlaba.

Uthe xa esithi uyathetha uNqentsu, uVenter engekagqibi ukuthetha waphakama waya ngasefesitileni. Wayivula, waze wathetha ejonge ngaphandle, emnikele umva uNqentsu.

“*I’m not done Mr Nqentsu, you interrupted me before I was done*.”

Watyibilika ngesiNgesi uNqentsu, engafihlisi; wayengenekuthula, watsho, emva ukuba uVenter uyaphuma emxholweni, esithi baqhela ukuqhatha izifombo ezingamaqaba, futhi efunga ngelithi abacingi pha kuye, soze avume le nto ayithethayo uVernter. Kaloku yena wayesuka enkundleni, ewazi amalungelo akhe ngokupheleleyo.

Ulithobe kulondawo ilizwi lakhe uVenter, esithi ukuba uyichaze kwabomthetho lengozi yakhe, izakuba nguzenge-zenge wetyala lamawele. Kuzakubakho abahloli beengozi namagqwetha ale nkampani. Kusenokuthiwa khange usebenze ngendlela ekhuselekileyo, limohlule ityala, ungayifumani nalo mali ibhatalwa abantu abalimeleyo.

Ukrwele intloko uNqentsu, wandula wathi makathethe ugqibe uVenter, ze ave yena ukuba uzakuthini na.

“For now I don’t agree with you at all,” utshilo uNqentsu. Kakade mna into ebendiyizele apha ngumsebenzi, utshilo ukuzicingela, de akhuphe isiqinisekiso sakhe zemfundo enomsila yedyuniversity.

Ukhawulezile uVenter ukuthi makagcine isiqinisekiso zemfundo yakhe kuye uNqentsu, abantu abamnyama abaqeshwa ngeziqinisekiso kumsebenzi wasemgodini.

Wathi uVenter ngenxa yokuba ehlelwe yile ngozi, nangenxa yokuba engazukuyixela ngumagosa karhulumente, abaphathi bagqibe ekubeni angene kula ndawo kaNdade kuba yena ethatha umhlala phantsi. Watsho esithi ke makaye kuye kwangoku, azokukuboniswa yonke into eyenzekayo kula ofisi yakhe.

Imincili kuNqontsi, ongazange achithe mzuzu ungomnye, watsho ukuxhuma, ephuma ngomnya esiya kwi ofisi kaNdade. Xa efika e ofisini kamasiza, wafika sele elindiwe. Waboniswa yonke into, waba ke njalo ufumana umsebenzi wokuba ngumabhalana omkhulu olawula abasebenzi bonke bomgodi.

Yatsho yaphinda yathi ‘tata’ kuye imali njengoko yayisenza njalo kwamantyi eTranskei.

UNqentsu uyazinyanga

Umninawa katata kaNqentsu, uLulama, ufika kwamkhuluwa wakhe umfundisi uLetha.

“Nqo nqo nqo! Akukho bantu na kweli khaya ekuseni kangaka?” utsho ukubulisa, sele ekude kufuphi kwindl’ enkulu yalapha kwaLetha. “Ingaba umkhuluwa wam sel’ evukele kwezi cawe zakhe, na? Akazivanga ezi ndaba zimbi kangaka zonyana wakhe?”

Khange kubephi zataka ukugragramela ngakuye izinja zekhaya, sekubonakala ukuba zimfun’ esiqwini! Tyhini umhlola onje, kusekhay’ apha nakuye okany’ akaziwa, zakuthini ukumamnkela ngoluhlobo zimqhelile nje? Nantso enye imkrazula nebhlukhwe yakhe!

“Phuma mfazi, tyhini!” utsho ngomsindo uLulama, eba ukhwaza umfazi womntakwabo, uNothando. “Tyhini madoda, yazi le nja iyidlakazile ibhlukhwe yam! Ndizakuphuma njani apha ngoku ndidlakazela ndinje?”

Uvela sele ekhuza umama wekhaya. Nanko ekhwaza esithi: “Yintoni tat’ omncinci, wadlakazela ekuseni kangaka?”

Khange abemade ngamazwi uLulama, esithi nazo, zizinja zakho!

“Andinakuba saya nasentlanganisweni xa ndi nje.”

Uxolisile umam’ ekhaya, ezigxotha kakubi neezo zinja. Ukhawulezise ngokukhupha izipeliti ekubonakala ebeziqhusheke kuye, wanika umninawa womyeni wakhe oku kokuba azame ukudibanisa kwindawo ezithile ehlanganisa ibhlukhwe yakhe, kungabisabonakala noko ezisemfihlweni.

“Lo nto akekho na lomntu uze kuye,” utshilo umam’ umfundisi.

“Uphi na umkhuluwa wam?” ubuzile uLulama.

“Uye ecaweni, tat’ omncinci. Kaloku kumgqibelo wokugqibela enyangeni babanentlanganiso yamadodana. Akabuyi ke xa eye phaya. Kaloku kubakho nabefundisikazi phaya.”

Bahleke lo nto.

“Angathini umkhuluwa ukulibala ziicawe, unyana wakhe esifa eGoli?”

Athi akusondele kuLulama umama wekhaya, wajonga ibhulukhwe katat’ omncinci wabona ukuba usinde ngokulambisa kweza zinja.

Akugqiba ukuphanda isixhaxha utat’ omncinci, uthi, “UNqentsu unjani, maMfundisi. Ndeva kaloku kusithiwa wakrotyozwa ngamatye. Uphi ngoku?”

“Bhuti, nathi sagqibela ngoko. Kodwa ke kwakusithiwa uyachacha.”

Ngoko nangoko wakhupha itshefu wamane ezosula iinyembezi emehlweni akhe. Utat’ omncinci wazibona ukuba uthunuka isilonda ebesesiphola.

Waqhitha umcinga, wabe kanti uqhumisa inqawe yakhe.

“Hayi ke maMfundisi, uze umxelele ukuba bendigqithe apha ndisiya entlanganisweni yelali.”

“Kulungile bhuti, ndizakwenza njalo.”

Uthe akubakude nendlu leyo, konela nje ade afike kwisango leyadi, weva ngesikhalo sikaNothando, wakhawuleza waqonda ukuba konakele. ULulama ujike ngoko nangoku waphindela endlwini leyo ibinomfazi womntakwabo.

Akugangwa nguNoluthando kwakhona, uqaphele iinyembezi ebusweni bakhe.

“Nkosikazi yomkhuluwa wam, sukuyenza le nto. Siza kuthuthuzelwa ngubani thina xa kuqala wena ukubhonga? Wena nje ngo mam’umfundisi kufuneka ibe nguwe othuthuzela thina.”

Wakhawuleza ukuhlisa umbilini umam’ umfundisi, nangona wayeqhubeka nokumfixiza, emana kusula nangolapho amehlo la akhe alilayo.

“Ewe ndiyayazi ukuba igazi liyajiya kunamanzi,” wavakala esitsho uLulama kuye, lingcangcazela kukuzisola ilizwi lakhe. “Kodwa nceda wethu, zibambe. Wena uThixo umazi ngaphezu kwethu.”

Ezosula inyembezi, waphendula umam’ umfundisi. “Ndizakuthini bhuti. Lo mntwana ebeqhuba kakuhle apha ngokuya ebeyitoliki. Kwayawa fika loSathana ndini. Ngoku umntwana ukude le kum, useGoli. Ndizakuthini ukungakhali ke bhuti?”

“Kaloku into endijikisayo sisi yile yokuva isikhalo sakho,” watsho uLulama. “Ngxe ke sisi.”

Akazange abenento ayithethayo uNothando.

“Kanene,” ubuzile uLulama, eba unento ayirhanelayo engunobangela ekubhaduleni ku kaNqentsu, “unyana lo wayeyenzelwe na imbeleko?”

“Zange bhuti,” watsho umam’ umfundisi. “Uyamazi nje umkhuluwa wakho. Wathi yena ungumfundisi, ke akakholelwa kwezo zinto. Kodwa ke wathi, ukuba umntana xa sele emdala uyayifuna into enjalo akana kumnqanda. Kodwa ke ndizakumbuza xa ebuyile. Ndakwazisa.”

“Umkhuluwa wam unento ayilibalayo, eyokuba yena zazenziwe ezi zinto kuye.”

Uvumile umam’ umfundisi.

“Kodwa ke, mfazi womkhuluwa uze ukhe uthethe naye phambi kokuba ndifike. Emva koko ke uthumele abantwana baye kundilanda. Noko iyakuba sele iphumile intlanganiso ngelo xesha. Hayi maan, lo mntwana ufuna amasiko lo qha, kungenjalo sakumswela.”

“Ucinge into eyakhe yabaluleka ke ngoku,” utshilo uNothando. “Lo mntwana ufuna amasiko qha. Ndizakum qala ungekafiki. Ndizakumthi mve oku kwenyosi ijikeleza endlini. Tyhini, caba ndizakufelwa ngumntwana ngenxa kaYesu. Lotata akeva ngoYesu.”

“Unyanisile Mamfu, umkhuluwa wam ufuna simkhuphe loYesu wakhe kuqala, uzakulunga.”

Bohlukane apho.

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Kuba umzi kwa Letha wawusethambeni kulelali yakwa Nxokwana , ukufuphi kakhulu ekupheleni kwemizi, akuzange kumthathe kuyaphi uLulama; wathi esandula kugqitha kwimizi emithathu, wathi thu ngaphesheya umkhuluwa kwakhe uLetha, kungekudala kwaviwa ngezinja ziphinda zikhonkotha, oku ingathi ngabantwana bebonakalisa imincili yabo ekuboneni uyihlo.

“Ibe ngubani ke ngoku lowo,” watsho ukuzithethela uNothando. “Ndiyandinwa ke mna. Kutheni ngoku. Ndizakugqiba nini ukucoca le ndlu? Ndipheke nini zezindwendwe zingaka?”

Wonelwa nje kukuveza intloko kusango lwendlu leyo wayekuyo, suka wakhawuleza waqhaphela ukuba ngubani ongenayo.

“Hayibo tata, kutheni?” Zange alinde nokuba umfundisi uLetha akhulule isali ehashini lakhe. “Wakhawuleza wabuya kwamsinyane kangaka?”

“Intlanganiso imiselwe iveki ezayo,” uvakale esitsho uLetha. “Ngoku naku ndidibana nomninawa wam apha entla komzi. Kodwa ke ndiva esithi ebeze kum ngomcimbi obaluleke kakhulu.”

“Ewe kunjalo.”

“Naye ke uthi akasayanga kulo ntlanganiso yelali ebesiya kuyo.”

“Kaloku nina maNtakwenda niyilali ninodwa.”

Kuhlekwe lonto ke.

Kubonwe ngaye sele engena ngosango uLulama, wasondela ngasendlin’ enkulu; nabo ootata balomzi bobabini bechwechwela ngasebuhlanti, bekhangela indawo elungele ukuba bangaxoxa ezekhaya lo mzuzu umam’ umfundisi ebuyele endlini, ukuyokwenza into ephungwayo. Azange kubekudala bechophile ngasexhantini, kwafuneka asukume uLulama akhawulele umfazi womkhuluwa wakhe, elanda lo nto iphungwayo.

Wayithatha eyakhe ikomityi uMfundisi. Xa ebonakala engenayo yena umninawa ka Letha, ufune ukuqonda ukuba kwenzeka ntoni ku Lulama, watsho ukumxelela ukuba yena ucele ukuba makakhangelelwe amarhewu, akanakulunga kweziphungwayo, wabe nomfazi walapha sele ekwenza oko. Zange ibenguwo nomzuzu, kwafuneka aphakame kwakhona apho wayehleli khona, alande umdoko lowo wayethe wawucela.

Bathe bakugqiba kuhlala phantsi ne nto, lafika ixesha, bangena emxholweni.

“Letha, mntana kamama, wandishiyela ibele. Ke lo nto ithetha ukuba intlungu yakho yeyam. Andizukujikeleza, ndixelise inja xa iza kuhlala phantsi. Nantsi into endifuna ukuyibuza kuwe mkhuluwa wam, ingaba uNqentsu lo wayeyenzelwe na imbeleko?”

Ngelizwi elibonakala ngathi uyaxhokonxwa ngoku, waphendula ngelithi umfundisi, “Uyabona umninawa, nam andizukujikeleza oku kwenja. Ukuba uze ngezinto zamasiko apha kum, ndiyakucela phambi kokuba sixabane, hamba kwam. Uyandiva Lulama, ndithi hamba kwam! Yini le!”

Wazama ukumncenga uLulama ukuba utat' umfundisi ehle, angangxami ngokuba nomsindo, kodwa tu, akazange afune ukumamela uLetha.

"Ufuna ndisikwe ecaweni? Soze yenzeke lo nto emzini wam. Ukuba kukho umntwana ofuna ezonto zika Sathana apha kwam, makalinde ade abe nenxowa lakhe, hayi apha kwam. Okanye aye pha kwakho, uyandiva?"

"Hayi Letha, Libele, Ntakwenda, Mbhoyi, Ndesana, bendizokubonisa olwam uluvo ngonyana lo wethu omane ehlelwa zizinto ezimbi ngathi akuthandazwa kowabo. Ndathi nam makhe ndiphose igade. Ukuba ibisebenza le mithandazo yakho, ngelapha uNqentsu. EseGoli nje ngoku, ade alimale, ngathi awuthandazi, ndiye ndathi sili khaya makhe sivelele nkalo zonke. Andideleli mithandazo yakho, Letha, kaloku uNqentsu nam ligazi lam. Andinakuthula esehlelwa zizinto ezinje ndikho. Kuleyo into, ingaske lidilike ukuba likekele. Ndizakushiya, kodwa uze uyicinge le nto ndiyithethileyo kuwe. Uyalibala ukuba zonke ezi zinto sizenzayo kulo mhlaba zezikaThixo zonke. NoSathana ngoka Thixo."

Uthe akugqiba ukuthetha njalo uLulama warhuqa isagweba sakhe wahamba. Xa edlula ngasezindlini akhwazwe ngumam' mfundisi, esithi: "Nikhawulezisile."

"Asigqibanga mam' mfundisi. Sixabene. Ndimncamile mna ngoku. Uthi ndingaze ndiphinde ndimfundekele ngamasiko yena."

Uthi umam' mfundisi, "Bendiyilindele lo nto bhuti. Kodwa sakuva ngosingaye ukuba uza kuthinina yena."

Ube kanti uyawushiya umzi ka Letha ngolohlobo uLulama.

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ULulama ufika kwakhe engekalindelwa kuba kakade iintlanganiso zelali umfazi wakhe uNovumile uzazi zithatha ixesha elide, nqu nemini yonke.

"Itheni le nto ikhawuleze kangaka intlanganiso namhlanje?" atsho ukubuza unkosikazi kaLulama.

"Ndixabene nomkhuluwa wam," itsho indoda yakhe. "Ndisuka phaya kuye ngoku."

"Tyhini, ngoku ndivuyela ukungena kwakho kuba ndithi incedile intlanganiso yenu ikhawuleze iphume kuba bendakuba yintoni kukunqanqatheka imini yonke? Kanti uhleli pha kubhuti? Nixabane ngantoni kodwa? Bendizibuza kanye ukuba kutheni ingathi awonwabanga."

ULulama akhuphe inqawe ayinike kuNovumile, athi: "Ndiye ndacebisa into yokuba makhe kwenzelwe uNqentsu imbeleko. Yho! Uphantse wanditya ngamazinyo. Ndide ndabona into ukuba nam andizukumyeka kwel' ilixa. Sohlukana ke siqumbelene sinjalo."

"Ubumxelela inyani ubhuti. Khona ngoku la molokazana wabo kudala wazekwayo kodwa abakathuthuzeli nangoku. Lo nto ke la mfazana uyakufika ejikeleza kwela khaya, ashiye owakhe umzi. Kaloku akasakwazi ukuhamba neentanga zakhe ngoba zona zinamasu ngambini ngantathu. Kowu, ndiyamvela umntwana womntu."

“Kuzakufuneka umbhalele incwadi uNqentsu,” utshilo umfazi kaLulama, “umxelele ngalento yembeleko. Mhlawumbi naye uyayicinga, okanye akazi nokuba makathini na. Kaloku yena ngoku uyafana nqwa negusha ebambeke ngeempondo emthini.”

“Licebo elo mfazi,” utshilo ukuncoma uLulama. “Kakade wena wamisana phi noNomeva kulanto yentonjane?” Athi umfazi, “Yho! Yiyeke into ukuba akuyazi. Ndonqena ukukuxelela. Ndaqonda into yokuba wena uyakumtya ngamazinyo. Wathi kaloku mna ndingaze ndiphinde ndimfundekele ngobubhanxa bentonjane. Yena wasindiswa kudala. Uhamba noYesu lonke ixesha.”

Ithi indoda, “Lonto ithetha ukuba inguye nomkhuluwa wam, bayangqinelana.”

Yakugqiba indoda ithathe isepha, itawuli nentonga iye kuhlamba umzimba kumlambo osezantsi kwegadi yabo. Washiyeka umfazi epheka. Ukubuya kwayo indoda emlanjeni, yanqakula omnye wabantwana bekhaya babhala incwadi, yona yathi yakugqitywa ukubhalwa yaposelwa kuNqentsu, le ncwadi imcebisa ngembeleko uNqentsu.

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Ngenye imini uNqentsu uncokola nabantu bendlu yakhe ngoMgqibelo we khefu.

“Madoda! Khanindicebise ngeenyangi zalapha eziwuchanayo umhlola. Ndagxothwa kwamantyi eTranskei ngoku apha ndiphantse ndafa ngamatye.”

Athi uMangaliso evuka ebhedeni, “Ufanelwe nguGila, into ka Bathakathi. Yinzalelwane yase Mpumalanga leyo. Ngumdak’ omnyam’ ongeva sepha lowo. Uzakukuchana. Akukhathaliseki nokuba ugula yintoni na. Unenyambalala yabantu abavusileyo apha besifa. Abantu bagabha iinyoka kulamfo, akeva. Ngumanqanqa lo wo. Awuyigqibi ibhothile ungalibonanga icala oya kulo. Phofu ke ntanga yam andikwazi wena ukuba ubujonge kweliphi icala. Kaloku kukho noogqirha benaliti, iicawe njalo-njalo.”

“Hayi, ntanga yam ndineengxaki ezininzi. Ndagxothwa kwaMantyi ngendlelana nje endandi ngazange ndiyicinge. Umfazi wam akafumani bantwana. Apha ndivalelwa ngamatye emgodini. Nithi mandithini ke madoda xa kunje kum? Kaloku ninamava nina. Akunjalo na?”

Kwathi cwaka endlini, kwabonakala ngathi wonke umntu wothukile.

Kwabonakala ngoku ukuba uNqentsu uyekile ukudlala.

Wathi uFeni, “UGila Bathakathi, nam ndiyamngqina. Hayi bona abantu abafuna abantwana, zibhotile zimbini kuphela. Uyanconywa.” Wathi ke UNqentsu, “Ndala ndiyakucela emva kwentsimbi yesibini kule mva kwemini yanamhlanje, masiye elokishini, eVuyani, apho siza kumfumana khona uGila, yena unyangayo.”

UGatyeni yena wathembisa ngomthandazeli amaziyo, naye wayefumaneka kwa phaya elokishini yase Vuyani. Kodwa ke waye wagqiba uNqentsu ukuba baqale ngenyangi kuqala.

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Xa befika kulomzi wenyangi, uGila Bathakathi, bafika kuyinyambalala yabaguli. Kwangoko intliziyo ka Nqentsu yaphuphuma ngamathemba. Kodwa wabona ukuba kuzakufuneka ubunene bakhe abuthi gu ecaleni. Bahoywa ngaba khwetha belo gqirha baze, balinda.

Uthe uGila, owaye nganxibanga zihlangu, nto nje umbhaco weentombi zabafana, ephethe itshoba lenkomo, etaka-taka, akufika kuNqentsu wathi, "Wena ukhala ngantoni?"

UNqentsu engcangcazela, "Asifumani bantwana nenkosikazi, ngunyaka wesihlanu lo sitshatile. Enye into ndagxothwa kwaMantyi apho ndandisebenza njengetoliki. Nalapha emgodini sekhe ndavalelwa ngamatye emgodini iveki yonke."

"Mfondini! Ingathi uzokundilinga wena. Ndiyabona ukuba uyadelela umthetho wakho. Kanti ke mna ndinyanga abeFundisi, ooMantyi, amaGqwetha iitishala, hayi amaphece – phecana anje ngawe lo. Kanye-kanye ufuna ndikunyange ntoni?"

"Be... Be... Beee..." wase watsho ukuthintitha uNqenstu. "Beee... bendifuna, mhlekazi undinyange zonke ezi zinto ndizikhankanyileyo.

Lathi igqirha, "Uphi umfazi?, ndifuna ukuqala ngaye."

Wathi uNqentsu, "A! a! a! a! Akekho, use Transkei."

Lathi igqirha, "Ndizakuqala ngawe, kodwa uze umlande ngoba eyenzala yona into ifuna ndininyange nobabini, uyeva?"

UNqentsu: "Ndi! Ndi! Ndi! Ndi! Ndiyeva nkosi." UGila wathi shwaka oko mzuzwana, waphinda wathi gqi etsiba-tsiba, ephethe iyeza nge emele."

Wathi kuNqentsu: "Sela! Uyiqongqothe le emele. Ukhawulezise ngoba abantu bayinkungu nelanga apha. Ke andizukuba nalo ixesha lokucenga wena. Uyandiva ndoda ndini?"

"Ndiyeva tata," watsho uNqentsu, kodwa ebonakala ngathi iyamoyisa iemele egcwele liyeza. Amane ephumla.

Lithi igqirha, "Yintoni ngoku wamane uphumla. Sela le emele yonke, uyandilibazisa, ndixakekile."

Wathi uNqentsu, "Kudala ndigongqoza, tata, ngoku ndidiniwe."

Wancedisa igqirha uMangaliso owaye ekhaphe uNqentsu, "Mfondini akudlalwa apha. Yenza le nto ithethwayo sizokuhamba."

Wayisela yade yaphela lo emele. Emva koko labuya lonke elo yeza. Wagabha into engange yure yonke. Emva koko wathi tywa phantsi engakwazi nokuphakamisa nomnwe lo wakhe. Igqirha lafumana ithuba lokumqaphula. Lamqaphula emahlezeni, esifubeni, emqolo, phezu kwamehlo, ezantsi kwenkaba, emathangeni, phezu kweempundu, ezinyaweni, emva koko wamnika iyeza lokuchela nelokuqhumisa, ze wamnika kwa nephondwana elaligcwele amafutha awayene mibala-bala nawaye nuka kakhulu.

Wathi, "Uze uwathambise la mafutha kathathu ngemini."

Emva koko wathi, "Hamba, uze ubuye nomfazi xa uphinda usiza ukuba ufuna abantwana."

Bagqotsa no Mangaliso ukuphindela enkomponi.

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Xa befika enkomponi baye kwisidlo sabo sasebusuku. Emva koko baya endlini yabo yokulala. Xa bekhwela ezibhedeni zabo, uNqentsu abone incwadi phezu kwebhedi yakhe. Xa eyivula afumanise ukuba isuka kutata omncinci wakhe, uLulama. Ayifunde engqengqe ebhedeni.

Bhota.

Nqentsu, mntwana womkhuluwa wam, andikwazi ukuthula ndibukele iingxaki zikuthe mbende. Ndinguyihlo, kuba kakade okuzalayo ungumkhuluwa kum.

ULetha wakuzala eli gqobhoka. Wala xa kwakusithiwa makakwenzele imbheleko, wathi yena akaloqaba. Zizinto zamaqaba ezo. Ke mfo wam ndiyakucela ukhe ufike apha ekhaya sikhe sithethe noyihlo. Mna ndimncamile. Kudala ndithetha naye ngale mbheleko yakho. Kusuke kucace into yokuba siza kukhuphana iinduma.

Ke andinakuyenza lo nto kumkhuluwa wam. Sithe ke nonyoko masive ngawe.

Ndingavuya ukuba ungaphendula ngokukhawuleza.

Uthe akugqiba ukuyifunda, wafana nenyiki lisecaleni komlilo. Kodwa wawubamba umothuko wakhe. Uthe akuqaphela ukuba amadoda endlu aye elala ngononye-ngononye, wehlika ebhedeni wathatha ingxowa yakhe yeencwadi, wahlala etafileni, waphendula utata wakhe omncinci ngoko nangoko.

Wathi:

St. Helena No. 4 Shaft, Room P2, Gauteng.

Tata omncinci othandekayo, ndiyabulela ngeengcebiso zakho. Kodwa bendicela ukuba ukhe uthumele uNomeva apha ngokukhawuleza. Kukho into efuna yena malunga nempilo yam naye.

Owakho ozithobileyo unyana,

Nqentsu.

Emva koko ayifake kwibhokisi yeposi looncwadi kwalapho.

Xa bebuya eholweni lokutya kwi ntsasa elandelayo athi uMangaliso kuNqentsu, “Awu! Usafunda na ntanga’m? Ndibone phezolo ubeke zonke iincwadi zakho phezu kwetafile?”

“Hayi gxa’m, bendiphendula incwadi yekhehle lam elincinci. Uthi bafuna ndihle ndiyokwenzelwa imbeleko. Kodwa ke mna ndithe makakhe athumele umfazi wam. Leyo sobe siyibone. Uya khumbula kaloku, ntanga’m ukuba uGila Bathakathi wayethe mandinyuse umfazi.”

“Ooh, hayi ke ntanga, umphendule kakuhle. Kaloku kuyafuneka ukuba ujonge into ibenye ngexesha. Umfazi wakho ke yena uza kufika nini?”

“Andazi kaloku. Qha mna ndithe kulancwadi ka tatomncinci, makamthumele umfazi ngokukhawuleza okukhulu.”

Bahleke lo nto.

“Kowu, Nqentsu ngas’ke ndibe nguwe. Awuzukubuva obu balonyaka ubusika.”

Bahleke kwakhona.

“Mfo ndini, ungathethi njalo. Lo mfazi andimfuneli ezo zinto. Kaloku uGila Bathakathi uthe ndimnyuse.”

“Andithi uzo kufuna abantwana?”

“Kunjalo”

Baphinde bahleke baqikileke, kubonakala uMangaliso umohlule uNqentsu.

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Hawu-hawu-hawu! zitsho ukukhonkotha izinja.

“Nomeva, mntana’m,” utsho umam’ umfundisi, ekhawuleza ukuya kuvela emnyango enexhala, “nceda hamb’ uyokunqanda ezo zinja zikhonkothayo. Ukho lomntu ozayo.” Aphume ngenene uNomeva, yena ebesandwendwele aph’ ekhayeni lomyeni. “Phuma, phuma, tyhini zitheni ezi zinja? Ziqale nini ngoku ukungamazi utat’ omncinci. Voetsek Sporty, hamba!”

Ungena endlini uLulama, utatazala omncinci kaNomeva, sele ekhawuleza, kubonakala ukuba inene akaphelelanga apha, kukho apho aleqa khona.

“Bethuna andizukuhlala nokuhlala phantsi. Nantsi incwadi evela kuNqentsu. Yeyethu sonke. Nifundise nomkhuluwa wam. Ixesha lam lentlanganiso yelali sele lixhatshwe yinja. Ndakubuya ngomso.”

Atsho ukuphuma ngomnyango.

UNomeva noninazala benjenjalo ukunqika le ncwadi, bayifunde.

Akhange kubekudala unina evile ukuba uthini unyana wakhe, wavakala esithi, “Nomeva mntana wam, ndibona ngathi uNqentsu uchane ucwethe ngotolo ngoku.”

Ukanti umolokazana ubonakele ebuxakwa sisicelo sikaNqentsu, ngathi akayazi into makayithethe.

Konele nje unina amthi ntsho ngamehlo, wavakala esithi uNomeva, “Ndiyakuva mama, kodwa le cawe yosindiso ndingena kuyo ngoku ndizakuyishiyela ntoni? Ngoba iza nam kakuhle. Abazalwana bayo bayandonelisa.”

“Ndiyeva ewe mntanam, kodwa bona bazakukubeka izandla qha. Ayikho enye into abanokuyenza.”

Uthi uNomeva, “Mna mama ndifuna umntwana qha. Le yokujikeleza esithubeni andiyingenga.”

Ukhawuleze akanqonda apha unina, wavakala eliphakamisa ilizwi lakhe.

“Nomeva! Aba bazalwana bakho becawe bangazibeka zonke izinto abazibekayo kuwe, andali, kodwa isitshixo sokumvulela lomntwana umfunayo sikuNqentsu. Ngaphandleni kokuba ke mntana wam kukho into endingayaziyo. Kha ke uyokucinga, uze undazise izigqibo zakho. Kodwa, xa ndisiva le ncwadi kaNqentsu ingathi ufuneka ngokukhawuleza eGoli.”

Atsho aphume umam’ umfundisi, eshiya uNomeva ashiyeke ezithethela yedwa, ngokubonakala ukuba uyacinga, *Ubani? Mna ndiye eGoli, ndishiye uMfundisi uDanisa. Yho! Ndingaphinde ndibanjwe ngubani kamnandi kangaka?*

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Emva kwesidlo sasekuseni, kumgqibelo wekhefu uNqentsu uthetha nesibonda sendlu yabo kunye namadoda onke endlu.

“Uxolo nto zikabawo! Inzolo!”

Uyazama ukumthethelela usibonda, “Madoda xa omnye wethu esithulisa masitheni cwaka sonke. Ngoko ke cimani onomathotholo benu. Thetha Nqentsu. Thetha Letha, bathule bonke ngoku.”

Abulele uNqentsu ze athi: “Mazenethole uSibonda.”

Ithi enye indoda egama layo linguFeni, “Dadela enzulwini mfondini. Yintoni wasuka wabangathi yinja izakuhlala phantsi. Kuzakuvulwa ebharini ngentsimbi yeshumi elinambini.”

“Uxolo madoda, ndithi mandi nabele iintlungu zam kungekudala,” utsho uNqentsu. “Oko ndahamba kuGila Bathakathi, andide ndiphile. Into eyenzekayo amashwa am ayanda. Izolo ndiphantse ndatshayiswa yimoto. Umfazi kuvakala ukuba uthi soze eze apha kum yena ngoba uhamba icawe yosindiso. Kwaye uthi akafuni mayeza esintu yena. Ndithini nto zika bawo? Yeyenu!” Ahlale phantsi uNqentsu.

Kuphakame usibonda wendlu, uNogawula.

“Nqentsu, yiya kowenu, ufike uthi uzokwenza la mbeleko wawuvezelwe yona. Ayikho enye into eyakuze ikuncede.”

Emva koko kwaye kwamane kuphakama amadoda ngamadoda kodwa onke aye angqinelane noNogawula. Laphela ityala lamawele.

Nyhani ke wade wehla uNqentsu.

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Kusuku lokuqala efikile ekhaya uNqentsu uthetha notata wakhe uMfundisi uLetha.

“Lo nto ke mfowam uthi yimbeleko uyazi kakuhle ukuba uza kuyenzela pha ya kwa mninawe,” utsho utata kaNqentsu ngasebuhlanti, ebhekisa kunyana wakhe. “Apha kwam

kukwaMfundisi. Undlu nkulu wecawe yethu angandisika ukuba engeva into yokuba ndednze imbeleko apha kwam. Ke andifuni sixabane. Ndiyavakala Nqentu?"

"Tata ndiyakucela, ukuba ndingunyana wakho oyinkulu, le mbeleko ndiyifunayo ndizakuyenzela apha ekhaya!" Sekhawuleze wanyukwa ngumsindo unkabi. "Izinyanya ezi sizinqulayo zezikaThixo nazo. Kaloku ngabantu abakhe baphila kweli hlabathi nabo. Ke ithi into bakwelemimoya ngoku, kwaye uThixo usebenzisa bona ukujonga thina basaphilayo. Ndivile futhi ngo tata omncinci ukuba wena wawuyenzelwe imbeleko. Ke tata ndiyakucela, ndicele amalanga apho ndisebenza khona. Ukuba siza kuxambulisana, liza kuphela ixesha lam apha."

