

NOMR NINI



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“UMakhwatha waseMzwangedwa.”

NOMA NINI

NGU

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UMLOBI WENKONDLO KAZULU

YACINDEZELWA EMSHININI WAS'EMHLATHUZANE
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*present to
lay before*
ISETHULO

LENCWADI NGIYETHULA KUMBONGENI
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NOMKHOSI KA6A6A

ISOSHA SOKWENANELA

Ngikuthandela ubumnyama bakho
Obunjengokuhlwa kobusuku,
Obukhanyis'amehlw'amakati:
Lawomehlo ngawakho Nomkhosi.

feed

Ngikuthanda ngesifuba sakho
Esiphakel'usapho lwakwethu
Ngobis'olumhlophe kuneliqhwa: *snos*
Iqhwa ngubuhle bakho Nomkhosi.

Ngikuthanda laph'usukhuluma
Sengath'ukhathele kausathandi,
Namehlw'akh'enduluza phakathi *look without seeing*
Emathunzini ezinkoph'ezinde. *(ulu)eyeleleke*
show

Ngibon'ubuhle bezintokazi
ZakwaZul'ekade zakhohleka
Zafa; ngibubona bunyazima
Njengonyazi lusithwe zintaba.

Ukugqishazela kwakh'uhamba
Ukhathaz'insizw'iyokweshela,
Ikudlule qed'ikujeqeze
Ikubuk'ikhal'ezimaconsi.

Ngikuthandela unwel'ekhanda
Oluyimamb'emnyama yehlathi
Izibulunge ngemihluhuwe
Icwebezela njengamafutha.

Ngithand'amaziny'akh'anetsako
Ahlobis'umlomo njengentebe
Yeziziba zamanz'o Thukela:
Sengathi kawudli nakudla.

Ngikuthanda nangezandla zakho
Engathi kaziliphath'igeja
Zigez'abcutwana baka Nandi
Abaqhakaz'ubuhle njengawe.

Ngikuthanda ngakho konke kwakho
Nami ngikukhonze kusengathi
Kawuzalwanga kulomhlabaathi:
Wehla ngezitulu zamaZulu.

Isandulela

Lendaba engiyibala kulencwadi namhla, yindaba engayitshelwa ubaba ngisemncane kakhulu. La encwadini kangiyibalile njengoba ngayitshelwa ngoba ngabe iyisinqamu esingenakugculisa muntu. Ubaba wangitshela yona wangibekela igumbi lalencwadi ngamagama aka Nomkhosi noNsikana. Lababantu nge mpela baka baphila eMvoti. UNomkhosi lo kuyiqiniso ukuthi watholwa kubalekwa, kubalekelwa impi. Amaqiniso alendaba agcina lapha kuphela.

Okuningi engikulobile, izinto engizithatha laphaya nalaphaya, ngaziqhwandela eduze ukuba ziyolise indaba yami ziyenze ibemtotti khona izofundeka. Ukuthi umfundisi Gilawoti waenenkosikazi ngenkathi ephemba umuzi waseMvoti kungenye yezinto engizakhayo mina ngoba siyazi phela ukuthi inkosikazi yomfundisi yase ifile ibulawa isifuba kayizange nje nempela iwabone amaZulu, yafela eBayi.

Ngalencwadi ngiqonde ukuthonsisela ezincwadini eziyingcosana zesiZulu esezibalwe yithina sizwe sakwaZulu, njengezawo Fuze, noMafukuzela, noDlomo, noMpanza, noZungu, noNtuli, noMdonswa, noMdladla-Mbatha, nabanye engingabaziyo. Ngiyethemba ukuthi nayo iyosiphonsa isandla njenge Nkondlo kaZulu engiyibale ngonyaka odlule.

Lencwadi yahlabana phesheya empikisanweni eyayenziwe abe "International Institute of African Languages and Cultures, London", ngonyaka ka 1933. Ithe ukuba ibuye kuyiyona yodwa ebeke induku ebandla yalandelwake ezinye ezanikwa amaduduza (consolation prizes) ngase ngiyibuyekezela ukuba icindezelwe njengoba seniyibona nje.

Ekucindezelweni kwayo ngibonga abeMonastery eMariannahill ngokuyithatha lencwadi ezandleni zafo bathi bazoyicindezela bona ngezindleko zafo. Kuyinto enkulu leyo kimina.

Ngiyambonga kakhulu umhloli omkhulu wezikole "Malcolm" owayifunda yonke lencwadi ngisayibale ngesandla emva kokuba ibuye phesheya, wakhomba naye akukhombayo, sabonisana naye wazewangitholela abanye abelungu abasebezinkela kimina ukuba bayithathe lencwadi, kanti nakhu sengilungise nabacindezeli base Mariannahill. Lokhu kunginike isibindi kakhulu ukuba nangomuso ngiphinde ngeleke enye incwadi.

Sengibonga owakwami uMa Nxaba, engangibala ngibale ngilahlele kuye, yena aphikise okungaye ngendlela anginike umqondo wakhe kokunye, yaze incwadi yaba yilokhu eyikhona manje.

Groutville

January, 28, 1935.

B. W. V.

N O M A N I N I

ISAHLUKO I.

Lalisathule izwe izikhulu eziphakeme zakwaZulu zihleli esithangamini zithamele ilanga eMgungundlovu. Kwakukhona oMondise kaJobe, noNdlela kaSompisi indunankulu kaDingana, noLunguza kaMpu-kane, noSivivi kaMaqungo nabanye bokhetho. Khona bengezukuphakala into abayixoxayo bahlala ngasezintangweni ezincikene nezindlu zamaButho ngofo wona ayengekho, eyohlasela. Usekhuluma uMondise ethi:

"Qha madoda, sekuphethe esinye isandla namuhla, izinto kazisahambi njengakuqala. Ngiyafisa ukuba ngiqonde ukuthi yini imbangi yalahlambanhlamba yalombuso kaZulu. Ngikhuluma nje kanginankululeko funa omunye wenu angithwale, ngiyathi ngilele sengizwa umkhonto ungithunga nocansi." Uyaphendula uLunguza uthi,

"Yibo ondunankulu laba abangasitshela ukuthi inkosi bayiyekelani igcwaneka."

"Uqinisile wena ka Mpukane, sitshele Ndlela, sitshele ukuthi kukhonani lapha," kusho uSivivi.

"Ngiyesaba ngofo ngangikhona mhla kwaDukuza inkosi ibulala umfowafo amaButho egiya kujatshulwa kanti yena ulakhile icefo nabafowafo. UZulu waqale wathi, wo, hhiya, ingozi umntanenkosi ubengabe umbulalelani umfowafo engenazwi naye na? Zavela

izihlakaniphi khona esebusa nje uDingana lo osekho-hlwe yithi, zavela izihlakaniphi za buza kuMhlangana, wayichaza indaba yonke kuzona,” kukhuluma uMondise.

“Kawuzwanga yini mhla egwaza uMhlangana laphaya ogangeni lomuzi, ukuthi uMhlangana wamdalula waneka amanyala ka Dingana?”

“Wathini na?” Ku buza uNdlela kuSivivi. “Wathi umkhonto lo, owavela phezulu (njengoba thina sitshe-lwa) wawudedelwe ngabomu uDingana khona uzo-wela esifubeni sikaShaka awe khona lapho angavuki. Inyani phela kwathi la kuthiwa makuyekwe ukusina kwama butho, ngoba inkosi isilimele, uDingana no-Mbopha noMhlangana bathi bona inkosi kayilimele, kakuqhutshwe phambili?”

“Yebo siyabona,” kusho abanye.

Waqhubeka uSivivi wathi, “Inyani phela uShaka wababiza abafowabo endlini kusa ngakusasa ekuseni ngaphambi kokuba afe, wababiza kukhona nabanye belalele, wabaqalekisa, ebikezela nangezinyoni ezimhlophe ezizayo, ezizothatha uZulu wonke ziwubuse ziwenze izigqili na? Inyani washo uShaka wathi abelungu bayofika, uyababona beza ngamanzi, noku-thi bangeke balibuse abafowabo?”

Bathula bonke kwaba sengathi bavulwe imilomo, kanti bagutshuzelwe imicabango yabo bonke befona ikhono uDingana abaphethe ngalo. Wakhuluma uNdlela wathi. “Sengiyabona madoda ukuthi kanti inkosi yenziwa yini ukuba namaBunu lawa yawabulala ngolunya olungaka nje ngani. Yebo Zulu niya-

khuluma nami kangazi isigcino sami kulolubishi lom-buso.”

“Uma sekungabaza nina Ndlela, nina enisenga umbele onobisi wemazi yakwaZulu, pho thina bantu-kazana siyothi sipi besipi?”, ku buza uLunguza.

“Usho njalo Lunguza, usho ngoba ungazi. Kawazi yini ukuba ngenkathi inkosi ibulala bonke abakwa bo ixosha bonke abakhala isililo sikaShaka mina ngavikela uMpande ngathi makangabulawa ngoba eyincekencekana, ebulawa umchoboka na?”

“Yebo siyazi wena kaSompisi wavika washo nokusho ukuthi lokhu phela uMpande uyena onenzalo kakufanele abulawe, futhi uyisilimana akanakubangisa inkosi,” kusho uMondise.

“Kodwa phela nawe kaSompisi wawubona ukuthi uMpande unonele phakathi okwendlazi yehlozi,” ku phendula omunye owayelalele. “Yini ngoba silapha nje yena sizwa ngosizwile ukuthi usathe nyelele waya ngasesilungwini, ku be nalapho esilungwini singamazi umuntu angase ayekuye ngaphandle kwabelungu.”

“Qha, uyaphosisa Zulu uma uthi uMpande ngangimazi ngoba mina ngangikhulumela okokuba indlu kaSenzangakhona ingapheli ibuqeke ithi nya,” kusho uNdlela.

Sekuphendula uSivivi uthi, “Mina ngiyakholwa ukuthi wena kaSompisi wawubona ngoba njalo umuntu anganifumanisa nihlanganise amakhanda noMpande noma kwenziwani. Akuwena yini omphelekezele wambeka ngaseNyezana, wesaba ukumfikisa

oThukela ngofo wesaba izinduna zikaDingana ezihlezi emazibukweni ziqaphele bonke abawela bethutha izindaba zikaZulu beziyisa esilungwini? Ngiqinile uma ngithi kuwe nokwahlulwa kwempi yenkosi eMaqongqo yahlulwa ekaMpande, icala liphezu kwakho.”

“Hawu madoda nakhuluma kanjalo inganti niyabona ukuthi inkosi ayisawahlanganisi amehlo, nami, ngithi noma ngibiziwe ngiyikha ngezibongo zayo, yona inganaki, nodiwo lwayo lwamasi olwalukhothwa yimi namuhla selinikezwa oMalambule. Selokhu impi yenkosi yahlulwa eMaqongqo umoya wami kawu khululekile neze.” Washo qede uNdlela wathathaza ithongwane lakhe wabema wabuka kude kwabase ngathi emqondweni wakhe kudlula izikhathi eziningi. Wazibona wakhumbula esengumfana elangazela ukuba aze abe liqhawe eledlula izinsizwa ayezibona zilwela uShaka yena esathwala amacansi namagudu nensangu, elibutho lezindibi. Wabona isiphosiso sakhe ukuba alahle icala lika Dingana ahlangele noMpande, ingani uMpande akaNkosi yasizwe. Wayibona impi yaseMaqongqo eduze noPhongolo inikizana naye inhliziyi yakhe ingananeli ukunqoba kukaDingane ingani uyinduna yakhe. Kwabuya zonke izinkulumo zabantu abahambe bezifafaza phakathi kwezizwe zonke zakwaZulu bethi, uNdlela lo owabanga ukwahlulwa kwempi eMaqongqo ngofo wayiphaka kabi. Wazibuza wathi konje ngabe lezizinkulumo sezafika enkosini ngokushesha okumangalisayo na? Konke kwagijima ekhanda lakhe ngemizuzwana nje, wathi ethuka ezinye izinduna lezi abehlezi nazo zasezimi

zikhuleka zithi: “Bayede wena wezulu,” kanti zikhulekela inkosi eyayiyochitha ngasothangweni.

UNdlela wathi ethuka ekhuleka naye wazifumanisa eyedwa izwi lakhe lezwakala njengelembuzi ihlwelwe yodwa ihamb'ikhala phakathi komnyama. U Dingana wambuka ngamehlo azinsungulo wangaqwayiza wabuza kuphela lombuzo:

“Ndlela mfo kaSompisi wena oyinduna yami, ngiyabuza ngiti oMaqhofoza

‘UGebuz’izulu,

UNgogo zabantu nezezinkomo,

UMaliwendima kant’uyazalela;

USEhla ngandawana yakhe yedwana,

UMgwazi weziqhananakazana’

Uphi na? Ngiyakubuza ngithi baphi nabanye?

UNdlela waqhaqhazela, wangingiza engazi into angase ayiphendule ngofo inkosi yaqhamuka yamzuma engazelele lutho. Wathi uyaphendula uthi: “Nkosi, e—e—e...” yamquma ulimi yathi,

“Nalaba onabo lapha nabo futhi usubafaka umoya wokuhlumuka bathathe umbango womfowethu uMpande na? Ngiyakubuza mfoka Sompisi, uMpande uyokwenzani eSilungwini? Ngesikhathi nehlukana naye ngaseNyezane, wena umphelekezela uhamba namanye amafutho ami, utheni kuwe?”

Wawaphansi uNdlela ewiswa uvalo, nokubona ukuthi inkosi kanti isiyayazi yonke indaba yakhe noMpande; akabuyanga wavuka, akubanga bikho namanye umuntu kwababemi owacabanga nokulanda amanzi amthele, amvuse. Kwathi ngesikade wathi ndiyandiya, wavuka wakhuluma wathi:

“Wena wohlanga, ngenzeni ngiyisigqili sakho nje?” Wathi uyaqhubeka uDingane wabuye wam-nquma ulimi wathi:

“Wena Lunguza kaMpukane, nawe Sivivi ka-Maungo mthatheni nimgoduse, ni buye ningitshela uma inja isikhwehlele isikhwehlele sokugcina.”

Kwabanjaloke ukugcina kukaNdlela. Ngenxa yokuba inkosi inganelisiwe ukugodusa kukaNdlela yamema ifandla eMgungundlovu “onduku zifomvu zigcotshwa ngamagaz’ezinsizwa,” yayala ukuba bonke abendlu kaNdlela nalawo mabutho ahlulwa eMaqo- ngqo akakwe ngalobo busuku abulawe kusale kwa- Zulu labo kuphela abathanda inkosi. Lachitheka ifandla layobika indaba kwabanye nokuba kulolwe imikhonto kuthuntuthwe nezihlangu ngoBa kusihlwa kuzoshanelwa bonke abophumo lukaMpande.

Abantu abaze bangaya nganhlanye bengemanzi. Kwasuka abanye bayohlebelala labo abazobulawa ba- batshela ukuba babaleke lapho kuthi hwelele. Kwa- baleka namanye amabutho agqabuka igoda lika Mpa- nde abaleka aqonda esilungwini. Kwabanye kwaba lukhuni ukuba babaleke baqonde ngasesizalweni so- Thukela, ngakhoke babaleka bedusa umkhondo ba- qonda ngaseMgungundlovana beqonde ukuba bayo- hlangana noMpande ngaphesheya koThukela kuthi noma esephindele emuva, basale bamlandele ezithe- ndeni zakhe.

UZulu uma ebaleka naye uxosha konke oku- ngaphambi kwakhe ngoBa funa kuthi lapho edlula ebaleka ngemizi, besekuthiwa, laba ababalekayo ama- gwala odwa. Ngakhoke zonke izizwana ezazakhile

kulolonke elibeke eNingizimu zacakazwa ngemikho- nto zaxoshwa zaweziswa uThukela.