"Uqiniseke kangakanani ukuba iza kusebenza lento uza kuyenza?"

"Ndibona apha kuwe," utshilo uNqentsu, ubuso bakhe butyhileka. "Wena zange waphelelwa ngumsebenzi. Iintlanti zakho zigcwele zonke nangoku. Abantwana bakho yinyambalala, kwaye akekho ongafundanga, ndiyaxoka?"

Wema ngeenyawo utata kaNqentsu, engafuni ukuzibonakalisa ukuba uchaniwe wathi: "Ze niyenze ke lo nto yenu."

"Enkosi tata!" watsho ukuvuya unyana kaLetha. "Xa kuvume wena, izinyanya azinaso isizathu sokuze zingavumi nazo."

Kowu! UNqentsu wabangathi usikelwe inqatha.

Waqwela ngelithi utata ka Nqentsu, "Ndizakukunika la nkabi yam yenkomo kuthiwa ngu Mbholayidiki. Isentsha la nkomo leya. Andifuni mfo wam wenze umsebenzi onje ngenkomo ethengiweyo. Zilikhuni ezi nkomo zase maplasini."

Waxhuma-xhuma uNqentsu, waxelisa itakane lebhokhwe xa kufika unina walo evela emadlelweni.

"UThixo soze ayeke ukukusikelela nga lento undenzela yona," watsho uyihlo, naye ekhululekile kwinkangeleko yakhe.

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Evumile ke utata ka Nqentsu kwaye kwanyanzeleke ukuba amadoda ekhaya adibane ngase buhlanti, ukuze kushukuxwe inqubo.

Waphakama uLulama wathi: "Ke Mantakwenda amahle kuza kuqhutywa lo msebenzi wembeleko njengesiqhelo. Kodwa ngenxa yokuba unyana lo wethu selenamajingxeba, kuza kufuneka angxengxeze emaxhantini kuqala. Kaloku umsebenzi wembeleko wenziwa xa umnikazi wawo elusana. Enkosi."

Watsho ukuhlala phantsi.

Ngokukhawuleza kuphakame uDalihlanga, inkulu yamaNtakwende, wenjene: "Madoda, siwagqibile njalo amalungiselelo alo msebenzi. Ngomso uNqentsu uza kuthetha emaxhantini ze emva koko ndiyihlabe inkomo."

Ebhekisa kuNqents, uqhube ngelithi, “Wena ukusukela ngoku uza kuzila. Awulali nomntu obhinqileyo konke-nkonke side sigqibe lomsebenzi. Awubuseli utywala kude kukhale la nkomo ngomso.”

Elokugqibela uliphose kumadoda elali. “Lali yakuthi, ze nisincede nivukele apha ngomso. Ngoba inkabi yalomsebenzi ihlatywa lingekaphumi ilanga. Siyavana madoda?”

Itsho yonke ilali ithi, “Sikuvile Letha.”

Uqwele ngelithi, “Nikhumbule ke ukuba akuzokubakho ntlombe, kwaye akuzubethwa ngqongqo, njengokuba nani nisazi.”

Avungame onke amadoda, “Kunjalo Letha.”

Aphakame uChamanemazi athi, “Makube luxolo Mbhoyi! Sivile siyilelali ka Nxokwana. Nenkuni sizithuthile siyilelali. Namanzi akhona. Kodwa niyavimba.” Akugqiba ahlale phantsi.

Kuphakame uLulama athi, “Uyasithuka xa usithi siyavimba Chamanemazi. Ngubani obethe sigqibile. Unjena ke wena. Ingathi andikufuni nje apha ekhaya zezi zinto zakho. Tshipha ndini. Lento yatshipha eKapa!”

Kubonwa ngotat’ omncinci wekhaya sele erhuqa isagweba sakhe, aye kuChamanemazi. Uthe xa esithi uyagalela entloko wanqandwa ngamadoda elali. Yaba nguwele-wele, onke amadoda ethe xhonxosholo. Elo dushe lapheliswa nguNqentsu ngokubeka iibhotile zotywala bomlungu ezine wathi, “Enkosi lali yakuthi ngokushiya imizi yenu nize kulomsebenzi wam. Kuzakuselwa ngomso. Kodwa ngezibhotile nalebhekile ndithi kuni nantsi ihamb’ idlani yam. Enkosi.”

Yaphokoka njalo ke imibulelo, abanye bafumana ithuba lokubuka uNqentsu. Kodwa amanye amadoda agoduka selerhuqwa ngamanye.

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Ngentseni elandelayo lathi livuka usapho lakwaLetha kwabe sele kuthe nqwadalala amadoda elali ngasebuhlanti.

Yeka ke umhlola wokuba kufunyaniswe ndoda nganye yelalli yayihleli kula ndawo ibihleli kuyo ngezolo!

Ukanti umbethe wathatha ixesha elide ukurhwaqela ngalamini!

Saphakama isithethi sekhaya uLulama.

“Kowu! Lali yakuthi, ingathi benilele apha.” Kwavalaka bekho abaqhulayo, behleka, bambi besithi, Ewe, tyhini, ubengasivimbanga kakade nayizolo, phofu bonke beyiqonda into yokuba akananjongo zokubakhubekisa uLulama. “Nantsi ke inqubo yanamhlanje. Amankazana eli khaya sele emqabile uNqentsu ngembhola. Njengoko besitshilo ngezolo, nguye kuphela oza kombhatha. Ngoku ke silinde ukuba aphume ekoyini azokungxengxeza emahlantini. Emva koko intlabi yekhaya uDalihlanga ahlabe le nkabi yenkomo ilapha ebuhlanti.”

Uthe esandula ukugqiba ukuthetha, wathi gqi uNqentsu. Emva kwakhe ingababafazi, amankazana neentombi zekhaya. Wawunokusiva isipeliti xa sisiwa, ndlela le wonke ubani

wayewuvalile umlomo, de nemozulu wawungathi nayo ikhethe ukubamba ucwango, ihlonipha le intu nkulu yenziwa emaNtakwendeni. Kaloku bonke abantu babeyazi into yokuba xa inokungakhali la nkomo, yonke lo nto ibisenziwa kwelo khaya ibiza kuba yimosharha, incitha xesha. Wawusithi wakubajonga ebusweni oomama baka Nqentsu, babengathi bagqiba kuhlamba ngamanzi anedongwe. Wonke umntu wathula tu.

Xa efika uNqentsu emadodeni, wakhonjiswa umkhonto nexhanti. Yawuxhiphula umkhonto la nto. Yanyoshoza ukusinga emaxhantini. Yafika yevovololo, yaqingqa, yadanduluka yathi: “Nqo! Nqo! Nqo! Nqo! Mantakweeeeeenda! Mantakweeeeenda! Mantakweenda! Nanku umzukulwana wenu! Nanku umzukulwana kaLetha, uLibele, uKhwangeshe, uQukwana, uMbhoyi, uNdesana, uNohuwana, uGqel’ emgqubeni, uSwelizembe ngenxa yoku libala wade waphoswa nabubukhosi. Camagu! Camagu! Camagu! Makudedub’ umnyama kuvel’ ukukhanya.” Yavakala intswahla yamakhaya neendwendwe bengqina ukuma kwalomntana kaLetha. “Mantakwenda, andinakulunga ukuhluthwa intlaka isemlonyeni. Zininzi izinto ezizakundiphosa xa ninokundinikela umva. Ndiyanicela ukuba nindijonge ngalo lonke ixesha. Ndicela inzala mawethu. Ndicela umsebenzi. Ndicela ulonwabo. Enkosi.” Yabaluyiyizelo komama, atsho angathi ayaxola namadoda elali.

Emva koko ke umkhonto wanikezelwa kwintlabi yekhaya, uDalihlanga.

“Mantakwenda! Ndim lo uthethayo ngoku. UDaluhlanga, inkulu yendlu enkulu kule mizi yaseMantakwendini. Ndim owanikwa esisitulo sokuhlaba. Ke ndiyanicela ukuba niyikhulule le nkabi namhlanje. Apha silungisa inkulu yonyana wenu, enimaziyo kwizinto zesintu. Lo mfana uneengxaki ezininzi. Uzibizile ke ngokwakhe. Ndibhekisa kuni ke boLetha, oLibele, oKhwangeshe, oQukwana, oMbhoyi, oNdesana, oNohuwana, oGqel’ emgqubeni, oSwelizembe ngenxa yokulibala bade baphoswa nabubukhosi. Ndiyayihlaba ke ngoku le nkabi. Yibambeni niyingqengqise bafana.”

Kowu, ibe ngu duntsu-duntsu, inkabi ayivumi ukuwa tu.

Akhwaze athi Uchamanemazi, “Nifanele ukoyiswa yinkomo makwedini, zezizinto nizityayo. Nitya amakhaphetshu, iitumata, zizinto zabafazi ezo!” Bambi babehleka, abanye bemgxeka ngelithi ayingomazi anokuphuma komdala awo, ingakumbi ngalomzuzu ooLetha besenza int’ entle kangaka. “Indoda ukuze yomelele kufuneka itye iinkobe kuphela. Khangelani ngoku, noyiswa yinkomo. Enye into enigqibayo butywala bomlungu nentsangu makwedini.”

Yade yangqengqa inkomo.

Yahlaba intlabi.

Kodwa cwaka inkomo.

Yaxhokonxa intlabi. Tu inkomo.

Ayashukuma nokushukuma.

Kuthe kwakubonakala ukuba iyopha kodwa ayide ikhale kwathiwa makhe kunikwe usingaye uNqentsu. Wahlaba naye, cwaka inkomo. Kwaphela uku qhulana ebantwini ngoku!

Omama bayiyeka nala ngonyana yabo. Lanquma inqatha. Kwabizwa utata ka Nqentsu. Naye watsho wancama.

Kwanyanzeleka ke ukuba ivuswe inkomo kuyiwe egqirheni. Akhethwa amadoda amahlanu. Akhweliswa emahashini.

Lamadoda ke ayekhokelwe nguKatsekile, othe xa beza kuhamba wabuza ukuba baya kweliphi igqirha.

Ibe nguLulama owaphendulayo, ngelithi, “Kowu kanene wena, uyathanda ukuyibuza ibhasi ibhaliwe, niyalazi igqirha lamaNtakwenda, linye nguMbhekaphantsi. Khawulezani madoda kuzakude kuphele ixesha.”

Agqabadula amahashi ukuya kwilali noko eyayingekude kuyaphi.

Bashiyeka abantu bengaqinisekanga nokuba mabahambe okanye balinde. Wawusithi xa ubaqwalasela, ufike beziziqhu ngeziqhu, bambi komama bezincokolela: “Ntombi! Sizakuma kude kubenini apha? Masihambe siye kulandlu inabafana.”

“Yintoni ebafaneni? Ngoba ke notywala buzakuthungwa emva kwenyama.”

“Hayi wethu, ndifuna ukuthethiswa nguChamanemazi kudala esithi uyandifuna.”

Bahleke besiya kulondlu.

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Amadoda ayethunywe egqirheni afika igqirha lingenazigulana. Awubeka umhlola. Igqirha lazikhupha izixhobo zalo, amathambo nezitofile, njalo-njalo.

Labuza igqirha, “Kanene nithi nitheni phaya xa nibiza izinyanya?

Kwaphendula uKatsekile wathi sithe, “Letha, Libele, Khwangeshe, Qukwana, Mbhoyi, Ndesana, Nohuwana, Gqel’ emgqubeni, Swelizembe.”

Lithi igqirha, “Katsekile, animbizanga uNxokwana?”

“Hayi Mhlekazi,” watsho ukothuka uKatsekile, “inene nangenyaniso asimbizanga tu kwaphela.”

Lathi igqirha, “Hambani ke nizame kwakhona, ningamlibali uNxokwana. Incinci le nto inibambileyo kula nkomo. Anilibizanga igama lomkhuluwa katata kaNqentsu. Andizukuyithatha nalo mali yenu, hambani!”

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Xa befika kwaLetha, bafika ngathi kukho umphanga. Kodwa bathi nqo ukuqala ebuhlanti, benza njengoko igqirha beli thethile.

Yathi intlabi, “Nxokwana, sikhulule mkhuluwa wam.”

Uthe esayiguqula inkomo yakhala kuqala.

“Mhooooo! Mhoooo!”

Yathi intlabi, “Ivumile madoda! Yigqibezeleni niyihlinze bafana.”

Kwabanjalo.

Ngephanyazo yaphekwa ephekwayo, yojiwa eyojiwayo. Usotheko uNqentsu wojelwa eyakhe yesiko. Wayitya yedwa wayigqiba njengesiqhelo selo siko. Emva koko yaba yimi yeyeye kwelo khaya.

Yaphela la nto yokubangathi kulindwe isidumbu.

Kophulwa, kwaphakwa, kwathungwa, waba njalo ufikelela esiphelweni umsebenzi kaNqentsu.

Kuthe bengeka chithakali abantu kwathi wayi-wayi amafu ngokukhawuleza, kwatsho esikhulu sona isichotho.

Wathi uLulama, “Yimvula yamaNtakwenda ke leyo. Kuyacaca nyhani ke ngoku ukuba icamagu livumile.”

Zithe zakuthi thothololo ezo zandyondyo, baphinda babuyela ezindaweni zabo abantu., konwatywa kwade kwaba ngumzuzu wokugqibela.

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NgoMvulo olandela usuku lomsebenzi, uMfundisi uLetha nowakwakhe, uNqentsu kunye noNomeva, bagqibezela ukuphunga.

Athi uNomeva, “Mama nawe tata, ndizakunyuka noNqentsu. Kodwa ukuba ukhe wandigezela, ndizakubuya. Kukho umfundisi kula cawe ndiyi hambayo yosindiso okwaziyo ukundibeka izandla. Kwaye ngoku ndimshiya sele ndibona ukuba ingathi izakulunga le nto ndiyifunayo pha kula cawe.”

Athi umazala, “Ndiyakuva mntana wam, kodwa isitshixo sempumelelo kule ngxaki yakho sikuNqentsu. Hamba wena naye, xa nifika phaya nithobelane. Ndiyavakala Nqentsu?”

UNqentsu athi, “Ndiyakuva mama, kodwa uNomeva kufuneka ayazi into yokuba ndim indoda. Makajonge kum. Kwaye makayeke ukumane endixelela ngabafundisi bakhe bosindiso apha.”

Kuthi kusenjalo kungene utata omncinci kaNqentsu, uLulama, sekubonakala ngoku ukuba izinja zimqhelile.

Athi, “Yho, uxolo bethuna, bendizihambela nje mna bendingazi ukuba kukho ingxoxo apha. Kaloku ndizokufuna ivanya mna.”

Athi uMfundisi, “Hayi uncedile ubekho mninawa. Naba abantwana bakho. Baphindela eGoli ngoku, njengokuba nawe usazi. Kudala ndithe mawuyokubizwa. Kaloku abangoku abantwana bafuna ukuqale bahlambe, bathambise ubuso, balungise iinwele, bakhaphane, phambi kokuba benze into abayithunywayo. Akukhonto ikuleqayo kodwa mninawa wam?”

ULulama, acime inqawe yakhe, athi, “Hayi, Letha, kodwa bendakuva into embi xa bendinokufika ababantwana behambile.”

Abhekise kuNqentsu athi, “Nqentsu! Sizihlambile ke ezethu izandla ngoku singulomzi kayihlo. Icekwa lishiyeke nawe ngoku. NoNomeva lo ungumkakho, akukhonto anokuyenza ngaphandle kwakho, kwezingxaki zenu. Into omawusincede ngayo ke mntana wam, kukuzila. Linochuku eli siko ugqiba kulwenza. Aliyifuni ihagu. Anditsho ukuba yiba ngumfundisi njengo yihlo. Kodwa mntwana wam, ube yindoda apho uya khona.”

Aphakame utata ka nQentsu athi, “Mfo wam, wayalwa mhla wawuphuma esuthwini. Ke ndizakuthi kuwe unyanisile umninawa wam ukuba uze uhloniphe lo mntwana wasemzini, kunye nelikhaya lakho, emva koko uThixo uza kunyengezela iintsikelelo. Hambani kakuhle bantwana bam, ingathi uThixo uza kuba nani.”

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Kube sekufika inqwelo-mafutha ezokubathatha yandule ibase edolophini yakwaCentane.

Bakhwela, yaba yimivuyo neenyembezi kubazali babo xa bekruncuka abantwana babo.

Xa befika edolophini yakwaCentane, bafika bathatyathwa yibhasi eyabasa eKomonani, apho bafika bathatha uloliwe owaye wabafikisa eGoli kusuku olulandelayo.

Ngenxa yokuba uNqentsu wafika nomfazi, yaphela kuye indawo yokuhlala enkomponi. Kwaye kwanyanzeleka ukuba aye kuhlala kwilokishi yomgodi eyayibizwa ngokuba kuse Skomplasi.

Ibhanti lesihlahla lomgodi

"He madoda, nivile ukuba izolo abantu khange baphume bonke emgodini?" itsho enye yamadoda ayesakuhlala noNqentsu xa kutshona ilanga, umgodo uvalile okwalomini.

"Kowu, Xola!" nguMangaliso otshoyo. "Uyawaqalile ke wena ngezi zinto zakho. Mfondini, sisetywaleni apha khawuyeke ukusifundekela ngezinto zomsebenzi." Ngumhlobo wakhe uTshangisa. "Ukuba abantu baphume bemanzi okanye benodaka izolo asiyonto yethu leyo, sikwazile thina ukuphuma ngoku siyasela qha ke. Ncedani, madoda, makhe sithethe ngezinto zalapha etywaleni. Ingaba niza kukwazi na ukuthenga ezinye iinkonxa ezintandathu, ukuphela kwezi siziselayo?"

"Kodwa ke Tshangisa ima," utshilo uZwayi, "ngoba ingathi uXola umwisa engenabhola ngokuba kaloku xa omnye wethu enzakele sonzakele sonke, andithi itsho njalo ICOSATU?"

"Ngubani uCOSATU madoda?" ufune ukwazi uTshangisa.

"Kowu!" utsho uZwayi. "Ukuhlala namaqaba kanene, kusekho abantu abangayaziyo neCOSATU le yembala, kule mpucuko ingaka madoda? Yho hayi nindoyisile mna ngoku.," watsho uZwayi.

"Mzwandile, ngubani iqaba, kwedini?" Wayecaphukile uTshangisa kakhulu. "Ndingakuzala ndikukhulise, uze ujike undixelele ukuba ndiliqaba? Soze uphinde uthi ndiliqaba mna! Iyanigezisa le mfundo yenu. Uzilibele ngoku ukuba uyintwana apha kum, ndakukufaka isagweba ngoku mna, undiqhela kakubi."

"Nifuna ukulwa ngento engenamsebenzi," ungenelele ngelitshoyo uMangaliso. "Masiziyekeni ke ezo, xa zinoyisa masithethe ngotywala qha."

Waphaka apho uXola, efunqule efesitileni iitoti ezintlanu zebhiya; ukhawuleze waphinda wabuya nazo sele zinento. Xa ezibeka phantsi, wahambisa wenjenje, "Makuselweni madoda, khaniyeke ukuxabana ngathi anazani. Sisuka kwaCentane sonke, ngoku sizoxabana apha. Hayi khona ndiyanqanda nto zikabawo ayinakwenzeka kuthi lo nto."

Uyambombozela uTshangisa esithi, "Kum ukuba woluka emva kunam, ungumntwana qha. Ndazi kunjalo ke mna phaya emakhaya, ngoku nina nithi nakuba nemali ningazazi nokuba nintangani na, kodwa mna intwana ndiza kuyifaka isagweba qha itsho indazi, andinaxesha lemfundo mna, ndiyabetha qha emntwini ongemva kum."

Olu suku ke nguLwesihlanu, amadado afumene iimali zawo. Kusuku olulandelayo lwangoMgqibelo iyikhefu yempela veki, kungekho mntu owayengxamele ukuyokulala kuba ethi ngengomso uvukela emsebenzini.

Kwavakala isandi, kanti kukho bani okhwaza umyalezo osuka kwabomgodi, ilizwi elo lithetha ngesiFanakalo, lisithi, "Madoda! Madoda! Mamela! Lo uthethayo ngoku nguGalelebhayini, induna yamaXhosa. Ndicela ukuba onke amadoda akwa Centane, masidibaneni ngomso

kusasa ngentsimbi yeshumi kusasa kwela bala lemidlalo yesintu. Ikho into embi nebuhlungu eyehlele omnye wabasebenzi bakwaCentane. Ngoku ke umphathi wehostele ufuna ukuthetha nabo bonke abasebenzi bakwaCentane. Ndiyabulela."

Emva koko kwathi cwaka, ingulo ezibuza ukuba ngaba kufe bani ngoku. Kaloku umphathi wehostele wayengathethi nabantu bendawo nje, wayethetha nabo xa kukho iindaba ezingemnandi.

Abasebenzi baqhubeka besenza ooqashi-qashi babo, ingulo ezibuza ukuba ingaba kufe bani ngoku, apha kule St. Helena Gold Mine?

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Kwayiwa kuloo ntlanganiso kubuhlungu kuye wonke ubani.

Ithe ibetha intsimbi yeshumi kusuku olulandelayo labe ibala lezemidlalo yesintu elingaphakathi enkomponi lithe wayi-wayi, liphithizela ngamaCentane.

Xa ayemane ebhunga onke ayengazi konke konke ukuba ingaba abizelwa ntoni na ngumphathi weHostele. Kodwa ayemana exokisana ngezinto ezininzi, amanye esithi inokuba kuza kukhethwa induna entsha ngokuba abantu bakwaCentane kudala beyikhalazela induna yabo, besithi ibuthanda kakhulu utywala. Wawusithi nokuba wonile ukuba uthe wakhupha iinkonxa ezintandathu zebhiya, uphume utshaya kuloo matyala; akukhathaliseki nokuba wenzeni na. Abanye ke babengayithandi loo nduna yabo tu kwaphela, benazo ezabo izizathu ezahlukileyo kwabanye, kodwa abanye babengeva nentwana ngaloo nduna leyo.

Kuthe kwakucaca ukuba liyahamba ixesha engade afike uMphathi weHostele kwacaca ngoku ukuba izagweba zidla ekhaya; iyile indoda iphosa isagweba sayo nakubani na ebisoloko imxhibile. Yaba nguloo hayi! hayi!

"Hayini bafondini, kutheni ngoku nazenza amakhwenkwe?" latsho isekela-nduna linethemba elikhulu lokuba kuza kukhethwa yena namhlanje ngokuba wayesazi ukuba amaCentane akasamfuni konke konke uGalelebhayini.

Ohlulelana amadoda, iyile iphose isagweba kulowo imaziyo ukuba akakho kwicala layo.

Yaba zizantyalantyala zamagazi, kwade kwabizwa iinqwelo zezigulana nabakwantsesana, nqu namagosa okhuselo lomgodi. Abonzakeleyo basiwa esibhedlele, abanye bavalelwa eziseleni oku kobusuku nje, lwatsho lwadamba olo thuli lwezagweba lwaluqhuma apho.

Akubanga xesha lide, yehla inkawu emthini. Ngamanye amazwi, wade wafika wona umzuzu ongaliyo nobukade ulindiwe wokufika kukamphathi weHostele.

Xa efika umphathi weHostele wathetha namaCentane ngetoliki, wenjenje, *"Gentlemen I know that you are all coming from Kentani."* (Itoliki, "Madoda mina yazi kuthi zonke wena phuma lapha kalo Centane.")

"*I have bad news for you*." ("Mina khona nalo mubi myalezo lapha ka wena*.")*

"Our mine has not been balancing for the last three months, we have been short of one man."
("Lo mine ka thina yena kade shota kalo one madoda.")

"Rescue team has been searching day and night but they did not find anything." ("Lo madoda lo yena setsha, yena setshile zonke malanga nalo busuku maar yena hayi khona thola nikisi.")

"We think that the lost man must have been coming from Kentani." ("Thina cabanga kuthi lo muntu lo yena lahlekile yena phuma lapha kalo Centane.")

"*But we are not yet sure."* ("Azikho qiniso namanje.*")*

"But we have got the skeleton of the lost man." ("Kuphela thina tholile lomathambo kalo madoda lo yena lahlekile.")

"We know that the lost man has a son." ("Thina yazi kuthi lo madoda lo yena lahlekile yena khona lo pikinini kayena lo yena madoda lapha khaya ka yena.")

"Because the hand belt of the deceased man is also lost we cannot be sure who is actually this man." ("Lo mathambo lo yena tholile azikho lo bhanti ka yena manje thina azikho qiniso kuthi ngubani lo yena yifile.")

"We have the skeleton only." ("Thina tholile lo mathambo kuphela.")

"Then the skeleton has no face." ("Lapha kalo mathambo azikho buso.")

"If there was a face we would be calling his son to see if their faces are alike just to be sure that we have the correct identity of the dead body." ("Thina cabangile kalo fanisa lobuso, maar lo kalo mathambo azikho buso.")

"We are now waiting for the rescue team to get the hand belt then we will be sure." ("Manje thina lindile lo madoda lo yena setsha tot yena thola lo bhanti kalo sandla.")

"Ek se vir hulle baie dankie madoda hulle kan nou uit gaan hoor." ("Mina bonga kakhulu lapha ka wena madoda manje wena hamba lapha kalo nkomponi futhi.")

Emva koko yaba nguhumhum, abantu bechithakala nangona bebonakalisa ukungoneli yile ngxelo yomphathi weHostele.

Abanye kaloku babecinga ukuba babizelwa ukukhetha induna entsha ngokuba babengasayifuni le ikhoyo, babesithi inobuqhophololo. Abanye babekhalazela into yokuba kungade kuphele iinyanga ezintathu umntu engabonakali kanti le mayini yenza njani. Abanye babesithi kucacile ukuba umntu usenokungangcwatyelwa apha ke ngolu hlobo. Abanye bekhalazela into yokuba balityazisiwe apho belityaziselwa into engekhoyo. Babesithi kudala benxaniwe, balibele kukumamela into engaphelelanga. Abanye babekhalela into yokuba bayafa yindlala belibele kukumamela into engenacala.

Bambi babesithi zinintsi izinto zokwenza e*Mzilikazi.* Isiphithiphithi sakhona seemonto silawulwa ziizangqa zendlela kuphela. Abantu apho abahamba ngeenyawo bangangoboya benja. Neemonto ziyinyambalala. Kaloku imigodi ngelo xesha kwakungekho nomnye owawunabantu ababengaphantsi kwamashumi amabini amawka. I-St. Helena Gold Mine iyodwa yayohlulwe kane, ithwele abasebenzi abangaphaya kuma shumi amabini amawaka abantu.

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Ngenye imini uNqentsu ushiya indlu leyo wayesele ehlala kuyo nomfazi wakhe uNomeva, uya edolophini kufuphi nomgodi lowo. Isihlahla sakhe sasinebhanti eluhlaza. Le bhanti ke yayixela ukuba wenza umsebenzi onjani na. Wayesele enonyaka wesibini elapho. Ngelo xesha ke kwakufuneka ukuba ugqibe unyaka emgodini esebenza ngomhlakulo nangepeki kuqala phambi kokuba ubhale into ekwakusithiwa yi-*clerical test*, yona inikwa abo bavavanyelwa ukuba ngoomabhalana basemgodini. Xa uthe wayipasa uyakhutshwa emgodini ube ngumabhalana.

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Enkomponi ebusuku kuvakala ilizwi oku komntu oyindoda ekhwaza, “Madoda! Madoda! Zonke lo madoda kalo Centane yena funeka lapha kalo stadium kalo mtshongolo, lo meninjala kalo nkomponi yena funa yena zonke kalo 10 kuseni. Mina bonga.”

Ngentsasa elandelayo yaba ngathi lo madoda akwaCentane ebelele kwelobala lemidlalo.

Wakhala kuqala uXola, “Tyhini tshangisa, siphelele ngoku. Uphi lo manenjala?”

“Kaloku abelungu ngabantu abatya izinto ezininzi, eyabo itafile iyagcwala ziindidi ngeendidi zokutya,” watsho ukuphendula uTshangisa, “abafani nathi, kaloku thina sitya umngqusho oneembotyi kuphela, sakugqiba sisele amanzi kube kuphelile njalo.”

Abo babemva kulentetho yakhe babanokubhideka.

UXola uvakala esithi, “Kaloku lusuku lwethu lokuphumla eli lanamhlanje, angasilibazisi iilokhwe ziyawa elokishini!” Kwahleka yena kuqala. “Kaloku thina singabanye asivuyeli kuhlala namadoda enkomponi. Oh, heke! nabo besiza.”

Naye uNqentsu ebephakhathi kwalamadoda; uthe akubona ukuba ngenene ufikile lo wo ebememe onke amadoda akuCentane, wasuka wacima izoli yakhe.

Akufika, akazange amoshe xesha, suka umphathi wathetha namaCentane ngetoliki wenjenje, “I have come to give you the final feedback about the deceased.” (Madoda, mina bonga ndaba mina buka wena khona zonke.)

“The rescue team has finally got the hand belt of the deceased and it has been confirmed that he is Welile Mafa from Centane.” (“Mina buyile kalo tshela wena kalo madoda le yena yifile.”)

“Next week Thirsday the body will be transported to Centane.” (“Lo madoda lo yena setsha yena tholile lo bhanti kalo sihlahla kalo muntu lo yena yifile, yena Welile Mafa kalo Centane.”)

“This exercise has been made easy by the hand belt.” (“Lo muntu lo yena yifile yena hamba kalo Lwesine lapha kalo khaya kayena.”)

Umphathi wemayini wagqibezela ngelithi, “And that is how we found out about the person’s identity.” (“Thina siziwe kalo bhanti kalo sihlahla kalo thola lomuntu.”)

Emva koko yaba yile nale indoda, itsibela kwindawo ebithenjiswe kuyo, ngokuba kaloku yayiyimpelaveki yekhefu leyo.

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UXola wahamba waya kwindawo yentselo elokishini, afike kanye xa umama wendawo leyo ethetha nabathengi bakhe.

“Mamelani apha ke bathengi bam abathandekayo, ndinesaphulelo namhlanje ngokuba inyanga ifile. Xa uthenge iibhotile ze-beer ezine, ufumana enye mahala.” NguMamsuthu lowo, owayengumnikazi wendawo yentselo eyayinomtsalane kakhulu kulo lokishi yaseThabong kangangokuba, negama layo kwakusithiwa kuseTloho (Yiza).

“Shakes!” atsho uPetros, ekhweba umhlobo wakhe. “Asilojoyini eliya likula corner igaphaya?”

“Yhazi, ujonge le nto ndiyijongileyo nam, lilo ntanga, ndibone ibhanti yesihlahla kwaye ibomvu, kaloku kuthiwa aba banebhanti ezibomvu basebenza kwiindawo ezinemali.”

Kukhuze uPetros emva koko, ngelithi, “Masisondele phaya kuye, sikhe sithethe nje naye, la wey mhlawumbi uza kuba moja.”

“Ja sani, ndikuthandela lo nto ke wena uyacava.”

Baya kuye xa befika kuye babulisa, wase washwantshwatha yena umfo lo, esithi unemali eninzi kangagokuba ugqiba kufumana imali yebonus ngokuba yena uyi-Team Leader, watso ebabonisa nebhanti lakhe lesihlahla.

Wamane ebathengela utywala kodwa yena woyisakala walala. Kulapho esi sibini sabonwa simphakamisa lo mfo, oku ingathi ngabantu abamkhaphayo. Konela nje ukuba bafike emveni kwendlu, bambeka phantsi. Batsho ukugqogqa iipokotho zakhe, de bafumana isipaji, singakwazi nokuvaleka yimali. Basithatha, bamkhulula nezo mpahla wayezinxibile bamshiya yedwa apho emva kulo ndlu babeselela kuyo.

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Ngosuku olulandelayo, wavuka ngentseni uMamsuthu nentombi yakhe, baqala ngokuqoqa aph’endlini.

“Thoko, yiza ntombi yam siqokelele amaphanga kwezi zindlu kuselelwa kuzo. Kakade wena ireport yakho ka Grade 12 iphuma nini?” Kubuza umama kaThoko, uMamsuthu.

“Andazi mama,” uvakala esitsho uThoko, “ndisalindile kodwa ndinalo lona ithemba lokuphumelela.”

Baphuma kwisakhiwo eso, beba bazakukhalelisisa apha ekukhangeleni kakuhle, becoca indlu leyo ngaphakathi, bandule baye nangaphandle.

“Tyhini Thoko,” wothuka unina akubona lo mzimba walendoda yayixhatshazwe nguXola nomhlobo wakhe, “yintoni ngokule yenzekayo apha?”

“Ngula bhuti mama wase mayini, bamkhuthuzile ooShakes.”

“Yho! Yho! Yho mntwana wam yinto esiza kuyithini le inje, umntu ahambe ngaze ngolu hlobo, jonga ubudoda bakhe buphandle.”

“Uzakuthini mama?”

“Ndiza kumthini na mntwana wam ngo’ba uyabona nawe ukuba elele obentlombe nje?”

“Yhu mama! Jonga lo mntu ingathi uyashukuma ngoku.”

“Hayi thob’ umoy. Wena hamba use lomphanga kulandlu.”

“Masambe sobabini, tyhini mama kutheni ufuna ukushiyeka weda nje apha? Masiphume sobabini ukuba awuphumi mama nam andiphumi.”

“Asiyo ntanga yakho le yhini le, ungumntwana into oyiyo awukazigqibi ezesikolo. Kakade uya kufunda nini? Beka loo maphanga uhambe uye ezincwadini zakho. Nithi ngumntwana otheni lo ugeza kangaka! Ufuna ntoni ezintweni zabantu abadala kakade. Hamba!”

“Hamba uye kufuna ingubo ekamereni uze nayo simgqume.”

“Mama, andizukushiya wedwa kulo bhuti ohamba ngaze ngolu hlobo, kutheni ufuna ndikushiye wedwa nje apha. Andihambi apha ngaphandle kwakho.”

Kuthe kusenjalo kwakhala ifoni kwenye yezindlu ezakhelwe kufuphi kunaleyo yotywala, kwanyanzeleka ukuba uThoko abaleke aye kuyiphendula.

Washiyeka unina emane eteketisa le ndoda eleleyo apho, ingaze injalo ingazazi nokuba iphi na. Emane ebamba amalungu omzimba wayo ayiphulule neengalo zayo. Kodwa ke loo ndoda yayingathi ifile. Kodwa bona ubudoda babuthe nqo bumane bushukuma qho xa ethetha lo mama.

Wothuswa nguThoko xa emkhwaza esengaphaki endlini, “Mama ifoni ifuna wena.”

Akazange afune nqu nokwazi ukuba ngubani, nto nje wasuka wathi unina, “Yithi andikho mntana wam. Andinakushiya abantu bam abandincedayo imini nobusuku, kaloku mna andinandoda, ndincedwa ngaba bantu basemigodini. Ndiza kuhlala apha ndimlinde ade avuke.”

Wayengcuchalaza lo mama ngulo bhuti owayelele ngakulo ndlu. Ekugqibeleni bade bamombathisa ngengubo elele njalo lo ndoda.

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Ngexesha lesidlo sangokuhlwa kwaye kwanyanzeleka ukuba avuswe lo bhuti lowo. Zange azazi nokuba wayelele njani apho. Zange abazi nabo bantu babemkhuthuzile. Zange azive nangelo xesha wayekhuthuzwa ngalo.

Kodwa ke umama walapho wamboleka izinto zamadoda zokunxiba.

Wathi kuye, “Ziyanikhuthuzisa ezibhanti zenu zasemayini”.

Wathi ke lo mfo, “Asinakho ukungazinxibi ngokuba xa uthe wafa kula mahlathi ufumaneka lula xa unebhanti. Nangoku ukuba bendifile apha bekuza kufonelwa emayini. Into yokuqala ebiza kubuzwa ngama polisa emayini yinomblolo yesihlahla.”

“Ooh!” watsho Mamsuthu, “hayi ke ngoku, soze ndiphinde ndiyonyanye le bhanti yesihlahla.”

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Yaqhubeka incoko phakathi kwalondoda noMamsuthu, de kwavakala into yokuba indoda leyo iye yanyuka ngengalo, yacela igumbi lo kuhlala apho kulo mzi, esithi yena udiniwe yinkomponi.

Kodwa wathi noxa kunjalo, ibhanti lakhe lona soze ahlukane nalo.

Ndiyamxolela

Kungorhatya ngoLwesihlanu wempela-veki yekhefu, amadoda endlu eyayihlala uNqentsu enkomponi ayencokola.

"Madoda, nivile ukuba uNqentsu ubuyile?" watsho uNdala.

"Ewe! Uthina ngoku?" Watsho ekhuza uFeni. "Ndiyatsho, kudala ndizibuza ukuba yintoni le ingaqhelekanga apha endlwini."

"Kaloku ubuqhele eza gambhutsi bezisoloko zijinga apha entungo," utshilo uNdala. "Soze uphinde uzibone ngoku. Uthe xa evela ekhaya wazithatha zonke iimpahla zakhe. Kaloku ngoku unyuke nomfazi." Yakhuza yonke indlu. "Ke uhlala eSkomplasi, kule lokishi yalapha." Wenjenjalo uNdala ekhwela ebhedeni yakhe, wongeza ngelithi, "Kaloku la mfo, beseliphelile ixesha lakhe enkomponi. Kaloku ebesesebenza njengomabhalana omkhulu, emva kwalaa ngozi yakhe."

"Ooh! Tyhini, kwatsho kwasa ke ngoku apha kum," watsho uFeni, indlu yahleka yonke. "Kowu! Ndingavuya ukuba ndingalimala oku kwam nditsho ndifumane umsebenzi wase-ofisini."

Athi uNdala, "Kaloku madoda umntu unyuselwa ngemfundo yakhe, hayi ngokulimala. Unganyuselwa ube yintoni wena uliqaba elinje?"

Bahlekisana njalo kungekho ufuna ukulala. Kaloku kwakuza kuyiwa emsebenzini ngoLwesibini ekuseni.

Kuthe xa amadoda ayemane elala ngononye-ngononye, kwangena uNqentsu egxadazela. Kwanyanzeleka ukuba kuvuswe uNdala, kuba uNqentsu wayengakwazi nokuthetha, impahla yakhe igcwele udaka, kucaca ukuba wayehamba etyibilika.

Kwaye kwanyanzeleka ukuba alaliswe kwibhedi ephantsi, kuba wayenokuqengqeleka awe phantsi, alimale, kweziya ziphezulu iibhedi. Kambe kwanyanzeleka ukuba akhululwe yonke impahla yakhe awayeyinxibile uNqentsu, kuba kwakumanzi neempundu. Hayi khona apha ngaphambili wayevuza amanzi konke nje. Bathi xa bemqwalasela bafumanisa ukuba ebehamba ezihlanzela. Isifuba sinkone sonke.

Ngentsasa elandelayo wavuka uNqentsu wathi, "Hayi bo, madoda! Ndiphi na apha?"

"Ufike ebusuku apha ungakwazi nokuthetha. Sagqiba kwelokuba mawulale phaya kula bhedi kaFeni, kuba wohlulakele ukukhwela phezulu uye kuleya ibhedi yayisakuba yeyakho. Kaloku ayikabi namntu oko yashiywa nguwe."

Ukuthuka uNqentsu! Esithi, "Ndala, ntanga yam ndicela undikhaphe. Ndiza kufa ngula mfazi. Kwaye ndifuna undingqinele ukuba bendibukwa nini yiyo le nto ndingakwazanga ukuya eSkomplasi." Yahleka yonke indlu. Wamkhapha uNdala.

Xa befika kwaNqentsu bankqoknqoza, bankqonkqoza, bankqoknqoza, wade wathi uNomeva, "Hayi bo! Ngubani na lowo?"

"Ndim, sithandwa sam. Vula, nkosikazi."

Athathe ixesha ukuvula uNomeva. UNqentsu ade aphumele ngaphandle kweyadi kuba wayetshiswa ngumchamo. Yade yavula inkosikazi kaNqentsu. Wangena uNdala. Xa engena uNdala, uNomeva wamgibisela ngamanzi abilayo.

Wathi, "Sifebendini sendoda. Ubulele phi?"

Xa engena uNqentsu ufika uNdala egxwala kukutsha ngamanzi, ethe natya phantsi, kuvakala incwina kuphela. "Nomeva! Yintoni le uyenzayo? Kutheni ubulala uNdala engenzanga nto?" wabuza othukile uNqentsu.

"Bendicinga hulendini lendoda," watsho uNomeva efuthekile ngumsindo.

"Uza kulala esitokisini ngale nto uyenzileyo?"

"Kungenxa yakho. Yhoo! Lilishwa lantoni eli lindehlelayo? Ndingekayiqali nokuyenza le nto bendizokuyenza apha."

Kusebusuku kunjalo, kodwa abamelwana beva isikhalo, beza ngobuninzi babo.

"Bendingazi nokuba kukho abantu kule ndlu. Bafike nini aba bantu, batsha kangaka, nkosikazi?" yatsho indoda yasebumelwaneni ixakiwe.

Wayiphendula unkosikazi wayo esithi, "Basand' ukufika. Andikabazi nokuba basuka phi."

Wayi-wayi abantu ngokukhawuleza nenqwelo yezigulana yafika ngokukhawuleza. Yamthatha uNdala. Walaliswa kwigumbi labantu abagula kakhulu. UNqentsu naye wayehambile kodwa naye wabuya ngeenqwelo zabamelwana ababeye kweso sibhedlele.

UNqentsu wafika kwakhe, wathi, "Phuma, Nomeva."

"Undisaphi phandle ebusuku kangaka?"

"Ndifuna ukuqiniseka ukuba awuphethanga manzi abilayo," watsho uNqentsu etyhiliza ucango.

Athi umfazi, "asinto yokuhlekisa leyo. Wena unamawenu kubs bendifuna ufe, cwaka. Rha! Awunazintloni. Uyokundilanda ezilalini ndizihlelele kamnandi. Kanti ufuna ukundibonisa ukuba wena ungudlalani."

Livuleke ngaloo mzuzu ucango, wangena uNqentsu selesithi, "Nkosikazi, ndiyalala ngoku, kaloku ndiyaphangela kusasa."

"Awunakulala ungandixelelanga ukuba ubulele phi kobu busuku sivuka kubo?"

"Bendisela neetshomi zam kula nkanti yasenkomponi, kanti ndiye kakhulu, ndohlulakala ukuphuma enkomponi. OoNdala bandithwala bandilalisa kula ndlu yabo isenkomponi. Ndilele apho ke."

“Eli tyala ndiyalimisa. Liza kuthethwa mhla uNdala waphuma esibhedlele. Ndiyakwazi kaloku wena. Waqhela ukuxoxa amatyala ezinkundleni zikamantyi.”

“Kucaca ukuba sobe kuphinde kugqibele mna ukuthetha ngoku apha kwam ngenxa yento yokuba kukho wena.”

“Yini myeni wam, masiyeke ukuxabana umhlobo wakho esesibhedlele elimele ngenxa yakho.”

“Sukuthi ngenxa yam. Yithi ngenxa yethu.”

“Ngenxa yethu ke.”

“Sukuthi ngenxa yethu ke. Yithi masimthandazele ukuze aphole ngokukhawuleza.”

“Kanene wena usoloko ufuna into eza kusilwisa. Makhe silale ngoku sakuthetha ngomso.” Balala.

Uthe uNqentsu xa esoyama kuNomeva, wathi uNomeva, “Soze ndenze loo nto mna nomntu onxilileyo. Andizanga kudlala mna apha eGoli. Lala wena qha wohlukane nokumane undiphathaphatha. *No sober mind, no sex.* Uyandiva, Nqentsu?”

“Enye into ekuza kufuneka ukuba iphele apha kuwe, kukundibiza ngegama. Andiyonkwenkwe eyolusa amatakane eebhokhwe zakowenu. Apha ndingumntu ohloniphekeke kakhulu,” watsho uNqentsu.

“Kuza kufuneka ndiqale ndiyibone apho kuwe kaloku imbeko. Ukuba awunayo wena, nam andizukuba nayo. Woyike amanye amadoda ebusuku, wade walala nawo enkomponi. Bekutheni uze ungathi abo bantu mabakukhaphe bakuzise apha kwakho kanti uxabisekile? Abakuxabisanga aba bantu qha bayakusenga. Kaloku wena, kuthiwa kuwe xa uteketiswa apha, “Mlungu” nawe ke bathi bakutsho ubathengele utywala. Iza kuphela yonke loo nto ngoku, ndikhona. Uze ubaxelele ukuba uMlungukazi ukhona ngoku. Ikrisimesi yabo iphelile. Qha umntu endimvelayo nguNdala. Umntu wabantu onzakale ngoluya hlobo engenzanga nto. Soze ndiyilibale le nto ndiyenze kuNdala. Kodwa ndakuxolisa kakhulu kuye mhla saphinda sabonana.”

“Akukho mfuneko yokuba uxolise ngokwakho. Ndikhona mna ndiza kuthetha noNdala nabantu bakowabo. Wena yithi cwaka. Ninjena ke bafazana basezilalini. Ingathi amadoda alapha emigodini awafuni abafazi bawo beze apha, niyaphapha gqitha nakufika apha.”

“Kodwa ke, myeni wam, soze ndingaluceli uxolo kuNdala. UNdala, ulimele ngempazamo, ezise wena apha endlwini.”

“Enye into emandikukhumbuze yona myeni wam, kaloku ndihamba icawe yosindiso. Phaya ke safundiswa indlela yokuthandazela abantu abagulayo, abalimeleyo, nazo zonke iingxaki ezithwaxa abantu. Ke ithi into, ndiza kumbeka izandla uNdala ukuphuma kwakhe esibhedlele,” wahambisa wanjo uNomeva.

Wayindwebela le ndawo uNqentsu, wathi, “UNdala uza kuphuma ephilile, ngoko ke, akazukufuna zandla zakho. Uyayazi phofu into yokuba xa unokuyenza loo nto, angaphuma onke laa madoda enkomponi aze kufuna ezo zandla zakho?”

“Mmaweze. Ndiza kuwabiza imali kaloku myeni wam, ndincedisane nawe.”

“Awukayiqalisi nale ubuyizele sowucinga ezo zinto.” Bahleke loo nto bobabini.

UNqentsu waphakama wayibamba ngesandla inkosikazi yakhe. UNqentsu wathi mabayolala.

Xa befika egumbini lokulala uNomeva wathi, “Lala apho ebhedeni wena, mna ndiza kulala apha phantsi ndedwa. Ndisadiniwe wethu. Le nto uyifunayo ebhedeni ayibaleki kwaye yeyakho wedwa. Kwaye ndisothukile ngale nto ndiyenze kuNdala engenatyala.”

Ekuseni wavuka uNqentsu walungisa emva koko waya emsebenzini. Kuthe xa kunqanqaza oonogqaza emathafeni, kwafika imoto yoonogada benkampani i-*St. Helena Gold Mine Pty* (*Ltd*). Kuyo kwakukho oonogada ababini abangamadoda kunye noNdala.

Bathe bakungena endlwini, wasitsho isikhalo uNomeva. Watsibela uNdala, wamphuza, emphuza emane ejinga kuye esithi, “Uxolo wethu bhuti Ndala uxolo, ndicela undixolele, ndandinomsindo ngalaa mini, ndicatshukiswe nguNqentsu. Uxolo.” Unogada womgodi owayephanda elo tyala wathi, “Nkosikazindini! Ungadlali ngexesha lam, ngena evenini ndikusa edolophini emapoliseni ngoku. Umangalelwe.”

Waqala phantsi ukukhala uNomeva wathi, “Owu! Yhini bhuthi Ndala. Ndixolele, ndingenza nantoni na ofuna ndikwenzele yona. Ndingakunika nantoni na onokuyifuna xa unokundixolela. Uxolo Ndala.”

UNogada wabhekisa kuNdala wathi, “Ndimbambe lo mfazi okanye uyamxolela?”

Uthe engekathethi uNdala wathi uNomeva, “Loo nto akasemhle uNdala ngoku avela esibhedlele. Ingathi khange alimale. Ubuso bakhe ngoku ingathi bobosana. Ndingasoloko ndimjongile imini yonke.”

Ngelo xesha uNomeva, uzwathi lwenkosikazi ekhaphukhaphu, ebengezelayo ebusweni, wayemane ejinga kuNdala.

Wathi uNogada, owayephanda elo tyala, “Ndala ndimbambe lo mfazi okanye uyamxolela?”

Waba ngathi uyatshatiswa uNdala wathi, “Ndiyamxolela.” Yabe iphelile into ebithethwa njalo. Kuthe xa ixesha iyintsimbi yeshumi elinanye, bemka oonogada bomgodi, beshiya uNdala kunye noNomeva kuloo ndlu kaNqentsu owayeza kubuya emva kwentsimbi yesihlanu emalanga.

Ukubanjwa kukaNqentsu

"Amandla!" watsho ukukhwaza uNqentsu, eme phande kwenginginya yabantu.

"Ngawethu!" saphendula isihlwele.

"Izinja!"

"Zezabo!"

"Siyaya ePitoli, siyaya!

"Siyaya!"

"Nokuba bangasidubula, siyaya!"

"Siyaya!"

UNqentsu wayesele engomnye woomabhalana abakhulu bomgodi i-*St. Helena Gold Mine Pty (Ltd)*. Kaloku waye wasabela ubizo lwamadoda awayesuka eRhawutini ehamba eshumayela ngombutho wokulwela amalungelo wabasebenzi. Ngenxa yemfundo uNqentsu waye waweva la madoda waze wancendisa ekugayeni inkxaso kunye nokujoyinwa kwalo mbutho. Ngalo mhla kudibene bonke abasebenzi bemigodi yaseWelkom, kwibala lezemidlalo elalibizwa ngokuba yi-Openheimer Stadium.

Kwangentsimbi yesibhozo ekuseni kulooMgqibelo abasebenzi babesele beqalisa ukuthi wayiwayi. Ngoko kwakungentsimbi yeshumi. UNqentsu owayesele enyulelwe ukuba ngumhlali-ngaphambili waloo mbutho wayexelela abasebenzi bemigodi izinto eziza naloo mbutho.

"Iindwendwe ezivela eRhawutini, ikomiti yalo mbutho wokulwela amalungelo wabasebenzi, abasenzi bonke, manenekazi nani manene, amandla!"

Abantu bathi, "Amandla!"

Wathi uNqentsu, "Lo mbutho ke basebenzi uzivile izikhalo zenu. Ke ngoku siyavuya xa nikho apha ngobuninzi benu. Siza kucela inkxaso yenu ke ngokuthi niwujoyine lo mbuthu ukuze ube namandla okulwela iingxaki neemfuno zenu. Zininzi ke izinto eziza kuliwa ngulo mbutho. Namhlanje ndiza kunifundela ezi zilandelayo:

> *Lo mbutho ufumanise ukuba ningabasebenzi ningamaxhoba abaqashi ngeendlela ezininzi.*
>
> *Umqashi uthathe oomabhalana, iinduna namapolisa wabasondeza kuye ukwenzela into yokuba bavale imilomo yabo xa nixhatshwazwa nina."*

Ngelo xesha wawunokuva nenaliti ewa phantsi kwelo bala lezemidlalo.

Wahambisa wathi uNqentsu: "Ukuxhatshazwa kwenu kuqala kwaMzilikazi apho bonke abasebenzi bale migodi yaseFreyistata, bafikela kuyo nabaya kuyo xa begoduka. Ezi mali zenu nizigcinisa kwezaa ofisi zakwaMzilikazi, azibhalwa zonke kweza ziliphu nizinikwayo, kuba kuyaziwa ukuba aniwaboni amagama namanani. Iimali zenu ke ziyashiyeka zityiwe kula ofisi yakwaMzilikazi."

Wabhala uNqentsu kwibhodi awayeyiphethe. "Babhala ngolu hlobo ke, aba nqevu. Xa ugcinise i-R1000 bayibhala ngolu hlobo R100.00. Enye iye kubo."

Uthe akutsho uNqentsu, amane ephakama ngokuphakama amadoda engqinela uNqentsu.

"Mhlali ngaphambili yinyani le uyithethayo. Mna kule joyini yam iphelileyo, khange ndikwazi nokuthenga nenkomo enye. Ndazibuza ukuba kutheni kuba kula joyini yam iphambi kwalena ndakwazi ukuthenga amathokazi amabini eenkomo."

Emva koko yatsho ingoma. Waphinda uNqentsu wayithulisa loo ngoma.

"Amandla!"

Lagquma lonke ibala lathi, "Ngawethu!"

Wathi uNqentsu, "Xa ndiza kuyeka ke maqabane ndiza kuthi kuni, ze nincede niye phaya kweza ofisi zalo mbutho niyokujoyina. Kaloku asinakukwazi ukunithethelela xa ningengomalungu."

Bazixelelwa iindawo ezikuyo ezo ofisi.

Wagqibelisa ngelithi, "Maqabane! Basebenzi! Xa siza kuvala ndifuna ukunixelela ezinye izinto ezi zakuliwa ngulo mbutho zezi:

> *Imigodi yonke kufuneka ithabathe inxaxheba ekufundiseni abantwana bethu xa bepase ibanga leshumi.*
>
> *Abanikazi bemigodi kufuneka bathathe inxaxheba ekulweni indlala kweli lizwe lethu.*
>
> *Kufuneka basikhusele kwizigulo nakwiingozi kuzo zonke iindawo esisebenza kuzo.*
>
> *Xa ungenakuqhubeleka phambili ngokusebenza ngenxa yokugula okanye ingozi, mawubhatalwe.*
>
> *Masisebenze ngokwemfundo yethu.*
>
> *Masiqeqeshwe, siphuculwe ukuze sikwazi ukunyuselwa emisebenzini.*
>
> *Mazijikwe iinkomponi ibe ziindawo esinokuhlala kuzo neentsapho zethu.*
>
> *Ezinye izindlu zeenkomponi mazijikwe zikwazi ukuhlala umntu ngamnye kuyo, hayi la maholo sihlala kuwo ngoku.*
>
> *Masihlaliswe ngendlela ehloniphekileyo.*
>
> *Maluphele ucalulo ngobuhlanga.*
>
> *Umntu obhinqileyo nomntu oyindoda mabalingane.*

Amathuba onyuselo emsebenzini mawafane kumntu wonke.

Sifuna amalungelo abasebenzi.

Sithi phantsi ngeNational Party, phezulu ngeANC.

Amandla! Amandla! Amandla!"

Sagquma sonke isitediyam.

Kwavuya wonke umntu ngaloo mini. Nabo babethengisa, zathengwa zaphela zonke izinto zabo. Wonke umntu wayeliva ivumba lenkululeko.

Iinqwelo zamafutha neebhasi zathutha abantu zibasa kwiindawo ngeendawo ababehlala kuzo.

UNqentsu wafika kwakhe ngentsimbi yeshumi ebusuku, wathi, "Nkosikazi, ndivela entlanganisweni yabasebenzi, ndimele laa mbutho ndandikuxelele ngawo. Ndaye ndakhethwa ngabasebenzi ukuba ndibe ngumhlali ngaphambili. Namhlanje ke besixelela abasebenzi iinjongo zalo mbutho. IbinguMbo noMxesibe kwela bala lezemidlalo likhulu."

Wama ngeenyawo uNomeva, wanqanda uNqentsu engekagqibi ukuthetha, wathi, "Ngoku ujoyine uPoqo? Uyaqonda into yokuba uza kusibambisa ngale nto uyenzayo?"

"Kanye kanye, Nqentsu, mna apha eGoli ndizokwenzani? Oko ndafikayo apha zange ulale nam, kodwa wawuthe mandinyuke kuba ufuna umntwana. Into oyenzayo apha ngoku mna endiyibonayo kukonwaba kwakho qha. Uhla unyuka neetshomi kunye neetshomikazi zakho. Kanti ke mna andidingi nto emandiyenze. Baninzi abafundisi kulaa cawe yam yosindiso ababethe baza kundibeka izandla nditsho ndifumane umntwana. Kaloku wena akuyenzi la nto wawuthe uza kuyenza xa silapha. Into entsha ke ngoku eyenziwa zezi ntokazi zakho, zifika apha qho emini zikubuze apha kum. Emva koko zihlekise ngam ngenxa yokuba ndingazazi ezi lwimi zithethwa apha. Enye izolo ithe mandifunde isiSuthu ndiyeke ukuba ngunolali. Qha khange ndifune ukukuxelela loo nto. Uyandiva phofu, Nqentsu?"

Kuthe kusenjalo kwabonakala isithatha semoto. Kwankqonkqozwa emnyango. Wavula uNomeva. Kwangena iqela lamadoda amhlophe namnyama. Enxibe iimpahla zamapolisa abanye benxibe iimpahla zoonogada bomgodi. Amamelisa uNqentsu i-*tape recorder*. Kwamanyelwa uNqentsu ethetha zonke ezazinto ebezithetha emabaleni ezemidlalo.

Wathi umphathi waloo mapolisa, "Ingaba nguwe lo Nqentsu?"

"Kunjalo, mhlekazi," waphendula uNqentsu.

"Mna ndingumphathi wamapolisa alapha eFreyistata. Sifumene isigunyaziso sokuba sikubambe siyokubeka eKomani, kumda woMzantsi Afrika ne-Republic of Transkei. Wasitsho isikhalo umfazi.

“Mna bendizokufuna abantwana kule ndoda sisanda kufika apha kweli lizwe kwaye asikalali sobabini. Ngoku ndiza kuthini ukuphindela eTranskei ndinjalo? Le ndoda ayikenzi kwanto apha kum.” Ngelo xesha ke amapolisa afaka zonke iimpahla zalapho ezilorini nasezivenini.

“Nkosikazi wena uza kukhwela apha ngaphambili nam. Sajini, valela uNqentsu ebhuthini yemoto. Emva koko zarhuqa iimoto. Zagaleleka kumda ongaphaya kweKomani neCofimvaba. UNqentsu wavalelwa kwisikhululo samapolisa alapho ngezityholo zokwaphula umthetho wokhuseleko loluntu eMzantsi Afrika. Izikhalo zomfazi zange zithathelwe ngqalelo ngaloo mapolisa. Yaba kukumka kukaNqentsu emigodini oko. Yaphela into ebithethwa ngoNqentsu.

II

Uchuku nezigulo

“Iphi ibhrashi yeeteki zam?”

“Yhoooo! Yhoooooooooo! Kowuuuuu! Hayi, mama. Oooh, ndixolele.” Sagqabhuka sisitsho isikhalo somtshakazana osemtsha.

“Yintoni? Thula kaloku, Tshawekazi, ndikuxolele. Kodwa mntan’ am khawutsho kwenzekeni? Kaloku sana lwam ndinebhongo ngawe. Ndiyaqala ngawe lo ukuba nomolokazana,” watsho uninazala ebhidwe yeyokosa.

Wasondela naye utata weli khaya xa ebona ngathi inkosikazi yakhe iyohluleka kukuthuthuzela umolokazana yodwa. “Mfazi, uyafa lo mntu umthuthuzelayo. Masibize i-ambulensi,” watsho engazi ukuba makaqale ngeyiphi.

Waqwalasela umfazi wabona ukuba umolokazana wakhe selebhedulula amehlo kwaye akasashukumi. Wasothula phezulu isikhalo naye loo mfazi. Kwaphuma wonke umntu kwayiwa kule ndlu inesikhalo. Xa wonke umntu ekule ndlu inesikhalo kufumaniseke into yokuba uyaphela lo mtshakazi. Ngethamsanqa unyana walapha omncinci wakwazi ukubaleka ayocela intanga yakhe ukuba ibancede ngemoto base usisi wakhe esibhedlele. Ukusuka kule lali ukuya kwilali enesibhedlele iimoto ezibalekayo zihamba iyure ezintathu zonke. Iyatsala ekhwelise umntu oyoba ngolo hlobo kunye nomama okhalayo kuba lo mama walo mtshakazi uyalwa xa imoto ibalekiswa. Imoto xa ibalekiswa uthi mayicothiswe kuba kuza kufa naye ngoku.

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“He, mfundisi khawutsho, myeni wam, bekusenzeka ntoni apha kwammelwane izolo?” Wabuza uMasabe kumyeni wakhe, uThembikhaya, xa bavukayo ekuseni.

“Utsho ngokuba kutheni, nkosikazi?” Wabuza ebubhideka uThembikhaya.

“Isikhalo awusivanga na wena?”

“Ndisivile, ndisivile. Ndingabe ndiphikene namanxila na mna. Uyayazi kaloku apha e-*next door* kukhalwa qho nokuba akukho nto embi eyenzekileyo.”

“Hayi kodwa mfundisi esayizolo isikhalo, besithe chatha kunezinye izikhalo esiqhele ukuziva phaya.”

“Bakhaliswa nakukunxila aba bantu. Bebenganxilanga? Ndidikwe *finish* ngaba bantu simelene nabo. Ndingxamele ukutshintshwa kwakule sekethe ndiye kwenye apho lingekhoyo eli zothe,” watsho efinge iintshiyi uThembikhaya.

“Soze ikutshintshe ke tana njengokuba sele uyingxamele kangaka nje.”

“Bekukhala bani, nkosikazi?”

“Bathi abantwana ibingumolokazana.”

“Ooh! Lo unomyeni osebenza kula migodi yaseWelkom?”

“Yena kanye.”

“Oyena mntu umnandi ke kula mzi nguye. Andazi mhla athe waphuma inxiwa lakhe koze kube njani na kula mzi,” waqwela ngelitshoyo uThembikhaya. Ngelingeni kuvakala izingqi zomntu osondelayo, kulande ukunkqonkqoza emnyango.

“Mfundisi! mfundisi!” Latsho lizingile ukukhwaza ilizwi emnyango. Waxhabasha ukuyosabela uThembikhaya.

“O! Nguwe mmelwane?” Watsho uThembikhaya engathi ubutyhafa.

“Wethu, nyana, andizukubuza nempilo. Khawundise esibhedlele. Oko umolokazana wam ethe wabalekiselwa khona izolo, asikeva ukuba unjani na. Itsho esimantshiyane izolo kungekho nto ayibikayo kuthi. Ngoku ndithi, mfo wam, makhe ndiyovela. Ndincede mntanam. Siyapeya ngomso imali yenkam-nkam, ndiza kukubona.”

“Yithi ndosule nje, tata. Ndiza kuba nawe kwangoku,” watsho uThembikhaya elaqaza ekhangela ukuba akukho manzi ashushu na ekhitshini. Wafika wakhe wathalalisa ekamereni phambi kokuba azikhumbuze ukuba ungumfundisi ufanelwe kukukhonza abantu. Wagxabhagxabhisa ukosula.

“Masibe yindlela,” watsho uThembikhaya ephuma seyixokozelisa izitshixo zemoto. Baphuma ke belandelwa lolo thulikazi kulo majikojiko asingise kwisibhedlele i-Thafalofefe, kwaCentane.