Kwathi lapho laba ababalekayo sebeluwelile uThukela, bachitha, bahlasela eSithundu, naseNonoti, naseMthandeni, naseMakhovana badlulela phambili kwaMadundube behlisa uMvoti enhla nawo ngase- Hlimbithwa bayebagwaza ezihlabathini zolwandle.

Izwe lalingakakhiwa kungekho namgwaqo, ku- gcwele amahlathi. Ma uya kulezindawo nanamuhla lokhu uyofumanisa kukhona amagqumagquma ayizi- xhobo anqanyulwa imingenela yoMvoti noThukela, besekuba izinkangala ezeluleke amaBanga akude lapho kungakhuli khona lutho oludliwayo lwasendle ngaphandle kwentshungu namahlala namagulukunqa. Kukhona imithi yeminga ekhula ibemfishane ilungele ukudliwa izimbuzi nezinyamazane zasendle, lapha kuthi uma ilanga seliphumile kushise inhlabathi phansi kuthi lapho uphumule ngaphansi komthunzi, ulele ngomhlane isihlangu usibeke laphaya, uzwe kukhala izihlonono zelanga, namaqhwagi, nawovete ababiza ukushisa. “Valley of thousand Hills” kwaDedange- ndlale yilapho iphonse khona ishoba layo lokugcina. Izwe elingenzansi ligcwele izinkangala namahlanze, namahla- thi, ahanjwa yizimamba ezimnyama neziluhlaza; iziwa zivuleke ndawozonke kunyibilika izimonya ezefuza ma- hlobo onke onyaka zinweba izikhumba zazo ukuba zibe namandla okugwinya okukhulu. Umuntu kanakuba nasibindi sokuhamba yedwana ngoBa kulezizindawo nanamuhla lokhu, noma sekwambiwa imigwaqo izi- ndaba zakhona uma zixoxwa kakulalwa kuze kuse umuntu ethuka ubala.

Lezindawo zihanjwa abaphansi nezihushuhushwane ezathi zihlangana nomunye kubalekwa empini zathi: “Ungibonabonephi?”

Wathi owakwaZulu “Ngikubonabone khona lapha”, wathi eqeda okwakuhola okunye okuphambili kwamuthi muku ngenhlanekela yempama wavaleka umuntu wansondo akabuyanga wakhuluma. Kwathi efulathela kwathi kuye:

“Uma uhlangana nathi ngelinye ilanga ubothi uma sikubuza sithi: Ungibonabonephi? Uthi, Ngikubonabone laphaya, ku—u—de!” Wathi lapho lomuntu izinyanga sezamelapha wayixoxa lendaba.

Ma ukhuluma kuleziziwa ziyababaza, ziwekezele sengathi maningi amazwi akhulumayo njengamazwi amakhonde, nezinkawu zivela kokweba um-mbila. Uma umi phezu kwentaba yakwaMadundu be lapho kwakhe khona manje abakwaMlawu kaKhuzwayo, uyobona phansi ulungelunge lwamanzi amhlophe aseMvoti ehla eya olwandle, namahlathi amnyama akake ugu lweziwa, namasimu aluhlaza omo ba wamakholwa endlalekile njengengu bo uyiphonse wayendlala phezu kocansi lwabelungu umbede. Nasenyakatho kude le lapho kwaqhamuka khona ama butho kaZulu ebalekela uDingana, uya bona amanzi oThukela ephefumula ngosizi kunyakaza nemithi yonke yamahlathi, eselokhu yanyakaza lokho nanamuhla isanyakaza, noThukela lusagoboza luyogcwalisa ulwandle, kodwa lu be lungagwali.

Kwakubaleka wena ndoda, kubaleka wena mfazi; kubaleka wena nsizwa, kubaleka wena ntombi; kuthi nawe ngane uzibonele ngogalo wakho emva

kukanyoko. Uma ukhathala wawusala khona lapho. Nawe ndoda uthando lwenkosikazi yakho lwaluphela lapho ngoba wawungamkhumbula kanjani owakwakho, noma wena nsizwa wawungayikhumbula kanjani intokazi yakho uyivikele, ubona umkhonto ubenyezela, negazi libomvu phambi kwakho? Ingani umuntu uphe nduka isilwane angaboni lutho. Ingani futhi noma sebebuya khona empini babulawa iqungo abanye, abanye babulawe amanxeba asaphola. Yiyo lento eyashonisa obabamkhulu bakhohlwa impucuko nokwazi ababezalelwe kukho, nababezalelwe khona emazweni akude, eNyakatho lapho imifula ingamachibi khona.

Badlula bebaleka kulezindawo zangaphesheya koThukela kwaze kwaba mini thize lapho sekuhlwe kwaphelela. Inyanga yayethwese, nesibakabaka sihlanzekile kungeko nafu. Inyanga yayi indilinga emhlophe iphuma ngasempumalanga, iqhakaze ibanga nezinkanyezi zezulu, imizimba nemiphefumulo yabantu nayo ingenwa usinga oluthize. Kwakuphakathi kobusuku lapho phezu kwegquma okuthiwa iNtu beni kwezwakala intokazi isho ngelincane iphimbo ivuma ingoma yezinsizwa zaseMzwangedwa, ikhuluma yodwa ingavunyelwa muntu. Yasho yathi:—

*“Vuma uphansi umkhonto wezinsizwa,
Nesilo sengwababane. Wa ungekho
Mashiya—Nkomo. Vuma, uphansi
Umkhonto wezinsizwa.”*

Bayilalela abayizwayo bathula bayilalela njalo yaze yazithulela nayo isukwe okwayo. Yathi la ithi nya, kwa bu bula izinkabi ezibayeni nezinkomazi za-

khonya zaphendulwa amathole azo ethombeni, kwa-khonkotha izinja kude sengathi zethusa abathakathi; amaqhude akhohliseka athi sekuyasa nawo akikiliga achwaza kuzozonke izigodi zaseNtuveni, mhlawumbe umsindo wawo wathathana waze wafika esilungwini—kasazi izinto ezinjengalezi kaziqondwa. Umoya wawumnandi uvumelana nenyanga nezinkanyezi, nezi-hlonono zomhlabathi zazinswininiza zibonga uMdali wazo ngenxa yokudla ezikutholile ngalelo langa. Ngamafuphi, yonke into yayenamile ithakazela ukuphila kwayo emhlabeni. Ikhona into ekhulunywa abadala bathi: Uma kwehlakala ukukhala kwezilwane ngaloluhlobo kusuke kubika umhlola. Okwezinja ngisho naka lokhu nje kusho ukuthi kuleyo mizi lapho zishaye khona umkhulungwane noma zakhonkotha kanyekanye kuzophuma isidumbu. Uma izinkomo zibubula kanyekanye nenyanga yethwese kusho impi. Kukhalelwa labo abancelisayo, nabayizinkubele, nabagulayo ngoba yibona abasala phansi ngalobo busuku, bayaqamba bayavuka sekuthe nya, kwakhala ibungane, indlala isithe be, kungekho nokhala kuye kukhaleke.

Kwathi ngokuhlwa okulandelayo phakathi kwamabili kwezwakala ukukhala kwawomame bethwele izandla emakhanda: ukukhala okunomunyu kukho, komuntu ongenakuzisiza, eqedwa isilwane sasendle simehla ngaphezulu, simdwengula. Izigi zagcwala izintaba zonke, zamadoda, nazinsizwa zibaleka, besho abanye bethi, “ingene” abanye bethi, “luhlangene, uyadela wena ophambili, uze ungizwele, sengiyokubika komame nakumantombazana ekhaya.” Emizini

yakwa Qwabe eyayakhe ngaseNtuveni kwabaleka omfo kaMzimba, nawo Hlonono:

*UDlomo khul'emini kithina Mayangeni
Dlomo waseMhlathuze, Nondabomkulu.
Sinikina singampongo yembuzi,
Yona idla umunga yeyame ngomthole.
Inq'elimbomb'elintus'umlomo
Linganga mathole asekhaya konina
Sibene singangoNqumela, singango Ngqeshe
Mavundla kaLugoloza,
Wena wakoNjomane yenkosi
Injoman'eyaduk'iminyakanyaka,
Yabuy'iz'ekhaya isipheth'umthantikazana:
Mhlong'omkhulu, Mhlongo kaNgqeshe.*

Abanye oNgqedana kanye namaMboza uMakhwatha kaGovu nobantuka bezwa wakwaMvuyane ikhehla elaliyimpandla, babaleka ubusuku bonke ubuthongo bengabazi, beshuma amahlathi, bewela imifula, engekho phakathi kwabo osakhumbula ngamakhosikazi akhe ukuthi abaleke abekaphi. Ngenkathi behlukana amakhosikazi nezingane bawayala bathi makayoqonda esilungwini awele enhla noMvoti njengoba impi yayilandela bona besilisa ababaleka baya enzansi noMvoti.

Kwathi kusa kuthi nwi, babe wabona amanxiwa omuzi kaShaka uDukuza, ebonakala kude ngamagceke amhlophe. Lathi selizophakama ilanga sebe-sondelene noDukuza bahlala phansi eMbozamo ngaphansi kwemikhiwane, nemithole, nemingamanzi, baqala ukuxoxoxa bebuzana nangemiphako. Sebe-

hleli phansi bebema nogwayi babona umfuqulwane uthiwe khahla. basondela becabanga ukuthi ngaseku-be umhlola, bafumanisa umntwana wentombazana ebekiwe, eshiywe negula, nencumbe, nomcabana omncane kanye nembeleko. Ubantukabezwa wathi: "lomntwana sizomenzenjani, engokabani yena na?" Waphendula wathi uMakhwatha "sengathi ngiyambona, akusuyenje owomfo wasebathenjini?" Lokhu phela waebazi abafu baka Mthayi kaLubozo wasebathenjini wathi ubantukabezwa, "qha wethu, kaku-suye, shiya sihambe sizothinta okungathintwa, kanti ilumbo." Kwaaba lukhuni kuMakhwatha ingani wae-sezicaphunile izikhali zakhe esefulathela, waphenduka wezwa sekukhala ngezwi elincane wakubuka, wakhumbula abantwana bakhe ababaleke ngayizolo, engazi nokuaba uyobuya ababone yini; ubuso bakhe bagcwala amahloni, wamthatha umntwana wamkhwa-xela ehlo mbe wahamba naye njengomntanakhe, wacaphuna amaklwa akhe, newisa, nesihlangu, wabaleka njengoba basebeyikhomba eduze impi.

bafika kwaDukuza babeka amatshe esivivaneni, bakhuphukela emanxiweni akwaDukuza lapho bathi ukukhumbula amadlozi, bamqaphuza uShaka bekhum-luma namathambo akhe phansi kwehlozi, bezwa kuthi gidi isibindi, banyathela bedlula sebeqonde eNtshawini ephakathi noMvoti noDukuza. bathe bethi kha-phaca ngaphesheya bavukelwa amaboxongwana ezinsizwa abajaha ibangana, kwathi sekuya emhosheni owehlela eMvoti okuthiwa iNgudwini, lapho kwakhe khona abafu baka Manombe wakwaZungu, benoMahlasela wakwaNtuli, babona izinyanda zotshani zimi-

swe ngezihloko bazishutheka phakathi. Ukungena kwafo kuzo bagaqa phansi bavula utshani eziqwini babuye babuvusa ngemuva khona umzila ungenakubonakala. Sebezithe shuthe, afike amaboxongwane athi: "wo, siyanibona ningene lapho kulezozithungu zesiqunga. Mshaye, nanguya lo obebethelethe impaka emhlane. Wo, kengikuthole wena mpandlana, yeka mina kababa". basebethi khimilili bebukana, basebephephikisana inkani, kodwa uMakhwatha nobantukabezwa kabezwanga ukuthi lezozinsizwa zazithini. basebefuna ukuphuma babaleke, kwasekukhala umntwana emhlane, wamthatha wamvala umlomo. Izinsizwa zethuka zithi ukhala emhosheni owenyusa umfula iNgudwini, zaphuthuma zafica impunzi nesixhumo sayo iphuza, zayisukela zicabanga ukuthi bekuyisixhumo lesi ebesikhala. Naziya zikhohlwa uMakhwatha nobantukabezwa, sezixosha inyamazane. Ngenxa yokwethuka amakhehla akabuyanga esavuka lapho kwahlwa kwathi phakathi kobusuku yaphuma futhi inyanga bayibuka iphuma olwandle ibomvu iyindilinga njengesigaxa sebomvu liyotatshelwa isibuda sezinkehli. Bayibuka bathula bangakhuluma. Egqumeni elingaphesheya bezwa kunqenqeza insimbi yethusi bakohlwa ukuthi eyani. bazebalala emva kokuba umntwana apiwe nguMakhwatha incumbana eyayisasele, bazumeka baphupha bebaleka begwazwa yimpi, omunye ebaleka waze waphuma ezithungwini zotshani, waphaphama kanti sekusile. Waphuthuma wavusa uMakhwatha.

bawubona umuzi wamakholwa ononhlevu laba phela abathi befika abefundisi bona babu oNgobengi-

shiyiwe ekukholweni, kwaNkosisihlangene. Basukuma bathintitha iziphuku zaBo bahamba bawela uMvoti bakhuphukela kwamnumzane (umfundisi) uGilawoti beyokhuleka. Bafika banikwa indawo enhla noMvoti bakha. Okokuqala bahlala nje exhibeni bebeke udlebe ngamakhosikazi aBo, kwaze kwathi langathize bayizwa indaba yawo bahamba bawalanda ngaseNyanganye lapho izidlwangudlwangu zaziwavimbele khona ziwephuca okuncane awayekuphethe. Bahloma babuya nawo nabantwana. UMakhwatha nobantukabezwa bakha imizi ezwanayo kakhulu. Intombazana le ababeyitholile yakhula, yagqoka kodwa isakhula imfundiso yamakholwa kayiyithandanga njengoyise abayitholayo. UMakhwatha wayiqamba igama wathi "UNomkhosi", ngoBa wayithola ebaleka ebalekela uDingane, kuhlatshwa umkhosi eNtuBeni. UMakhwatha lo waengakabi nanzalo noma waesemdala. Umfana wakhe waemncane kakhulu owamthola kuMamthimkhulu, nalona owaemthole kuNombonjane waengakhombisi mqondo walutho negama lakhe lalingasho lutho. Ngakhoke uNomkhosi uyena owayelusa.

Umgwaqo oya ethafeni wawudlula endlini yokufundela abantwana bawononhlevu. UNomkhosi wayelokhu ezwa kukhala insimbi nezingane zihlangana, zime umugqa, kuqhamuke omunye azikhuze, ziguquke zishaye indingilizi ebonwa namhla "eMaraBastad ePitoli lapho izinsizwa nezintombi zishay'indingilizi"—nje-ngoBa kusho igama lasesikoleni. UNomkhosi waeziqhuba aziqhuba izinkomo afike ame ngasesikoleni sokufundela abuke lemihlola, acaBange ngayo ehleli phansi kanye nenja yakhe uNkondlwane, abuye adlule

aqhuba izinkomo. Isigcino waze wayithanda lemihlola waqala ukuxoxa ngayo kodadewabo uNontula okunguyena nkosazana kaMakhwatha. UNontula wae-
ngakuthandi ukufunda, ezondana nayo yonke inkambiso yamakholwa. Ngakhoke isigcino uNomkhosi waba ifela-phakathi waneliswa ukukha ngamehlo ehleli phansi ngasezidulwini nenja yakhe uNkondlwane. Ngenye inkathi waeyakhulume nenja yakhe: "Bekake Nkondlwane, abanye abantwana bayafunda thina silapha. Kuhle sikubuka kude, kodwa hhayi uma ngizovalelwa endlini njalo. Kuhle be shay'indingilizi phandle, ngiyathanda." INkondlwane kwakuba sengathi iyezwa ilale phansi ivungame kancane, izihuqa phansi emhlabathini, ikhonkothe kancane, itshakadule ibaleke ibuye ibuye nje ithi thwi phambi kuka Nomkhosi. Kothi ma izingane sezingeniswa endlini, no Nomkhosi adlule ashaye izinkomo zikayise aziyise ethafeni, kwaMandelu.