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IWelkom, enye yeedolophu zaseFreyistata, yenye yeedolophu ongasokuze ubone negqabi lomthi phantsi kuyo, kwaye xa ukuyo uyakwazi ukuyijonga inkomo, iintsuku ezintathu, ihamba ibheka phambili ide iphele emehlweni usayijongile. Ngummandla osityaba kanobom. Apha ke kule dolophu kuyanyakazela ngabantu ngenxa yenyambalala yemigodi yegolide. Kodwa isiXhosa sona sinqabe okwezinyo lenkuku apho. Ukuba usuka eMpuma Koloni, uya kuncedwa kukuthetha ngezandla apho ukuba awusazi isiNgesi. Kukho omnye wemigodi emikhulu apho kuthiwa yi-St. Helena Gold Mine. Inkomponi yakhona ingadibanisa uKwazakhele noZwelitsha. Kukho abamelwana apha baseMpuma Koloni, uNtloko noNtshebe. Omnye wayehlala kwigumbi lama-238 omnye ehlala kwigumbi lama-239. Ngenye imini kungoMgqibelo, abasebenzi bahlamba iimpahla zabo kwiholo elikhulukazi. Xa egqiba ukuhlamba ezakhe iimpahla uNtshebe waya endlwini yakhe. Xa ekhangela itikiti lokutya eza kuya eholweni lokutya kungene uNtloko. Ngoko nangoko athi uNtshebe,

“Awu mfondini ndakushiya e-Change house yintoni ngoku emva kwam?”

“Uxolo, ntanga, khawundicela undiboleke ibhrashi yokuhlamba iiteki.” Okuyinene enjenjalo uNtshebe.

“Ize ilale apha ke le bhrashi, bafo. Ndiyanazi anibuyisi.” Hayi ke bethu aphume uNtloko edloba-dloba.

NgoMvulo ekuseni xa abantu bephangela kuvakale ukuba abantu ababephangele emgodini ebusuku ngeCawe ababuyanga. Ikhetshi ababekhwele kuyo zange ime emgodini wayo, yaya kuntlaleka ezantsi yatyoboka kwafa wonke umntu owayekuyo. Lonke elo 132 labantu ababelapho lafela apho. Ezi khetshi zenziwe ngamazinki elothe akudidi oluphezulu ngokuqina nokomelela, kodwa le yeli qela yawa yaba mcaba ngaloo mini, yatyumza wonke umntu okuyo.

Emva kweentsuku ezimbalwa zivakele ezi ndaba nanko uNtshebe esiya kwammelwane wakhe eyofuna ibhrashi yeeteki zakhe. Xa engena kuloo ndlu wafika wonke umntu ekho.

"Ndiyabona ukuba ninembizo apha. Andifuni kuniphazamisa. Khanixelele uNtloko ukuba andinike ibhrashi yeeteki zam, ndihambe. Andizanga kumamela amatyala enu apha," wenza loo mtyangampo uNtshebe. Waba nokumthomalalisa usibonda wendlu esithi,

"Ntshebe, hayi mntakwethu, ayibi nje xa iza kulunga. Akwenziwa ngolu hlobo wenza ngalo emadodeni." Usibonda wolathisa uNtshebe isitulo esingenamntu, wandula ukuthinta isikhohlela entanyeni waze walandelisa ngamazwi akhapha oko kukhomba esithi:

"Khawuchophe umamele. Ziyakufuna nawe ezi ndaba sidibene ngazo apha." Wambombozela uNtshebe esithi uyalityaziswa. Wacengwa wade wamamela. Wathi usibonda,

"Mfondini, Ntshebe, sithetha ngaye lo mntu uze kuye usibona sidibene apha nje. UNtloko oko wayephangele ishifti yobusuku beCawe egqithileyo. Kuvakala ukuba ebekulaa khetshi ibulele bonke abantu ababephangele ngobaa busuku."

"Ke iphi ibhrashi yeeteki zam?" Wabuza uNtshebe engayinanze nganto le yayithethwa. Waqubula umgqala wamalahle esithi ufuna ibhrashi yeeteki zakhe. Kwathi saa apho kuloo ndlu. Emva kwexesha elide wade wehla umsindo kaNtshebe, wayamkela inkcazelo.

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Ngumfazi kaNtloko lo wagula wade wasiwa esibhedlele iThafalofefe akuba efumene ezo ndaba ngefowuni. Ekhala nje ecela uxolo kumamazala wakhe kungenxa yento yokuba nguye owanyanzela indoda yakhe, uNtloko, ukuba ithathe ijoyini kuba wayehlekwa ngabanye abafazi besithi ngumolokozana otheni lo udlakazelayo. Kangangokuba wathi akuyeka ukukhala wazithetha kakuhle ezi ndaba ekhayeni lakhe, kodwa eqhubeleka ngokucela uxolo kuninazala.

"Mntwana wam, akunatyala. UNtloko bekufanele ukuba aye kwamlungu emveni kokuba ethathe umfazi," watsho uMasabe, "Futhi ke sisithethe salapha kuthi esi sokuba athi umfana xa ephuma esuthwini ayokutshintsha kwamlungu. Ebesenza loo nto ke uNtloko. Besiqala ukuyibona le into yenziwe nguye. Nanko esilandela umtshakazi engekabeki nesenti kweli khaya."

Wabonakala esemoyeni ngoku umama kamfi. "Ngoku ke, Nothembile, uzibhalise ngabani iincwadi zakhe uNtloko?"

"Andazi mama"

“Uyandixokisela ngoku? Umbulele umntwana wam kuba ufuna ela khipha leemali zakhe zaseRhawutini. Zibhaliswe ngam ke, ntombi. Goduka wena akusekho nto yakho apha.”

Emva kwaloo ntlekele yekhetshi ebulele bonke abasebenzi basebusuku kuloo mgodi, iSt. Helena, zange baphinde balale abaphathi baloo mgodi zizikhalo ezivela nkalo zonke, abantu befuna abantu babo ukuba bayokubangcwaba. Yaba nzima ke ukwenzeka kwaloo nto ngokuba abantu ababelapho babecolekile ziintsimbi. Ubusithi xa ufuna umntu wakho, oomabhalana bajonge ubunzima bakhe ezincwadini zenkampani uze ukhelelwe intlama elingana nobo bunzima bomntu wakho. Ngamanye amazwi wawunikwa ingxubevange yabantu ngabantu. Ngelishwa ke loo madoda afa njengamajoni afele emfazweni ngokuba nawo ayekwidabi yokulwa indlala. Athunyelwa amazwi ovelwano yinkampani kubo bonke abazili. Nezicelo zamafa zalungiswa ngempumelelo yinkampani leyo. Kodwa inkampani yona zange ibuthi krwe ubuthongo yimibutho elwela amalungelo abasebenzi.

Emva koko ke inkampani yakhupha abasebenzi bonke ukuba baye kungcwaba loo maxhoba emva kwenkonzo yesikhumbuzo eyayinkulu neyayibanjelwe kwiholo yabantsundu eThabong. Kaloku ngaloo maxesha umntu omnyama wayengenasabelo edolophini nakweyiphi na imeko. La mfo webhrashi yeeteki zakhe zange ayilalise la ndlu. Waphindela emva komngcwabo wayokuthi kwaba bantu babehlala noNtloko ukuba abafuni nto embi mabancede bamnike ibrashi yeeteki zakhe qha. Kwanyanzeleka ke ukuba elo tyala liye kumphathi wehostele.

Singamaqaba sobabini

“Ntang’ am, ndiza kulala ubuthongo obuhlayo namhlanje,” wavakala esitsho uCirha.

“Kusuke kwathini na, ntanga? Wabuza uJola.

“Mfondini ndide ndayithumela la mali kudala ifunwa ngula mfazi wam. Kaloku yena uvele axele izinyo liqaqamba xa efuna imali. Akusoze umxelele ngenyanga engekafi xa efuna imali.”

“Kowu! Banjalo bonke ntang’ am,” atsho uJola esosula umlomo egqithisa isikali sikazagiya, utywala besintu obabuthengiswa ebharini yasemayini, i-*St. Helena No. 2 Shaft*.

“Nyhani ke Cirha uza kuthi kum ukhuthuzile kuba ayikafi inyanga?” Waye wonyuka wenjenjalo nengalo kaJola uCirha.

Wabasa inqawe yakhe uCirha watsala kabini kathathu kwasisisi kwade kwatsarhwa noJola, owade wacaphuka.

“Mfondini, uqhumisela mna ngoku.”

“Uxolo Jola. Bendisathini kanene?”

“Ubusandibalisela ngemali oyithumele kumfazi wakho, ndabuza ukuba uyithathe phi imali ungekarholi nje? Awukandiphenduli.”

“Oo! Hayi maan ndincedwe yila nto kuthiwa yi-*cash* nevasi.”

“I-*cash* nevasi, yintoni leyo mfondini? Wabuza exakiwe uJola engenalo nofifi ngale nge-*cash* nevasi. Wacacisa uCirha ukuba umntu ofuna imali uye aye kwi-*Pay Master* e-*Pay Office* akunike loo mali uyifunayo phambi kokuba ifike imini yokurhola kwakho, aze ke xa urhola ayithathe emrholweni wakho. Ubuqaba asinto onokuze uyombulele umntu. Wayekhohlwe yi-*cash advance* uCirha lo.

Ezinzulwini zobusuku obulandela obo kwavakala i-*loud speaker* ekwakukhwazwa ilizwi kuso lisithi, “Cirha wakuGatyane! Cirha wakuGatyane! Uyafuneka esangweni. Uhanjelwe. Kukho umntu othi ngumkakho osuka kwaGatyane. Yiza nemali akayibhatalanga iteksi abekhwele kuyo.” Wahliphinika uCirha esohlika kwiqonga lesine lebhedi yakhe.

“Ndisomfaka isagweba la mfazi kuba andiyazi into ayizele apha. Akukapheli neeveki ezimbini ndimthumelele imali. Uza kundazi ke lo mfazi namhlanje. Kudala ndiziva ezi zinto bazenzayo nala nyambalala yeetshomi zakhe.” Waphuma enezo ngcinga uCirha ephethe isagweba sakhe. Xa efika esangweni nanko esithi uyagalela emfazini ngesagweba sakhe kwanceda unogada owamthi hlasi ezandleni, waze wohlutha neso sagweba kuye.

“Undenza isidenge? Ufuna ukundenza intlekisa. Akukapheli neveki ezimbini ndikuthumelele imali. Ufuna ntoni apha? Ndiyivile la nto niyenzayo pha neetshomi zakho.” Waxakana nento umfazi kuba wayengakabuzwa nempilo nemvelaphi egityiselwa ngesagweba nje. “Uhamba

usenza izinto zamadikazi. Ulala namadoda ngoku uzokundosulela? Ucinga ukuba andiyazi loo nto leyo? Watarhuzisa imfazi labe limkhohlile.

"Khawundimamele kuqala, tata," watsholozela ezantsi ebuphoxeka umfazi kaCirha.

UCirha wavonya isagweba sakhe wambombozela esithi yena akukho nto aza kuyithetha nehilihili. Lamqobisela ipolisa limthembisa ngokumbizela amapolisa. Wafane waswama. Lakwazi ke elo polisa le nkomponi ukuba ngunozakuzaku kuloo ngxaki. Kwagqitywa kwelokuba unoteksi makabuye kusuku olulandelayo kuba uCirha uza kuboleka imali eposini akube ephume emgodini. Umfazi yena wakhatshwa waya kulala kwindlu engaphandle kwenkomponi eyayenzelwe amandwendwe. UCirha yena wahamba wayokuphumla kuba esazi ukuba uyafuneka emgodini kwintsasa elandelayo kwaye uyavukela.

Uthe uCirha xa ekwigumbi lokuhlamba, kanye xa encokolela uJola ngale nto imehleleyo eve ekhwazwa, "Cirha wakuGatyane nceda ufike esangweni inkosikazi yakho nonoteksi bakhona, bayakufuna."

"Uyayiva ke Jola le nto bendikubalisela ngayo? Nanko futhi lo mfazi ehamba nala noteksi wakhe. Madoda ithiwani into enje?"

"Kowu Cirha! Unethamsanqa, mfondini, kule mbalela inje yasenkomponi uzibone sele ufumana izandyondyo. Ukuba ibindim bendiza kucela amalanga ndimcokise lo mfazi lowo," wazama ukuqhula uJola khona ukuze angxenge umsindo kuCirha.

"Mfondini, ndicaphukile mna njengokuba wena uyenza indlalo nje le nto."

"Suka mfondini, hamba uyohleka nomfazi wakho." Bahleka ke loo nto bohlukana.

Xa efika esangweni uCirha wadanduluka, "Ngunogada, ngunotaxi, hayi inokuba ndiza kutya intshwela mna ngoku?" Kwahlekwe loo nto. Emva koko wathi, "Mfazindini ize ithi kanti ibhadlile le nto uyizeleyo apha kungenjalo ndiza kukufunqula ndikugibisele emgodini ucunyuzwe zeza khetshi zihla zinyuka phaya." Wanqanda unogada.

"Wena nogada ndibona ngathi uze kuwe lo mfazi," watsho uCirha.

"Kanti ke tana bendifuna ukuphalaza ingxaki endizise apha ngoku akhoyo unogada." Ibe nguloo dulubhentsu ke uCirha engafuni kuthethwe kukho unogada lo gama umfazi efuna ukuthetha kukho ingqina kule nto ayizeleyo. Wavonya isagweba sakhe uCirha. Wanqanda kwakhona unogada. Kwanikwa umfazi ithuba lokuba athethe. Wathi xa ehamba unogada umfazi, "Sukuhamba, mhlekazi, ndifuna ingqina kule nto ndiyizeleyo. Kaloku mna noCirha singamaqaba sobabini le nto ndiyizeleyo apha ifuna kubekho umntu onesikolo.

Lo mama wakhupha imvulophu enezitampu zaseposini, waludlisela kunogada esithi, "Ndaye ndafumana le mvulophu xa ndiyiqhaqha ngaphakathi ndafumana iphetshana elingabhalwanga nto. Kwabe kungekho nesenti kule mvulophu. Kowu oko ndingazange ndixhuzule ngaloo mini, soze ndiphinde ndixhuzule." Wawathetha la mazwi emana ukuzosula umlomo. Xa eqwalasela lo mcimbi unogada wafumanisa ukuba le mvulophu ikhangeleka ngathi yoniwa iselapha eGoli phambi kokuba iposwe.

“Cirha,” watsho unogada, “Uqinisekile ukuba wayifaka imali kule mvulophu?” Kwangoko waxela inja iza kuchopha uCirha. Wakhwaza unogada, “Mfondini ndisemsebenzini apha. Phendula”. UCirha wacima inqawe yakhe waphendula ekhefuzela.

“Le mali ndandiyinikele uChris lo waseCumakala ukuba andiposele yona lo gama mna ndandisiya emgodini.” Wapheca izandla lo mama wabhekisa kunogada wathi, “Umyeni wam uyafundelwa iileta ezivela kum. Naxa ebhala ileta kufuneka ehle enyuka efunana nomntu wokumbhalela. Nam ndinjalo ekhaya.” Wagqibezela ngelithi lo mama, “Yatyiwa nguloo Kiris lo mali leyo.” Akugqiba wafaka nje kwaphepha emvulophini.

Kwanyanzeleka ukuba unogada aye nabo eposini ekufutshane apho bafika bagcwalisa amaphepha okukhalazela ukungafumani nto ngaphakathi kwimvulophu leyo. Zaqengqeleka ke iinyanga kulindwe impendulo eyafika isithi imvulophu zange iqhaqhwe eposini koko umposi zange ayifake imali koko wafaka iphetshana sokutsala imali kuphela. Kwacaca okwekati emhlophe ehlungwini ukuba uChris wayitya loo mali leyo akugqiba wafaka nje kwanto ngaphakathi. Ukuba uChris wayenokuvela ngalo mhla wezo ndaba ngekuthethwa into yokuba yena akasaphili ngoku. Xa unogada elanda umkhondo kaChris wafumanisa ukuba wagxothwa kudala kuba weba imali yomNyasa neyomTshangane.

AmaXhosa nabeSuthu bayabulalana emiGodini

"Ndibona ngathi siza kuyivala le mayini," watsho uMnumzana uVan Wyk, ngelo xesha uvele ngefestile embonisa amawaka-waka abantu abamnyama ababegcwalise kwisikhululo seeteksi. Ingulowo etyathe umgodlo wakhe ebalekela ukusindisa ubomi bakhe.

"Hayi *baas,* ngamaXhosa la anenkathazo kule mayini. Nangoku kuvakala ukuba ngawo aqale lo mlo," watsho uMaputo owayeyipikinini ecakela uVan Wyk.

"Asuka athini na amaXhosa, Maputo?" Wabuza uVan Wyk, owayeyi-Senior Manager kuloo mgodi owawubizwa ngokuba yi-*President Styne Gold Mine*.

"*Baas,* iminyaka mine sihlala namaXhosa kungekho zinkathazo. Eli qela lamaXhosa lisuka eTranskei. Nina, *baas,* neza nale ntlekele ngokuthi niqashe eza sisebevu eziqhayisa ngemazinyo anezikhewu ukuba zivane namaXhosa. Elo qela lona liphuma eCiskei. La maMpondo aseTranskei ebezolile, futhi uninzi lwawo ngabantu asebeqinile. ICiskei igqabise ngeedyongwana ezibhampayo ukuhamba oku," watsho elinganisa uMaputo ebonakalisa nokusinyevulela kwakhe esi senzo.

"Icuba labaThwa zilitshaya ngokungathi zilibuza imvelaphi." Kwathi kusenjalo kwangena abelungu abasuka ezi-ofisini eziphezulu.

"Khawusiphe igumbi. Zakuhamba ezi ndwendwe ndakukubiza. Lingandinceda eli bali lakho. Kofuneka ndenze ingxelo ngalo mlo."

"Kulungile, *baas*, ndizolinda wena mna. Ungaxhalabi. Ndilazi lonke eli bali." Wamka uMaputo.

"Madoda, ingathi sofela kule mayini thina sishiyekileyo," watsho uMzalwana.

"Utsho kuba kutheni?" Badanduluka batsho bonke endlwini bebuza.

"Madoda, ngoku ndivela emthandazweni ndidibana neeNtsuthu apha esangweni."

"Zisenzani?" Wabuzwa zizinto ezazisele zitshiseka ziintambo.

"Ndigqithe xa zibulala la mabhalana umhlophe waseTsomo lo kuthiwa, uWhitey".

Bakhuza bonke. "Ndisathetha. Ebesithi xa esithi uyaphakama zimtsho ngeza ntonga zabo zaseLesotho ayohlaba ngentloko phantsi, watsho uMzalwane.

Yanxakama yonke indlu. "Ngoku ke wena, Mzalwane, usinde njani?" Yabuza enye indoda. Wabalisa uMzalwane ukuba yena wancedwa kukuba wayombethe la ngubo yabo kuthiwa sisiSuthu, kwaye eyambethe ngoluya hlobo babeyombatha ngalo. Bambona xa edlula kubo kodwa baye bacinga ukuba ungomnye wabo.

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“*Baas,* ndingangena ndizise into ephungwayo?” Watsho uMaputo eme ngakwi-ofisi kaVan Wyk. Kwathiwa makangene. “Khawugqibezele ela bali lakho, Maputo,” watsho uVan Wyk.

“Into eyenzekayo ezi dyongwana zithi zakugqiba ukutya phaya ekhitshini zime phandle. Xa indoda yoMsuthu iphuma nesitya sayo esinokutya, kuba bona bethanda ukuyotyela ezindlwini zabo, la maXhosa matsha aye athathe inyama kwezo zitya.” Babebethwa abeSuthu bakhutshelwe iimela baze babaleke bashiye nezoo zitya zabo zinokutya okwakuye kutyiwe zezo ntwana. Wajika wabomvu uVan Wyk. Waba manzi ubuso ngumbilo. Itshefu yakhe yasuka yammanzisa ngakumbi.

Yaqhubeleka imiqodi yabagoduki. Amapolisa nonoogada bemayini bathi gqolo ukuzama ukuphelisa izidubedube aho emayini. Xa esenza ingxelo kwikomiti eyayijongene nalo ntlekele uVan Wyk wayithetha injalo ingxelo awayeyifumene kwipikinini yakhe, uMaputo. Yothusa umntu wonke. I-ambulensi yayisele iza kutshothoza ngoku kuba lalingapheli inani labantu ababebalekiselwa ezibhedlele.

Emveni kokuba zivakele ezo ndaba zenyama eyayihluthwa kwanyanzeleka ukuba uVan Wyk adibanise bonke abantu ababeshiyekile kulo mayini, kunye nabanye abaphathi. Kwakufuneka kuziwe necebo lokuphelisa oko kungavisisani. Kodwa kwakusithi kusajongwe eso simemo sikaVan Wyk kuvakale ukuba ziphinde zanqoza kwelinye icala lenkomponi. Ngoku wonke umntu enkomponi wayehamba exhobile. Wawusithi wakuva ukuba lo mntu udibana naye akasazi isiXhosa ugibisele umkhonto wakho qha. Nawe ukhe wadibana nabo ze ungasazi isiSuthu wawufela kuloo ndawo. Amalinge kaVan Wyk okuphelisa loo mlo awa phantsi.

Kwavakala ukuba loo mfazwe yade yaphuma enkomponi yaya ngaphandle kwilokishana yemayini ekwakusithiwa siSkomplaas. Ngolo hlobo laye lisenyuka inani labantu abafayo. Imibutho yabasebenzi neyezopolitiko yatsho yancama. Kwakufa abantu usuku nosuku. Kuthe xa kufe abantu abangamashumi mahlanu anesine uVan Wyk wabhengeza ukuba wonke umntu agoduke kuba uyayivala imayini kude kubonakale ukuba imeko ibuyela esiqhelweni.

Wonke ke umntu wagoduswa. Kwashiyeka abantu ekwakusithiwa ngabeenkonzo ezibaluleke kunene: abantu abanjengoonogada kunye nabasebenza esibhedlele, nabantu ababekhupha amanzi emigodini.

Themba ilitye kunomntu

"Madoda! madoda! madoda! Thina mamela zonke. Kusasa kalo 10 o'clock zonke lo muntu kalo miayini yena funeka lapha kalo makhulu hall. Yena khona lo makhulu party. Lapha mgodi lo Section 54 lo kalo Mafutha yena tholile makhulu production futhi. Manje lo makhulu maneja kalo mayini nalomunye lo yena phuma lapha *head office* yena buya zonke. Manje thina cela zonke lo madoda phambili yena hamba lapha kalo mandawo ka yena thina yizwa kanjani lo makhulu madoda yena khuluma. Mina bonga," yatsho induna yemayini ibhekisa kumadoda ayethe nqwadalala phambi kwayo.

"Kowu! Iyawayintoni ngoku, qho xa ililanga le *off* kufuneka siye kwezi ntlanganiso zomgodi zingapheliyo. Mna ndifuneka elokishini kungoku nje," Watsho uZagungqa egoqoza kula ndawo ihlala izitya zabo, elungiselela ukuya kwisidlo sasebusuku. "Unomona kaloku wena, Zagungqa. Umphathi uza kuncoma umntakwethu kuba kudala eyiphakamisa le mayini ngemveliso ephakamileyo. Iza kuba zezo ntetho nje emva koko sitye inyama sisele notywala mahala," Watsho uMlu esebumnyameni kwibhedi yakhe ekwiqonga lesibini ukusuka emgangathweni ophezulu. Wawubona ngelahle lezoli ukuba kukho umntu kula ndawo wayethetha ekuyo. Kaloku ngoko wawungekabikho lo mthetho ukhoyo ngoku wokuba awunakutshaya kwindawo enabantu. Ngoko kwakuba ngathi kuqhunyiselwa iinyosi enkomponi xa abasebenzi bekho bonke ingakumbi kubusuku obandulela iimpela-veki yokuphumla.

"Madoda kukho ntoni namhlanje apha eholweni? Kwabuza umqhubi weteksi. Bamphendula abakhweli bemcacisela ngento eyenzekayo.

"Ndiyatsho *moss* kuba ndibona abantu bengezi apha eziteksini. Ingathi asilolanga le *off*. Kowu ziza kugcwala kade iiteksi zethu namhlanje."

"Emva kwala mgidi bawenzayo phaya abantu bazofuna ukuya edolophini naselokishini. Siza kude sixakeke; qha thina masilinde, madoda. Ayikho enye indlela abanokuhamba ngayo abantu benkomponi xa besiya edolopnini nase lokishini," watsho unoteksi. Abanye abakhweli babephuma eteksini kuba bebona ukuba ayide ihambe. Nabo betsalwa livumba lenyama eyojiweyo. Baya kula ndawo inenyama.

Enye iteksi yade yagcwala yahamba. Xa besohlika edolophini uTshawe waya ebharini. Xa efika ebharini wafika kukho uTefo, uMlefe, uZocks noHigh Speed, abasebenzi belaa candelo lalinepotsoyi. "Imihlola ayipheli. Ningalapha, madoda, i*section* yenu inetheko elikhulu? Kwenzeka ntoni madoda?"

"La genge ingamaXhosa ayisifuni kaloku thina kuba singabeSuthu. Ithi singamavila. Sive ukuba zithe singakhe silinge silubeke unyawo phaya. Zizo kuphela eziza kuthetha nabelungu thina akukho nto siyaziyo singamaqaba aseLesotho. Asikhange sixelelwe nangayo la potsoyi," watsho uMlefe.

“Mna ndiyazazi eza ntwana kaloku zisuka kunye eNgqamakhwe azimazi umntu omdala. Zigeziswa ngala manqindi ziwadlalayo kule mayini. Kodwa ziza kusazi ngenye imini,” watsho uHigh Speed.

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“Khanithulisane, mawethu. Ugqibile ukuthetha umlungu omkhulu walapha ekhaya. Ngoku ke emva kwezi mvumi zigqiba kuphuma apha kuza kuthetha isithethi sosuku. Lowo ke ngumlungu osuka e-*Head Office*. Emva kwakhe kuza kuthetha umsebezi wale *section* engusingaye. Emva koko ke sodeka itafile.” Kutsho umphathi-nkqubo nongumabhalana wemayini omkhulu.

“Halala! halala! Vityi! Vityi! Wele! Wele!” Kwabanzima ukuba awuvule umlomo umfo omhlophe, owayerhashalala apha ebusweni, elishiye kanobom igade, engumalambedlile, efake I-*safari suit* emnyama, efake inqawe kwenye ikawusi, efake inxili yecuba kwenye ikawusi. Amabhovu akhe ewaphothile waze wawaqabelisa phezu kwempumlo, kuba impumlo yakhe yayinesigingqi apha ngasemva. Iiglasi zakhe zamehlo wawunokucinga ukuba yila nto ijonga izinto ezikude. Wathetha ngesiNgesi esithi, “Manene nani manenekazi, ndiyanibukela ngokundamkela kwenu. Ndingathanda ukubulela ngakumbi uMafutha ongoyena usuka kule *section,* nesize kumwonga ngegalelo lakhe kule nkampani. Siqine ngaye siyile nkampani. Wokuwongwa ngokonyuselwa umrholo wakhe.” Akugqiba ukuthetha wagxidika kwiqonga lezithethi. Kwavakala isandi sokukhuhlana kwamadolo akhe esiya kuthi vovololo ngakwezinye iindwalutho. Xa engathethi wayewuvala mba owakhe umlomo.

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“Madoda indoda engafuni kusebenza mayithathe ibhatyi yayo ihambe kule *section* yam. Mna andimcengi umalayisha. Umalayisha kum uyafana nje nenja, yona ileqa inyamakazi emva koko igityiselwe ngamathambo. Khona ngoku u*baas* wam omkhulu uthe imali yam iza kuphinda inyuswe lingekafiki ela xesha lokunyuswa kweemali zomntu wonke. Ezi ngqeqe ndizisebenzisayo emgodini umlungu akathethanga nto tu ngazo. Qha uthe mandiqhubeleke ngomsebenzi wam omhle. Ndiza kuqhubeleka ke ndibakhama phaya emgodini. Ndiyaphinda nangoku umalayisha yinja apha kum,” watsho uMafutha.

Emgodini ke abasebenzi babevukela kakhulu. Abelungu babo babeqala ukuhla ngentsimbi yesibhozo ekuseni. Kweli candelo likaMafutha kuvukwa kuyiwe enkomeni kwangentsimbi yesine ekuseni. Bathetha ngendlela abaza kusebenza ngayo. UHigh Speed wenza uhlolo lwasekuseni kwindawo ekwakuza kusetyenzwa kuyo, ekhangela amatye ajingayo anokuthi awele abantu xa beqala ukusebenza. Wafumanisa ukuba indawo abaza kusebenza kuyo ayinazimpawu zangozi kwaye bangaqala ukusebenza. Bathi bengekaqalisi ukusebenza wathi omnye umsebenzi.

“UMafutha uyasibulala, madoda. Masenze into ngaye. Uthukisa ngathi. Nakwela theko ndiva kusithiwa uthe sizizinja.”

Ngomothuko omkhulu wathi uTefo, “Ukubulala okunjani? Sigwayimbe?

“Makanqunyulwe umqala ngoku,” watsho uZocks.

"Kofuneka senze ngathi ibiyingozi. Sombamba simbophelele ngentambo simbeke apha esiporweni sikamakalanyana, simtyumze ngomakalanyana," watsho uMlefe. Bonke nabanye bavumela.

Yaba ngathi uyivile le nto uMafutha wathi gqi ngentsimbi yesithandathu endaweni yecala emva kwentsimbi yesibhozo. Akubabona behleli bengasebenzi wothuka, wathi, "Nithe nywexe kodwa kunyekenyeke apha. Khona niza kusebenza njani kwindawo enje. Rha! Umalayisha yinja. Bendakumnqanda xa enokunyusa imali yezinto ezinjengani kanje. Amavila, amanxila. Ninuka utywala nonke khona ngoku. Ezi zinto! Ndinganivuthelisa ndithanda, uphele nalo msetyenzana wenu. Niphinde nizokukhalela apha kum ezi zinto."

Uthe esathetha enjalo bamthi nqaku. Bamvala umlomo, bambhijela ngentambo. Wakhabalaza yaba nguloo mbhodamo. Yayingavakali nento ayithethayo. Bamngqengqisa esiporweni sikamakalanyana. Emva koko baqhuba umakalanyana wahamba phezu kwakhe wakroboza wonke lo mzimba ungezantsi. Emva koko xa sele beqonda ukuba uyafa, bakhupha la nto babemfake yona emlonyeni, baze bakhulula nala ntambo babembophe ngayo. Emva koko bemka apho esitishini bayokusebenza phakathi. Xa befika apho bazincoma baze baqhubeleka nomsebenzi wesiqhelo.

Ngelo xesha ke ikhetshi iyaqhubeleka ukuthoba abasebenzi besiya kwizitishi ngezitishi abasebenza kuzo. Xa ifika kwisitishi esisezantsi kwesi sentlekele, abasebenzi babona igazi elivela ngasentla lichiphiza. Ngokukhawuleza benyukela ngasentla. Xa befika apho bambona uMafutha edada egazini. Kodwa intsontelo ababembophe ngayo ikhululwe. Umakalanyana yena wayesephezu kwakhe. Bafowunela ngoko nangoko umntu ojongene nokhuseleko lwabasenzi. Wehla noogqirha nabongikazi ukuya kweso sitishi sentlekele. Ngethamsanqa oogqirha bathi akakafi koko ukwikhoma. Wathathwa wasiwa esibhedlele esikhulu kunezinye.

Wade waphila uMafutha kodwa waba yinto engenakho ukuzenzela nto. Wayenxityiswa, etyiswa. Waxoxa ityala. Abamangalelwa bafunyaniswa bengenatyala ngenxa yobungqina bukaMafutha obabungavakali. Ukusuka apho imayini yathi wayengafanelanga ukuba uMafutha asebenze la msebenzi, kuba la msebenzi wamlimzayo. Waba ke njalo uMafutha akasenakho ukuqhubela phambili ngokusebenza waze wanikwa iimali zakhe zomhlala-phantsi wagoduswa.

Kwaye uMafutha kwavakala ukuba ukuphila akukuhlanga kuye ezilalini. Kaloku ngoku waba yinto engasafunwayo nangalaa mantombazana ayembhubhuzelela xa efika emakhaya. I-*wheel chair* yakhe yayimsokolisa, isonakala yila meko yasezilalini. Nentsapho yakhe yayidiniwe nguye, kuba wayefuna ukuba kusoloko kujongwe yena. Nomfazi wakhe wayemana emthuka esithi akanandoda, kwaye uza kuhamba yena zange agxothwe kowabo. Umfazi wayesithi yena akanakuhlala yena phaya usemncinci kakhulu kwaye ufuna ukwalekelisa. Nabantwana bakhe babesithi baza kukhe baphumle ekuthukweni. Kangangokuba omnye wemka wathi yena uphindela emzini wakhe. Nabantu belali babesithi, "Uyamazi omnye umntu yena kudala ethuka abantu belali esithi ngamaqaba kwaye ngamavila?"

Isibhedlele sasemayini

Umkhaya wam uDabane uzibamba ngeenkophe iinyembezi xa ebalisa ngemeko yokuba ngumguli kwisibhedlele semayini. UDabane wazalelwa kwilali yakwaNxokwana kwisithili sakuCentane. Njengoko wayengazange aye esikolweni, kwanyanzeleka ukuba asebenze emigodini bonke ubomi bakhe. Ukhule eyinkwenkwe eqinileyo. Wayemde. Wakhula esolusa kwaye elima namasimi akowabo. Ukhule engayazi indlu kagqirha le kunyangelwa kuyo abaguli. Akukho nanye intombi eyayisithi, “hayi” kuye xa ethe uyayithanda. Ndiyabona ayetsalwa ngumhlantla wakhe, kunye nebala lakhe.

Ngaloo maxesha ke yayifana nesiko into yokuba ithi inkwenkwe xa igqiba kuphuma ebakhwetheni, ityathe imigodlwana yayo iye eGoli. Kaloku kwakuza kufuneka iqale elayo Ikamva. Wenza njalo ke naye uDabane. Uthe kanye xa ecinga ngokuyiqongqotha iminyaka yakhe yokuya kwaTEBA, wagula. Ekuguleni kwakhe uye walaliswa kwisibhedlele esasilalisa wonke umntu owayesebenza emayini ngaloo maxesha. Kwakusithiwa yi-Ernest Oppenheimer Mine Hospital eWelkom.

Xa usiya kuye uyokumbona wayengayazi eyona nto wayegula yiyo. Wayesithi ubuhlungu umzimba wakhe wonke. Kwakunzima nokuba makangqengqe. Kwakunzima nokuba makeme ngeenyawo. Kwakunzima nokuba makavule umlomo. Wawusithi xa uthetha naye athi, “Hamba uyandithunuka apha ezindlebeni.” Neenyembezi zakhe wayesithi ziphuma kabuhlungu. Kwakunzima nokuba mawumbambe ngesandla, kuba wayesithi uyamthunuka. Kwakunyanzeleka ukuba yonke imihla xa ndiphuma emsebenzini ndiye kumbona. Wayendibalisela ukuba bonke abantu abelaliswe nabo baye babhubha bonke kushiyeke yena. Uthi naye wayesoloko ephupha kakubi. Wayesithi qho uphupha emi kwisikhululo esiya ezulwini. Wayesithi ela gumbi wayelaliswe kulo yayilelabantu ekwakusaziwa ukuba abazukuphila. Wayesele eza kugqiba unyaka elapho kwelo gumbi kodwa wayesithi wonke umntu owayesisiwa apho wayengavuki. Kangangokuba abongikazi babesele bebuza kuye inani labantu abaswelekayo. Wayesithi ke naye wagqiba ekubeni abe nencwadana yokubhala bonke abantu abaswelekayo. Ukwenzela into yokuba abongikazi xa bembuza ekuseni abanike ingxelo echanekileyo.

Eyona nto eyayimphatha kabuhlungu uDabane kukuba wayetsalwa igazi qho kukhangelwa ukuba akanaso na isigulo seswekile. Iminwe le yakhe yonke yayigcwele imingxunya yeenaliti. Kodwa naloo swekile yayingabonwa. Kukho enye indoda eyayikhangeleka ngathi ayiguli ilele ecaleni kwebhedi kaDabane. Ndambuza ngenye imini ukuba uphi na la mfo ndandidla ngokufika encokola kunye. Wathi uDabane lo mfo waye wathathwa ngempazamo ngabongikazi bamsa kwigumbi loqhaqho apho wafika wanqunyulwa imilenze. Wathi xa evuka zibuyile iingqondo zakhe wabuza kubongikazi ukuba iphi na imilenze yakhe. Kwathiwa inqunyulwe. Wababuza isizathu. Xa kujongwa kwiincwadi zezigulana kwafunyanwa eyakhe ngakwenye ibhedi, le ibiphezu kwebhedi yakhe yayingeyoyakhe. Wayesithi uDabane izizalwane zalo mfo zazihamba phaya zikhala yonke le mihla xa zimbona engenamilenze. Umfazi walo mfo, abantwana bakhe abahlanu, abazukulwana bakhe abathathu,

abantwakwabo, oosisi bakhe, abatshana bakhe—zonke izizalwana zakhe zazigxwala kula bhedi yakhe yonke le mihla. Nam ndandisendidiniwe kukuya kweso sibhedlele kodwa uDabane wayengumakhelwane emakhaya. Ndandinyanzelekile ukuba ndiye kuye qho khona ukuze ndikwazi ukuyiphendula iintsapho yakhe xa indibuza ngaye.

Ngamanye amaxesha xa ndiyokubona uDabane ndandikhe ndiwangene onke loo magumbi eso sibhedlele. Yiya kwigumbi labantu abagula nge-TB. Babelala kwindawo enye nabantu ababegula ngugawulayo. Ndabona ngoko ukuba ezo zigulana azohlukanga tu. Xa ujonge iibhedi zazo wawubona ngeencwadi zezigulo ukuba kukho abantu. Mna ndancedwa kukubuza kubongikazi ukuba ziincwadi ezitheni ezi zijinga zodwa ezibhedini. Umongikazi waye wandijikelezisa kuzo zonke ezo bhedi ezityhila. Ndothuka ndaphantse ndaxhuzula ndakufumanisa ukuba kukho abantu kuzo zonke ezo bhedi. Ezo ke izigulana zingamatywantsi zonke. Kwakunzima nokushukumisa amalungu omzimba. Ukuba uhlabe ngentloko uya kuncedwa kukufika kukamongikazi ukuze akhululeke. Ngamanye amaxesha apha ngasemva ubone ukuba lomntu ebefuna ukuya endlwini encinci kodwa ohluleke xa ebezama ukuvuka.

Kwade kwacaca ukuba uDabane ukuba uguliswa ziikhemikhali zendalo zomgodi. Waye wabona inyama yakhe sele imane iliqika. Xa ekhulula iimpahla zokulala zesibhedlele, zaziphuma nenyama yakhe. Wayekhala qho xa ekhululwa naxa enxityiswa. Nam ndandifika ibhedi yakhe imanzi tixi ngamanzi negazi. Ndandisithi ndisangena emnyango kube ngathi kuhlinzwa isilo. Bonke ke abanye abantu awayelele nabo babengathethi bengashukumi kwaye uninzi lwabo lwalulala ubuthongo banaphakade. Abongikazi abangena ekuseni babemangaliswa xa befika uDabane esaphila.

Abongikazi babesithi uDabane uthetha ubusuku bonke. Wayesithi kukho oomama ababini ababemane bemfikela besithi bamlindele pha phandle. Babesithi uyabazi. Kwaye bonke bazizizalwane zakhe. Wayesithi omnye ngumama omkhulu wakhe. Kodwa abanye ababini bayazifihla xa beze kuye emaphupheni ebusuku. Wayesithi uDabane omnye umama ufuna uDabane ezingubeni. Yiyo loo nto uDabane wayemane ekhala ngobusuku. Xa kunjalo ke uDabane wayekhala kude kuze abongikazi kodwa bona bangaboni nto. UDabane waye watshintshelwa kwisibhedlele esikhulu eBloemfontein. Nalapho kwaye kwanyanzeleka ukuba ndimane ndisiya. Kodwa ngenye imini ndafika kusithiwa zange avuke. Isibhedlele sasemayini sinabaguli abagula zizinto ezinqabileyo ezenziwa yimeko yangaphantsi komhlaba.

Thembeka xa ufuna into

Kumgodi i*Bambanani Gold Mine Pty Ltd* eWelkom, kupapashwa isithuba somsebenzi. Kufunwa umntu omnye owayeza kusebenza ebusuku. Lo msebenzi ngomnye walaa misebenzi yayiyeyabantu abamhlophe kuphela. Ukhetho lomntu nalo luza kwenzeka ebusuku. Abantu babephethe izixhobo zokubhala ngokuba kwakuthiwe baza kuvavanywa kuqala. Lo mgodi ke wawunabantu abangama-20 000. Xa kwakubalwa abantu ababekwelo holo kwaye kwafunyaniswa ukuba babeli-1 600. Ngaphandle kwelo holo kwakugcwele amagqirha namagubu neentelezi. AmaZiyoni nawo ngawawo amagubu namanzi ababesithi athandazelwe. NamaZCC nawo ayekho apho. Ingelogazi kuhlinzwa abantu ngeencakuba ezade zababuthuntu. Abanye besopha iintungo, kuba babegqojozwa ngeentsiba zeenciniba. Emva kwelo holo yayizizantyalantyala zamanzi nemigabho. Abantu babesithi bakhupha amashwa. Ngentsimbi yesithoba ebusuku lwavalwa ucango lweholo. Kwathiwa abangakwazanga ukungena mabajike. Lahamba ixesha umaneja engafiki.

Ngexesha localucalulo emZantsi Africa kwakukho umthetho ekwakusithiwa yi-Job Reservation Act. Wawusithi lo umsebenzi ngowomntu omnyama kuphela lo ngowomntu omhlophe kuphela njalo-njalo. Kuthe xa lo mbutho uphetheyo ngoku uphumelela iivoti ngo1994, wayiphelisa yonke imithetho yocalulo eyayifana nalowo. Yaba njalo yonke imisebenzi ivulelwa abantu bonke. Lo msebenzi ke sithetha ngawo namhlanje yenye yalo misebenzi eyayibekelwe abelungu kuphela.

“Mfazi, khawundinike la bhiya yokugqibela. Kaloku ndiya koluya dliwano-ndlebe lomsebenzi ngoku,” watsho Maritz kumfazi wakhe. Wayinikwa. Wamana ukurhabula kuyo.

“Olaa vavanyo bendithetha ngalo kukungalali. Ukuba ndifike kukho abaleleyo, abo basilele *klaar* ndibakhuphela phandle. Unobungozi la msebenzi, nkosikazi, yiyo le nto wawusenziwa ngabelungu bodwa kudala. Nangoku kuthiwa maze ndithathe umntu omnyama onesidanga noxa nje thina belungu besiwenza ngebanga lesithandathu. Kaloku nkosikazi le genge imnyama ayikaqondakali kakuhle. Nangoku kuthiwe zendithathe umntu omnyama onebanga leshumi.”

Wafinca ibhiya yakhe uMaritz, wabulisa kumkakhe, waze wabekeka endleleni. Xa efika emayini uMaritz wafika kuphithizela: kungamagqirha, amaZiyoni, amaZCC, amaxhwele, nazo nezangoma. Uthe esajonge leyo satsho isikhalo. Abantu ababevalelwe ngaphandle ngenxa yokugcwala kweholo babebuya. “Rha! Yini le siyangena nathi. Ukuba asingeni, nani niyaphuma apha kweli holo. Akukho mntu uzakuvavanywa namhlanje.” Yaba koko kuxambulisana. Zagityiselwa ngamatye zophuka zonke ezo festile zelo holo. Yachithakala kwaloo ndlela iqoqoshekileyo babehleli ngayo. Omnye umfo ogama linguMaseru waya ebhabha kuMaritz wathi, *“Baas*, hamba ngoku, aba bantu bathi baza kukubulala kuba ukungafiki kwakho ngexesha kuko oku kwenze lo mbhodamo.” Wabulela kakhulu uMaritz.

Waxelela amapolisa emayini ukuba axelele abantu ukuba lo msebenzi wokuqasha uza kuba ngokuhlwa kwangoMgqibelo. Emva koko ke umntwana womlungu waphindela ezitotini

zakhe. Amapolisa akhupha wonke umntu athi kuthiwe babuye kubusuku obulandelayo. Kodwa awuzange ube lula loo msebenzi. Abanye babesithi abazukuhamba apho kude kube nguMgqibelo. Kwaye kwavakala ukuba bonke abo bantu zange bahambe kwezo ndawo babefole kuzo. Ngamanye amazwi oko babelapho ngokuhlwa kwangoLwesihlanu.

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Endleleni ephindela emayini ngengomso lagqabhuka ivili lemoto kaMaritz. Xa esiya ngasemva wafumanisa ukuba akanalo elinye ivili. Kwanyanzeleka ukuba ame apho emane emisa iimoto ezazidlula ngendlela. Iimoto ezazidlula apho yayizezabantu ababetshayisa emayini besiya elokishini. Kwakungekho nomnye owakwaziyo ukumnceda ngokumboleka ivili. Waqonda ngoko nangoko uMaritz ukuba kweli tyeli uya kubulawa ngezandla ngabanutu ukuba akanakuya. Waye wayitshixa imoto yakhe wahamba ngeenyawo. Apha endleleni wayemane edibana namagqiza ngamagqiza abantu ababephuma ezirhoxweni. Abanye babemana bemlingisa ngeentonga. Abanye babemane besithi umlungu ufuna ntoni apho ngelo xesha. Abanye babenqandwa bemfikile ngezagweba. Babesithi, "Betha ezi zinto zohlutha umhlaba wethu. Khona uya phi lo ngeli xesha? Bulala umlungu." Kodwa bade banqandana.

Ude wafika kwiholo awayesiya kulo uMaritz. Ngokuya esondela wazixelela ukuba uza kulala kwelo holo kuba kuthe cwaka. Xa engena kwelo holo ngentsimbi yesibini ekuseni wafika bonke abo bantu babekwelo holo belele. Yayingumntu omnye kuphela owayehleli. Xa embiza loo mntu mnye, wafumanisa ukuba nguMaseru lowa wayemncedile ngezolo.

"Wahlala ngeli xesha. Kutheni, awunabuthongo?" Wathi uMaritz. Wacacisa uMaseru ukuba unengxaki yokuphuthelwa.

"Masendithatha wena kulo msebenzi. Lo msebenzi ufuna umntu ongalaliyo." Waxelelwa ke uMaseru ukuba ngoMvulo avukele kwi-ofisi yeenjineli. Bonke abo babelele wathi uMaritz bohlulakele kuba ukuvavanywa kwabo ebusuku kwakufunwa ukubonwa ukuba ngabaphi na abohlulwayo bubuthongo. Xa ephindela kwakhe elokishini uMaseru, wathatha uMaritz wamsa kwakhe kuqala. Ukuthembeka kwakhe uMaseru, ngokuthi alinde ubusuku bonke noxa nje abanye abantu babelele, kwamsebenzela.

III

Intlupheko namabhongo

UNontlungu

"Kowu! Lixelegu kanene lo mntwana weli khaya. Ingathi akekho kwixabiso lokufikisa. Ndide ndibuye eklinikhi izitya zaphezolo zisenkone. Ndavuya ke ubona nje xa ndandisendela ekh' apha kukho umntwana osel'ekho. Ndandisithi ndatsho ndaphumla." UNongxolo wazithetha ezi zinto ejikeleza izindlu zonke. Xa efika kwindlu elala uNontlungu wafika wathi chatha ukukhala xa ebona uNontlungu ekobentlombe.

"Tyhini, Mazangwa! Ndiyaphupha okanye ndiyaphambana? Nontlungu vuka! Yintoni?" UNontlungu uye azisonge phantsi kweengubo.

"Andiphilanga, mama. Oko undithuthisa amanzi izolo, usithi andizufumana kutya ndingalizalisanga itanki. Ndohlulakele ukuyigcwalisa ke. Andikatyi. Bendikenakuya esikolweni isisu sisemqolo." Wakhwina uNontlungu ngelizwi elingcangcazelayo. UNontlungu wazitsala ezo ngubo zayokutsho phantsi.

"Silingondini somntwana. Vuka! Vilakazindini. Into eyasoloko izililisa, izigulisa. Menemene. Uyihlo sisimathumathu nje endasicholayo; into esoloko ingenamali, eyasoloko ibuya isithi abelungu abayibhatalanga. Andazi ukuba ngendiyini na ukuba ndandingazange ndifumane iimali zomyeni wam wokuqala owacinezelwa ngamatye omgodi," watsho uNongxolo ezigibisela phandle nezo ngubo.

"Khona ulala njani ngeengubo ezinje. Ingathi kusengelwa kuzo amathumbu. Zange ndiyibone into enje. Abantu bafuzane ngolu hlobo. Ndenza le nto nakuyihlo. Ulixelegu, ulivila kanye oku kwakho. Ukuba anitshintshi, mna ndiza kukhangela amanye amadoda. Soze kaloku mna ndibe ngumgqomo wenkunkuma yenu. Umfazi uwazele amadoda apha phandle. Kwaye kweli ityeli, ndiza kuzikhangelela indoda enemali. Soze ndiphinde ndiyenze le mpazamo ndiyenze ekh' apha. Zange ndimqonde uyihlo ukuba akanamali ngolu hlobo. Wofika egxanya kwezi zitalato zale Dutywa xa esiza apha eNgxakaxha." Kuthe kusenjalo wasuka wagabha uNontlungu. Yankone indlu. Wasitsho isikhalo. Wathi unina:

"Akwaba akumithanga. Phuma! Yiza nobulongwe uzokusinda apha endlwini." UNontlungu wathu akunjalo.

Waxokozela uNongxolo esithi kuNontlungu makaze nobulongo asinde kula ndawo ahlanzele kuyo.

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"Nkqonkqo!" Latsho ilizwi emnyango. Watsho engena ngaphakathi utata wekhaya, uNdivile, akuva ukukhwaza kukaNongxolo. Kwakungorhatya. Wafika kusaxanjuliswana ngaphakathi. Akazange akuve nokufika kwendoda yakhe uNongxolo.

“Khawenze le nto ndithi yenze mntwanandini. Uyihlo naye andiyazi into ayihleleleyo emsebenzini, udla ngokuba sele ekho ngeli xesha. Kungenzeka ukuba ufumene inkazana enemali.” Watsiba ngelo thuba uNdivile, wangenelela naye kuloo mpikiswano.

“Nongxolo! Nenzani na kanye kule ndlu?” Watsho uNdivile ilizwi lakhe nezingqi zakhe zithe chu ngokufanayo. Ngeli xesha azinyakathisayo kolo dushe, uphakamisa umsimbithi wakhe. Asondele aye eziko, angene phakathi koNongxolo nentombi yakhe.

“Bethuna khanindifake nam kule gigi yenu, nam ndiyawufuna umdaniso. Ndandikhe ndayintyulubi. Uxolo ngokuniphazamisa,” watsho uNdivile, etsho ngezihlangu ezichophileyo, ebonakala erhatyele ebusweni.

“Wena thula! Hamba uye ebhedini, ndiyeza kuwe,” watsho eyityhilizela ecaleni indoda, wabe nomntwanwa wendoda engayekanga ukufixiza entla. Yathi indoda, ngelo lizwi likhulu:

“Mfazi, khawuyeke umntwana kusebusuku ngoku. Masilale.” Yatsho indoda ibonakala ngathi ayiwuqondi umonzakalo owenzekayo kuNontlungu, intombi yakhe. Wathi uNontlungu:

“Tata, ndikusuku lwesibini ndingasatyi. Izolo umama uthe mandithuthe amanzi emlanjeni, ndigcwalise itanki. Wathi ukuba andiyenzanga loo nto andizukutya. Ndohlulakele ukugcwalisa itanki ngamanzi waze wathi umama andizukuva nto ityiwayo. Ndilele ndilambile izolo. Namhlanje umama uthe mandisinde kule ndlu andikwazanga ngenxa yokulamba. Ndiphelelwa ngamandla. Ukuba ayipheli le ngxabano yam nalo mfazi wakho, ndiza kufela apha. Okanye ukuba awuthathi manyathelo, mna ndiza kunishiya ndiye kuhlala ezitalatweni. Ndivile ukuba abanye abantwana abaphatheke kakubi njengam, bazophula kule mbiza ibilayo ndikuyo ngokuya ezitalatweni.” Wangcotsha ngakumbi utata xa esiva ezo ndaba. Waphinda wavonyavonya la msimbithi wakhe. Wawuphakamisa emane ebetha ngawo esithubeni ngokungathi ubetha umntu olwayo.

“Nina nobabini ingathi ningabantu aba balekelanayo. Yonke le mihla ndixoxa amatyala enu. Ndifuna ke ngoku nindimamele nobabini. “Nkosikazi, phakela lo mntwana atye phambi kokuba alale. Uyandiva?” Avume umfazi, aphakele wonke umntu.

“Tata, nasi isidlo sakho sasebusuku. Ndizamile ukuba utye kamnandi namhlanje kuba usebenza nzima, usebenza wedwa, usebenzela mna nela vila lakho, uNontlungu. Kodwa ungumyeni omhle. Apha ekuphileni kwam, ndikhe ndaba neqela lamadoda kodwa hayi ndincamile ayikho efana nawe. Xa ndinawe ndiba ngathi ndisezulwini,” watsho uNongxolo ephulula ezo ndevana zendoda yakhe ewayimana eyiphuza. Nayo ke yanxiba olukaBhlankethi. Nantso ikhupha inqawe yayo, impakuza. Yathi:

“Oko ndathi ndalala nawe, Nana, zange ndaphinda ndalala nomnye umntu. Indlela abandifuna ngayo phaya emsebenzini ayithetheki. Ndibathuka bathi saa. Ndithi kubo nina niyalibala ukuba ndiyonela nguNongxolo wam.” Elo xesha uyamphulula emilenzeni. Emva koko kulelwe ngumntu wonke. Ngentsasa elandelayo uNdivile wavuka waphangela. UNongxolo waya kuvusa uNontlungu kula ndlu alala kuyo kodwa wafika egqiba kuhlamba elungiselela ukuya esikolweni. Wambetha kakhulu ngebhanti esithi:

“Xokindini. Ungathini ukuxoka kangaka ngam kuyihlo? Uthini ke ngoku kuba ndim nawe qha. Kwaye ndiza kukubulala fi namhlanje. Soze ndihlale ubomi bentshontsho mna kwam ngenxa yakho ntondini. Awunambulelo. Uyafana nenja le ethi ngoku iphothulelwayo kodwa yona ibe isinya iinkozo. Uyaxoka nangoku soze ndikuvumele uye esikolweni ungekandonelisi apha endlwini. Uyalibala ukuba le malana kayihlo soze yonele kweli khaya. Ndim odlekayo ekh’ apha. Ukuba usafuna ukuhlala apha uza kwenza into endithi yenze uthanda ungathandi. Jonga, sana, mna ndineemali zam. Yandibhatala imayini andinabhongo kwaye soze ndiphinde ndilambe mna. Nangoku uyihlo ndimgcine nje kuba ndifuna into yasebusuku.” Emva koko wamnyola, wamshiya apho.

Uthe uNontlungu akufumanisa ukuba uphelelwa ngamandla kwakhona ngenxa yendlala, waya kunina wafika efixiza, ekhohlela, ehamba ngokwelovane, wathi:

“Mama ndilambile. Kwaye andinokwazi ukuphinda ndisebenze ngoku okanye ndakuzibona sele ndisifa.” Waye wamphakele loo ntwana yokutya emva koko, wathi uNongxolo:

“Ukugqiba kwakho ukutya uthathe yonke impahla yakho uphume uphele ekh’ apha. Uyihlo uthe kum ufuna ukwenza omnye umntwana apha kum. Ndithe kuye soze yenzeke loo nto kusekho wena. Wathi mandikugxothe. Ke ndithi kuwe hamba ngoku.”

“Ndiye phi, mama?” Wabuza uNontlungu ngelizwi elicengayo, zabe izidlele zigcwele iinyembezi. Saqalisa ukutswina nesifuba sakhe. Umzimba wagcwala iintlungu wonke. Wangcangcazela. Kwaba ngathi kukho iintsimbi ezikhalayo ezindlebeni zakhe. Ngelo xesha unina uyamncedisa ekuqokeleleni iimpahla zakhe.

“Awunantloni ukuthi uza kuya phi? Wakugqiba ukuba neminyaka eyi-13. Hamba uyokuthengisa ngomzimba edolophini.” Watsho emrhuqela phandle neempahla zakhe.

UNontlungu wahamba esokoliswa yiloo mpahla eyayinzima. Wayethetha yedwa esithi: “Noxa ndingazi apho ndiya khona, kodwa kuthe gungxu kum ukushiya lo mama. Kowu isikolo—ndiyazibona zonke izinto. Ndiza kulala phi ndiza kutya ntoni namhlanje. Utata wayesithi xa ndimxelela ngomama athi mandenze into endiyixelelwayo.” UNontlungu waba yinto ehamba ilala esithubeni.

Indlala

"Nkosikazi, ndenze into ngaphandle kwakho. Andazi nokuba iza kulandisa na uthando lwethu, okanye iza kulidodobalisa, okanye ilichithe tu. Kodwa mna bendingasayicingi into yokuba ndingaze ndohlukane nawe, s'thandwa sam," watsho uBhisho, ebeka phezu kwetafile isitya ebesinokutya. Waqhubeleka ngokuvungula ngoku athethayo.

"Masive kuqala ukuba yintoni na le uyenzileyo. Ukwahlukana kona akunaminyaka. Bayohlukana abantu sele besimelela bobabini," watsho uNomisile ngaloo nkani yakhe. Ngelo xesha ugalelela indoda yakhe isiselo esikhupha efrijini. Yathi indoda:

"Jonga, Nomisile, abazali bam ndithe mabonyuke. Ndifuna sihlale nabo apha. Le nto ndiyithethayo iza kuba njalo. Andicengi mntu ngaloo nto. Kusebenza mna apha." Umfazi wayeka yonke loo nto ebeyenza ekhitshini, wasondela ngasendodeni, wayithi ntsho.

"Khawutsho ke myeni wam omhle, Bhisho, ndiyintoni mna ekh' apha? Ungekaphenduli unjalo, ukuba ndingumfazi, akukho nanye into enokwenzeka ndingayazi. Ukuba ubabizile mna ndingayazi loo nto, ndicela ubafowunele uthi mabeme. Ukuba basendleleni yiya esitishini uthi xa besohlika mabaphinde bakhwele omnye uloliwe baphindele apho bebevela," watsho uNomisile engqisha.

"Nomisile! Ukuba ndim indoda kweli khaya kuza kwenzeka into endiyithethayo qha. Owakho umsebenzi usekhitshini nasekucoceni lo mzi wam qha. Umama wam notata wam bayeza qha. Akukho mntu uza kuyijika le nto ndiyenzayo. Kusebenza mna ndedwa kweli khaya qha. Ndiza kukhe ndibone ukuba ndiseyindoda na ekh' apha okanye andiseyiyo." Yatsho la nto.

Wathi uNomisile uza kufowunela amapolisa, esitsho ekhupha ifowuni ebiza amapolisa. Emva koko waxelela indoda ukuba mayilungise amapolisa athi ayeza aza kuyivalela. Yema ngeenyawo indoda. Xa isithi jezu kumfazi wayo, yabona ukuba, ingathi akayoyiki. Yafixeka ngumsindo.

"Ndizoyibeka apha naloo mapolisa akho. Mna ndiza kondliwa phaya entolongweni. Andazi ke wena nezi ntombi zakho zintlanu, ezisekumabanga aphantsi ngolu hlobo, ukuba aza kunondla na loo mapolisa. Mna into endiyithethayo inye qha yeyokuba abam abazali bayeza apha."

Kuthe kusenjalo zatsho izinja, zanga zisondela emnyango wendlu. Kwabonakala isithatha semoto sisondela ngokusondela. Wabaleka uBhisho wayokutshona kula kamere ilala iintombi zakhe esintlanu. Wathi kuzo maziye kuphendula amapolisa zithi kuwo yena akekho, oko ebeye eCiskei akakabuyi. Zaphuma iintombi, xa zifika kwigumbi lokuhlala kanti ngutatomkhulu nomakhulu wazo. Bavuyelana baphuzana nomama wabo naye exhumaxhuma. Wathatha ezo mpahla zabo wababonisa indawo yokuhlala.

“Tyhini abazukulwana bam bakhule ngolu hlobo kanti. Yho! Yho! Heee! Abasebahle. Kanene uNomisile badala kangakanani aba bazukulwana bam?” Wabuza umakhulu ekhupha umphako.

“Bayezana oyena mncinci une-13, baze aba badala babe phakathi kwe-15 ne-18,” wacacisa wenjenjalo umama wekhaya. Apha ekucaciseni, uNomisile aveze nento yokuba abaqhubi kakuhle esikolweni ngenxa yendlala. Kangangokub bonke basekumabanga aphantsi kakhulu. Athi umakhulu:

“Yeka abantwana bam wethu. Basebancinci aba bantu. Kaloku nani bazali babo anifundanga. Nam noyise wabo omkhulu zange siwubone nokuwubona umnyango wesikolo. Nithi mabafuze bani? Nangoku bahle abazukulwana bam, kodwa babhityile. Kutheni Nomisile? Niyabavalela xa nisitya? Uphi yena uyise wabo? Ndiyamfuna.” Kanti utata wekhaya, uBhisho, uvile ukuba ngabazali bakhe aba bafikayo hayi amapolisa. Wathi gqi unkabi ecima icuba abelitshaya kula ndlu yabantwana. Kaloku wayeyazi into yokuba abazali bakhe bobabini babemnqanda ecubeni besithi liza kumgulisa makaliyeke. Uthe xa ebona abazali bakhe, waqala ngotata bawolana ixesha elide. Wade wakhalaza ugogo wathi:

“Eyona nto buyahamba bona ubusuku njengokuba ningade niyekane nje ukubukana.” Emva koko uBhisho wamyeka utata watsibela unina. Bawolana. Wenza ixesha eliphindwe kane kunelo wayelenze kutata. Wade wakhalaza notata esithi makulalwe ngokuba udiniwe. Wanga uqhwatyelwa izandla umama kunyana wathi chatha ukuthi nca, kanye xa esiva utata ekhweleta. Kwanyanzeleka ukuba uNomisile angene phakathi kwabo. Bade bohlukana.