ISAHLUKO II.

Ukuhlangana kukaMpande namaBunu kwaBangu ngela phambili ukuchitheka kwezizwana eziningi kwaZulu. Ezincane ezazesaba ukucibikezwa ezinamandla zahamba isinyenyela zaqonda oThungulu, lapho zazi-yosebenzela abelungu eThekwini. UMpande wahlulwa ukuphatha umuzi wakhe, pho, waengasiphatha kanjani isizwe na? Ingani amadodana akhe uMbuyazi noCetshwayo basebeBangisana khona phambi kwakhe. Baqembuka phakathi abakwa Mbuyazi bazibiza ngokuthi bayiziGqoza abaka:

*Mbeduka njengesona,
UPhaqa njengelanga,
UTakasa njengeboyi
Libalana nemihosha.
Inyathi yasenhlakanhlakeni,
Indlov'enesihlonti
Njengelemb'eleq'amanye,
Ikhwan'elisikwa lihluma,
Ngengxenywe linguPhunga
Ngengxenywe linguMageba.*

Nabakwa Cetshwayo bathi bawuSuthu. Kaku-
banga sikhathi yabambana ngezihluthu eNdondakusuka,
yayibedula ekaMbuyazi. Kwehlakala futhi ukuba
izizwana ezingenabani zachitheka zawolekela esilu-
ngwini ziyofuna inkululeko nokuhlala ngokuthula.

Lapha esilungwini kwakungasekho ukuhlala nge-
zikhali nokuchitha igazi njengakwaZulu. Inhlalo ya-
bantwana yaseyahlukile impela. Indoda yayifingqa itha-
the igeja iyolima, ithathe uncelemba iyogawula izi-
ntingo zokwakha indlu, ixove udaka inameke indlu
yayo. Isifazane sasesilungwini sasesifusa ngoaba sa-
sibeka abantwana, sipheke, siyohlakula amasimu, si-
beke nezindlu namageceke. Kwasekukhona intenge-
lano ngezinto, isikhathi sezinkomo nezimbuzi sesiqala
ukuba sinciphe. Kwasekukhona abanye abashiya
amakhaya baqonde eTekwini bayosebenza beseben-
nzela izingubo nemali yokulobola ngoaba abelungu
basebefike nezixwembe zesiliva negolide kuthiwa
umuntu onalezixwembe unengcebo yonke. Ngemali
angathenga izingubo, nezinkomo, akhiphele nomfazi
amlobole amqede. Izinsizwa zazisuka kude kwaZulu

zilizhaya phansi izwe ziya, eThekwini ziyosebenza
imali.

Lezo zinsizwa ezasezikwazi ukufithiliza ulimi
lwezizwe zazithola imadlana engcono. Lezizingane
uNomkhosi ayelokhu ezibona ziya esikoleni zazilu-
ngela leso sikhathi sokukhula kwazo lapho ziyiqonda
eThekwini ziyosebenza imali yasesilungwini. Konke
lokhu uNomkhosi wakuzwa wangakuqonda. Njengoaba
waejwayele ukwalusa kanye nenja yakhe uNkondlwa-
ne, elokhu eweza njalo izinkomo aziyise kwaMandelu,
waejwayele njalo ukuhlangana nabafana namanto-
mbazana aseNkobongo nganeno kwaseMhlali, eya
esikoleni. Kuba abafana kwakukhona omunye uNsi-
kana. UNSikana lo kwakulishinga lokuntela kungu-
yena ngqwele yaso sonke isixuku sesikole esiqhamu-
ka eNkobongo. Waebeya dlule ngaku Nomkhosi
amshayele isaga njalo athi: “Mina ntombazana, ke-
ngibe yileyonja ehamba lapho uhamba khona—ngifu-
ng’abaseNkobongo!” Asho njalo adlule. Hawu, ku-
hleleke nje yisixuku kungabi ndaba zalutho.

Kwahamba, kwahamba, uNomkhosi lento yam-
phatha kabana ngoaba imehlisa, ukuhlekwa engaku-
jwayele njengoaba waengumuntu ezihlalela yedwa na-
sendle. Waze wathi ngelinye ilanga; “kodwa wena
ngenzi, ulokhu ungikhuza nje, ngabe ngiyathe ngi-
yadlula?” UNSikana akaphendulanga wadlula nje
malanga onke ephinda into efanayo, intombazana yaze
yafikelwa ukukhophoza kwamahloni. Ngesikhathi
inkani yolaka seyiphelile uNsikana wahlangana nayo
maqede wanyifa esixukwini kwangathi ungena ehla-
thini kanti ulindela uNomkhosi. Kwathi behlangana

uNsikana waqandula wathi, “ufuna ukwazi ukuthi ngikukhuzelani zonke izinsuku?” UNomkhosi wethuka nenja yakhe yaxwaya yasondela kuye njengoBa yayinolaka uMakhwatha eyikhethele khona ukuBa ibeke amashingana ahlupha intombazana. “Impendulo kanginayo ntombazana ngoBa kangikwazi ukuthi unguBani, futhi nokuthi uzalwaphi, izinkomo lezi eza-koMakhwatha laphaya enhla nezibuko lomVoti. Ngiyokunika impendulo ngelinye ilanga, sengimdala, sengiphumile kuleyandlu oyibonayo lapho izingane zishaya khona indingilizi. Wongilindela nempendulo yami. Thembisa khona manje ukuthi uyongilindela “Noma nini.” Lawamazwi okugcina uNsikana wawasho ngenkani kwasengathi uyayishaya intombazana Nayo yethuka yathuthumela yathuka isithe, “YeBo ngokulindela nempendulo yakho “Noma nini”.

Ezinsukwini ezindala amantombazana ayeshaywa enziswa noma yini ngenduku nangamazwi okufutheka. Kwakusinda lawo oSonkanise aBaBeziBambela naBo kuBafana naye athi ekhuluma nje umfana aBe ebeke ukuBa angavundlisi amazwana akhe.

UNsikana wasuka lapho waBaleka waphuthuma esikoleni njengoBa isikhathi sasesishayile. Kwaqala ukungena uvalo oluncane kuNomkhosi, uvalo olungazange luBe lusamyeka. Waqala ukuBona izifanekiso zikaNsikana emqondweni wakhe, waqala ukuBa uNsikana aphume athi phengqengqe emicabangweni yakhe, nasemaphusheni akhe athuke uNsikana efika njalo athi kuye: “Mina ntombazana kengibe yileyonja ehamba lapho uhamba khona—ngifung’abaseNkoBongo.” UNkondlwane uqobo lwakhe wayeseBika uNsi-

kana, nezinkomo zemboza uMakhwatha zasezibecwe uNsikana. Liqinisile igama lawoBaBamkhulu elithi: “Nginjenje ngenziwa uthando, nginjenje yizindaba zokwaliwa.”

UNomkhosi waengazazi ukuthi unguBani, wase-senjenje ngenxa yokungazi nokungahlali namantombazana akhulile okuBa amchazele into ayiyona.

Kwakungelinye ilanga uNomkhosi ehambisa izinkomo zikayise waqabuka ehlangana nezingane zase-Nkobongo kodwa uNsikana engeko. Kwaze kwaBa inyanga, naye waesefuna amasu okuBa athole imfihlo yolokhu. Waqhweba enye yezingane zakhona wayibuza ngokucophelela, wathola ukuthi kanti uNsikana wahamba naBakuBo aBadala wayoseBenza imali eThekwini. Ingane kayazanga ukuthi uyobuya nini kodwa yachaza ukuthi uNsikana uyothatha isikhathi ngaphambi kokuBa aBuye. Lento yamhlupha uNomkhosi kodwa engazi ukuthi imhluphelani lokhu akasihloBo nalomfana, futhi akanqume lutho nalomfana, kuphela ulinde impendulo yakhe ngoBa wameyisa njalo emkhuzazazazi engadle nkoBe zakwaBo. KwaBuye kwafika inhliziyoyolaka kuye wathula wacabanga, wasuke wahamba wathi: “Cha hambake ntombazanyana.”

Emva kwesikhathi esithile umka mfundisi omhlophe uGilawoti wambona uNomkhosi ehlangana naye eqhuba izinkomo, wathanda ukuhlanzeka kwakhe wambuza ikhaya lakhe. Waphendula emkhombisa ngaphesheya koMvoti ezimfundeni lapho kwakwakhe khona amamboza uBantukaBezwa noMakhwatha. Ngelinye ilanga wafika ekhaya likaMakhwatha umfundisi ezofuna lentombazana ukuBa izohlala kwakhe iphathe

aabantwana bakhe. UMakhwatha wavuma njengoba abafana bakhe basebekhulile sebenamandla okwalusa.

Izinsuku zasezibalwa ngenye indlela esilungwini sekukhona usuku okwakungasetshenzwa ngalo kuthiwa olweSabatha noma iSonto. Amakholwa aye-bala kusuka kulo kuthiwe iSonto, kuya kusasa abantu bonke baya sombuluka ngemisebenzi yabo, kuthiweke uMsombuluko, kulandele uLwesibili, Lwesithathu, Lwesine, Lwesihlanu. Ngelanga elilandelayo wawubona amakholwa eya emifuleni eyowasha amalokwe, uhumanise amadwala emhlophe qwa yizingubo zesifazane. Lelifanga bonke babegqibela umsebenzi balungele ukuyosonta ngakusasa. Amabeshu namabinca aye-ngavunyelwe ukuya esontweni endlini yenkosi kwakufanele afihle umzimba, kwesiphezulu naphansi. Lapha esontweni umfundisi wayebaluleka abantu behlezi phansi kungabi bikho noyedwa onyakazayo nobanga umsindo, kubuye kuthathwe ingoma kuhlatshelwe. Abantu basebefunde amaningi amagama okucula. UNomkhosi ngokuhlala kwakhe kwamfundisi wafunda naye ukuloba nokufunda isiZulu, wafunda nemithandazo namaculo enkosi. Nanti igama owaelithanda:

*“Woza, Moya oyingcwele
Woza maungene kithi;
Thina sesikunxanele,
Sizizwele wena futhi.*

Refrain *Moya oyingcwele,
Maungene kithi;
Thina sesikunxanele
Sizizwele wena futhi (Zulu Hymns No. 106).*

Kwakuthi ma selithathwa lelo amakhehla efake izinjivane nezinkonjane esho ngamazwi amakhulu, nezalukazi sezikhiphe imixhiliba zinqonqoloza ngama-phimbo alingisa uhlanga lwamanzi, kodwa uzwe njalo izwi likaNomkhosi liwaphotha onke, njengelenyosi ihebeza ezimbalini ezinyakaziswa ngumoya wenyakatho ehlobo. Kwakuhlabelela izinto zawo Mhuhulu oMpangela yeJozi, kuvungame izinto zawoBevule kaMahawule wakwa Dlozi. Ngenxa yezwi layo lentokazi kaMakhwatha bayikha bayifunela amasu, omame bayibungaza njalo ma sekuphunywe esontweni.

Izinsizwa zaceba amacebo okuyivelela ziphikisana, zithinzisane zithi zingayehlula kanjani. Zisebenzise amakhubalo entando, ziyophalaza, noma zizibalule beseziyoyibingelele? Qha, njengoba iyesebeka into engcono ukubeka intando esihlalweni lapho ihlala khona esontweni, ihlale phezu komuthi bese uyingena egazini ithuke isithanda omunye. Ezinye izinsizwa zaca-banga ukuyilalela endleleni eya emifuleni lapho iyokukha amanzi, kodwa zicabange, zicabange, zaze zabona ukuthi imithi yentando ngeke imngene uNomkhosi ngo-ba udla inhlanzi, amafutha enhlanzi enza kushibilike yonke imithi ingangeni, eminye izincibilikele njengamanzi ingabi lutho.

Lapha kwamfundisi kwakujwayele insizwa yekholwa, kuyiyona esiza ukushumayela ngaphandle isiza umfundisi. Lensizwa yayifundisiwe, izazi, kodwa engekho amantombazana eMvoti ayefanele yona emehlweni omfundisi. UNomkhosi waeseyijwayele impela lensizwa, igama layo kunguTomasi kaNogiyela. Kuthi nalapho uNomkhosi evakashela ekhaya

eyobona emzini kayise kuBe yiyo emphekezelayo, noNomkhosi esemthatha uTomasi njengomfowabo.

Babevela enhla noMvoti ngelinye isonto ntabama oNomkhosi noTomasi, inhliziyo ka Tomasi ishisekele ukukhuluma waesethi: “Awubeke Nomkhosi nazizinyoni zomoya amalanda amhlophe andiza njalo ngamabili, ayofuna izintethe nankaya asebuyela ekhaya emigodini yawo. Kayize ngakutinta into enje?” “Yebo nempela izinto zomhlaba ziyamangalisa. Bekade ngicabanga nje nami ngibuka ubuhle bomhlaba sengathi umuntu angahamba ayekude, lakungafiki leziya nyoni. Uthi kodwa zingandiza zifike eThekwini leziya nyoni?” “Angazi, Nomkhosi, kodwa mina ngithintha ukuhamba kwazo njalo ngazimbili” “Akuzona zodwa lezinyoni ezihamba ngazimbili; njengoBa kade ngisekhaya nje ngibona izimvana ezimbili zitshekedula zenamile, kakumangalisi lokhu kimina.” “Sekukaningi sihamba nawe sobabili sikhuluma njengabantwana. Ake sikhulume ezobudala namhla. Nomkhosi ikhona into engifisa ngikutshele yona selokhu sejwayelana, kodwa ngishaywa uvalo.” UNomkhosi akezwanga into eyayikhulunywa uTomasi ngoBa waesacabanga ngezinyoni ezimbili zindiza ngelinye ilanga zifika eThekwini ezweni angalazi, mhlawumbe zibone uNsikana esebenza, mhlawumbe zikhulume njengezinyoni zezingane kwane zithi: “Tayi, Tayi, siphetheni ngomlomo sipheth’amas’omntwana; Siwayisa ngaphi, siwayisa kwaTayi, uTayi ka Soncengeya.” Imicabango enjenga le eyayigijima ixoshana ekhanda lakhe, ngakhoke esezwa uTomasi esethule wethuka wathi, “Angizwa umoya?” Naye uTomasi wazibonela enge-

ngane ukuthi ingqondo yalentombazana kayikho lapha Yaphela lapho leyondaba.

Ngelinye ilanga uTomasi wafica uNomkhosi ephethe abantwana bomfundisi wathi: “impela kuhle kabi ukuBa nomntwana ohlanzeke njengalaba obaphathayo, Nomkhosi. Uyacabanga ukuBa uma ungaba naye owakho ungamphatha kahle kanje?” Wahleka uNomkhosi wathatha izinwele zomntwana womfundisi waziphulula, waziphatha ngobunono, wazidabula indlela phakathi nekhandazehlukana phakathi kwavela isikhumba kancane, kwaBa indlela eqondile, isuka esimongweni yathi nte ekhanda, waesethi, “owami umntwana uyokwenziwa nje, ngoBa noyise ngothanda azenze nje izinwele ekhanda lakhe.” Wamamatheka uTomasi ngoBa indlela ekhanda kwakuyinto owayeyibona sengathi eyabelungu bodwa. Izinwele zomuntu omnyama zazingenakwahlukana phakathi njengezomlungu; waesethi kuNomkhosi, “hhayi uyakhuluma ntokazi kaMakhwatha, kodwa ngendaba yezinwele ukuBa zenziwe nje, sengathi amaphupho lawo kimi.” Wema uTomasi wambuka edlala nabantwana njengengane enye uNomkhosi wahamba ephethe isigqoko sakhe ngesandla.

ISAHLUKO III.

Kusuka eMhlali umuntu eya eThekwini kwakuthatha usuku nenxenye. Indlela yayidabula emahlathini nasemathafeni asoGqolweni, kuyindlela yabantu, nezinqola sezihamba, kodwa ingambiwe. Kwakuyingozu ukuhamba kwaBantu beyisixukwana oGqolweni

ngoba kwase kwakhe izinswelafoya. Kusuka oGqolweni wawubanga oHlawe ugudla phansi kwamagquma aseMdloti uwele Ohlange bese uqonda eMngeni esizalweni sawo, uklaye emaxhaphozini uze ufike eMtateni lapho idoloba laseThekwini lalakhe khona.

UNsikana wasebenza iminyaka emithathu nenyanga, waqala ukukhumbula ekhaya. Ngamasonto naye akakhohlwanga ukuya endlini yenkosi eyayibekwe eZihlabathini lapho manje sekuyindlu enkulu yama Meleka. UNSikana kwakuyigagu lokucula amagama amakholwa kodwa waengathandi ukungena emhlambini wamakholwa; eya nje esontweni ahlabelele njengabanye. Wabuya nemali engangopondwe abalishumi nesithupha, ababomvu.

Lapha eThekwini waephekela izinsizwa zabelungu ezazingonongqayi, zimnika zonke izingubo zazo ezindala, zimthwalisa izikhwama zazo lapho ziya emidlalweni eMgungundlovu, apha the amahhashi. Zazimtshela ukuba naye azicwale ngokugqoka kwakhe abukeke emuhle. Enye yalezinsizwa yathi kuye, "Hey Nsikana hayi muhle gqoka fana kalo, muhle yena fika lapha." Hau njengoba phela yayimjwayele yamklaya indlela ekhanda yathi make azibuke esibukweni. UNSikana waengazange azibone esibukweni ngaphambili. Wathi lapho ethi nhla wabona uswahla lweinsizwa emnyama lumi nomlungu. Lowo mlungu wamabona ukuthi umlungu wakhe, wabuza wathi, "Nkosana, ubani lo?" Wathi umlungu, "Buka kahle Nsikana, lomunye khona lapha, yena lo Nsikana, buka muhle mpela." Wamangala uNsikana emangaliswa imikhuba yabelungu.

UNsikana kwakuye kuthi noma esele yedwa naseThekwini adabule indlela ekhanda, azicwale, bese eyozibuka esibukweni, ekhuluma yedwa ahleke nje-ngothe kwane inyoni yabathakathi yona okube kuyathe kusakanke uyibone izilunguza phansi esizibeni sengathi ithi: "Wo, hhe, ngimuhle ngiyinsizwa yakwe-thu kodwa ngoniswa ilokhu, nalokhuya," isho ihamba inwayizela phezu kwedwala onqanqameni lwamanzi. Naye uNsikana waezibuka ubunsizwa bakhe.

Izinsizwa zabelungu zazijwayele ukumxoxela uNsikana nomngane wakhe izindaba ezazixoxwa oyise bezizwa ngabanye abelungu abadala. Kwakukhona njalo lokho kujwayelana phakathi kwalezinsizwa ezimnyama nezimhlophe, esikubona kuphela kuvela namhlanje ezikhathini ezinzima; mhlawumbe uma umuntu omnyama esindisa umlungu eminza emanzini, noma behamba endaweni eyingozi imibala yabo bayayikhohlwa babone kuphela ubuntu obuphakathi kwegazi namathambo abo.

Ngelinye ilanga bahlala ubusuku bonke bexoxa ngenxa yokuba kwakushisa ubuthongo bungafiki. Waqala unkosana omkhulu wathi, kwakuba mangalisa bezwa izindaba zasoLuganda ezikhombisa isibindi sezizwe zakhona. Kulomhlaba kulizwe lamabubesi. Kwenye inkathi kusuka sonke isifunda siyohlasela ibubesi elibulala wena muntu nawe silwane. Kubuthana abantu abangangekhulu phakathi kubo kubekhona abantwana, abafazi, namadoda. Bayahamba belalisa utshani obude, besondela esikhundleni sebubesi lelo. Bashaya izigubu zabo, bememeza, besondela zize izimpondo zihlangane. Linele lizwe ibubesi li-

phume liphulukundlela enkundleni yalo lithi lifona, lihlngane nezixuku zabantu, ziyaluza, lidideke liyenhla liyenzansi lingayazi into eliyenzayo. Lithi liyaxuma liyeqa, balibeke phansi ngomkhonto noma nge-wisa.

Omunye walababantu ngelinye ilanga waxoxa indaba yokuthi kukhona ibubesi elidla abantu lingazikhathazi ngenyama yezilwane. Wavuma ukuzinikela ukuba kube nguyena opelekezela abelungu abathwele izibamu, yena kodwa alaliswe phezu kohlaka lubekwe ngasemkhondweni webubesi lelo khona lizomnuka lize limbulale. Ngalofo busuku inyanga yaphuma yabayihle bambona loMganda ehamba enganake lutho eyolala ohlakeni osebeni lwehlathi. Wafika wazelula uMganda lo walala, kwathi abazingeli babelungu bakhwela emithini kwelenyoni balinda kudana.

Insizwa ingagqoke lutho yalala yathi ja, balinda abazingeli omunye wathi wozela walala, wavuka kusacwebile kungekho nathunzi labubesi, wathi uyabeka wabona insizwa isalele ohlakeni. Kwathi lapho kumpondozankomo, kuluvivi enzansi babona ithunzi elinjengekati likhasa phansi lisondela kancane njengekati lilubela impaka; bonke baphakamisa izibamu bebona ukuthi lelikati elikhulu kalifoni lutho ngaphandle kwenyamazane elaliswe phezu kohlaka.

Lasondela ibubesi elikhulu lihambe linyonyofa, nabazingeli balungela ukuqondana nekhanda lalo, badubule. Nempela kwenzeka. Lagxuma ibubesi labubula, baphinda, izinhlamvu zadabula isikhumba salo lahithikela phansi okotshani buhulwa ngesikela.

Wethuka uNsikana wabuza wathi, “UmGanda wenzenjani na?”

Waphendula umlungu ngesiZulu esinqamukile wathi: “UmGanda wasimze wavuka wahlala ecikica amehlo, eqabuka kwesikabadakazi kade eziphuphela amaphupho obuthongo obumnandi.”

Ngenxa yokuba bonke babeyizinsizwa babethanda futhi ukuxoxa ezobusha lapho izinsizwa ziphikisana zikhombisa isibindi sazo khona zizothandwa zibe ngamasoka. Omunye waxoxa ukuthi ezweni laseMashona lapho kugcwele khona izindlovu izinsizwa zakhona zikhombisa ubuqhawe obumangalisayo. Kusuka izinsizwa ezintathu zibace phansi zigasela inkunzi yendlovu. Omunye wazo aze angene ngaphansi kwayo ayigwaze esijungujungwini eduze nendlebe; yethuke maqede imbene imsukele.

Iyothi imsukela, lona wesibili aqhashe abuyele eceleni ithi iyadlula indlovu awufake esiphangeni, ikhale ibongiswa ubuhlungu lapho ezinye sezethukile zabaleka. Ngenxa yalomkhonto osesiphangeni iphenduke indlovu ithi iyamthatha lomuntu wesibili naye abaleke. Sekuyithuba lomuntu wesithathu manje yena abeseyixosha ngemuva aze ayifice lapho ithi iyaphendukela kowesibili awufake umkhonto kwesinye isiphanga. Manje indlovu ixakeke ingazi umuntu ezo-
msukela ngofo bayidlala isilima.

Laphoke oNsikana sebelele ngezisu esihlabathini balalele, athi uyanqamuka umlungu ucobelel'ipipi lakhe bathi kanyekanye: “Qhuba nkosana kusemnandi. Igcine ngokwenzenjan'indaba yendlovu?” Omunye athi, “mina ngifuna ukuzwa ukuthi ziphike izintombi

lokhu thina kwaZulu sithi sigiya, sibongwa ngokuhlafana kwethu bezimi, zibuka, zikhexile; uthi usikaza bekusho ngapha nangalapha, leyo ekuthandayo ikhale nonyoko akhale usizi.”

Ngenxa yokuba ebona ukuthi lendaiba imnandi nomlungu angayiqedi ayishiye khona lapho enzela khona nakusasa beyobuya abantu laba bazohlala nabo phezu komtata lapho amanzi ekhanya isiliva umdwe-shu omude uma inyanga iqhakazile. Kothi kusasa basheshe fawuqede umsebenzi bahlangane futhi endaweni efanayo fazolalela izindaba zabantu abamnyama bakwamanye amazwe.

Lapho-ke umlungu ayiqhuba indaba.

“Qhuba nkosana sizwe, qhuba.”

Inkunzi yendlovu isigwaziwe, iyozishaya ngeshoba layo izibula, namagwagwa ezindlebe isihamb'iphakuzela, igijima ngemilenzekazi eyimigqiki ihamb'impempeza ngekhweli elikhulu. Yoze iwe phansi ibukuze ngomboko wayo ikhale ngokuyalela, bakhwelle phezu kwayo bayibokode ngemikhonto.

Lapho isife nya kuyamangalisa ukubona amaviyo amadoda nabesifazane namantombazana aseyizintombi eqhamuka ndawozonkana, bethwele amaqoma bezozitapela enyameni yendlovu. Kodwa amaqhawe aye athole amazinyo wona athathwa athengiswe kude ezizweni eziwathengayo ziwayise phesheya kwezilwandle. Zonke izintokazi ebezeshelwa yilezinsizwa uma zivuma zithumela ubuhlalu obalukwe kahle bokubincwa okhalo nasentanyeni noma insizwa ibufake ekhanda bufeyisibonakaliso sothando lwentokazi. Akumangalisi ukubona isixuku samantombazana esha-

yela ihlombe insizwa iyinye ngenkathi onina noyise bezitika ngenyama benganake lutho.

Yathi iyophela indaba izinsizwa zathatha izinduku zazo zasukuma zifuna ukuhamba, uNsikana wafuza komunye wazo wathi, “Nkosana, uyathandwa wena na?” Yahleka insizwa yomlungu yawuphindsela emuva kuNsikana lowombuzo wawuphendula umfo kaMbokazi wathi:

“Angazi noma ngiyathandwa yini ngoba ngashiyekhaya ngithe intombazana elitshitshi nje, ende-kazi, mayongilindela ingathandi muntu.” Basuka bonke bahleka nomngane wakhe wathi,

“Suka Nsikana uyacabanga ukuthi ikhona intombazana ongayishiya lapho ihlosa kodwa ucabange ukuthi nanamuhla lokhu isakulindle?” Bonke baqhuma bahleka yilencululo kaNsikana. Wabuye wakhuluma umngane kaNsikana wathi, “bengithi usukhulile Nsikana kanti use umfana.”

Behlukana khona lapho uNsikana wachitheka wakhuphukela exhibeni lakhe nomngane wakhe wakhuphukela kwelakhe ehambe ehlafelela “ngoNobuhle intomb'ehlanyis'amajaha,” walalela uNsikana wafikelwa amahloni okuthi ubewuphendulelani umbuzo womlungu wakhe lokhu uzibangele ukuaba ahlekwe abeyinsini. Wahlala ngaphandle kwendlu yakhe wababona abelungu bakhe besahleli ngasemtateni kuzo izihlalo ababehleli kuzo, bebema amapipi abo amade efuquka intuthu eyizikhatha ibeka phezulu emafini. Amehlo abo ayebeke olwandle lapho phezu kwesibubulungu nomtate, kwakukhanya izimfinyezi njengemi-

lilo evutha phakathi komnyama wehlathi, ingani unyezi wawuphezulu.

Wabuka uNsikana wafikelwa inkumbulo yalentombazana eyayihamba nenja njalo iqhuba izinkomo zikayise iziyisa kwaMandelu ziyokudla. Wafikelwa ukujabula waqala ukuphupha emqondweni wakhe ezibona ehleli eduze kwayo lentombazana, hhayi ngasosebeni lolwandle emtateni nasesibubulungu; kodwa eduze kwamanzi oMvoti lapho kukhule khona ububane oluluhlaza olungomi ihlobo nobusika nalapho ikhukhubooya lenabile lidliwa yizinkomazi zobisi. Wacabanga ngezinto ezinje wazewozela khona lapho wazelula walala khona phandle engambethe ngubo, kwaze kwasa.

Enye indaba ababejwayele ukuyibuza abelungu laba abayizinsizwa: eyokuthi kabathandi yini oNsikana ukuBa ngelinye ilanga baphenduke babemhlophe na? Leyoke yayibahlekisa kakhulu ngoBa yayiletha imiqondo eminingi; abanye babethi bangajabula kodwa uNsikana nomngane wakhe njalo bathi baxolele ukufa bemnyama ngoBa “Phela nina belungu ninjengendwangu emhlophe engcola kalula futhi eshesha izwele amakhaza,” kusho umngane kaNsikana.

“Futhi umbala omhlophe kawunasithunzi, kawuzothile njengowethu. Beka nezintokazi zakithi zinzi-ma, zigcwele, zihamba-nje zigcwale umgwaqo. Nina ezakini zilula zibophene kazinazandla nezokuphatha igeja.” Kwathi besho lelizwi lokugcina bahleka kakhulu abelungu, sebecabanga ngezindaba zamalobolo, nezawomvulamlomo nokunye okunjalo.

baBona ukuthi indlela abayicabanga ngayo lenda-

ba, yahlukile kakhulu kweyabo lapho umuntu wesifazane eligugu lokubeka indlu nelanga lingamboni, pho, okwegeja kuhlangene naye kanjani.

baBaxoxela nokuthi phesheya kwelakuBo kukhona abantu abamnyama. Phakathi kwoBo kukhona abazicaka ngamakha nangempuphu emhlophe ngoBa befuna ukuBa mhlophe. Nalapho baphendule oNsikana bathi qha, yingoba beyizilima. Bona bayathanda ukugqoka kwabelungu ngoBa kuyabahloniphisa ikakhulu abantu besifazane, bafihle imizimba yabo eligugu ingahambi iqhakanjisiwe ezweni. Nayo imilenze le efakwa abesilisa mihle kakhulu iyamvikela umuntu noma ehamba emeveni izitho zakhe zingaklwejwa zindwani.

Isikhathi njalo baBesichitha kanje uma bonke bendawonye, benqakulisana ngezinto zakobantu nakoBelungu; kwaze kwaphela isikhathi sokuntelisana kwangena izindaba zemibuso yakomaNgisi nakomaBunu.

Ikhona into eyenza ukuBa uNsikana akhumbule ekhaya. Kwavela ukungezwani okukhulu phakathi kwaMaNgisi naMaBunu lawa ayesakhe kwaKhangela. Ngelinye ilanga oNsikana bethuka izinsizwa lezi abazisebenzelayo seziklwele zibomvu zasuke zayokwehlisa iduku lesizwe samaBunu, zalidwengulela phansi zaseziyokwenza ikamu lazo ngasePhayindi. Ngalelolanga kakudliwanga ukudla komela emabodweni.

“Hawu, uyabona nje Nsikana izilokazane kazi-dlanga namuhla, laphaya kwethu kade kuthiwa mangesule izibamu ngamafutha”, kukhuluma enye insizwa eyayijwayelene noNsikana. “Ngiyesaba mina noma ngingazazi izindlela zochuku lwabelungu, nokho

ngiyabona kunuka santungwana sobubi obuzayo,” yasho njalo insizwa yakwaZulu yathula yabema igudu layo, yalilalelisa lihoqoza liphuma intuthu izikhatha. “Laba bakwethu akusibo abantu abaphutha ekudleni kodwa namuhla kabekho. Uyangibonela nje futhi ukuthi lawa mabutho ezinsizwa ezingamambuka zibaleke kwaZulu, ngisho leziya ezihlala eMsizini, ngibona nazo zihola izitho zilola imikhonto. Ngiyibone ekuseni ibenyezela imikhonto ibekwe phezu kwezintingo.” Waesethi ukubamba kancane enkomeni, kwabonakala kodwa ukuthi akayijwayele, waesebaleka eya ekhaya eyohlokoza umlilo.