Kuthe kusavuyelwana kunjalo afika amapolisa akhaba yonke into eshukumayo apho, athi:

“Uphi uBhisho? Sifowunelwe yinkosikazi yakhe isithi wenza izidubedube apha kule ndlu ke. Size kumbamba.” Ngelo xesha ayemkhangela naphantsi kwebhedi. Wanqanda umfazi, ewaxelela ukuba iphelile la nto ibisenza ukuba ababize. Ke mawaphindele apho ebevela. Yho! Yaba ngathi kugalelwa iparafini edangatyeni athi amapolisa:

“Nkosikazi akudlalwa ngathi. Sisemsebenzini thina njengokuba wena ulibele kukuphuca nje. Ukuba asiyithathi le ndoda, umthetho uthi masimangalele wena ngokudlalisa ngomthetho. Ke siyayiyeka indoda yakho sithatha wena. Ngena evenini ngoku.” Kuthe kwakuba njalo wonke umntu walo mzi wafuna ukungena evenini. Bathi abazali basuka eCiskei beze kwaba bantu. Ke ukuba aba bantu bayabanjwa, nabo mababanjwe. Nabantwana kwelabo icala bathi abashiyeki. Yaba ngumbhodamo. Kwaye kwanyanzeleka ukuba amapolisa afowunele umtshutshisi omkhulu, owaphendula ngolu hlobo:

“Mphathi wesitishi, bayeke bonke abo bantu. Qha wena ngomso uye kum enkundleni ukuze ndicime eso sigunyaziso sokubamba.” Waphendula wathi umasitishi:

“Kowu! Mhlekazi undihluthe intlaka sele isemlonyeni. Kodwa ke ndiza kwenza njengoko uthetha.” Yaba ke njalo iyajika iveni yamapolisa ilambile injalo. Wathi umfazi kaBhisho:

“Nam ngomso lo usayo ndiza kufowunela abam abazali beze apha. Kaloku inxeba lomntu omnye linxeba lethu sonke.” Akugqiba ukutsho njalo ayokungena endlwini yakhe nendoda yakhe. Xa efika kuyo azijule ebhedeni. Elo xesha ushiya uBhisho encokola nabazali bakhe

bobabini. Ngenxa yokuba kwakusebusuku kakhulu, kwaye abazali bakhe babediniwe yindlela kwanyanzeleka ukuba bangahlali ixesha elide kuloo ndlu yokuhlala. Enye into ke yeyokuba aba bazali bobabini bayibona into yokuba ingathi ayikho imvisiswano apho ebantwaneni babo. Bakhawuleza bayalela unyana, uBhisho, ukuba kulalwe enye nenye iya kusonjululwa kusuku olulandelayo. Abazali kaBhisho baye baboniswa eyabo indlu yokulala baze bayokulala kuyo. UBhisho, xa efika kula ndlu balala kuyo nomfazi, wafika umfazi elele phantsi. Xa embuza ukuba kutheni wathi umfazi makabuze kubazali bakhe, kuba naye mfazi ngengomso wayeza kufowunela abakhe abazali nabo bayokuhlala apho emadizeni.

Kusuku olulandelayo ekuseni uBhiso nomfazi wakhe uNomisile bancokola.

“Nkosikazi! Uyivile phofu la nto ubuyithetha phezolo? Ukuba ayilunganga? Ungathini ukubiza abazali bakho silamba sinje. Umama uthe izolo aba bantwana babhityile.”

“Ubabizile abakho abazali kulanjwa apha. Nabam ke mabeze bazokutya le nto iza kutyiwa ngabakho. Kaloku uthi xa uthetha nguwe osebenzayo ekh’ apha.” Wayithambekisa iqhiya. Uboyazi ke xa umfazi athe wathambekisa iqhiya, kuza kuphuma iinkwenkwezi. Wathi:

“Khona ngoku akukho nto ityiwayo apha. Khawundinike imali wethu ndenzele abantu basemzini wam indla-kusasa.” Waba ngathi uyavuya lo mfazi. Yathi indoda:

“Khawukhangele kwiimfihlo zakho wethu mna andinayo nale yokuthenga isikali necuba. Uyandazi, ukuba bendinemali ngendingasekho apha. Ndibe ndimamele ukudelelwa nguwe.” Xa igqiba ukutsho indoda yathatha intonga nebhatyi yaphela emehlweni ingaxelelanga mntu ukuba iya kweliphi icala, kwaye iyokuzama ntoni na. Ngentsimbi yeshumi elinambini kuhleliwe endlwini yokuhlala kujongwe umabonakude ziindwendwe nabantwana, athi umakhulu wabo:

“Kanti usavimba nangoku, Nomisile? Yini mntana wam awusenantloni nanguyihlo lo. Oko sigqibela ukutya izolo ngala maxesha. Yhini mntanam. Ingathi siza kufela apha. Uya kubanjwa xa sinokufela apha. Kaloku mna noyihlo singabantu bakagqirha. Sinamaxesha okutya amayeza. La mayeza ke mntana afuna ukutya. Uphi khona uBhisho? Hayi ndiqinisekile ukuba xa ebekho nonko ngesisitya ngoku ukuze side sisele la mayeza ethu. Kowu! Uphopho, ngathi ndiyambona. Ngumntana wam wamazibulo lowa.”

Kuthe kusenjalo wangena uBhiso. Akathethanga namntu. Uye waya ngqo kula ndlu alala kuyo. Wafika wazilahla phezu kwebhedi. Kwathunywa eza ntombi zakhe zintlanu ukuba ziye kumbiza. Zabuya nembande yesikhova. Zabuya zisithi ulele obentlombe. Zathi zimsetshile kwaye akukho nepeni le emdaka ezipokothweni zakhe. Kwacaca ke ukuba akuzukutyiwa, kuba neendwendwe zazingenamali, kwaye kwakufuneka zityile ukuze zizokusela amayeza. Yamtya le ntlungu uNomisile. Wabiza iintombi zakhe zontlanu wathi kuzo:

“Bantwana bam, asinakufa yindlala nikhona. Yenzani ngolu hlobo. Qalani kulo mzi ungentla. Emva koko ninyuke nayo yonke le mizi. Kumzi ngamnye nicele ezi zinto zilandelayo: Omnye uza kucela iswekile, omnye amagqabi, omnye isonka, omnye inyama, omnye ikhaphetshu nethanga. Ze lo uza kucela ithanga aliqwalasele ukuba alibolanga. Ukuba libolile, abaxelele balitshintshe. Ndiyabazi abantu balapha xa ucela into emntwini basuke bakwenze esa silambi esingathi asiboni nangamehlo. Thathani nazi iingxowa bantwana bam. Xa niphuma

emzini ndidlulele kweminye imizi, nani niyabona into yokuba sibaninzi ngoku kweli khaya. Kwaye niyambona utata wenu ukuba akayonto. Ningabuyi bantwana bam zingagcwelanga ezo ngxowa. Hambani ngoku ke, ndiza kutshica amathe.” Xa ivuka indoda yaya emfazini:

“Mfazindini ovimbayo. Awunantloni nangabantu aba bomzi wakho. Kuzakutyiwa nini ekh’ apha? Xa mna ndinokulamba kangaka kubekise phi kubazali bam. Uyaqonda phofu ukuba aba bantu baneswekile? Uyayazi ukuba iswekile iyambulala umntu xa engatyi. Baphi khona abantwana bam? Uyawaqala ezi zinto zakho. Ndifaka intonga xa kulapho ke mna. Ukuba kukhe kwakho umzali ofayo apha, uza kundibona into endibhinqa ngayo.”

Ukhutshwe amehlo ekhuthuza

“Nkosikazi, ungalibali kaloku ukundikhapha ngomso ekuseni. Asisakwazi ukuhamba kumnyama yile ntwana kaDudu. Ayihlabi ingathi yimazi enenkonyane,” watsho uTola ebhekisa kowakwakhe. Ngelo xesha uthe folokohlo esofeni yakhe, ekubonakala ngathi wayichola kweza ndawo kulahlwa kuzo inkunkuma ngumasipala. Kangangokuba kuloo ndawo wayehlala kuyo kuloo sofa kwakuzobeke umzimba wakhe. Kanti ke xa bethetha abamaziyo bathi eza sofa zakhe zeziya wayezithenge ukufika kwakhe kweza zindlu zintsha, zaseMandela Park.

“Unamabhongo tata kaJongi ndiza kuthi ndikhapha wena, ze mna ndibuye nabani?” Watsho uLulama eme ngasetafileni, elungisa isidlo sangokuhlwa. Kodwa ngoku athethayo wayevakala ukuba umane eyiva le nto ayiphekileyo. Wayesenzela into yokuba aphake eqinisekile ukuba indoda yakhe iza kutya kamnandi. Xa umjonga esiqwini ke uLulama, wawungenakubuza ukuba kuphekela banina kwelo khaya. UTola waphakama eyokubeka amaphanga ebhiya. Lo mfo ke wawungenakutsho ukuba nguye ophangelayo kweli khaya xa umthelekisa nomfazi.

“Uza kubuya wedwa, woyika ntoni wena kuba awuphangeli. Le ntwana kaDudu, siyoyika ngokukhuthuza, iyakwazi wena ukuba awuphangeli. Kwaye ingumntwana kakhulu kuwe ayinokwazi ukukwenza nantoni.” ULulama, enika utata kaJongi ukutya, wathi:

“Yho uyasiqonda phofu isidlwengu xa sivule imela, soze ungasiniki into esiyifunayo. Kwaye ndivile nyhani ukuba lo mntwana kaDudu, uyakhuthuza kwaye uyahlaba. Ndive nento yokuba ummelwane wethu lo ungasentla, uSiporho, yena ukhuthuzwa qho ngulo mntwana kaDudu.” Lade lafika ixesha lokulala. Kwalalwa.

Bavuka ekuseni bakhaphana.

“Hayi bo tata kaJongi ndiyajika ngoku. Ufuna ndide ndikufikise esitophini?” Watsho uLulama erhuqa iinyawo.

“Ubusandikhaphela ntoni xa ungazukundilinda ndide ndingene eteksini? Yatsho indoda ibonakala ukuba iyazazi izinto zokudlala.

“Ndiza kukufikisa ke kwezi teksi zakho, kodwa ukuba kukhe kwenzeka into apha kum, uyazi ukuba ityala lelakho.” Watsho umfazi naye ebonakala ngathi udikwe yeyokosa. Kuthe besambombozela njalo, zathi gqi iiteksi, zidluladlulana apha endleleni, iyile ifuna ukulayisha kuqala kunenye. UTola waba ngathi uyagityiselwa xa wayengena kuloo teksi.

“*Bye bye*, ke nakaJongi. Xa ndibuya emsebenzini, ndifuna ukufika upheke kamnandi. Ungenzi le nto yenziwa ngabanye abafazi, abathi yakuphangela indoda baye emakrexeni abo.” Bayihleka loo nto, bohlukana. Xa ihamba iteksi, wakhwaza umfazi:

“Soze ndiyenze loo nto usaphila. Andiyiyo lo *type* mna.” Wawathetha la mazwi erhuqa iinyawo ephindela endlwini, ebonakala ukuba uphindela ezingubeni. Xa engena esangweni lakhe uLulama, eve ingxolo.

“Awu! Ingathi kukho umntu okhalayo nje. Yintoni ngoku? Bendisathi kupholile namhlanje.”

“Yhoooo! Imali yam engaka. Imali yam yokugqibela. Uyithathe yonke lo mntwana. Kodwa ndimbonile kwaye ndiyamazi. Andikhuthuzwa mna. Ndiza kumlungisa. Ndiza kumfundisa abantu.” Xa uLulama nabamelwane bakhe besiya kwelo cala leso sikhalo, bafumanisa ukuba nguNodabuye. Wayelele etsale umrholo wakhe wonke esenzela into yokuba xa ebuya emsebenzini aye kubhatala amatyala akhe onke. Yaba ngathi yayiva ngevumba loo mali loo ntwana kaDudu, uLizo, nekwakusithiwa nguNkomiyahlaba.

Into eyayinxiba iimpahla ezingathi uzambulelwe. Imikhono yeebhatyi, eyehempe, izikipa neejezi, yayilabalaba apha ezingalweni. Iibhlukhwe zikankabi zazisiwa zonke. Kodwa xa ekhuthuza akwaziwa ukuba wayezibopha ngantoni na. Wayengathethi qho. Kodwa wawuliva ilizwi lakhe ukuba ulingqokolisa ngabom. Esikolweni wayeka efunda ibanga lesibhozo, wathi yena ugqibile. Emini wayengumntu owayethunga izihlangu zabantu. Asitsho sibe ngathi sivela evenkileni yezihlangu. Yayingaziwa indlela awayezenza zimenyezele ngayo. Into eyayixaka abantu yayiyeyokuba iitshomi zakhe zazingaziwa kula ngingqi wayehlala kuyo ukuba zingoobani kwaye zazivelaphi.

Emva kweso isikhalo, engekangeni endlwini uLulama, aphinde eve esinye ngezantsi. Xa esithi uyamamela afumanise ukuba sesendoda ngoku eso. Abaleke uLulama ephethe izembe, aye kwelo cala lesikhalo. Xa efika ngomnye woomakhelwane bakhe, uRhadebe.

“Yile ntwana kaDudu, uLizo, ndiyibone kakuhle. Iyithathe yonke la mali yam yenkamnkam le bendigqiba ukuyikhupha emtshinini. Iza kundazi. Andikhuthuzwa mna. Rha yinile iqaba elinje.” Omnye umfo ogama linguSiporho, owayengafundanga kodwa ephangela emigodini, wathi:

“Radebe, khawuyeke le nto yakho yokusoloko uthetha ngemfundo. Ukhuthuziwe naloo JC yakho. Ngoku kufuneka sifune le ntwana siyibulale qha. Mna andiyi emsebenzini namhlanje. Ndiza kuyifonela ingqonyela yam, ndiyixelele ngale ngxaki sikuyo.”

URadebe wayefixiza, kucaca ukuba le ntwana imfikile ngeempama.

“Madoda masiye ngapha ngasesikolweni. Kukho esa sirhoxo siphaya singavaliyo. Ezi ntwana zizityela phaya iimali ezizithatha ebantwini.” Xa befika kweso sirhoxo beligqiza lamadoda awayekhokelwe nguSiporho bayibone le ntwana isela utywala. Yaya yolathwa yenye indoda kwelo gqiza. Bayileqa bade bayifumana. Wayibamba usiPorho wathi kuyo,

“Namhlanje buphelile obakho ubunkunzi. Uyakhumbula undikhuthuze amatyeli amahlanu?

“Ndicela uxolo bootata bam, soze ndiphinde ndikhuthuze apha kule ndawo ndihlala kuyo. Ukusukela kule veki izayo ndiza kukhuthuza kula ndawo ihlala imixhaga, eVuka.” Wacela uzolo uLizo esithi ugqibelisile ukumosha apho.

“Mna, mfo wam ndizokwenza into yokuba ungaze uphinde ukhuthuze naphi na,” watsho ekhupha imela uSiporho. Uthe xa engqengqiswa phantsi uLizo, uSiporho wakhupha imela yakhe, wamgromba amehlo omabini wawakhupha. Akugqiba wayalela abantu ukuba bamyeke. Ngeli xesha akhalayo uLizo, amehlo akhe ayexhumaxhuma ecaleni kwakhe. Bamshiya apho esithi, “Namhlanje kukhalo mna.”

Ungakhwazi ungekaphumi ehlathini

“Nkqo! nkqo!”

“Ngena.”

“Tyhini bafazi ndathetha kakubi kangaka kanti kuza kungena umntu obaluleke ngolu hlobo. Hayi ke hlala apho esofeni, nqununu. Akukho nto imbi phofu?”

“Hayi mama,” yatsho inqununu yesikolo esifunda intombi yeli khaya. Yakhupha imvulophu embala umdaka yayinika umama weli khaya. “Ingaba yintoni ke le, nqununu?” Wabuza umama ekhefuzela engazi nokuba ayivule okanye ayenze ntoni loo mvulophu. Kaloku wayengaboni kakuhle xa engazifakanga iiglasi zakhe zamehlo.

“Uya kuyivula xa ikho intombi yakho,” watsho unqununu ephakama.

“Khawuchophe wethu ndimise amanzi eti esitovini.”

“Hayi noko, ndakuphunga ngenye imini, ndileqa abahloli kuba bayafika namhlanje.”

“Hayi ke kulungile, nqununu.” Wakhupha inqununu emva koko wabuyela endlwini. Emva koko wonda ngala mvulophu yayishiywe yinqununu. Anxibe iiglasi zakhe zamehlo ayijonge. Wafumanisa ukuba yingxelo ngenkqubo yomntwana wakhe esikolweni. Wayibeka kuba efuna ivulwe ngumnikazi wayo. Kusenjalo, dyulukudu uLinda, “Mama, iphi i-*report* yam yesikolo kuthiwe zinikwe abazali?” Wathi unina, “Hayi wethu khawukhulule utye emva koko ke sijonge i-*report* yakho.” Xa egqiba ukutya uLinda kwajongwa i-*report* kwafumaniseke ukuba uphumelele emagqabin.

“Uthi uya eyunivesithi kunyaka olandelayo?” Xa efika utata evela kowakhe umsebenzi wafikela kolo vuyo. Wathi emakhwenkweni akhe makuxhelwe enye yeza gusha zityebileyo. Wabe njalo ke uza kuya eyunivesithi kunyaka olandelayo uLinda. Yaba ngalo mayeyeye kwelo khaya kwafika namandwendwe kuziwe kweso sihikahika setheko. Andisathethi ke iintanga zika sotheko zazinyakazela. Utata weli khaya yayinguye umphathi-nkqubo exelela lo nkungu nelanga yayilapho ukuba le ntombi yakhe ifuze yena. Watsho esithi ejongile nje ingathi soze imdanise. Konwaba nothathatha apho. Abazali besithi ngabo bodwa abanomntwana oza kuya eyunivesithi kula ngingqi.

Emva kwetheko zagoduka iindwendwe. Ezinye zazimane zimbombozela apha endleleni. Kaloku xa ungumntu awuthandwa ngumntu wonke. ULinda yena wakhapha isithandwa sakhe uBoy ngesithuthuthu sakowabo. Xa befika kuloBoy babulisa abantu abadala emva koko baya ekamereni kaBoy. Babemane bekhulula baphinde banxibe. Bemane bengena ezingubeni. Wafowunela ngunina uLinda. “Ndisahleli noBoy.”

“Sifuna ukhawuleze kaloku awukamxeleli utata wakho ukuba uza kufunda ntoni eyunivesithi kulo nyaka uzayo.” Wagoduka emva koko uLinda. Wasikhalisa isithuthuthu sakowabo. Wakhe wagqiba iqela lemizuzu ejikeleza ndawonye. Asibhongise, asiphakamise, aphinde

asigibisele phantsi, sitsho ngolona thuli. Waqabela phezu kwaso sabhomboloza singashiywa moto apha endleleni wade wayokufika ekhaya.

Xa efika ekhaya ke kwaxoxwa ngesikhokelo ngekamva lakhe. Kwafikelelwa kwisigqibo sokuba uLinda afundele ukuba ngumantyi. Umama kaLinda ke yayinguye owayecebise ukuba intombi yabo ibe ngumantyi. Lo mama wayemane eyilinganisa xa ixoxa amatyala. "Ntombi yam, ndizoya ematyaleni xa inguwe imantyi. Xa uxoxa ityala lomntu endingamfuniyo, ndiza kuthi mgwebe lowo ntombi yam. Kodwa ukuba uxoxa ityala lomntu endimthandayo ndiza kuthi myeke lowo ntombi yam. Ukuba uxoxa ityala lesela kula masela alapha ndiza ku phakama, ndithi gweba Linda, gweba lisela elo. Ndiza kuya qho edolophini xa uxoxa amatyala mntanam ungabinexhala ndiza kuthi xa ingumntu endimthandayo ndithi myeke lowo ntombi yama uyarhabulisa. Ezi zinto zivimba nokuvimba ndiza kuthi *two years* kulowo ntombi yam." Kwakuhleka nosana ngalo mini kwelo khaya. Wathi utata wekhaya yena, "Uyabona ntombi yam, baninzi abantu abagezayo kwezi ndawo sisela kuzo, ngoku baza kundazi. Iza kuthi indoda isaxambulisana nam ndisuke ndiyithi quba ngobo tywala apha ebusweni. Andisathethi lona icuba, akukho mntu uya kuphinda atshaye ndinqanqatheka. Ndakumgibisela impana ndidibanise nalo nqawe okanye lo sigarethi yebhongo. Kaloku ngoku ndinentombi engumantyi."

Zavulwa izikolo ngexesha lazo. ULinda waba ngowokuqala kuloo lali ukuya esikolweni. Yayingathi ngumtshato ukrozo lweemoto ezazimsa edolophini. Wonke umntu waloo lali wayethe chasi. Akukho mntu kuloo lali owayengazi ngokupasa nokuya kukaLinda *eUniversity of Cape Town* esiyokwenza ubumantyi. Xa efika esikolweni wabalasela ezifundweni. Yayinguye owayesombulula iingxaki zabanye abantwana besikolo kuloo yunivesithi.

Wahlaselwa ngumkhuhlana ombi kakhulu kwikota yokuqala uLinda. Oogqirha babesithi abayiboni le nto agula yiyo kodwa babethembisa ukuba uza kulunga. Xa kunjalo ke uLinda wagqiba kwelokuba noko akanakude abaxelele abazali bakhe ngomkhuhlana noxa nje waye buva yena ubunzima. Kuthe xa kukhethwa abaphathi beeklasi kwikota yesibini waphinda wazigqatsa uLinda waphumelela emagqabini. Kaloku kwikota yokuqala zange kubekho nomnye umntwana owaye wafunyaniswa enetyala kubafundi abangaphezu kwamashumi amabini awayebamele kwindidi ngeendidi zamatyala abo.

Uthe eseso siququ uLinda, hayi yamohlula impilo. Kwanyanzeleka ukuba aye kwagqirha futhi. Kweli ityeli oogqirha bamlalisa. Benza iimvavanyo eziliqela emzimbeni wakhe. Bafumanisa ukuba ukwinyanga yesine ekhulelwe. Waba njalo uyakhutshwa esibhedlele. Ekuveni kwakhe ezo ndaba kwaba ngathi kuthiwa kufe wonke umntu kowabo kushiyeke yena kuphela. Kodwa kwanyanzeleka ukuba agoduke nakanjani na. Ngethamsanqa wafika abazali bakhe bekho bobabini. Wazixela ke ezi ndaba. Umama wakhe wafa isiqaqa. Utata yena laphela olo suku ethukisela kuba ezo ndaba zafika ezisela utywala bakhe. Kwanyanzeleka ukuba uLinda athathe imoto ase yena nonina esibhedlele. Xa exelelwa umenzi wesisu, uBoy, wathi ebengeyedwa, akanakuhlawula isisu yedwa. Abantu belali bona babeqamba iingoma ngeso sehlo. Abanye besithi baza kuphumla kudala bengxolelwa ngomantyikazi wokuqala kula lali. Kwakuhleka nomntwana apho. Kaloku kuthiwa loo mama lowo wayexelela nosana kuloo lali xa eli teketisa athi, "wena uza kuba ngomnye wabantu abaza kuthethelelwa nguLinda xa engumantyi." Kuthiwa nokuba umntu unengxaki kuloo lali,

wayexelelwa ngoLinda. “Linda uLinda wena uza kuvala izikolo ke ukufika kwakhe uza kuyisombulula le ngxaki yakho.” Ungakhwazi ungekaphumi ehlathini.

Intokazi endiyizondayo

UTshoba wayencokola nomabhalana wakhe uVutha. UTshoba ngumphathi we-Ofisi yePosi, yaseFlagstaff, emaMpondweni.

"Nto kaVutha ungakhathazeki ngokuba ndithe mawubizwe. Ndiyakubona ukuba uxakeke kakhulu kula khawuntari yakho. Kaloku yimpela-nyanga ndiyayazi loo nto. Kodwa mfo kaVutha ndifumana ifowuni evela kundlu-nkulu wee-ofisi zeposi. Thatha isitulo uhlale phantsi inde le nto ndiza kukuxelela yona." Watsho ebasa umdiza wakhe uTshoba, uMphathi-Posi. Kodwa uVutha wabonakala ngathi imehlo lakhe likula khawuntari yakhe. Wathi:

"Thetha, Posi, ndimamele, kwaye abantu bamile phaya kula khawuntari yam, gqagqanisa. Okanye kutheni singathethi xa kuvalelwe idinala nje, kuba aba bantu sibancedayo apha beze ngeebhasi ezisuka kwiilali ezikude. Ngoku xa ndilibele kukuma apha phambi kwakho ziza kubashiya," watsho uVutha ebuya umva. Waphakama uPosi, wathi:

"Ndim, uMphathi-Posi apha, andizukuva ngawe. Wena ungumabhalana nje apha. Ndiyayazi into yokuba kudala usebenza apha kodwa ngelishwa ke, mfo kabawo ndim, ophetheyo ngoku, uyeva, Vutha!" Ngelo xesha uMphathi-Posi umi ngeenyawo. Wathi uVutha:

"Andizanga kubanga isitulo sakho sokuphatha iposi. Ndithi kuwe, ndixakekile kula khawuntari ndisebenza kuyo. Khange nditshixe needrowa zam phaya. Khange ndicinge ukuba uza kundilibazisa kangaka sixakeke sinje ezikhawuntareni. Ulibele ngoku ukuba yimpela-nyanga. Kufuneka sibale zonke izinto esizenzileyo kule nyanga. Iimali ezingenileyo, eziphumileyo, ii-*Postal Order*, iimali zemihlala-phantsi, ii-*COD parcels*, izitampu. Kwaye iza kuba nguwe oza kuthi sithatha ixesha elide ukubhalansisa i-Cashbook. Khawundiyeke, maan, bhuti, ndiye kusebenza. Le yakho into mayize mva." Uthe akugqiba ukuthetha njalo umfo kaVutha, wamshiya apho uTshoba ematshekile.

Uthe xa ephindela ekhawuntarini yakhe umfo kaVutha, waba ngathi yimazi yenkomo, egqiba kuzala, xa ifuna inkonyane layo. Wafika umgca wakhe uyophuma ngomnyango. Kaloku yayinguye kuphela owayebhatala abantu abazokulanda imihlala-phantsi yabo. Ufike kubonakala ngathi ungayiva inaliti xa isiwa. Abantu betshintsha-tshintsha imilenze yabo. Abanye belele emiqolweni yabanye. Lo mfo, owawungasoze usabele xa ethetha, wayegoba kuyo yonke iminyango yaloo Ofisi yePosi yaseFlagstaff. Ngoko nangoko uthathe isitampu sakhe sePosi. Yaba ngugqagqa gqagqa gqagqa. Sithe sakuvakala eso sithonga kwababephandle, bayishiya imithunzi baphindela emigceni yabo. Zange kuphele nomzuzu ukunceda ixhego elalilelokuqala emgceni wakhe. Lathi:

"Ubuyile uVutha! Into evuthuza kuvuthuzeke, MaMpondo! Phakamisani amapasi enu, ubuyile uVutha. Wavuthuza mandulo, nangoku. Usavuthuza."

Ngephanyazo kwaba ngathi kuphakulwa iinyosi pho, ingulo efuna ukuqinisekisa ukuba ubuyele endaweni yakhe. Ithe ibetha intsimbi yokuqla kwabe sele kuvakala ingxolo

yokukhala kwebhungane emgceni kaVutha. Waziqoqosha izixhobo zakhe zokusebenza. Nanko esiya kuzivalela esefini eyayilungiselelwe ukutshixela iimali zeposi nezinye izinto ezibalulekileyo, ezinjengezitampu.

Yabetha intsimbi yesibini. Kwabuyelwa edyokhweni. Uthe akujonga ngaphandle nangaphakathi umfo kaVutha, wafumanisa ukuba baphelile abakhe abantu. Ngoko nangoko wagxanya ukuya kwi-ofisi yomphathi. Ufike emane ezosula ubuso ngetshefu, wathi:

“Posi! Ndim lo singathetha ke ngoku. Noko kusathe ncwe kwelam icala.”

“Uza wakuthanda? Nam ke ndixakekile ngoku. Hamba ndiza kukubiza,” watsho ephakama uPosi. Wavula ifestile ye-ofisi yakhe. Walayita umdiza wakhe watshaya. UVutha wathi:

“Ngelishwa ke mphathi wePosi, ukuba asinakuthetha ngoku, sakuthetha ngomso. Kuba ukusuka kwam apha ngoku, ndiza kuxakeka yi-*cash book* yam. Kaloku ifile inyanga.” Wacima icuba lakhe umphathi-posi. Wavula isefu, wakhupha ifayile, wajonga uVutha, wathi:

“Kufike imbalelwano evela eMthatha kwi-ofisi kandlunkulu. Bathi wena kufuneka uyokuqalisa kwi-ofisi zika ndlu nkulu kwisithuba seveki ukusuka namhlanje. Wathi uVutha:

“Ubani? Mna, ndiye eMthatha? Kwi-ofisi zikandlunkulu? Soze, Posi, baxelele ngoku.” Wathi akuziva ezo ndaba uVutha, waba ngathi uza kuligqobhoza ngentloko uphahla lweso sakhiwo. Waba ngathi ubuthambise nge-oli ubuso bakhe. Lanyamalala ela bala lakhe lalingathi uqaba ummemezi. Umphathi-Posi yena wayengazigxeki ezo ndaba. Kaloku uVutha wayesele enemibimbi kwi-Ofisi yePosi. Wamtyabeka ngemibuzo esithi:

“Uyaqonda phofu ukuba olu tshintsho lwakho luhamba nokuphakanyiswa kwakho? Uyaqonda ukuba uza kuba ngumaliyavuza ngoku? Yintoni le yenza ukuba ungafuni ukuyishiya le ndawo?” Waphindisela ifayile esefini umphathi-posi, wathi ugqibile. Wema wajonga phezulu umfo kaVutha. Wazosula ngetshefu eyayimanzi, wathi:

“Posi! Nceda xelela la madoda akwandlunkulu ukuba andinakulunga ukumka apha eFlagstaff kuba idikazi lam limithi. Xa ndingalishiya liza kudliwa ngala maMpondo. Kwaye xa enokulidla, sakuphuma esa sisu sam. Kwaye ndiyaqala ukumithisa. Yithi mabandise wena kwandlunkulu ze ke mna ndibe ngumphathi-posi apha.” Waphendula ngelithi umphathi-posi:

“Mfo kaVutha, ndigqibile mna ngoku. Ukuba awuyanga phaya kule veki izayo, emva kweentsuku ezintathu uya kugxothelwa ukungabikho emsebenzini ngaphandle kwemvume.” Emva koko umphathi-posi wajikeleza onke amacandelo exelela bonke abasebenzi ngezo ndaba. Yaba yimincili apho ngaloo njikalanga wonke umsebenzi enqwenelela uVutha indlela entle. Omnye wabasebenzi owayeyitshomi kaVutha wabizela uVutha ecaleni wathi:

“Kodwa ntanga yam, bekufanele ukuba nguwe umphathi-posi wethu. Kuba wena kudala usebenza apha. Kwaye wena unamava ngaphezu kwalo mpathi ukhoyo. Kodwa ungasilahli, ntanga yam, siza kukufowunela xa kuthe nxi. Kwaye ndivile ukuba uya kwela candelo labasebenzi.” UVutha ebonakala ngathi ulahlekile. Emane ezosula ngetshefu qho.

“Loo nto ke, tshomi, sele ndixelelwe ukuba umsebenzi wam phaya kukuqesha, ukutshintsha abasebenzi, amatyala, ukuphumeza izicelo zabantu abafuna ukuya kuphumla. Kwaye

kuthiwa ayizontombi eMthatha. Kuthiwa eza phaya ziyaziyela endodeni. Le ntokazi yam, kaloku, isuka phaya sele indixelele konke ngoMthatha. Ndiza kubhovuza yonke le mihla phaya eMthatha. Kwaye, ukuba aziqondi, ndiza kwalekelisa ndakufika phaya."

Ngentsimbi yesibhozo ekuseni, uVutha ungena e-ofisini kaGongqo. Bakwizakhiwo zikarhulumente ezibizwa ngokuba yiBotha Sigcawu. Bayafanisana. Bafumanise ukuba babekhe bafunda kunye eLibode. Kwaye babekhe babambelana entombini. Kodwa loo ntombi yaye yatshata nomnye umfo owayesebenza kwwamantyi. UGongqo ajikelezise le nqeberhu intsha kubasebenzi bonke. Yamkelwa ngezandla ezishushu. Emva koko ke ayibonise umsebenzi. Wamlukisa ke kuba wayemazi ezilokhweni. Bahleke loo nto. UVutha waba ngathi uneminyaka elishumi elapho kuba wakhawuleza ukuyazi yonke loo misebenzi wayeyifundiswa apho. I-ofisi yakhe yayineholo elalisoloko linabantu ababefuna umsebenzi. Yaququzela ngathi ineminyaka ilapho la nto ngaloo hempe yayo yayisoloko ingaphandle ebhlukhweni. Kakhulu yayivavanya abantu ababezokufuna imisebenzi. Emva koko akhangele iposi efuna abantu, aze amthumele apho umntu othe wapasa olo vavanyo. Babebaninzi ke abantu ababesohlulwa lolo vavanyo. Kaloku abantu baseTranskei, babesemva ngolwazi, ingakumbi ngaloo maxesha.