Ntambama ngalelologa babona ubuxhaxhaxha bamahhashi engeniswa, kwathi ebusuku wafika uNkosana omdala kaNsikana wamhlelela ukuthi basathi nyelele bayohlasela amaBunu kwaKhangela. “Beka Nsikana thina hamba hlasela lomaBunu lapha Khongela. Mina ayiyazi nokho buya. Uma mina ayibuya beka lomfowabo kamina, beka kahle.” Washo maqede, uNsikana washaywa isiyazi sobuthongo sengathi uyaphupha akazi into ayizwayo, kodwa wavuma wathi “Yebo Nkosi, ngizolibeka ikhaya nize nibuye futhi.”

Ahamba amasosha edavuzela esihlabathini enqamula nezihlahla lapho manje sekumbiwe khona sekulala imikhumbi yezizwe ngezizwe eThekwini. Kwathi bengazelele, ingabe ngaphutha lini, esinye isibamu saqhuma, kanti izinhlozi zamaBunu ziseduze ziyabona amasosha amaNgisi. Zayibikela eyasekhaya yahloma yalinda, Bekake lokhu amaBunu akhe elawo ikamu ngaphezulu, nenyanga ibakhanyisile laba bako

maNgisi ngenkathi beza. Badubula kanye kwaxhaphazela amanzi eziswini kumaNgisi abophana isinya-kanyaka, namahhashi ethuka, amasosha ahlakazeka. Indawo yayingeyinhle njengoba uyibona namuhla. Kwakugcwele ubuku olubishayo, nomhlanga namachibi amabi. Ekuhalekeni kwawo amaNgisi ehlakazwa izinhlamvu abaleka aphuphuthaka angena obukwini iningi lawo laphelala lapho, kwasala wena mbayimbayi obudonswa ngamahhashi, kwasala wena zibamu zemali.

Phakathi kobusuku uNsikana wavuswa uNkosana omncane efika egwele udaka izinwele zibeke phezulu engathi uyahlanya. “Hawu yini Nkosana, kwenzenjani na? Wafika wedwa uphi omkhulu?” Waqhumuka umfana owaeyibungu, waqhumuka wakhala wambamba uNsikana ngesandla, waye wawela phansi.

UNsikana watatazela wamgumula wamlalisa ocanisini lwakhe wamfulela ngezingubo, kodwa kwakuthi noma ephaphama abede njalo ngomfowabo kwaze kwasa.

AmaBunu kawachithanga sikhathi asondezela avimbanisela ikamu lamaNgisi elalisePhayindi kwathi izinhlozi zalo zabanjwa zayiswa eMgungundlovu ngengeziboshwa; laba abanye bavinjelwa inyanga yonke. Ukudla kwaphela faqala ukudla inyama yamahhashi ayesasele, kwabulawa zonke izilokazanyana ezincane, zadliwa zaba ukudla, njengamakathi, nezinja. Umkhandlu wahlangana kwacetchwa icebo lokuba kuyiwe kobikwa eBayi lenda. Isango lokuphuma lalingekho. Kwakhuluma enye yezinsizwa ezaziqinile

emnyama yathi: “Makhosi, kungathi uma idobela selishonile phansi mina nomunye wamakhosi sigwedle isikebe sinqume phakathi kobusuku siqondane naseBiyafu. Siyobophela amahhashi amabili noma amathathu esikebeni ahlambe ngemuva. Sothi sithi chaphasha phesheya mina ngohamba phansi ngisemadolo lula, inkosi iyogibela.”

Umkhandlu wamangala ukubona umqondo womuntu omnyama ungaka wasukuma omunye igama lakhe uDiki wathi, “Qha bakwethu nomkhandlu, sengiyazinikela ukuhamba ngiphelezelwe uNdongeni lo okhombise ubuqhawe besizwe sakuBo emaThulini. Ngizohamba ngokuhlwa kwakusasa.” Nempela kwathi kuthi hwelele uNdongeni iqhawe lase liqosheme phansi komuthi wenhlalamagwaba lapho kwakuboshwe khona isikebe, lihleli libambe izikhali zalo. Kwezakala amahhashi amabili eza, “Uwe lowo Ndongeni? Yimi Nkosi, sekuyikho yini. YeBo sekuyikho.”

Sebehambile oNdongeni noDiki kwathi gidi izibindi kumaNgisi, nendaba yaxoxeka. UNSikana wangenwa kakhulu umunyu wokugoduka. Kwase kungumkhuba wakhe ukuxoxela uNkosana wakhe omncane izindaba ezindala zakwaZulu, ambongele namakhosi ohlanga namaqhawe njalo lapho sekuhlwile enzela khona indlala ingezozwela egazini lomlungu wakhe. Waebaqamundela zona izibongo noma behlangene nabanye abelungu bevakashele uNkosana wakhe, esho oZulu kaNogandaya.

“UZulu ladum'obala,

Lapho kungemunga kungenamthole,

USikhoth'esingenakungenwa ngandawo,

UMgijim'ayafik'ezinkilimbeni”,

aqhubeke njalo aze aqede; kodwa njalo kwakuthi

ma esho izibongo zamakhosi zimkhumbuze ekhaya eMvoti. Ngelinye ilanga washo wakhithika phansi wakhala uNsikana, wavukwa usinga, wagiya wagiya, waesethi nyelele eyolala endlini yakhe.

Ngelinye ilanga bezwa kuqhuma isibamu ngasolwandle bathi bethi nhla babona imikhumbi emibili iqhamuka bezwa namatilongo ekhala sengathi amisa amasosha isibindi. Bonke baphuma phandle nabangenamandla asebeqedwe iphanga bazidonsa bahlala phandle babukela indlovu yamanzi egwinya umuntu, namabodwe nokudla, ingena emtateni weTheku. Kwase kungukusinda kwaBo.

Kwaphela inyanga uNsikana wacela kumlungu wakhe ukuBa amdedele akayoBona uyise nonina eNkoboBongo. Kwathiwa makashiye omunye umuntu amBambele. Nempela wamthola omunye umfana wangaseMzinyathi emaQadini wamBambela.

Waqala uNsikana ukulungisa izimpahla zakhe eqoqa lokhu nalokhuya efuna nezintambo zokubopha imithwalo yakhe. Waqala nokubeka nhlanye uhlamvu lokuthenga umphako wendlela, wabuyekeza indlela aqhamuka ngayo eminyakeni edlule. Waqonda kamhlophe ukuthi yonke into seyashintsha ngoBa kwase kuyisikhathi eside ahamba ekhaya nezincwadi zingasatholwa. Nokho kwakuthula kuthule kuqhamuke inqola yentarasipoti (transport) izothutha izimpahla ezivela emaShowe nakoDukuza nakwezinye izindawo ezigudle ugu oluqonde kwaZulu.

Wabopha izihlangu zakhe umfo waseNkoboBongo wahamba nabanye ababo ababeqonde ngakwa Maphumulo. Bathi, “qha, ngoBa kasinakulala emakhaya na-

muhla kuhle sisuke nje lapho ilanga lifudumalayo.” Yebo bahamba abafu bakhona noNsikana engabazi eqonde ngokuthi lokhu indlela eya kwaMaphumulo isika phakathi eMhlali, sebeyomshiya endleleni. Abafu ababehamba phambili bebade, bedle ngezitho ezimisi-phasipha, neziqhaza zethambo ezinombala omhlophe nomnyama bekhuluma bodwa omunye wathi: “Wethu, ngibuya nje ngiya ekhaya kangiphethe lutho ngisebenze iminyaka emibili ePhayindi kodwa imali kayibonwa.” “Hawu, ungakwenza kanjani lokho ingani washiya ugoyise intombi, usuqale nokuyilobola na?” Wathi lo omunye, “impela kangazi nokuthi ngiyongena ngaliphi kubaba. Ngayiphuza ugologo yonke imali ngibuya nopondwo abane kuphela.” “Imbikhe leyondaba wethu.” Hawu yaqhubeka indlela. Wabuye wakhuluma futhi wathi, “sengibone isu wethu, kunganjani sibambe lokhu esihamba nakho” Wathula lo, walalela; “ngisho lomfana olibungu wakithi ngoaba uye obesebenza kahle. Singasuka simaphuce nje imadlana yakhe, simsumpule intamo, simlahle esizibeni, sithathe lokho esikuthathayo sihambe.” Wathula futhi lo omunye, wathi ethatha wathi, “Qha wethu kangivumi lokho ngoaba lomfana wabekwa ezandleni zami nguyise wathi mangombeka ezingozini. Okwesibili ungumlamu wami ngimbuka ngimbuke ngibone emehlweni akhe udadewabo uNtombiyembuqa, qha, wethu kangivumi, ngingafa nokufa, ngimfele.”

Yaqhubeka indlela noNsikana ebekile kancane nabanye ngemuva, kuxoxwa izindaba zeTheku, zempi, nezomsebenzi, bengezwa lutho olukhulunywa yilezi zinsizwa phambili.

“Ubani futhi lomfana esihamba naye?” Kuphendula lona omunye uthi, “lomfana owangalapha eMhlali naye uyagoduka ngenxa yokwethembana nomlamu wami uthe uzogoduka kanye naye. Pho, yena ngabe usebenze kanjani?” benza uzungu ukuaba bambambe, bamkhwathaze uNsikana, bamudle nezimpahla zakhe zonke. Ngenkathi kuhwelela basebedlule eMdloti sebeqonde emathafeni asoGqolweni lapho kugcwele khona izinswelafoya, nezigebengu, nabaphangi, nezidlwangudlwangu. Bathi ukuphambuka kancane endleleni, kwayilowo wafuna isiqunjwana sokukhosela alale kuso. Balala banqumisa izinduku, ezinye zabeka lapho kushona khona ilanga, njengoba benza bonke abahambi bendlela. Lokhu kwenzelwa ukuaba umuntu avuke angeduki, nokuba umnyama ubesemuva, ngaphambili kukhanye njalo.

Inyamazane nayo amadlozi akubo ayayitshela uma ingozi isondele. UNsikana wawesaba amehlo ezinsizwa ezimbili lezi ebezihamba njalo ngaphambili, kwasephuzela njalo umzimba wakhe lapho ethi uyalala. Ngakhoke wathi nyelele kwasengathi uya ngaphandle. Wathatha yonke imali yakhe wayigqiba ngaphansi kobulongwe eduze nesiduli, wabuya walala engalele. Ukuaba lelozwe wayelazi futhi lingazulelwa izinswelafoya waeyokweqa khona busuku lobo abalekele lezi zinsizwa. Umnyama wawumkhulu wathikinyezwa izinkanyezi zezulu nomthala wona ohlala njalo uqaphile. Kude le emahlangeni emizi eyayikade ilokoza imililo wezwa kukhala uZavolo ethi “Zavolo, Zavolo, sengepabantabakho;” kwamnandi ukubuyela emaphandleni kade agcina ukuaba umlalandle, wahlala ebuka phezulu,

elalele noZavolo, waze wazumeka ubuthongo walala wathi vithi.

KwaBe aBehlile ubuthongo wezwa umuntu emvusa ngenduku ethi, "lokhu kulala kuthi nqu, sengathi kuzalwa izinyemfu! Vuka, usho, uziBike ukuBa usebenzeni eThekwini. Thina indoda siyayithelisa ika-khulu uma ithembe kithi isiphephelo sayo." Washo emuthi ziphu ngomshiza futhi.

Wathula, wahlengezela izinyembezi zolaka uNsikana, lapho ephendukelwa abantu abethembile. "Hawu, bakwethu senizonginqumela endle kade sihamba kanyekanye," wambamba ngentamo wathi, "thula, thula, ukhuluma kuBani kanjalo? Uyangazi mina, ungazewethembe kimi nje?," wayiphonsa eyafika yamshaya idolo wawaphansi, ingani uNsikana waesecabanga ukumbamba alwe naye. "Hawu nina bendlu ephakathi, thethelelani makhosi, nicinge yonke imithwalo yami, nemali eningayithola eyenu. Kodwa mina ngalahlekelwa iyoyonke imali yami mhla kwaMaBunu namaNgisi eKhangela. Ngibuya nje ngize."

Bacinga, bacinga behluleka bamBuyela bathi, "mina mfana imali uyicashisile, sizokushaya sikushiye ulimi." Nempela bamenzani uNsikana, bamshaya bamshiya khona lapho nemibalwana ethize eyase igugile naye ethi uNsikana uyiphathele isalukazi esingunina; bathatha zonke izingubo zakhe ayezinike abelungu bakwaBo bamshiyela ezingasho lutho. Bamshiya phezu konjani ungqoqwane lo wasemadotsheni, nasemidonini yasoGqolweni, benzela ukuBa umahlule afe nokufa angasindi.

ISAHLUKO IV.

Kwakungesonto ekuseni lapho uNomkhosi wancenga inkosikazi yomfundisi ukuyokwenza umthandazo esontweni langaseSihlahleni. Indlela inqamula phakathi kwethafa lakwaMandelu. Lendlela futhi ibeke eThekwini. Wathi lapho ehamba ngayo lendlela uNomkhosi wakhumbula ukuguquka kwezikhathi. Namhla wayehamba ngayo eseyintombi ephethe iBayibele lakhe nencwadi yokuhlabelela, Eminyakeni emithathu edlule waengelutho ehamba ngalendlela elusa izinkomo zikayise uMakhwatha. Wahamba waye wafika ngendawo lapho waejwayele ukuhlala khona nenja yakhe iNkondlwana abukele izingane zidlala, ziguquka zishaya indingilizi.

Wakhumbula izingane zaseNkoBongo nalowo mfana owayejwayele ukumkhuzela wakhumbula negama lakhe "uNsikana." Wahleka lapho edlula ngesihlahla lapho wamumisa khona wathi uNsikana ngeke amtshele isizathu amkhuzela sona. A! namhla kwakumkhanyela uNomkhosi ukuthi kanti waenothando lwalomfana. Yini amkhumbule afise sengathi ngabe leyompendulo uyizwa namhla? Yini eyenza ukuba agxile kangaka enhliziyweni yakhe emva kweminyaka baBonana? Iya! mhlawumbe eThekwini kukhona izintokazi ezingcono kakhulu kunaye owathi efika nje uNsikana wathathana nazo. Uma kungenjalo pho akasabuyi ngani? Uma wabuya pho akaveli ngani nasesontweni? "Insizwa ilikhohlwa kanti intombi iyilizwangedwa othandweni," washo njalo wahamba.

Wakhumbula isifundo sakhe azokhuluma ngaso ngalelo langa wahamba wakhwela egqumeni elali-

gcwele imihlonhlo nezihlahla, elithiwa kuKwesempaka, walibona isontshwana lakhe. Lelisono namhla liqhutshwa indodakazi kabantukabezwa eyaganela koMdleyana. Nanamuhla lisabizwa kuthiwe kuseSihlahleni, noqobo lwendawo yisihlahla ngoba isonto kalikami, nensimbi kayikabekwa. Kunjalo abanye abantu bayazinikela emsebenzini wabo babange ngokuthi “nangaphansi komuthi kwathiwa noma bebathathu Naye uyobakhona uSomandla.” Uma uya eMvoti namhla uyoyibona imbongolwana idonsa ingqokumbanyana iphuma emzini omhlophe kaGilawothi iyoqhuba umsebenzi kaNomkhosi. Kuyadabukisa ukuhona umsebenzi ongaka ongaphaswe muntu, womela phansi nje ngezimbali zasendle eziqhakaza ubuhle bazo buphelel’endle. Ukuha kuya ngezwi ngabe eSihlahleni namuhla kuduma izinsimbi, kumi ithempela lamathempela.

Wahambake uNomkhosi ehamba yedwa wafike wawenza umthandazo wawuqeda, wahlala wafundisa ababefuna ukungeniswa ebandleni. Esewuqedile umsebenzi wakhe kwasondela amakhosikazi, ambungaza ahambisana naye ebonga umthandazo wakhe, namazwi abebavuselela ngawo enkonzweni. Bahambisana bayebafika emgwaqweni oqonde eThekwini, bamshiya. Eceleni nomgwaqo uNomkhosi wema wabeka eNingizimu. Kude le kwakuthunqa izintutu kubonakala kalufifi eMhlali naseNkobongo lapho kwakhe khona manje amadodana awoPhephethwayo, nawoMalamba. Inhliziyo yakhe njalo yayisanamathele kuNsikana ukuthi kuleminyaka emithathu usayikhumbula yini intombazana ayishiya yalusa. Kusenjalo wezwa umuntu emthinta ngengalo ethatha izincwadi

zakhe, kanti uTomasi umfo kaNogiyela. UTomasi uzwile ukuthi uNomkhosi ungaseSihlahleni wathi qha wobe wephuzile.

“Yini Nomkhosi ukhumbulephi nkosazana.” uNomkhosi wathulawathula wathi, “Ngikhumbula ngisemncane kunalokhu ngalusa izinkomo zikababa nje ngomfana. Ngangijwayele ukuhlangana nabafana ababefunda laphaya endlini emhlophe yesikole. Lababafana umfanekiso wabo kawusuki kimina nje nempela.” “Pho, lababafana unandabani nabo bengaba le emaqabeni nje wena ungowasemakholweni?”, kubuzwa umfo kaNogiyela ngoba waezibona kunguyena yedwa ofanelwe uNomkhosi; kakhulu kangakanani namuhla lokhu phela namuhla umphathele nencwadi yakhe yokuhlabelela neBayibele lakhe? “Qha, ngiyabakhumbula nje ngoba babengihlekisa ngenkathi ngiya kokwalusa. Ngifisa sengathi ngingake ngibabone nje ngizwe nje ukuthi bangase bangahlule yini nasekukhulumeni isiNgisi ngoba babengishaya isithutha.” “Hhayike akunacala, besengimangele,” basebehamba, bethule.

“Hha! Ngakhumbula, nkosazana, ngelinye ilanga ngezwa kuxoxwa sengathi ikhona insizwa yangapha eMhlali eyake yazidlisa satshanyana kuwena, leyonto yangihlupha. Kuhle wazi, nkosazana, ukuthi ngiyohlupheka uma kulomhlabo kuyoba khona umuntu ongase umbuke ngamehlo othando, nosizi, owedlulamina. Seku iminyaka sahlala ndawonye singahluphananga, ngifuna ukukutshela isifuba sami ngawe kodwa amazwi ami aphelele emnyameni womlomo nje ngensipho ephelela ezandleni zomwashi.

UNomkhosi kwaBa sengathi akezwa, waziba wahlabelela igama elimungunya engalikhphi mazwi, waphendula wathi, “ngiyezwa,” waeseqhubeka engaphenduli nkulumo kaTomasi wathi, “ngiyakhumbula kahle omunye walaBo bafana wahamba waya eThekwini.”

“Wo, kanti ungiziba nje njalo uma ngikhuluma nawe yingoba ubambebele kulomfana wangaseMhlali, owaya eThekwini, sengiyaqonda manje,” inhliziyo yakhe yase ifudumele. “Qha, uyaphosisa.” Wathatha futhi uTomasi, “wazi ngani noma lowo mfana namuhla sewathathwa yimizulane esiqala ukugcwala emadilobeni ithi iyosebenza kanti iyowunga abantwana babantu bezisebenzela?” UNomkhosi wathi, “qhaBo uyaphosisa QwaBe.”

“Qha kangiphosisi ngoba izindaba ngiyazazi. Kufikwa emaThekwini lapha umuntu aphenduke umhuka angaziwa namgodi alala kuwo, alokhu ethi uya-sebenza kanti uyagcula nemigwaqo yonke. Uyacabanga ukuthi wena uphethwe umoya wakobefundisi, nokuthoba nokuzendlala phansi lokhu onakho ungaphekisana nezintaka zeTheku ezindiza phezulu zihamba ngesicathulo? Ingani naye lowo mfana (ingabe igama lakhe nguBani) kunamuhla uyaklemuza ngonochwasha ababomvu; lapho wena uzikohlisa ulandelana nezinjalo izinto?” “QhaBo akuyena lowo uyaphosisa.” “Uyongibuza ungiphale ulimi ingabe uyoyibona ngisho nemnyama indibilishi kuyena mhla efikayo.”

“Ayiphela asikwazi lokho. Uma engayiphethe,

kobe kukhona okukhona, wehlakelwe ishwa,” kuphendula intombazana.

UTomasi wathukuthela wazilahla amathambo wakhumbula izikhathi ezidlule ezisabonwa kwaZulu; kuphela lapho intombi kwakuthi ma iphendula ngamazwana anobuswana, insizwa iyigijima ngomshiza kube ubumayemaye, ilanyulelwe abafowabo. Wabona ukuthi indlela yokumbofa uNomkhosi eyokuba axoxe indaba ayizwe ixoxwa umfundisi ekhuluma nenkosi-kazi yakhe ngenkathi ethola izincwadi ezifike nekalishi elithwala iposi. “Nansi indaba enye, Nkosazana, ake siyeke ukuxabana ngeze. EThekwini lapha kwezakele indaba embi. Kushayene abelungu bamihlizana bafakana odakeni kwafa amaNgisi ayizintahantaha, edutshulwa amaBunu. Kuthiwa bonke laba bantu abasuka kwaZulu bafe bandlala ucansi lwamakhosi abo, kakusalanga namunye.” “Au, uyithathaphi leyo ndaba? Uyizwe ixoxwa umfundisi? Ngiyabahawukela.” “Kuthiwa futhi noma bekhona abasalayo, bavinjazelwe bayabulawa mihla yonke. Amathongo athukuthele ayabajezisa ngenxa yobubi obugcwele. eThekwini. Kuhle, Nomkhosi, thina esilapha sihlale phansi ngokuzwana, sivume lokho esidalelwe khona ngoba noma ngicabanga ngiphi naphi ngibona wena udalelwe mina, nami ngidalelwe wena. Pho, kwaya kanjani iNkosi isihlanganise lapha kwamfundisi, kube yithi esichumisa umsebenzi weNkosi kuqala abanye abazalwane besavalelekile ebumnyameni?”

Lawamazwi angena enhliziyweni kaNomkhosi waqala ukucabanga ngomunye umqondo. Ngoba nempela uNomkhosi noma waengase amthande uNsi-

kana, uNsikana waeke wameshela yini lokhu waezidlalela nje ngoba bonke abafana abangamashinga bayamemeza nje mabefona intombazana abangayaziyo benza ukuyigcona. Ubani futhi owayazi ukuthi uNsikana angasathathwe izintaka lezo zaseThekwini, nokuthi khona mazingamthathile akafanga yini. Uma kufa umlungu lapho uNsikana ebeyini yena. Zonke lezizinto zagijima emqondweni kaNomkhosi wethuka esethe, “Nempela kuyamangalisa ukuthi yini eyasihlanganisa kwamfundisi.”

UTomasi waengazi ukuthi uma ufuna ukwahlula umuntu wesifazane ikakhulu uma ethanda insizwa, qala ngokubona yona insizwa uyi nembe ngazozonke iziqu zobunsizwa wena uzifojise ube ngumuntu wokuhawukelwa. KwaZulu waengazange abone insizwa ifika entombini iyeshela, ifike iyihlikahlike ithi, “Suka mtanethu, ungaze ungale nje lapho kini ikhona intombi? Nawe umilenzana nje, njengodade, ucaabanga ukuthi ungowokuthanda mina nginjengoba nginje?” Isho insizwa ixhume ishaye utshani iqhwishe iya le, iya le phambi kwentombi. Nentombi ihleke olwabayeni, iqhimuke ikhale ngoba eyithuka, asuke umntanensizwa ashaye utshani bengakambambi.

Uyobe eyathe ayibone iyokha amanzi afike avimbe phambi kwayo ingabe isahamba eyibuza ukuthi “mtanethu amazwi ami uwagwinya nezinkobe zakwenu?”. Ayigcone ayishiye. Nayo isizolinga ukuzicwala njalo aze ayibone umntanensizwa ukuthi nempela isiyakholwa amazwi ayo okuyifojisa, abese naye esethamba eseyibeka ifala.

Esilungwini kwasekwahlukile. Intombi wawuyi-

thuka maqede ngezicana zayo, isuke iqonde esibu-
kweni izibone ubuhle bayo ibuye kuwe injengoba
ibinjalo izolo. “Alikho iqili elizikhotha emhlane,” ba-
sho njalo abadala, nayo yayize ikholwe uma insizwa iyiphindephindelela iyithuka nje ingayiboni. UTomasi wayesweleiseluleko sabadala, ngoba indawo yayimmele kahle, noma phela inhliziyo yentombi ingumala’egquka, isondo lenqola. Bahamba kanyekanye, bayefafika ekhaya sebexoxa ezokholo, lena yothando isafakwe ebodweni yazitshekelwa.

Umfundisi waecabanga ukuba kothi nxa beshada laba bantabakhe baqhuba umsebenzi asewuqalile phakathi kwesizwe esimnyama. Bobabili waebathanda esecabanga nokuba kothi ngenkathi izwe selidatshulwa lenziwa amanxiwa akaLizevu, nabo uyobadabulela, kube isikhumbuzo enzalweni yabo. Waephupha njalo leli phupho elingazange lithele zithelo, zibonwe uye umfundisi wamakholwa. Ngoaba kunjalo, bonke abazimisela ukubona izithelo zemisebenzi yabo bajwayele ukuzivunelwa abanye bona sebadlula noma izithelo zephuze ukuvuthwa. Lokhu kuvamile nasezikhathini zanamuhla ukuba umcabango nje nesifiso somuntu kudale izindonga zemifula zibe amagebe, kodwa kube bengabekile phambili ukuthi lawo manzi ayovela emithonjeni leyo anjani. Kanti mhlaumbe amagebe lawo ambiwe ezihlabathini zenkangala, kufike amashisandlu neziphapho, kukhukhuleke wonke amabibi phakathi kugqibeke imifula ingazange ibonakale, njengokuyibuka kwethu ihanjiswa amaphupho.

Umfundisi imicabango yakhe wayitshela lomfo kaNogiyela, naye wajaabula waqikileka ebona umfundisi emthanda kangaka. Waqala ukufundela, uku-

shumayela, kwaBonakala nokuthi yonke indaba, yakhe noNomkhosi iyavuthwa ngempela. Kwanqunywa ukuba mhla beshadayo kuyoba yibona abayokwenzelwa idili elikhulu lesikholwa. UNomkhosi waeseqala ukubukela imishado yesikholwa, wayibona ukwahluka kwayo kweyakwaZulu emidala.

KowakwaZulu intombi yayiphuma nomthimba wayo iyokuma iphethe ishoba lenkabi, nesinqindi somkhonto eyayisina ngaso ikhombisa ukuthi ubuntombi bayo buphelile, isithwale isinqindi somkhonto kuze kuphele isikhathi somgcagco. Yayifaka inyongo ekhanda, kuyinyongo yenkomo eyihlatshisiwe nguyise mhla kwemulwayo isizophuma iye kowayo. Inyongo le eyayikhombisa njalo ukuthi umntwana akalahliwe abakubo nokuthi amathongo awoyise ayamphlezela ayomakhisa umuzi wesihle. Lenyongo yayikhombisa ubuzalwane phakathi kwemizi eshadiselanayo, nalapho umakoti esengene endlini yakhe lenyongo waengena nayo ayichome emsamo noma ngasemnyango. Zazisina izintombi zomthimba ziphelekezela umakoti kuyilokhu zifike naye kusihlwa zigqumushela kuze kuphume ilanga.

Esikhundleni sokuaba kuyiwe endlini yokusonta yobukholwa umthimba kwaZulu wawuvuka ekuseni uyendle esihlahleni lapho wawunikezwa khona imbuzi noma inkomo yokuphekel'endle; kuthi nezihlobo eziletha ukudla zikuyise khona esihlahleni lapho. Ngalezozikhathi umkhongi kwakusengathi uyena umfundisi ngoaba uyena owayesho isikhathi aphume ayokhipha umthimba awulethe esigcawini. Nempela bese uphuma umthimba uqonde esigcawini ushuqungene ufike lapho

uklele uthi klebu izinhla ezimbili; omame sebeshanele phansi ngamasholo abo ezinyamazane behhalalisela umntwana bemshiya kumfokazana. Lelo langa phela wonke umuntu uphakamisa okwakhe, abakwaBo kamntwana basho zonke izici ngomkhwenyana nabakomkhwenyana basho zonke izici ngentombi leyo nabakwaBo.

Ngalezo zikhathi umakoti naye waenempeleki yakhe eSimzimazisa kuthi uma izinhla seziklelele ame ngale, nayo ime ngalaphaya baqale igama boBabili begobodisile umakoti elokhu ekhombe phansi ngesinqindi sakhe somkhonto nempeleki yakhe ikhombe phansi ngesigqigqi sayo senduku. Zothi zilamukela igama izintombi zilivume nazo zigobodisile lize livuthwe zilishayele ihlombe, kusuke ukusina.

Kuqale umakoti nempeleki yakhe asine eshashalazini aphume aqonde komyeni ezibukelini, athi lapho ethi qhwi ebuya, kuphume ezinye izintombi ezimbili zilandele nazo zidlalisela okokuaba zikhiwe emthimbeni kuthiwe: "Hheya! yasina intombi kaSi-baniBani, enje, ne ukuthi—suka bo!" Iyathi iyagoduka sekuke kwafika izinsizwa zajama zathi, "Guga mzimba, sala nhliziyu, kakusigodo saguga namaxolo aso." Uma kusina umthimba isilisa sakomntwana kasisini sithi qakalala, silokhu sishudula ndawonye sivuma igama.

Kuyothi uma umthimba uphakule kusuke uyise womntwana aBeke umntanakhe emzini, athemeleze. Uyoqala ngokubonga amakhosi akubo, ehle eze koyisemkhulu aze abonge nomntanakhe uma bekuyintombi eyaziwayo. Lapho kuzophuma izinsizwa ezithu-

kuthelayo ezingamagagu zisinele amazwi kayise womntwana, kushuquke uthuli, kukikize omame macala onke. Yiso lesisikhathi lapho kwehla izinyembezi kwaBaningi bekhumbula amathongo akuBo.

Uma kugiye insizwa eliqhawe eseyake yahlabana kothi lapho isibuya isigiyile abakuBo baCaphune ihlabathi nezibi bayithele ngazo bethi: "Hamba kuthi-kuthi, wena owathi kunje kwanje," ibuye insizwa inikina njengenkunzi kade ihlephul'isiduli ithiba. Omame balokhu beqize njalo beqhudelana nabo benanela amazwi akhulunywayo nokusina kwezinsizwa. Ekugqizeni lapha kukhona abaziwayo njengokaMabuza wakwaNgcobo owayegane kuMhlakaza kaNkonzo wakwaNgwane khona EMvoti. Nanamuhla lokhu ukugqiza kuyihlobo emishadweni yabantu ngisho abafundisiwe. EMvoti kusenziwa kakhulu.

Kothi kuphela lokhu kungene uyise kamyeni naye athethele umntanakhe ikhetho beselihoxa liyovunula ngoBa inkundla isizothathwa yilona. Esikheleni sokuvunula kwekhetho ekade libukela umthimba wona osusine wabuyiselwa eceleni, kuye kuqubule abantu abangenandaba nomgcagco lowo, abayizibukeli zaleso sifunda, ngoBa isigcawu kasivunyelwe sishiywe nje; funa kuveze amashwa lokho.