Omnye usisi owayengathi uhlamba ngobisi wangena kule ofisi kaVutha. Uthe uVutha wakuva into eyayiqatywe ngulo sisi emakhwapheni, wadenga. Wathi lo sisi:

"Molo wethu bhuti. Kowu, incedile le ofisi ikhe iqeshe umntu omhle kweli tyeli. Umhle bhuti." Watsho lo sisi eyibambe ngesandla into kaVutha. Yavukwa kokwa kubila kwayo. Wayibamba ngezandla zozibini lo sisi esinye simane siphulula. Wayijonga wathi:

"Wena ukuba ungandiqesha, ungalala apha," watsho evula amaqhosha wento awayeyinxibe ngasentla. Wawakhupha omabini amabele akhe, ebomvu enjalo. Ngethamsanqa babe bobabini kuloo ofisi ngelo xesha. Wabhekabheka uVutha kuba wayewazi umsebenzi wamabele endodeni. Emva koko uVutha wanika lo sisi izixhobo zokubhala uvavanyo. Uthe akugqiba ukubhala olo vavanyo lo sisi, wazinika uVutha ezo zinto ebezibhala. Wathi:

"Ukuba undiqeshile, ndiza kupha into emnandi kakhulu. Kwaye uza kuyitya wedwa. Nokuba ungayitya uyigqibe, ukuba undiphe umsebenzi, andinangxaki." Bavumelana. Emva koko bohlukana. Ithe xa ithe chu ukuya emnyango, wayijonga. Wayenxibe isikeyithi esibomvu esiveze iimpundu, amahleza nomphambili wonke. Wayifowunela ke ngenye imini esithi mayiyokuqala umsebenzi eDutywa. Bavumelana ke ukuba bona bobabini baza kudibana ngempela-veki ukuze uVutha aphiwe la nto imnandi wayethenjiswe ngayo.

Wafika nyani uVutha ngentsimbi yesixhenxe ngorhatya ngoLwesihlanu. Wafika intombi yakhe ikho kwaye ihleli yodwa. Kowu olungako lona uthando. Yabhomboloza into ekhalayo ngezothando. Imilebe yabo bobabini yayimanzi tixi kukuphuzana. Yahamba ke intombi iyofuna izinto eziselwayo kwihotele eyayikufutshane apho. Washiyeka ezilola uVutha. Kodwa wayemane ejonga ixesha kuba kwaye kwabonakala ngathi lo sisi akade abuye. Wabona ukuba makajime ebhedeni alungiselele ukufika kwentokazi yakhe. Kungekudala wabona isithatha semoto. Wathi cwaka. Kwangena lo sisi wakhe engaphethanga nto. Emva koko kwangena amadoda amathathu. Ambuza igama lakhe. Walixela. Athi ke kuye angamapolisa. Azothatha yena kuba umangalelwe ngokuzama ukudlwengula, nokuba kuloo

ndlu ngaphandle kwemvume. Wabanjwa ke uVutha. Lamoyisa netyala. Wagwetywa iminyaka esibhozo engafumenanga nala nto imnandi. Waphelelwa nangumsebenzi.

Kwathi kanti umfazi wam yintombi yam

"Nantsi ke into endinibizela yona Mantakwenda. Izolo ndiye edolophini nenkosikazi. Sithe xa sishiya uCentane singena kula ndlela iya eGcuwa lagqabhuka ivili lemoto, yayokutshayisa emthini. Yabhukuqa nathi. Sancedwa ngabantu abebelandela emva kwethu. Basirhutya kobo bugoxo. Babiza inqwelo yezigulana, yasisa esibhedlele eGcuwa. Salaliswa. Kodwa umntu obenzakele kakhulu ngunkosikazi. Kwaye kwabakho imfuneko yokuba athiwe igazi. Kodwa kwafunyaniswa ukuba alikho igazi esibhedlele. Kwafunwa elam. Ndavuma. Bathe oogqirha xa bewadibanisa lo magazi bafumanisa ukuba ngawomntu omnye. Unkosikazi ngelo xesha wayengekho zingqondweni. Wayengayiva naloo nto yokuba amagazi ethu ayafana. Ndathi ke mna koogqirha mabasebenzise elo lam igazi ukuze aphile unkosikazi. Enye yokufana kwamagazi ethu sobe siyibone xa sele ephilile. Mna ke mawethu ndikhutshiwe esibhedlele. Unkosikazi yena ndimshiye engekakwazi nokuthini kwela gumbi labantu abagula kakhulu. Andinakothuka nokuba kungathiwa akavukanga. Nantso ke boobawo ndiyinikezela kuni ke ngoku," watsho uVungula.

Emva koko kwaphakama elinye ixhego elaligqiba kutshaya. Labeka phantsi inqawe lathatha isagweba, laya kuVungula ogqiba kwenza ingxelo ngengozi ebahleleyo. Wathi, "Kwedini ingathi awusandazi ukuba ndinguyihlo omncinci, uTshipha. Uthetha ukuthini xa usithi umolokazana wam, uNozuko, usenokungavuki esibhedlele? Kutheni umnyebelela nje umntwana wam? Uyaqonda phofu ukuba nguwe wonke lo usifake kule ngxaki? Ndiza kukufundisa abantu namhlanje." Uthe xa esithi uyagalela ngentonga, aphakama onke amadoda agalela pha kuye ngezawo iintonga. Emva koko wayazi indlela yokuthetha. Emva koko kwabakho umtyhi. Waxelelwa ukuba anikeze ngethuba lokuba kuqwalaselwe lo mncimbi wengozi. Kwagqitywa kwelokuba makufonelwe omnye woonyana belo khaya, uVuyo, ukuba amane esiya esibhedlele abaphakele ngenkqubo kamolokazana, uNozuko.

Kwiveki elandelayo yafika ifowuni evela kuVuyo isithi kusenzima kakhulu kuye. Wathi oogqirha bathe kuye akubonakali ngathi uza kuphila. Akukho mntu owayengakhali kuloo mzi xa kwakufika ezo ndaba. Kaloku loo molokazana lowo yayinguye kuphela owayepheka. Ezo ndaba zazithetha ukuba indoda iza kutya ibona. Loo molokazana ebesithi xa epheka alinganisele yonke la mizi yaseMantakwendeni. Kanye, kanye uTshipha wayephila ngamarhewu awayesenziwa nguNozuko kuba owakhe umfazi wayevukela ezirhoxweni mihla le. Wayesazi mhlophe ukuba xa enokufa la molokazana, aya kuba anyisile awakhe amathole. Kaloku nabakhe abantwana babephila kukutya phaya ekhaya khulu.

Kuthe kusenjalo kwafika uPhakamisa ongumkhuluwa kaVungula. Ephuma kuCofimvaba apho wayesebenza kwiSebe lezeeNtolongo. Ladibana ikhaya. Wabaxelela ukuba udlule phaya esibhedlele wafumanisa ukuba umfazi womntakwabo akaniki themba. Kwaye noogqirha sele beyilahlile itawuli. Kuloo ndibano uPhakamisa waphinda waphakama wathi, "Mantakwenda! Mna andizukujikeleza. Mfo wethu! Khawucacise ngale ndawo yegazi. Oogqirha phaya bandixelele isimanga sokuba igazi lakho lifana nqwa nelenkosikazi yakho. Ke mawethu ithiwani into enjalo. Andizukuphindela eCofimvaba singawuqabelisanga lo mcimbi

wegazi. Ndiyema apho. Mayingabi ngathi ndivuthela amazinyo ke nto zikabawo. Ndiyihlabile nini ke amabayihlinze." Aphakame uTshipha abhekise kuPhakamisa athi, "Nyana womkhuluwa wam, umkhuluwa wam wade wayolala kobandayo engayifuni into embi. Andinazi ke nina ngoku ukuba nifuze banina. Le ntetha uyivusayo sisayivalile kweli khaya kuba sisithi makaphile uNozuko kuqala. Emva koko ke siyivuse kuba nam ndinomdla wokwazi ngale ntsumantsumane yegazi esiyive ngoogqirha. Uxolo, Letha, silapho ke sileli khaya likayihlo. Andazi ke ukuba aza kuthini na amanye amadoda." Kwaphinda kwaphakama kwa uPhakamisa wathi, "Xa kunjalo ke mawethu ndiyawurhoxisa umbuzo wam. Masilindeni ke njengokuba ikhaya ligqibe njalo. Enkosi mawethu."

UTshipha uncokola nomfazi wakhe uNovintwembi. Athi uTshipa, "Nkosikazi ingathi kukho imoto engena pha kwamkhuluwa. Khawundiphe intonga yam ndikhe ndiye. Ndiyokuva ukuba kuqhubeka ntoni na ngoNozuko."

"Khawuhlale phantsi, wethu, ndisarhoxisa amanzi okugqibela kulo mngqusho ndiwuphekileyo. Uza kukhemezela phaya yindlala. Akukho mntu uza kuhoya wena phaya kukho isigulana. Ukuba uyafuneka uza kubizwa," watsho uNovintwembi.

"Phaka ngoku ke andinakulinda ukurhoxa kwamanzi. Wonyule lomngqusho wakho inokuba uthambile ngoku. Andifuni de ndilandwe umkhuluwa wam esaphila wayengalandwa kwizinto zalapha kwam. Kamnandi ndithetha nomntu omaziyo ngqo umkhuluwa wam."

Xa egqiba ukuxukuxa uTshipha kwafika abantwana besithi, "Kuthiwa masizokubiza utat' omncinci. Usisi uphumile esibhedlele. Uziswe ngubhut' Vuyo ngemoto." Hayi ke bathana mba ukuya kwatatomkhulu. Yangena kwangoko imbizo yamaNtakwenda. Umhlali ngaphambili uPhakamisa wathi, "Mawethu, ngoku ndiza kunixelela into eyenzekayo. Ngokuvezwa ngala mangqina mabini uVungula nomkakhe uNozuko." Ibali labo ke lihamba ngolu hlobo. Kuthe ngela xesha uVungula wayefunda kuForm One, wathandana noThozama lowa wakwasibonda. Kwathi ngokudlala kwabantwana kula mahlathi bahamba kuwo xa besiya naxa bevela esikolweni. Kwathi kanti uVungula wayenzakalisa la ntombi. Kanti uThozama wayekwathandana nela polisa kwakusithiwa nguFongoqa. Ngenxa yokuba lalisebenza wathi umithiswe lilo. Lamkhupha esikolweni lamzeka. Bazala umntwana abamthiya igama elinguNompucuko. Wakhula uNompucuko wade waba ngumongikazi eMthatha. Wadibana apho ke noVungula. UVungula wamthanda waze wamenza umfazi wakhe. Uthe engumfazi njalo kaVungula bafumana amawele aziintombi omabini.

Kuthe kwakuvela le ngozi oogqirha bathi bafumanise ukuba amagazi abo afana twatse. Kuthe xa kuxoxwa elo tyala lokufana kwamagazi abo bengumfazi nendoda, kwanyanzeleka ukuba umhlali ngaphambili awacele, loo mangqina mabini ukuba achaze iimvelaphi zawo. Intombi yathi yona zange umama wayo amxelele ukuba wayekhe wathandana noVungula. Kodwa yena uNompucuko wathi wayemane embuza umama wakhe ukuba kutheni le nto yena ingathi akafani nabanye abantwana. Umama wakhe wayedla ngokuthi, "Kaloku wena mntana wam, uyihlo wandimithisa engekanditshati." Kwavakala nento yokuba uThozama wayesele engumhlolokazi kuba wabhubha umyeni wakhe uFongoqa emva kwabantwana ababini ababesolekela uNompucuko. Yahumzela inkundla yathi, "Alivakali eli bali." Wathi umhlali ngaphambili, "UVuthuza utshate intombi yakhe wayizalisa amawele aziintombi."

Isizathu zange axelelwe nguThozama ukuba wammithisa. Wadibana naloo ntombi wayizeka. Waba njalo uzeka umntwana wakhe wamthi nka amawele akwazintombi. Yonke loo nto ivezwe yingozi ethe yabahlela.

IV

Ndiyivala ngomthandazo

Sasincedwa kukuyithenga

Ngeminyaka yoo1980 noo1990 abasebenzi basemigodini babengavumelekanga ukuba bazishiye iindawo ababehlala kuzo ekwakusithiwa ziinkomponi. Futhi ngelo xesha umntu obhinqileyo wayengasebenzi nokusebenza kuloo migodi. Yonke imisebenzi yabafazi yayisenziwa ngamadoda. Nabafazi babasebenzi babengavumelekanga ukuba bawabone amadoda abo kuloo migodi ayesebenza kuyo. Loo nto yenza ukuba indoda imgqibele umntu obhinqileyo ngala mhla yashiya ikhaya isiya emgodini. Kodwa inkanuko yona, ukukhanukela umntu ongumfazi, yayirhawuzelisa imizimba yamadoda. Kangangokuba ekuseni yayingulo abalise indlela aphuphe ngayo kamnandi elele nomfazi wakhe okanye umntu wakhe. Amanye amadoda ayede alale namanye amadoda. Andisathethi ke ngezi ntwana zazibaleka isikolo, kuba zaziba ngabafazi abasemthethweni enkomponi. Kangangokuba xa zigoduka zaziphiwa izinto ezinkulu kunye neemali ezininzi ngamadoda azo asenkomponi.

Phakathi kwiminyaka yoo1980 yatshintsha imithetho. Baqeshwa abafazi emakhitshini, ekucoceni ezi-ofisini nasezibhedlele. Namadoda asenkomponi avumeleka ukuba angaya ezilokishini nakuzo zonke iindawo ezazihlala abantu abamnyama. Oosisi abamnyama bafumana umtyhi wokuya ezinkomponi. Kodwa babengavumelekanga ukuba bangene ezindlwini nasezibharini zaloo mawaka-waka wamadoda ayehlala apho. Kwanyanzeleka ke ukuba abo sisi bangqunge ngasezibharini xa befuna loo madoda.

Oosisi abo babefika apho behamba ngamacala. Babenxiba izikeyithi zesilika ezijikelezwe ziipliti. Wayesithi ngoku anxibileyo kodwa uyibone inkaba yakhe, imigqongo, amahleza, iintsula, izinqe; andisathethi ke ngamabele ayephithizela agqibe isifuba esi sonke. Okuyipenti ke kona kwakunganxitywa tu. Ndiyabona ukuba kwakulungiselelwa okuza kwehla kusaphunywa ezindlwini. Aba bantu ke uninzi lwabo lwalunezisu owawunokucinga ukuba uneenyanga ezine ekhulelwe kanti babengasayenzi loo nto. Iziqa zabo zazivela kakuhle xa benxibe izihlangu ezichophileyo. Izidlele nomlomo zaziqatywa into ebomvu. Ibunzi lona lalisitsho ngomvambo wamachokoza amnyama.

Kwakusaziwa ukuba ezi ntwazana zithengisa ngeziqu zazo. Zaziqopha ngokujikeleza ezibharini, zilalele amadoda azikhanukayo. Ukuba uyithengile kwakufuneka ukuba iquluse ecingweni ze wena mthengi ulirholoshise ngaphakathi komnatha icephe lakho. Kukuwe ukuba ufuna ize ngomva okanye ngomphambili. Kodwa imali yayingafani. Kwakushiyana oonozala ukondla apho. Amadoda ayetyhilizana uyibone intwazana ibuso bunemihlisela emnyama nabomvu yeza zinto bekuhonjwe ngazo ekuseni. Lithi lakufika ixesha lomsebenzi kuhoywe umsebenzi. Kumadoda angondlekanga kakuhle kwakuba zizikhalo kwezo ngcingo. Kwakunganyali ukuva intokazi ikhalima isithi, “Uyikhuphelani? Sukuyikhupha! Yiyeke. Yifake futhi! Yenza maan.”

Kwakunyanzeleka ukuba uzame ukulithubelezisa nakanjani na icephe lakho kuba emaninzi amadoda angxangele ukuthenga. Ukuba ulibele kukufotyoza wawusohluthwa intlaka emlonyeni. Abo sisi babe sele bebazi abathengi babo. Kuba ingwe isidla ngamabala

wawuzenza ngokwakho ukuba ube ngumthengi okhethwayo. Kwakufuneka izingqi zakho zivakale. Kungenjalo wawufola ngakwelo cingo kude kuphele ixesha lebhari. Ukanti ke bona omakad' enetha babengafoli nokufola kwelo cingo koko babekhwetywa kuba zazisaziwa izithonga zabo. Zazibakho ke neemini zento ekwakusithiwa yiseyile, apho isixa semali emayibhatalwe sasithotywa. Loo seyile yayinikwa amadoda amade ngeentonga zawo. Abo sisi babesithi xa begoduka bephethe zonke iimali zenkomponi baqhayiselane endleleni ngezithonga abazifumeneyo kubathengi.

Kuthe kwakubonakala ukuba elo shishini "lempundu zangaphambili" liyanda kwavezwa elinye isebe. Eli sebe laba kwibala elikhulu elohlula imayini nedolophu. Akukho mntu waziyo nanamhlanje ukuba ngubani owaxelela amadoda asenkomponi ngelo sebe. Kodwa laba ngundaba-mlonyeni kungekapheli neveki livuliwe. Kwavakala ukuba kula veki yokuqala amadoda ayesenziswa simahla. Kwaye yayingqisha indoda kudinwe yona kwabo sisi. Kwavakala futhi ukuba elo sebe lavulwa ngaba sisi basebenza emakhitshini abelungu. Kuthiwa athi amanyasa, "Nilibele kukuzixhaphazisa ngabeSuthu namaXhosa, inemali le nto yenu. Vukani." Benjenjalo ke. Ukusuka kwiintombi ukuya koomama ababesebenza kuloo makhitshi abelungu. Omnye umama waseLesotho wabiza intombi yakhe, wathi mayilumle umntwana wayo ize eWelkom, kuba imali yokuba ngunongogo yogqitha neyokusebenza emgodini.

Aba beli sebe litsha abathengisi babevela bangqengqe ngomqolo. Indoda ke yayibeka imali yayo nje ifunze enkomeni. Kwakufuneka ukhawulezise ngeli xesha usebenzayo kuba usisi lowo ejonge kuluhlu lwamadoda asangxangele yena. Wayemana ukuwakhomba ngemilenze la madoda, andule ukuthi, "Nina lungisani imali uyagqiba lo uphezu kwam. Masivan' apha: imali mayitshintsheke. *Please*." Wade waphakama umfo owokuqala, wavuthulula wahamba. Kwakhwela olandelayo owakhokhelisa ulwimi kulo sisi. Wathi lo sisi, "Khawuyeke ukundinyokonyela ulwimi mXhosandini. Uzokundihlanzisa. Khokhelisa kule uyizeleyo." Babegoduka abo sisi beyirhuqa ngeengxowa imali yamajoyini.

Abafazi baselokishini bathi bakuyiva le nto bavula elabo isebe laselokishini. Kwakukho ihostele eyayihlala abantu abangosisi kuphela. Yayibizwa ngokuba yi*Ladies Hostel* eyayenziwe ngumasipala wengingqi. Igama leli sebe kwakuthiwa yi-*LOKHWE ZIYAWA*. Apho ke kwakubuya zonke izizwe ziye apho. Nabantwana besikolo babezenzela imali apho. Apho ke umntu othengisayo wawumbona ngethwathwa elalijingiswa apha esifubeni lixela ixabiso laloo sisi. Wena into owawuyenza kukumnika imali qha. Emva koko yena azihlube umhlaba wangezantsi. Ukuba uthe gqolo ukugeja yindaba yakho. Ukuba ulibele kukukhulula ibhulukhwe liyahamba lona ixesha. Uyakuva sekusithiwa, "OMNYE", ungekaqalisi nokuqalisa. Obo bumnandi sasincedwa kukubuthenga kwiindawo ezinjalo singamajoyini.

Eyaselokishini ke yona yahamba yahamba yade yazibetha zonke ezinye. Kaloku apho amadoda ayekwazi ukumthenga usisi ngomrholo wawo wonke. Xa wenze njalo ke akukho ndoda iya kube iphinde imthenge lowo de kuphele inyanga. Yayikwazi indoda ukuthi yakuphela ijoyini iye kwenye imayini ithathe entsha ijoyini kuba imali yayo yala joyini indala yayiphelela e-*Lokhwe Ziyawa*. Yaba sisiqalo sokutshipha kwamadoda eso. Yaba sisiqalo sokunyuka kwabafazi bawo bezokuwalanda amadoda abo, ayesele etshone lwale kubacimbizi baseGoli ababethengisela umntu wonke onemali. Abantwana besikolo babesithi

xa besiya ezikolweni baphathe iityesana ezineempahla zokutshintsha; ze bathi xa bephuma esikolweni banxibe iimpahla abacimbiza ngazo kwezo ndawo ngeendawo zeshishini labo. Abanye abantwana bezikolo babede baziyeke nezo zikolo bathengise ngemizimba yabo, bondle abantwana babo nabazali babo. Amajoyini ayesithi, “Heee! Kazi solishiya na eli Rhawuti njengokuba similisele iingcambu kwezi ntokazi zalapha.” Obo bumnandi baseGoli baba sisinama-ndokunamathela kwamanye amadoda.

Andimfuni kwam

"Le ntwana yakwaMandlane andiyifuni phaya endlwini. Kudala ndimane ndisiva ukuba ibutha phaya. Kutheni isiya xa ndiphangele nje?" Watsho uMlibo ubuso bungatyhilekanga.

"Ukhe ndafika ipha namhlanje, ndizoyibulala. Nantsi imela epokothweni. Hayi, ningandinqandi." Wakuthetha oku uMlibo emana ukuzimpampatha kwiipokothi zesilamba sakhe. Ngaloo mzuzu kwathi qatha engqondweni yakhe ukuba adlule e*Boiler shop* kuqala aye kulolisa loo mela wayedlisela ngayo.

UMlibo wawenza lo mtyangampo wamazwi akuba etshayisile emsebenzini emva kwentsimbi yesihlanu, xa ilanga likhumbule kulonina. Lo mfo wayeligwangqa owawungacinga ukuba lizalwa ngumlungu nomntu omnyama; ethe ncothu kangangokuba wayegoba xa engena eminyangweni yezindlu; umzimba wakhe wona wawukhaphukhaphu, eqhayise nangezandla ezazinanazela okwezomntu oculisa ikwayari. Wothuka xa esiva uDavid esithi, "Awu, mkhaya. Kutheni wathetha wedwa ndikho?"

"Ukho nantoni wena ufana nje nala ntwana yakwaMandlane? Uyamazi ukuba la xathawana uhlala emzini wam xa ndingekhoyo?"

"Ndiyamazi. Ukhe athengise utywala naye phaya kwakho. Ngoku sizothini ukungayi thina? Nangoku ndiyaqonda ukuba uTa Zwayi uphaya. Ndiyamazi uyithanda gqitha la *joint* yakho la *wey*."

"Kwedini, *pasop*. Ndingaqala ngawe ngoku." Watsho uMlibo elingisa uDavid ngala mela ebecinga ngokuyilolisa. Emva koko ke uMlibo wangena e*Boiler Shop*, uDavid wenjenjeya ukuya apho kukhwelwa khona iiteksi eziya edolophini. Yakuba iloliwe imela uMlibo naye wasingisa ngasesikhululweni seeteksi. Emva kwemizuzu emihlanu yafika iteksi. Yothula abanye oosisi abangamaziyo uMlibo. Kodwa aba sisi babesuka kwaMlibo besiwe ziitshomi zabo. YayinguNonyembezi noNokufa. Babezintanga. Yile genge yoo1980. Babengabacoci kwakule mayini inye. Babe nemizimba ethe fuku bobabini. Kodwa uNonyembezi yena wayekhanya ngebala lo gama umhlobokazi wakhe wayemnyama thsu.

Yonke ke le nto yenzeka e*St. Helena Number Four Shaft* kwindawo ekukhwelelwa kuyo iiteksi eziya eSkomplasi. ISkomplasi ke yilokishi yemayini, e*No. Two Shaft* naseWelkom. UNonyembezi, omnye waba sisi wavakala esithi, "Yhu ntombi sincedile sidlule phaya kwesa sirhoxo kanti ndiza kuthi gqi ngesidala sam."

"Kanye kanye. Bendikusa ngabom phaya bendisazi ukuba soze la bhuti angabikho phaya. Uhamba phaya qho ingakumbi la tata waphaya xa eye emaXhoseni. Yho! Ntombi kulawula la bhuti phaya. Nezikweliti sizinikwa nguye phaya," walandelisa ngelo uNokufa. Bonela nje kukuhleka bathi ke yena akabhali naphantsi ukuba nje uvume loo nto aza kuyithetha kuwe ugqibile.

"Uphi kakade utata waphaya?" Wabuza uNonyembezi.

“Kowu lowo ligoduka kungenzeka ukuba useKoloni ngoku sithethayo.” Kuthi kusenjalo kufike iteksi eya eWelkom ibathathe aba sisi babini kushiyeke uMlibo yedwa apho.

Uthe uMlibo akuva ukuba la ntwana yakwaMandlane iyashukumisa phaya kwakhe wayothenga ezinye iimela. Ngethamsanqa lakhe ivenkile eyayithengisa izinto-yinto apho kweso sikhululo seteksi yayisavulile. Akaphozisanga maseko yakugaleleka inqwelo yamahilihili eyamsa eSKomplaas ngephanyazo. Ngoko nangoko waya endlwini yakhe esenza imitsi engathi ngumntu lo oza kugxumeka izinti zokwakha indlu ukuhamba kwakhe. Itshefu awayeyiphethe yayisele iyiyo emenza manzi ebusweni. Ihempe awayeyinxibile yayihlohlwe kanobom apha ebhlukhweni ukwenzela ukugcina eza mela wayezithengile. Kubekho inkwenkwana ayibona iphethe iibhotile zebhiya izisa komnye wabahlobo bakhe. Uye ayilandele le ntwana. Imamkela ngobubele le tshomi yakhe, baze basele bonke. UMlibo uye ayibuze ukuba le ntwana ibithengiselwa ngubani na. Iye ithi le ntwana ithengiselwe nguTa Zwayi. Emva koko iye ithi chwishi inyamalale.

“Mfondini, ndizothi nje iglasi ibe nye, ndimke.” Okunene wenjenjalo uMlibo akukhova ithamo lakho. Apha endleleni uziva ehumzela, “Izondazi ke le ntwana namhlanje. Rha! Iba kukwabani apha?”

Uthe xa ekude kufuphi nendlu yakhe wabona ukuba makhe aqale angene komnye wabamelwane bakhe. Xa engena apho ufika kuselwa; abulise, kuvunywe, anikwe iglasi, kuselwe.

“Madoda, ndidikwa ngula mfo kaMandlane osoloko egoxe emzini wam,” uvula ngelitshoyo uMlibo. Iba yiloo ntswahla kuhlekwa esi sithwakumbe sento abawela ngaso.

“Ungafane uqave utsho. Ukwakho ngoku sithethayo. Bendithengiselwa nguye ezi bhiya, loo nto ukhethe ezona zibandayo,” kutsho uGwala, ongumsindleki wabantu kule ndawo kuselwa kuye.

“Uza kufika encume phaya kwakho xa ufika. Umkakho ebequkeza ekhitshini. Ndiyabona ukuba ebelungiselela wena.” Uyayiqongqoloza iglasi yakhe uMlibo aphume esitsho ngesitshatshela sezithuko. Uthe xa eza kufika ngasendlwini yakhe waqala wangena kulo mmelwane usecaleni kwendlu yakhe ngqo. Nalapha ufika kuselwa ngumntu wonke, naye angazibandezi ithamo elinye nje lebhiya. Kuthi kusenjalo kubhaqwe ukuba uMlibo uxhobe ngeengxabela zeemela. Zibonwa ngokumana zisithi liqi ukuwa. Xa ebuzwa ngazo wathi, “Ze ningalali namhlanje, madoda. Niza kuva ugovu wezi mela xa zisidla emntwini. Ndifuna ukumshiya ethe nkca izisini. Koculwa amagugu, ndiyakuxelela. Ndifuna imela nganye idle ukudla kwayo.”

“Uyaqonda phofu ukuba yimbethi-manqindi yale mayini leya?” Latsho elibuzayo.

“Ndizoqala ndihlabe loo manqindi. Inyama nethambo azenz’ into kwisitshetshe. Okanye mandithi kocaca namhlanje ukuba ilinqindi iyimela yeyiphi eyoyisa enye.” Agigitheka ayiloo nto amadoda. Wathi xa enga uyaphakama uMlibo wasuka wayokuthi folokohlo esofeni, yoyi bameba ubuthongo. Xa ekhwazwa umfazi wakhe wathi, “Myekeni apho lowo sodibana naye kusasa.” Wayekwa walala apho kwammelwane.

“Gwiba! Gwiba!” wavuka dlundlu selememeza uMlibo, “Ziphi iimela zam?”

“Azikho kwibhegi yakho, besizifake khona?” Buphuthuphuthu uye agqogqe kwibhegi yakhe, afike zikhona.

“Ooh! Nazi. Hayi ndizibonile gxa’ m. Masibonane emva komsebenzi ke madoda.”

“Kulungile makhelwane.”

Uye athi chu uMlibo aphume kwaGwiba onde ngomzi wakhe. Xa efika kwakhe afike uMandlane enxiba izihlangu kula ndlu inesofa, inkosikazi yakhe yona isekamereni isondlula.

“*Hi homi,*’ kubulisa uMlibo kuqala.

“Sewundibulisa kanjalo ngoku; kwathini na nkabi yakuthi?”

“Kwathini ngantoni? Andina-*contract* yokubulisana nawe mna. Xa ungafuni ukubulisana nam vala umlomo wakho qha,” watsho uMlibo engqangqaqhela ngasekamereni yakhe.

“Kuqhubeka ntoni ekh’ apha, Nowethu?” Wabuza umfazi wakhe emthe ntsho emehlweni,

“Wafika seluvundlile nje wena uvela phi ngeli xesha. Ubulele nabani?”

“Usazi nje ukuba ndoyisakele ndalala kwaGwiba, undibuzelani?” Uphendula atsho uMlibo ebucunuka.

UMandlane uye abakhwaze bobabini bafike. Xa befika uye abacele ukuba bahlale phantsi kancinci. Axelele uMlibo ukuba bekugcwele ngabantu apho izolo. Kangangokuba bekukho neza ndlavini zabeSuthu kuthiwa ngamaRashiya. Yiyo loo nto ke eyenze ukuba yena Mandlane agqibe ekubeni azokuncedisa kwamkhaya wakhe onguMlibo. Ibinguye obemane enqanda ubundlobongela obebusenzeka apho. Nokuze kungagezwa apho kuncede yena, kuba ebengenakubayekela abakhaya bakhe.

“Andazi nokuba bendiphazama na ngaloo nto, mkhaya.”

Wasukuma uMlibo eyindwebela le nto iza noMandlane. Wakhwexa ibhlukhwe wayibeka enkabeni. Amehlo akhe wawamilisela kuMandlane. Emva kwethuba wanikina intloko.

“Rhabula apha, mfondini. Mandithi indima oyidlalileyo apha kwam izolo ndiyayibulela. Kumnandi ukuyazi into yokuba abakhaya bethu basikhathalele. Ndifuna sivane apha ke: ndipholelwe yiyo yonke le nto yobu buhlobo ufuna ukubakha.” Waphakama ngoku uMlibo wayokuma ngasefesitileni, emana ukuphuthaphutha ezipokothini, ephatha kuzirhawuzelela esilevini. Endlwini iphela kwakulawula ucwangco, olwalumana luphazanyiswa ziintshukumo zikaMlibo.