Ikhetho liyoqhamuka liqhuba izinkomo lihambe lishuqungene nalo lihlabelela igama lakubo. Iyokhonya inkunzi noma inkabi, zithathele izinsizwa zigiye zifele emhlabathini. NgoBa kukhona okubophe umuntu enkomeni kwamhlanganisa nenhlabathi azalelwe kuyo, noma imithetho nezikhathi zingaguquka—iqiniso lelo. Ziyosondela izinsizwa, namakhehla ehola, isima-

me singemuva. Kuzosina isilisa sisinela umthimba manje isimame sizimazise. Ikhetho lishaya isigelele lapho izinsizwa zima zithi du, kuphela kunyakaze umzimba, nesisu, nezandla, nekhanda, inkombi kube sengathi kayisenamathambo, induku isiphum'ebusweni, ibek'eceleni, naphezulu. Othathisayo lapho sekuzosuka fonke bazomshayela ihlombe bemukha ngokudlulisel'abanye.

Kuyophela lapho kuhlakazekwe sekulungiselwa ikusasa lapho kuzohlatshwa khona ngoBa namuhla kudliwa utshwala kakhulu. Yayinje indlela yokushada eyaziwa uNomkhosi okwathi ukufika kokukholwa yaqala ukuguquka ngoBa nomfundisi uGilawoti waeke avakashe ayobona kusinwa, abone nalapho izinsizwa zigiya kusuka amaqungo ekhanda; nalapho omame bekikiza beqhawuzelisa okwamathole endle; nalapho sekushaywa isigelele.

Okunye kwakwethusa ikakhulu ngoB'umfundisi wake wabona uMhuhulu wakwaNgwane exosha umuntu, umuntu lo wabaleka waye wangena ngaphansi kom-bede wakhe. Phezu kwalokho uMhuhulu wamlandela igazi selishisa wangena endlini yomfundisi wakhalakathela nasekamelweni lomfundisi wamgwazela khona umuntu lo ngaphansi kom-bede. Umfundisi akayikhohlwanga lendaBa waehlala njalo eyikhumbula nakuNomkhosi.

Njengoba abantu babengena njalo enkolweni imithetho yabo yehluka kwaBangaphandle nangendlela yokushadisa kwaBo. Umfundisi wakwenqaba ukuba abantu bakikize nokuba kugaywe amatshwala kudakiswe abantu. Ukugiya nakho kwenqatshelwa pha-

kathi komuzi. Amaculo omshado ahlukana izigaba ezimbili. Ngelanga kungena umshado kwakugqunyushelwa njengakuqala khona amagama esehlukile sekushaywa idotshaba nokunye okuthiwa isawondi, kushaywe umqhuqhumbelo owawuzifanisa nesigekle kodwake wona udlalisa ngezinyawo. Kuphikiswane kuze kuse. Ngakusasa kuyiwe esontweni kuyoboshwa ifindo phambi kwabantu bonke benkolo, kuculwe amagama esonto kubuye kuhlatshelwe namanye okuzithokozisa futhi emva kokuaba ifindo liboshwe.

Noma phela izinto abantu babengovuma zonke, zabaxaka ukuaba umfundisi anqabele nokukikiza kodwa lokhu. Baqumbelana phakathi njalo uma kushadiswa kwaze kwathi ngelinye ilanga inkosikazi kaNxaba yazidela yakikiza lapho izinsizwa nezintombi zithi ukuphuma nje endlini yesonto, zikhwela uGulukudela, zibophene unyawo ludla umunyu zitamba.

Wathi:

“Hheya! kakusenacala ziningi izinkomo ezibayeni, useyoyishaya nomfundisi lowo,” washo eqhuma phezulu ethi, “kikiki, kanti kakuphumi ntombi yini, sahamba sengathi kufiwe, siboshwe imilomo?” Wathi ethi nya, sasuka sonke isimame saduma phezulu sisho ngamazwi akade aboshwa, saqhumisa okwamanzi efohla uthango kade evinjelwe, asho amakhosikazi avunyelwa zigodi namagquma oMvoti washo omunye umame wathi. “Kikiki, kuhle kwethu kugcwicwiz’obumnandi, kuphum’intombi, kusho thina bomuz’omdala, bomuz’omkhulu basesikoleni eMvoti ozisini onwele ziluhlaza zikanywa ngamahleza.”

Hhawu sangquzuka sonke isimame sakikiza.

Yayingenakuzibamba inkosikazi kaNxaba ibona indodana yayo iligagu, ithi noma ipuluha yenza lokhu nalokhu, seluqonge phezulu ukositini kumfo kaMbambo uMafushane, kodwa kuthule kuthi nya. Indodana yakhe uJakobosi eyayimpofu ilihwanqa, yayaziwa phakathi kwezinsizwa. Waze wathi ezidela unina, uMseyiseyi waengazideli ngamanga, waekhumbula oyisemkhulu abangasekho.

UNomkhosi wabuka lomshado washaywa uvalo ebona abantu bedelela umfundisi beqa umthetho wakhe, bekikiza njengamaphandle. Kodwa nakuyena kwafika inhliziyu yobuhlubuki wathi naye ubengakikiza uma intsha idlala kahle kanje, ngoaba waengaliboni icala ekukikizeni nasekuthokozeni kwesimame. Nokho phela, umfundisi waewushayile umthetho, omame laba babeqa izwi lomfundisi, akathandanga ukugxila kakhulu kulokhu wagcina ngokuthi bayaphosisa bonke, noma isiphosiso yena engasiboni.

Zazihamba zisikaza izintombi ezindala sezivulwe imilomo. Konke lokhu wakubuka uNomkhosi wafela phakathi. Lokhu ukuqala kokukhula kwezimpiko zabantu bebona ukuthi ezinye izinto zazinqatshelwa nje kodwa zingenabo ububi kuzona. Kusukwa mhla lokho kwasekukikizwa, nomfundisi kasizwa ukuthi inkomo yehlawulo wayilanda koMdleyana njengoba inkosikazi yakhona uMseyiseyi ephule umthetho. Kakhulu kangakanani lokhu phela manje izinsizwa ezazivela emaThekwini zasezifike nenkositini, kuthi lapho seyikhala nje izinsizwa zixhume zithi zilunywa amatekenyane, kusho izinto zawo Makhabeni oMsindo, ne-

zawo Hlonono oLangeni, nezawo Mbambo ezazikhuluma zizwalaze oM-mbiyana.

Umshado wawuyihlobo zonke izintombi sezifuna ukushada zinyathele ngezambulela ezimhlophe, zitamba ziboshelwe ngokuzwana kwazo, ziholwa umshayi wenkositini ngaphambili okuthiwa umasikandi. Nabanqaphandle kwasesikoleni, loluhlobo lomshado lwabakhanga bafike behlome izinduku bame laphaya babukele izintombi nezinsizwa zamakholwa zidlala ngalemfungumfu eyayikhala kusuke unwele, kukhale nezimfengwane sengathi kukhona iziphoso ezithile kulento, nekhambi elisusa usinga. Kwakuwa izinkomo nezinkabi kuyothengwa inkositini—imfungumfu—ekhala intombi ingenwe ihabiya ilaze ezintabeni. “Hhayi wena bulima ngoba kade siba umtapo wezihlakani-phi!!”

UNomkhosi waekufuka konke lokhu ahleke ebona lezizinto ezifika nabavela eThekwini ziguqula abantu zibenza olunye uhlobo. Yebo abantu basebeguqukile sebengenakubanjwa muntu. Ilanga laseliphumile enzansi sebethathe amageja bephekuza bephanga isikhathi, bebalekela ukuhlwa.

Naye uNomkhosi wazibona futhi efikelwa yilenhliziyo futhi yobuhlubuki imtshela phakathi kunembeza wakhe ukuthi lowaya mfana owahamba wathi makolindwa njalo, naye uyothi mhla efikayo amguqule amenze enye into. Wakhohlwa kancane umfundisi owayesendlini kude ngasesontweni, wakhohlwa nyanngo Tomasi owayesengenile enhliziyweni yakhe. Kwakumnandi ukuhamba alandele lesisixuku sabantu abengomunye waso atambe nezintombi ezinye. Kwaku-

mnandi ukukhuluma ngeTheku angalaziyo lapho amanzi ewelwa ngezikebe ezigwinya abantu zibaphumisele ngale ngaphesheya, bayabuya baphethe izimfungumfu, namaduku awosilika, nezicathulo ezibomvu, nezambulela ezimhlophe eziqhibulwa yizintombi eziphambili. Kwakumnandi ukuhlala njalo phakathi kwalababantu. Yebo kwakumnandi.

ISAHLUKO V.

Ukuaba amaBunu bawachithe eMtateni weTheku, asuka lapho aqonda ngasemGungundlovu lapho uhulumeni wawo wawahlulela khona izindaba. Amanye ngenxa yokudangala athi akanakuhlala eNatali lapho eNingizimu ephehlwa ngamaMpondo kaFaku, nangaseMpumalanga ejojwa ngamaNgisi, kanti eNyakatho amaZulu ayewacifele iso athi kuwo “Mpango-mpango ukulala ngomkhono.” Achitheka futhi eqa uKhahlamba eduka anyamalala kwasala insila yawo eyingcosana.

KwaZulu ukukhanya kwasekuphumile eMpumalanga abefundisi abamhlophe sebebaningi bethi bafundisa abantu ukukholwa eNkosini. Njengoba phela babengahlukene okompela nabakuho phesheya kolwandle nalaba abaseThekwini, babelokhu bebalelana izincwadi zifike lapha eThekwini zigcinwe besezithathwa ngengqokumbane eyayidonswa amahhashi, izihlakaze nomhlabo wonke kaZulu. NakwaDukuza kwakukhona isikhumulo samahhashi, athathe aye afike oHlawe, athathe lawo afake eThekwini njalo masonto

onke, kushayela abantu ababetheniwe ngoBa kwakufika nemiqulu yabefundisi igcwele wena zingubo, nawe zincwadi.

Enye yalezizingqokumbane eyayisuka kwaDukuza yadlula ekuseni ngovivi inquma oGqolweni kuyo imidoni yalapho izigebengu zakwaMaphumulo beziminda khona uNsikana. Emva kokuba zimdinde uNsikana waquleka bonke ubusuku engazi lapho ekhona kodwa umqondo wakhe undiyazeliswa izinto eziningi ezazifika yena ecaBanga ukuthi usefile. Ebusuku umoya wagcwala amakhaza kwase kugcwala ungqoqwane wamphaphamisa uNsikana kodwa akaqondanga lapho ekhona. Walinga ukunyakaza kodwa umzimba wonke wawusinda engawuzwa ukuthi ungowakhe yini. Amakhaza abuya agcwala esigodini nje ngoba kwasekuphakathi kwamabili, sekuzothatha ukusa, amgongobalisa amakhaza kangangoba akabuyanga esakwazi ukukhuluma, nokunyakaza lokhu. Yadlula ingqokumbane yabefundisi iqonde eThekwini bathi bethi nhla eceleni komgwaqo baBona umuntu esewugodo nje, bawamisa amahhashi bathi bekhuluma naye bafumanisa engakwazi nokukhuluma nokushwawuzela kodwa lokhu. Bathi bemguqula bafumanisa izingozi eziningi zimmboze ekhanda nemivimbo emzimbeni, baBona ukuthi qha bekungumuntu wasesikoleni, ubesukelwa izinswelaBoya zimphanga anakho. Bamhawukela, bamcosha, bamsonga ngompisimpisi abafudumeleyo, bamzwela usizi ayekulo. Bamfaka enqoleni yamahhashi baphindela naye emuva eThekwini; konke lokhu kwenzeka kuye nje akazi yena.

Bafike bamshiya lapho bethatha khona izimpahla

bathatha abakuthunyiwe, bashintsha amahhashi baguquka kusa ngakusasa. Ukufika kwabo ekhaya bayixoxa ekhishini lapho kuhleliwe kugcwele izisebenzi uNomkhosi ebapha ukudla. “Bayidemeza insizwa ngezinduku madoda sizwe sifikelwa usizi sayicosha sayesayilahla eThekwini.” Obani bona labo?” “Aibazi ngoBa nathi besijahe eThekwini,” kuphendula omunye, “sithe sijika nje ngasezindongeni ezisoGqolweni samBona lomuntu. Insizwa egcwele, insundu nje, ngokugqoka kwayo nomzimba ngiyabona iliQwabe.” Usephendula uTomasi, owayekade elalele, uthi, “anoqaphela namuhla kuyingozi ukuhamba nicosh’abantu bezilalele emigwaqweni noma beni kanjani.” “Awu uthini nduna na? Noma lowo muntu simBona elimele kade ebulawa na?” “YeBo kuyingozi ngoBa kwazi bani noma yinina ebenimgcweleza nimbulalela imali yakhe? EThekwini lapha izwe labelungu nemithetho yabo.” “Kunjalo nduna na?” “YeBo lezizinto ngiyazazi.” Wahleka uNomkhosi obebuzo lowo mbuzo, wasuke wahamba, akabuyanga angene lapho ngoBa waeseqedile ukupha izisebenzi. Kusuka ngalelo langa bonakala abantu ababuyanga bacoshe muntu endleleni uma bemBona ehluphekile, noma sebeya eThekwini basebeqhaq hazela besaba ukuthi funa babuye babuzwe ngendaba yalomuntu abamcoshayo nokuthi ngase babanjwe bebanjelwa ukuthi bayizigcwelegcwele, bacishe babulala umuntu.

Ngalelo langa bemshiya uNsikana wathathwa wayiswa endlini ethize lapho wathi eqabuka waBona esendaweni ayaziyo ayejwayele nokuthunywa kuyo abelungu bakhe. “Ngiyaphupha noma sengifile na?”

Nithi ngisaphila nin'enilapha?" Washo ethinta ekhanda esikhundleni sokuiba athinte izinwele wahlangabezana nezindwangu ezimhlophe zimfophile ikhanda lonke, wathi uyatoboza kwezwakala ubuhlungu. Wathi uyaguquka lapho wayelaliswe khona phezu kocansi olwalugcwele utshani ngaphansi, wezwa futhi kutshutshumba umzimba wonke, udumbile, futhi unenkwa-tshu, wabuye wabuza wathi "Ngiyaphupha noma ngisaphila na?"

Samtshela yonke indaba yokumcosha kubo abantu bomfundisi, bamcosha oGqolweni, ngenxa yezingozi ayezithwele ekhanda. UNSikana wathi esesele yedwa waqala ukulandela indlela yakhe nabantu bakwaMaphumulo, eyilandela emicabangweni yakhe waye wafika ezidonini lapho wafika wacashisa khona imali yakhe ngasesidulwini, emva kwalokho wabona bemshaya, ngemva akaqondanga lutho. Nakhu esezifona lapha kulendlu. Wabonga amadlozi akubo ukuba nakhu esindile wabancenga ukuba bamdedele aye kumlungu wakhe. Yamangala inkosana yakhe owayeyisebenzela imbona enje, yamfunela amakhambi akobelungu, agcwele amafutha emithini, nemikhomo nezimbazi zolwandle, namanye amakhubalo namakhani namuhla enike niwabone egqunyiswe emakhemesi ezinyanga ezimhlophe kulezizinsuku zanamuhla. Nakobelungu kukhona abathakathi abasile abathe ntse, abaphatha imithi engaphezu kweyawo Motlomi uyisemkhulu kaMshweshwe, nengaphezu kwaleya eyayigaywa uMbophe egcaba ngayo uShaka khona ezoba nesithunzi. Laba bathakathi bakobelungu bakufaka bakubeke izinsimbi lapha esifubeni ubabone sebethi

"ncincinci," babuye bayibeke ohlangothini, ukufa lokhu bakubone ngamehlo ezindlebe njengoba kuzo zombili izindlebe kungena izintanjana ezibomvana noma zibe mnyama. Besebekuthwebula ngemilozi yolwandle kushabalale. NoNsikana kwathi mahlayana, kwathi mahlayana, hawu bakuthwebula, wasinda.