“Iindlela zakho, Mandlane, nezam azingqamani ncam,” walekelisa uMlibo, “Kwizinto zalapha kwam andisifuni isandla sakho. Kudala ndikunyamezele uzifohla ezintweni zam. Ukuphuma kwakho apha namhlanje, ungabuyi uphinde uze apha nokuba kuthiwa kukho umntu obulawayo. Masingabhidani kwezi ndlela zethu.”

Emva koko wajonga emfazini wakhe. Intombi yaseMaZizini yanela nje kukuthi ntla ngaloo mehlo omyeni wayo awayebhalwe ingqumbokazi, yaze yondela phantsi. “Nowethu!

Andimfuni kwam lo mfo. Andifuni noncedo lwakhe apha. Baninzi abantu baseNgqamakhwe kwesi sixeko. Xa unengxaki yiya kubo. Uyayazi nawe ukuba oko sahlala nabantu baseNgqamakhwe engekho lo mfo wakwaCentane. Ndiyaphinda, Nowethu, ndithi, lo mfo andimfuni kwam.”

Mkhupheleni phandle abethwe ngumoya

"Kuphakathi evekini naxa kuyimpela-veki nikhothama kule nkomponi. Kowu! Kubuhlungu ukuba nini." Ndaziva ndisitsho ngenye impela-veki kubantu endandihlala nabo enkomponi. Elo xesha kwakusekunqanqaza oonogqaza emathafeni. Ndandivuthulula ijini yam, endandiyondlale phantsi kweshiti lebhedi yam ngoko bendilala. Amalahle okubasa isitovu ayephelile kwaye ayeza kundilibazisa. Ngelo xesha ndandiphethe ibhrashi namanzi ndibile ndilithontsi ndihlikihla amagazi eencukuthu neentwala ezazicumkele kulo *ngxaza* yam la *wey*.

"Letha, uza kufela kwesa Skomplaas wena. Usaya khona futhi?" Wabuza uGatyeni evele ngenkaba ezingubeni.

"Obam ubumnandi abubotshelelwanga kuwe ke, Gatyeni," ndatsho ndisondlula. "Iilokhwe ziyawa eSkomplaas." Ndaguquka ndalijonga eli khaba ndandithetha nalo. "Amajoni omkhonto wesizwe anqongophele kufuneka ongezwe sithi."

Ndawabulisa nje loo madoda ndaphuma. Ndandingathi andinyatheli apha phantsi. U-*makhulu skop* wam ndamphatha ngesandla kuba ndingafuni ukulityaziswa ngamapolisa esangweni lasenkomponi. Athi esithi, "*Makhulu skop*", ndabe sele ndimthe qhiwu ngesandla. Lanyikinyela ke elo polisa le nkomponi libhala inombolo yam namagama am. Kaloku amapolisa enkomponi ayengafundanga. Kwakuthathwa abantu abaye balimala emgodini babekwe emasangweni enkomponi. Kaloku kwakufunwa abantu abazokwenza into ethethwe ngumlungu qha.

Ngelikade ndade ndayokufika eSkomplaas, ilokishi yasemayini. Apho kwakuhlala oomabhalana, abaqhubi beenqwelo zemigodi, *imitshini boy*, nee-*team leaders*, nabantu ababeze neentsapho zabo. Ndaya ngqo kwaMamiya. Ndathi makandibonise incwadi yamatyala ndibhatale phambi kokuba ndithenge. Elo xesha asivani kakuhle noMamiya. Kaloku emigodini kwakusamkelwa mihla le ngamaqela ngamaqela. Kwakuthe chatha ke ngaloo mini kuba kwakukho negenge eyamkela ngempela-veki. Xa endibonisa ityala lam ndaqonda ukuba andoneli. Kodwa ndandingenakho ukumjika kuba ndandingenabungqina.

Emva kokubhatala ndathenga ndayokuhlala nezinye iigenge phandle. Apho ndafika kuthethwa ngalo Mamiya, igenge isithi uyalonyusa ityala. Kwakungekho mntu uxolileyo tu apho. Kuthiwa ukuba ukhe wakubona phakathi evekini unxilile butywala obuziselela bona e-*2 Shaft Hotel*, uthi akufika endlwini yakhe afake nokuba ukwelete ihintyana yegrangqa kwityala lakho.

"Nithini na madoda, unjalo?" Ndabuza ndiphethwe nayintsini.

"Ukuba ukhe wakubona ugqitha phambi kwala ndlu yakhe uqhutywa ngumtshovalale, ubiza abantwana bakhe athi mabeze nala ncwadi yamatyala, ongeze etyaleni lakho. Kangangokuba xa ungabonakali kwakhe wayethumela abantwana bakhe ukuba

bakukhangele ze bamxelele xa bathe bakubona unxilile," yaphendula enye iponi eyayithetha ngokungathi nayo yayikhe yalixhoba lobu buqhetseba.

Xa omnye wabantwana bakhe ethe kuye, "Mama, bendibone utata uMoya enxilile ngokuya bendivela esikolweni." Kuthiwa yena uMamiya wayekholisa ngokuthi, "Yeke, tyaph' utsho ke mntan' am, ndiphathele la ncwadi yamatyala."

Ngenye imini ndasishiya eso sirhoxo ndaya kwaMathanga. Apho ndandiphatheka kakuhle kakhulu. Ityala lam laliba yile nto ndiyaziyo. Kangangokuba ndandinxila ngokonwaba apho ndiyazi into yokuba ityala alongezwa xa uthe wanxila kakhulu. Qho xa ndiphuma enkomponi ndandisiya apho. Ngenye imini ndiya kwesi sirhoxo sam sitsha ndidibana noMamiya, ndifuthukile, andibuze ukuba ndagxothwa yintoni na kwakhe. Ndayaluza, ndankolonkoloza, ndizenza ngathi ndinxile. Kanti ke ndandiphuma kwibhari yasenkomponi. Wandicela ukuba ndimphathise iimpahla. Ndenjenjalo ke ndaya kumfikisa kwakhe. Emva koko ke ndacela indlela, ndahamba ndikhululekile.

Enye into endandiyithanda kwesi sirhoxo sitsha yayikukuba sasisetyenziswa nangabantu abaphucukileyo kakhulu ababesuka kweza lokishi zingqonge imimandla yemigodi. Iititshala, amagqwetha, oomantyi, oogqirha, oomabhalana, ukuyotsho kubaphathi bee-Ofisi zePosi. Kaloku ngoko kwakungekho zihotele zabantu abamnyama. Nam ke ndandizithanda ezi ngcungela endandisela nazo kaloku ndandingumfundi wase*UNISA* ngoko. Ngenye imini siyasela apha nezi ngcungela neqela elininzi elisuka kwilokishi ngeelokishi. Kunxiliwe kungempela-veki yempela nyanga. Iyatsholoza into ekhalayo. Namacuphathikazi eentwazana ebengezela kwaye eqhuba ezawo iimoto. Yayingathi awatyityimbisa ngabom amathanga awo.

Ndanxila apho ndalala. Ethubeni ndilele kanye xa libantu-bahle ndothuke. Ndakothuka ndavuka nje ndaqava mayana. Kusenjalo ndive uMathanga exambulisana nomnye umntu onxilileyo. Uyabona ke wawungamoni uMathanga ndikhona. Ndandisoloko ndimnqandela qho. Ngale mini ndiqabuka esithi, "Khuphelani phandle lo mntu abethwe ngumoya, unxilile." Kowu! Ndiwuvele ebuthongweni loo myalelo. Kodwa ndiqonde ukuba xa usuka kuMathanga ngekhe ndingawuthobeli, kuba ndingaphoswa zizinto ezininzi. Wakhutshwa ke loo mfo etyhilizwa, wagxadazela wade wayokuwa tywaa phandle. Ndimlandele ke. Xa ndifika phandle ndingambetheli izinto ezazikhe zalapha. Ndimkhaba, ndimfaka amanqindi, ndimana ndimrhuqa, ndimphakamise ndimoyamise ngodonga lwendlu, ndimvuthulule ngemvula yeempama. Ndandiphatha kuthi, "*Upper-cut*", xa ndimfunqula ngenqindi, ndimana ukumthi *jep-jep* namanganqindi apholileyo.

Emva kwethuba elide lo mfo sele emajaja ligazi wandibhaqa uMathanga. Wabiza abantu esithi, "Nanku uMoya ebulala umntw' abantu apha phandle." Baphuma abantu bafika ndisazenzela kuloo mfo. Banqanda, ndanqandeka. Wabalekiselwa esibhedlele loo mfo lowo ngeemoto zabaseli. Ndamangalelwa kwabanye abaseli apho. Ndaxoxa, ndisithi, "Nithe mayikhutshelwe phandle ibethwe ngumoya la ndoda, ndayibetha ke." Xa wayebuzwa uMathanga ngabantu ababelapho wavuma ukuba ngenene watsho ukuba loo ndoda mayikhutshelwe phandle ibethwe ngumoya. Yaba kukusinda kwam oko ekusiweni eziseleni.

Imixhentso yesintu emayini

I-ofisi yoomabhalana bomtshongolo yayigcwele icala lonke amaphanga anezichenene zegrangqa. Le ofisi ke yayisesiqithini esasinengca eluhlaza eyayichetywa qho. Ikwelo thafakazi elaliphakathi kwenkomponi nebala lezemidlalo yesintu. Xa usijikeleza ke eso sakhiwo, untofoza kuloo ngca, wawukhaba iziciko zeebhotile.

Lo mabhalana, okhaya lakhe lalikuQumbu, kwakudinwa wena xa uncokola naye. Wayekhwela esitulweni xa evula okanye evala iifesitile. Iibhlukhwe zakhe ezintsha, wayezisa kubathungi bazifakele amabala abomvu naluhlaza, phambi kokuba azinxibe. Xa nijongene ethetha, wawungenakumbuza ukuba ugqibele ninina ukusela utywala. Yayinguye owayebhalisa amaqela okanye abantu ababefuna ukungenela loo mixhentso. Wawungenakuya nakubaphathi benkomponi xa elandula. Kwakunyanzeleka ukuba uzibonakalise kuye ukuba ngenene nangenene ufuna ukufaka iqela lakho kuloo midlalo okanye ukufaka isiqu sakho.

Abasebenzi basezimayini ngaloo maxesha babehlala ngokweelwimi zabo: amaXhosa, amaZulu, abeSuthu, amaTshangana, amaNyasa, amaNdebele, amaSwazi. Kwakunyanzeleka ukuba bahlale ngokomthetho wocalulo karhulumente wangelo xesha. Naloo mixhentso yesintu yayinyanzelwa kwayilo mithetho yocalulo nolawulo. Ukuba imayini ayiyanga kuloo mixhentso yayifumana isohlwayo esiqatha esivela kurhulumente. Yayinokuphulukana nemvume yayo yokomba igolide.

Ngosuku lwaloo mixhentso kwakusithi wayi – wayi kwangentsimbi yesibhozo ekuseni, ingulo eleqa ukuba afumane indawo yokuhlala. Elo bala lezemidlalo lalihonjiswa ngemibala – bala yezo ntlanga ezazihlala apha. Kwakubakho nentaphane yezinto ezingaqhelekanga ezazithengiswa apho. Namachule ezandla ayekhona kuba yayingengobasebenzi basemigodini kuphela apho. Wena wakha wayibona *iNational Arts Festival* ebanjwa minyaka le e*Grahamstown*, wondingqinela.

"Manenekazi nani manene!" Watsho umabhalana wemixhentso yesintu, uMnu. Gxagxa. Ngelo xesha wayekhwele phezu kweqonga elalibekwe phezu kwemigqomo emibini.

"Siyaqala ngoku. Kaloku abelungu abakhulu bemayini nabasuka eburhulumenteni bafikile ngoku. Siyaqala ke ngoku kuba besime ngabo. Amaqela aza kungena ngolu hlobo: amaZulu, amaXhosa, abeSuthu, amaNdebele, amaTshangana nezinye izizwe," watsho uMnu. Gxagxa ejonge kwindimbane ephambi kwakhe.

Uthe esathetha njalo angena amaXhosa ebethana ngeentonga zawo. Yayiyile indoda iphethe iintonga zayo zombini. Ukuba wawukhe wawubona umphumo wamakhwenkwe emaXhoseni, enjenjalo amaXhosa ngaloo mini. Ayesophisana. Kodwa eyophayo yayigalelwa nje umhlaba ezindumeni nasemanxebeni. Emva koko iphinde iqule izingombele owayo. Yaba nguweye – weye apho sele kungekho kwamntu umamela omnye. Usotheko wayekhwaza ekhwazile exelela amaXhosa ukuba ahlale phantsi awakabizwa. Ngephanyazo kwathi wayi –

wayi iinqwelo zamapolisa emayini, kodwa nawo ohluleka. Kwanyanzeleka ukuba kubizwe amapolisa karhulumente. Kwathi gqi iinqwelo zokuthutha izigulana neeveni zamapolisa. Kodwa kuloo maqela amaXhosa ayebethana apho zange kubekho namnye uvumayo ukukhwela kwezo nqwelo zezigulana nezo veni. Bathi bona emakhayeni abo sisintu sabo ukuthi xa kukho iindwendwe ezibekekileyo bazamkele ngemibhiyozo yeentonga. Kwaye bona babephawula ukuba umcimbi uqalile. Kwanyanzeleka ke ukuba ezo nqwelo zijikiswe.

Luthe lwakuthotha ke olo thuli lamaXhosa, umphathi-nkqubo waqhubela phambili. "Ngoku ke mawethu siphindela kwinkqubo yethu. Sosebenza ngoluya hlobo bendithethe ngalo. Ngoku ke ndifuna amaZulu eqongeni." Uthe engekagqibi ukuthetha abe amaZulu selekhasa ukuya eqongeni. Yayingamabutho ngamabutho eentsizwa. Intsizwa nganye iphethe ikhaka kwisandla sasekhohlo, umkhonto negqudu kwisandla sasekunene. Babehamba ngaze kubekwe nje ngezandla ukufihla amaphambili. Iintungo zombini zibhijelwe ngoboya bebhokhwe. Emagxeni bezibhijele ngeemfele zengwe. Iintloko zijikelezwe zizidlokolo ezenziwe ngeentsiba zenciniba. Babelandelwa ziintokazi zabo ezazinxibe iinkciyo kuphela. Zazilwatyuza zimana ukujakatyula okwabantwanana. Zazingathwalanga entloko. Emva koko zabiza elinye iqela elangena lakhawulezisa lakha oonomgogwana bezindlu zengca. Abo ke babetsibatsiba, besitsho nangengonyana eyayisithi, "Ukuba awuvanga mna awuyivanga into emnandi." Ecaleni kwabo kwawa isikhaxa sezinto ezazenziwe ngeentsimbi, kunye neengobozi ezaziqaqelwe ngeentsimbi. Ngoko nangoko la ndawo babegiya kuyo yaba ngathi zeza ntaba zaKwaZulu-Natal. Kangangokuba kwakukho inkolelo yokuba ngenxa yobo buyokoyoko nezinyanya ezingooShaka zazikho nazo apho. Kwakuthe thantalala zonke iintlobo ngeentlobo zamayeza esintu, kwaye namashwa eqhunyiselwa ebaleka ngaloo mini. Ngalo lonke elo xesha umxhentso weentsizwa neentokazi wawuqhubela phambili. Ababukeli babekhwaza bekhwazile yimincili. Abelungu bashiya iindawo ababehleli kuzo, behla bayokuthatha imifanekiso yaloo miboniso, ezo ngoma naloo midaniso. Nendlela abaphuma ngayo yawonwabisa umzi. Ndabona selebebambene omnye emva komnye, izandla zingathi ngamavili kaloliwe zijiwuza ukusinga ngaphandle. Intsholo eyayingako esuka kubabukeli yayingathi ngumgqumo womlambo emva kwezandyondyo.

Athe engekaphumi onke amaZulu kwabe sele kungena amaXhosa. Nakuwo kwaba ngathi kukhutshwa umbona esileyini. Kuthe xa kulindeleke ukuba aqale, induna yamaXhosa yathi iza kukhwaza kwi-*loud speaker* kuqala, waze umphathi-nkqubo wayidlulisela kuye.

"Unotshe! Unonkala akathombi kabini. Kulaa mtshongolo walo nyaka ongapha kwalo uphelileyo, amaXhosa zange ayinikwe imbiza yawo yenyama. Ke akukho mtshongolo oza kuqhubeleka apha amaXhosa engayinikwanga laa mbiza yenyama yalo nyaka," yatsho induna yamaXhosa.

"Nam ndikweli lithethwa nguGatyeni, induna yethu, asinakuthatha nxaxheba lingaphumanga ilizwi elicacisa ngalaa mbiza yenyama sasingayifumenanga kulo nyaka. Futhi apha kule mayini kupheliswe utywala bethu bamahala, umxhaxheni. Buphi, siyabufuna ngoku? Awuzukwenzeka lo msebenzi wanamhlanje singaphendulwanga," yatsho le nkewu itshotsha entla. Kwaba ngathi bekupapashwa umphanga. Kuthe kusenjalo kwavumbuluka iqela labantu abatsha elajikeleza kweso *stadium* licula igwijo elalisithi, "Thina silwela amalungelo ethu." Waba yinkuku esikwe umlomo umphathi-nkqubo kuba kwakukwaphethe

yena nakulo nyaka kwakuthethwa ngawo. Abelungu baba ngathi baqabe igazi ebusweni nasezingalweni. Eza nwele zabo zibulembu ngenkangeleko zabonisa ukuba amaXhosa atyhile kwelinye iphepha. Kwangoko zeza iihipo zemayini zisiza nonoogada. Wajika umboniso wesintu waba ngathi ngumbhiyozo kaKholongolose. Umfutho womcimbi wadamba. Oomama baselokishini bathatha iintsana zabo bonda ngomnyango. Abanye oomama kwaye kwavakala into yokuba abaziboni iintsana zabo. Zavakala izithonga zokudutyulwa kwe-*tear gas*. Yaba nguloo mbhodamo kusitsho izingqi ngokungathi kuyaduduma. Kwabakho neengxwelarha ezazikho kodwa amapolisa akwazi ukuza noncedo lokuqala.

Emva kokubonisana nabaqhankqalazi, umphathi-nkqubo wajikeleza ngehipo yemayini eqokelela abantu ukuba baphindele e-*stadium* uthuli obelukho lwethile. Abaqhankqalazi bavuma ukuba umsebenzi uqhubeke. Wathi umphathi-nkqubo, “Ke ngoku ndinikezela iqonga kumaXhosa.” Wanga ngengatshongo. Zangena eza nto ngentlombe yazo. Zithe zakuthi cwaka ziza kuqalisa ngemiboniso yazo, kwaba ngathi kungena umongameli weli lizwe kwelo bala.

AmaXhosa ke ayengamaqela amabini, amakhwenkwe nabafana. Kwaqala amakhwenkwe kwaze kwalandela abafana. Aye abonisa ngamakhuko neenqawe ezinde eziqaqelweyo. Babesithi bakutshintsha izinto ababonisa ngazo, bahlokome abantu yimikhwazo nemivuyo. AmaXhosa apho abonisa kakhulu ngezinxibo zawo ezibonisa ubume bawo eluntwini. Izinxibo zawo zazibonisa umahluko phakathi kweentombi nabafazi. Intombi ethe yalimala isesekhaya yayingawunxibi umbhaco ofana nowentombi engekalimali. Kwakunjalo nakwizinto abazithwalayo. Xa umfazi womXhosa enxibe umbhaco omde, ongavulekanga ngaphambili, kubekho ifasikothi, aze athi tyuu ilaphu elingathi yibhibhi apha phantsi kwesilevu, lowo yayingumhlolokazi. Kwaye kwaXhosa yintombi kuphela ehamba ngesifuba esiveze amabele. Amadoda nabafazi babesebenzisa eza nqawe kuthiwa ngoozalipholile. Ezinye zide ziqaqelwe ngeentsimbi. AmaXhosa ke ebekuthanda ukuqaba imbola ebomvu nemhlophe, yiyo loo nto kude kuthiwe ngamaqaba. Amadoda wona ezawo izinxibo ziqaqelwa zizithandwa zawo. Isishumane besibonakala ngokunxiba iibhlukhwe ezingenazintsimbi. Ngaloo mini ke amaXhosa abonisa ngendlela abanqula ngayo izinyanya nangendlela abolusa ngayo amakhwenkwe.

“Ki ki ki ki ki ki ki kiki ki ki kiiiiii!!! Halala halala halala halala halala!” Yayisitsho imikhwazo. Ngelingeni zangena ezikaMshweshwe, iyile iphezu kwehashi layo. Ayesitya umhambo lo mahashi, eqhutsuza. Umbono owawulapho wawuhlwabisa umzi uwonke. Abafazi babeSuthu ke bona bohluka ngeelokhwe kuphela. Kungenjalo bombatha ingubo ende nemfumamfuma ekuthiwa sisiSuthu igama layo. Le ngubo yombathwa ngumntu wonke. Yingubo emabala – bala kwaye inxitywa okwedyasi. Ezo ngubo ke uya kufika zonke zinemifanekiso eyohlukeneyo emininzi, kwaye ziyathengwa azenziwa emakhaya.

AmaNdebele wona abonisa iingqayi ezinemifanekiso eyenziwe ngezandla. Ayephethe nezindlu ezenziwe ngodongwe, zinemizobo emihle yobuchule. Nawo ombatha iingubo ezifana nezabeSuthu. Kodwa ezabo zohlukile kwezabeSuthu kuba ezamaNdebele zineentamo ezihonjiswe ngezacholo. Entloko bafaka umngqi omnye wentsimbi. Ezindlebeni

abanye bafaka amacici, kanti abanye bafaka iibhobhile kula mingxunya yamacici isezindlebeni. Zavuyelwa nezabo izinto.

AmaTshangana wona angena ethawuza eneemfele zebhokhwe ezintungweni, ephethe amakhaka neentonga. Atsho kamnandi ngamagubu. Emva koko babonisa ngentlaninge yabo yamayeza. Athi akuveza iyeza leentombi yangulo umfana elifunela kuye. Ayerhuqa nentente eyayineengwenya. Athi akuzivulela zaya ebantwini zidloba. Yaba zizijwili, yangusaa. Wathi umphathi-nkqubo, “Mawethu! Sifikelele esiphelweni salo msebenzi wanamhlanje. Kuni nonke, Maz’ enethole!” Onoogada basemayini bazikhusela izidwangube ezazilapho. Kwashiyeka amaTshangana neengwenya zawo.

UYASHUMAYELA KE LA MFUNDISI

EWelkom kukho ilokishi enkulu kakhulu yabasebenzi basemayini ekuthiwa yi-*Las Vegas*. Le lokishi ke idwele nelokishi kaMasipala eyaziwa ngokuba yiThabong. Asingomntu yinyambalala apho. Abasebenzi basemayini ke babefana nabantu bonke. Umahluko yayikukuba kule lokishi yasezimayini kwakukho iintlanga ezininzi ezivela kulo lonke eli lizwe laseAfrika. Abantu basemayini ke babe neenkolo zabo njengaye wonke umntu kweli hlabathi.

Kwibala eliphakathi kwe-*Las Vagas* nelokishi iThabong kukho isakhiwo esikhulu secawe esihle kunene. Le cawe kuthiwa yi-Presbyterian Church of Africa. Amaxesha amaninzi iindwendwe zazijika kwesi sakhiwo qho zifuna indawo yokuphumla eneziselo ezibandayo. Kangangokuba uMfundisi owayephaya ngela xesha lam wade wabhala umbhalo othi: LUMKELA ISIHOGO. Emva koko zaye zisiba mbalwa iimoto ezazilahlekela apho. Lo Mfundisi ke wayengatshatanga kodwa enentokazi eyayinomntwana wakhe, mntwana lowo owaseqalisa ukunqakula ngengqondo. Lo sisi walo mfundisi wawusithi xa umjongile uncume uthanda ungathandi. Hayi khona xa umvele ngasemva wawungasoze uphinde ufune ukuphuma kulo ndlu akuyo. Wayengathi uhlamba ngobisi. Kangangokuba abazalwana babethanda kakhulu ukuya kucheba ingca phaya ecaweni. Ilizwi lakhe lalifana nelomntu ovuka ebuthongweni. Umzimba wakhe wawungathi ngowomntu otya ekhwele esikalini.

“Mama nawe tata,” wtsho lo mntwana wentokazi kaMfundisi.

“Namhlanje andizokuya kula cawe kamama.”

“Ngo’ba kutheni, ntomb’ am?” Wabuza uMfundisi.

“Siyangxoliswa phaya,” aphendule umntwana.

“Ningxoliselwa ntoni ntombi yam?” Unina wentombi ngelo xesha wayeka zonke izinto awayezenza etafileni wamamela intombi yakhe.

“Kuthiwa siyangxola.”

“Ngoku ke yintoni ebangela ukuba kungafunwa ningxole?” Ngoku sekubuza unina wentombi.

“Kaloku sizovusa abantu abaleleyo.” Kuhlekwa kube mnandi kube yiloo nto, abazali bejongene.

“Kuyalalwa kule cawe yakho, mfazi. Kudala ndisithi kuwe yiza apha e-PCA.”

“Asoze ndilahle icawe yam mna kaloku anditshatanga. Ndakuyitshintsha la cawe mhla ndatshata,” waphendula umama womntwana.

“Ndiyakuva, ndiyakuva. ndiyakucela namhlanje use umntwana lo uthi ufuna icawe etshisayo namhlanje. Ngumthendeleko namhlanje ndiza kube ndishumayela,” watsho uMfundisi encumele ecaleni. Bavumelana emva koko uMfundisi wacela indlela.

“Kulungile sodibana ecaweni, kodwa ingathi uhamba ekuseni kakhulu namhlanje,” atsho uNolizwi, kuba elo yabe iligama lwale ntwazana kaMfundisi.

“Kuba ingumthendeleko ndizoyothenga izinto eziselwayo. Kuzobakho nentlanganiso yekomiti yecawe,” watsho uMfundisi.

“Kulungile, kodwa ungaseli ezi zinto udla ngokuzisela xa ungayanga ecaweni,” watsho uNolizwi.

“Hayi *maan*, andiludibanisi ulonwabo nomsebenzi,” watsho ephuma ehleka.

Zakhala iintsimbi zasecaweni, yakhala eyokuqala ngexesha layo. Emva koko kwabonakala ukuba icawe iye igcwala ngokugcwala. Kaloku e-PCA icawe yomthendeleko yayiba yinkonzo enkulu. Kwakuvuka nalaa maxhegwazana angakwaziyo ukuhamba. Kwakuphuma nabo bantu wawunokucinga ukuba abacawi. Kwakukho inkolelo yokuba xa utye umthendeleko kuza kubakho unoko empilweni yakho. Abanye abantu babefika belayishwe ezivenini ngasemva, ezimotweni, kwiikhumbi, kwiiloli, nasemahasheni athutha abantu.

Yakhala enye intsimbi, wathi unobhala wekomiti yecawe, “Malungu masiqale.”

“Siqala njani uMfundisi engekho; hayi madoda sanukuthetha izinto ezingekhoyo apha?” watsho ugosa.

“Mfo! Andithukwa yenye indoda mna uwabale amazi owabhekisa kum,” waphendula unobhala ebindekile.

“Uxolo mzalwana wam, bendicebisa nje,” watsho ugosa. Gqalakada ngaphakathi uMfundisi waxela imbumbulu iphuma esibhamini. Waxolisa apho esithi ebesokoliswa zeza bhotile zomthendeleko, zange azifumane. Ithe yakugqiba ke ikomiti yenza umngcelele oya kule ndlu inecawe. Noxa bafika sele ehumzela amakholwa ngokufika kade kwabafundisi kodwa kwanyanzeleka ukuba bazeke mzekweni.

Icawe ivulwe ngeculo waze uMfundisi wayiqhuba yonke inkonzo yomthendeleko. Emva koko kwaqala inkonzo yentshumayelo. “Ndiyanibulisa nonke makholwa ngegama lenkosi yethu uYesu Krestu. Amen,” wavula ngatshoyo uMfundisi.

“Amen!” Yadanduluka indlu yonke.

“Namhlanje ndifuna ukuthetha ngezinto ezininzi. Okokuqala ndiza kuthetha ngendlela isono esaqala ngayo.” Kanye ngelo xesha kwaphakama omnye umdala wecawe wathi, “Mfundisi yeka ukugwegweleza ixesha lihambile kudala sihleli apha ngena emxholweni.”

“Ndiyabulela, mnt’ omdala” watsho uMfundisi, ebutsarheka.

“Bendisatsho ke bazalwana nani bodade. Isono saqala ngento nje encinci, into efana neqanda.”

“Mfondini biza into ngegama layo. Yintoni? Le isono siqale ngayo, kuyahlwa mfondini.” Sazinga esi sikhalazo salo mdala wecawe.

“Ndiyaqonda,” waqhuba uMfundisi, “ukuba bakhona apha kuni abantu abayaziyo inyaniso. Amen!”

Waphakama omnye umdala wathi, “Nali elam ilinge. Mna ndeva ngeyam iBhayibhile isithi baye bahamba ngaze uAdam noEfa, kodwa ke andazi nokuba ngowuphi na owakhulula kuqala, futhi andazi nokuba baye benza ntoni na emveni kokuba behambe ngaze.”

Omnye umama webhatyi wayikrobela zibekwa le nto yoku kugwegweleza, wathi, “Ngentlonipho enkulu. Niyigqibile le nto ngoku. Umntu ongumama nongutata xa behamba ngaze bobabini kulindeleke ntoni apho?” Lonke ibandla lahlokoma, “Amen!” Emva koko ke uMfundisi wayithathela kuye inkqubo yakhe wenjenje :

“Isono bazalwana sangena ngento encinci, isiqhamo ekuthiwa yi-apile. Loo nto ke ithetha ukuthi nizilumkele izinto ezifana nee-apile. Umntu okucela i-apile umxelele ngoko nangoko ukuba awuphisi ngayo. Kwaye futhi ndifumanisa into yokuba ngabantu abangoomama aba bathanda ukucela ama-apile emadodeni.” Walijonga ibandla lakhe umfundisi, wancuma.

“Okokugqibela ke bantakwethu xa kuza kujikeleza isitya senkongozelo ndiza kuthi kuni nikhumbule ngenye imini uYesu wakhe wakhanyelwa nguPetros. Emva koko uPetros wayokuloba elwandle. Zange afumane nenye intlanzi. Nani ningaze nindinikele umva. Eza zitya zemali mazigcwale zonke ngoku. Kungenjalo ndakwenza laa nto yayenziwe nguYesu kuPetros. Uthi umbhali emveni kokuba uPetros exabene noYesu, wayokuzivulela elakhe iqela labalobi. Kodwa baduntsuza ubusuku buphela zange bafumane kwanto kolo lwandle babeloba kulo. Uyabona mzalwana akukho nto uza kukwazi ukuyenza uYesu engekho. Ukuba azigcwali ezo zitya ezo akukho nto niza kuyenza iphumelele. Niza kusoloko nimane nisithi ninamabhadi kanti nizenza ngokwenu. Xa ninganikeli ecaweni yazini kakuhle ukuba nikhanyela uYesu Krestu. Xa nimkhanyela uYesu, buzani kuPetros.” Uthe akubona ukuba zigcwele izitya wazithatha wathi, “Phakamani!” Kwaphakanywa. Wathi, “Ufefe lwenkosi yethu uYesu Christ Malihlale nani ngoku kude kube ngunaphakade. Amen.” Xa bebaliselana abantu, ezindleleni ezigodukayo batsho ukuthi, uyashumayela ke la mfundisi.