Imithi lena waezilandela ekhemesi ephethe incwajana. Kwayakwaya waze wajwayelana nomfana owayesanda kufika esebenza khona evela kulo langase-Mvoti. Ngelinye ilanga lomfana wathanda ukubalela kubo kodwa ukuloba engakwazi. UNSikana wambalela, nezibuyayo izincwadi zazifundwa uNsikana. Ngelinye ilanga lomfana wathola incwadi eyayinalaw'amazwi:—

"UTomasi indodana kaNogiyela uzogcagciswa ngomthetho wamakholwa nentokazi kaMakhwatha ehlala kwamfundisi. Kepha kukhona umoyana wokuthi ukhona umuntu owake wayikhulumisa waseyishiya wanyamalala wathi uyosebenza. Kodwa phela lawo amaxoxo nje: abantu abayeki ukuxoxa."

UNSikana walinga kakhulu ukuzibamba kodwa inhliziyi yakhe yamdalula yathi kuye: "uwe lowo Nsikana, owatshela intombazana ukuba ikulindele, "Noma nini" khona uyoyitshela okwakho nayo, nanamuhla ikulindele." Wagoduka nemithi yakhe kwathi lapho egcoba amanxeba akhe wabehlabelela ngosizi oluncane, elinga ukuba afinyelele ekhaya. Thina MaZulu yonke into esiyicabangayo, nesiyifisayo, nesiyikhumbule, nesidabukisile, nesijabulisile, siyeneka phansi siyihlabelele ngephimbo elibekene, nelizwana naleyo mvunga ekuphethe ngaleyo nkathi. Yiyo lento ekhohlisa iningi labantu bezizwe abafunda izindlela

zikaZulu, bathi noma egqilazeka noma eklabile bezwe kufana nje kuye, ekwaneka phansi ngengoma. No-Nsikana wamungunya awakhe amagama kanti yilapho eqaqa khona inkinga eyaziwa uye yedwa noNomkhosi.

Kukho konke owayekucabanga ngoNomkhosi waefika aqedeleke, eseze wonda nokonda yindaba yokuthi imali yakhe yasala endle, mhla ethi makabulawe izigebengu zakwaMaphumulo. Nendawo yemali lapho wayifihla khona wa engasayazi ngempela. Walinga ukucabanga ukuthi ngabe kwakukuyiphi indawo kodwa kakumkhanyelanga neze. Waekhumbula nje ukuthi kwakungaphansi komdoni othize eduze nesiduli esibuqamamana nomuthi. Nobulongwe lofo ayebeke ngaphansi kwafo, namuhla kade boma bambozwa utshani. Zonke lezizinto zenza ukufo umqondo wakhe ungagculi, alale engalele.

Ngesonto elilandelayo wabuza kulomfana ukuthi uyogoduka nini, ngofo waefuna ukuhambisana naye njengofa izindlela zase zingewona amahlane angakho. Nezinqola zentaraspoti zasezihamba njalo emgwaqweni zithutha. UNSikana waebulawa ukuthi, usazosebenza athole enye imali, nokuthi kungamsizani ukubuyela ekhaya engaphethe lutho na. Angaba inhlekiso nakubantu, ayilobole ngani yona intombi angase ayichithise lofo tshwala eyase ibugayile kumfo kaNogiyela.

Umfana lo waeqede izinyanga ezimbili namasonto amathathu esemsebenzini esezogoduka ekupheleni kwenyanga. baqala ukubopha imithwalo, belungisa nezikhali zendlela nemiphako. Njengofa UNSikana waesazi konke ngendlela kuyekufike oGqolweni wa-

qopha isikhathi sokusuka wathi mabasuke ntambama bahambe impela, balale emzaneni wabelungu owase uqalile eMdloti. Wavuma umngane wakhe nempela baliphaqaza belishaya phansi, behlangana nabafokazi, bakwaZulu beqonde eThekwini bebuza, "kunjani bangane bethu, kuyadliwa nje emuva," baphendule bathi, "wo, kuyabuswa oThungulu, nathi sisayobona emakhaya." "Pho siyolalaphi makhosana na?" basho njalo ziyahamba izinsizwa ezimbili, bona bemi banqaka amazwi abo. "Wo hhiya, kakusekude, uyodlula leya ntaba uswacele, uwele umfula omkhulu esizalweni sawo, uyozi bona izindlu ezimhlophe."

"Siyabonga, kakusho nina ukuthi kuyabuswa oThungulu kusho imizimba yenu ukuhambela phezulu, ngisho nakwaZulu, Mpandekekhona, azisekho izinsizwa ezinjalo." baguquke abafokazi bahambe.

Lathi lishona ilanga babedlule Ohlange beqela emagqumeni abeke uMdloti namanzi awo sebewabukela phansi, bathi beguqula amehlo bewaqondisa ngenhla bawabona amatende nezindlwana eziningana zimi. baphendukela khona sebeyofuna indawo yokulala njengofa kwasekuhlwile kuyingozi futhi ukulala endle kugcwele izilwane. bafika bakhuleka bacela indawo yokulala bakhonjiswa indlwana eyayi liqhugwane kuyona kubaswe umlilo kukhona nabanye abantu abagozobele khona kuzosa bedlula. bonke babeqonde eThekwini bengazange baye khona ngaphambili.

Kwakuxoxwa ezempi nokufo kwaZulu manje umbuso usuphethwe uCetshwayo njengofa kade ibambene eyamadodana kaMpande eNdonakusuka. Ya-

yiBEDula ekaMbuyazi kodwa isidumbu sakhe kasaziwa muntu. Iningi lithi wabaleka uMbuyazi ngenkathi ebona ukuthi impi yakhe iyehlulwa, iziGqoza bezinikanela phansi aboSuthu, uMbuyazi wabaleka waya eMgungundlovu. Abanye bayaphika bathi wazibulala ngendlela engaziwayo wathi akanakuthanda isidumbu sakhe siphathwe nokuphathwa uCetshwayo noma umuntu woSuthu.

Yaxoxwa indaba kwaze kwaba sebusuku. Izinsizwa zakhona eMdloti ezazisebenzela abelungu zazihlabelela zigiya, zizinweba, ezinye zibema amagudu zinganake lutho. Izinsizwa zabelungu lezi zazibema ugwayi zihleli ezindlwani zazo zifunda amaphepha ngezibani. Wathula uNsikana ebuka konke lokhu ebona ukwahlukana kwemiqondo yabantu abasavela kwaZulu bedla ngoludala nalaba abasebeywayele abelungu, wacabanga ukuthi kazi kobe kunjani ngezikhathi zamadodana abo uma beyobanawo.

Yena waengekho kukho konke lokhu waecabanga ngentombazana owayigcina eminyakeni emithathu edlule nezinyanga ngaphezulu, emangala ukuthi kazi namuhla ingakanani. Nokuthi lensizwa okuthiwa uTomasi kazi injani, ingakanani. Nokuthi noma ingaze ibe ngangezintaba zibekelene kobe ababekananga noNomkhosi emehlweni, wamkhumbeza okudala nesi-thembiso sakhe sokumlindela “Noma nini.” Kothi lapho umlilo umnandi, nezinsizwa zixoxa ezakwaZulu, imithwalo ibekwe laphaya, limfikelele ifu elimnyama lokusala kwemali yakhe oGqolweni, nokuthi khona uma uNomkhosi engase amthande angamlobola ngani. Kuphele konke abekucabanga, ubuso bakhe buhwa-

qabale bugcwale imivingqi, nezinhlonzi ziphakame aququde amazinyo aphume phandle eshiya izimpahla zakhe nomngane wakhe.

Kwaze kwathi ebusuku balala kwathula kwathi cwaka, njalo abafu bakwaZulu ababengakujwayelanga ukulala-zu, babuye baphaphame bephonsana amazwi, “kazi mina kababa ngoBe ngilelephi ngomuso,” omunye naye obese ephapheme aphenhlele athi, “sen-gathi usho kimi mina inhliziyoyami isekhaya. Ungangibonisela oMaBulose nomaShandu beqwashile kwelempi.” Babuye bathule, kuthule kuthi cwaka, kuzwakale enzansi emfuleni amaselesele ewekeza echwensa ebika ihlobo abuye anqamuke, besekuhonqa omunye endlini eziphuphela nje ekhuluma, phakathi nendlu iziko lilokoza umlilo okhihlikile kodwa usuyophela sekukhona ungwengwezi lomlotha ngaphezukwelahle, nabantu endlini sebengabonani. Waze walala uNsikana wathuswa izinkuku sezikhala kanti ikhwezi seliphumile enzansi. Wamvusa umngane wakhe uNsikana, bagqoka bavalelisa kwabanye, behla bawashaya amanzi oMdloti. Ilanga laphuma bekuphukile eNyanninga bedlula oHlawe (oThongathi manje) sebezohamba amathafa asoGqolweni. Lathi lifudumala basondela ezidonini; bahlala ezidonini lezo bathi “eya akunacala, sesihambile ngoBa sekuzobamini yantambama, lothi liya ngonina besesihlukana, ngingena kwelakithi.” “YeBo wethu, sesihambile, akesihlale phansi sithathe amathunga siphuze nanka amanzi omthombo emahle.” “Nempela,” kusho uNsikana.

Phansi kwezidoni bahlala phansi babubudla ama-

nzi kashukela, bashwakaqela nemfamumfamu yesinkwa, basulela ngamaqatha enyama, waesethi uNsikana "Ngisaya ngaphandle." Njengoba yena ehleli edla nje waebuka ehlanganisa ukuma kwendawo ukuthi njengoba "salala laphaya, mina ngasuka ngathi, ngiyofihla imali." Wasukuma esebona indawo kodwa isiduli okuyisonasona engasiqondi kahle phakathi kwezimbili ezazimi ndawonye; Wasifuna isikundla, ebudula ngalapha nangalapha waze wabona lapho ngabe ikhona imali, waqhanda ngesidunu senduku, nempela kwathi engazelele kwathi khwehlele, yaphuma imali, wayiqoqa amehlo akhe esengaboni uvalo, nezandla ziqhaqhazela sengathi ukhona ombonayo. Wayifala yaphelela yonke. Waeseguqa phansi wabonga eNkosini, wacina ngokubiza oyisemkhulu. Abelungu laba babemthanda ngempela ngoba, lomncane owaesesele wamupha opondwe abayisithupha emhawukela ngokulahlekelwa kwakhe. Seyiphelele yonke manje yaba amashumi amabili opondwe no-pondwe ngaphandle.

Wabuya umfo waseNkoboongo eseyisonge ngeduku elikhulu walithatha walithi ntsi esiswini khona ingezokhala iziwe abantu abadlulayo. Wafika waxolisa kumngane wakhe ngokulibala ngoba wamfumalisa eselele ecotshwe yindlela, nokukhathala, nelanga. Esemvusile bathatha imithwalo bahamba. UNsikana kwase kunguye osexox'indaba manje nemilenze yabo isiqinile. Kwathi liyoshona babeqhamuka eMhlali, uNsikana wabonga umngane wakhe uNkomeni ka-Zululokulethwa wakwaKhuzwayo. Bakhombisana

namakhaya abo, uNkomeni emyalela lapho beyohlanguana khona ngesonto.

Kwathi ukuaba bahlukane wema uNsikana waphelwa ngamandla kwaba sengathi akakafiki ekhaya kodwa uyaphupha. Wafikelwa ukhleka, waeseshaywa uvalo wathinta esiswini sakhe wabona ukuthi, qha, usaphelele, wathatha imithwalo yakhe wasukuma waphambuka emgwaqweni wezinqola eya ngaseNtshonalanga. Waqala ukuabona amanxiwa akubo, wawubona umlilo ulokhoza waqonda kuwona. Wawadlula amanxiwa wabekana nalapho kwasekwakhiwe khona. Wanukelwa umusi wembuthuma yezinkuni ezazithandwa unina umthombothi, nomunga, wagudla unqenqema lothango olwalakhiwe ngogange engafuni ukungena ngesango ngoba funa basheshe bambone ukuthi, nangu umuntu engena ngesango bambambe, bemlibazisa, bembuza imibuzo engaqonde ndawo aze azidalule igama lakhe. Wahamba waya ngenhla komuzi emasangweni ezintombi, nelekhohlwa, wawedlula lawa waqonda kwelengqadi lika nina. Wange-na maqede wasondela ngasosikweni lwendlu wanyonyoba wancika kulo waye wafika ngasegumeni wafika wafihla khona imithwalo wayisitha ngezinyanda zezinkuni ezazibekwe khona, wayesenyiba.

Waphuma futhi ngesango lika nina wacasha ngasogangeni. Kwaba sengathi uyejabulisa okwephupho. Wezwa izwi likanina libiza udadewabo uNokuthela, owayemudekazi, kuthi lapho seziboshelelwe nje kutanjwa kwelaseNkoboongo uyise amkhuze athi: "Isibuzi esimqala, uvemvane lwamagangane, olungabanjwayo." Emuhle lomntwana wabantu, ku-

khulunywa ngaye yonke indawo. UNSikana wezwa izimazi zikhonya esibayeni sikayise namathole ephe-ndula ezindlini; wezwa nawakwafo ethombeni ekhala ekhalela onina. Wezwa esangweni ngasesitumbanjeni izingcanga zihilikiqa umuntu abanye bezikhuza bezi-
thulisa. Wezwa umfana owalusayo obephuzile uku-
buyisa izimbuzi ezaluswa uye ehlafelela abuye ashaye
umlozi ethi:

“Yeka ngento yami weLizweni

Wen’owayishiya l’eThekwini, weMame.”

Izwi lakhe libuye lithi du, kukhale amazwi ezimvana esihlahleni, kuphendule onina bathi, “me-e-eh;” kubuye kuthi nya, athathe umfana wakhona. Wazewasondela umfana wawuqhuba umhlambi wakhe, imicabango yakhe ingasanganisiwe lutho lwezinhluphekho zomhla-
fa. Konke lokhu kwangen’enhliziyweni kaNsikana kwathi tshi, kwamlethela usizi lokukhala kunokuba kumjabulise.

Waye wadlula umfana nezimbuzi nezimvu zakhe ziqhubushana zikhala, ezinqanda, ehlafelela ngento yakhe afayishiya eThekwini. Wezwa uNsikana eyo-
shona umfana kude esigodini eziphindelela igama lakhe yena engenandaba ndawo nomhlafa. UNSikana wafisa isikhundla salomfana umhlafa owayengawazi ewuzwa sanganekekwani.

ISAHLUKO VI.

Kubo kaNsikana kwak’umuzi wamakholwa na-
mabinca angaphandle. Kwakuyinxuluma enhle ka-
khulu, yakhiwe phezu kwegquma elibuka uMhlali

libeke olwandle lapho kwakhe khona amadodana kaPhephethwayo khona. Kwakugcwele amahlathi nezihlahla zelala nencema ikhulile iyinde kwelukwa ngayo izicephu, nezithebe, namahluzo amahle kakhulu.

Ngesonto elalizofika uNsikana unina waesejwa-
yele ukuba iso lakhe lesinxele lidikize besethi: “Ma-
mo maQwabe, ngidikizelelwa iso ingabe ngizobona
bani engimaziyo.” Ngelinye ilanga waefudumezela
utshwala, isijingi sibila saphuphuma saqhilika esidiki-
selweni. Uma utshwala benza njalo, bathi abadala,
bukhombisa ukuthi buzophuzwa umuntu wezizwe.
Unina kaNsikana wahleka nje washo wathi: “Iokhu
noNsikana ongabe ngithi uye ozophuza lapha, naye
kade wazibungukela wangishiya nginje, ngigxaz’ama-
nzi njengencuba. Ukuzala kunjengomlungisi yena
ozithela isisila. Uthi ngangazi ukuthi ma sengiguga
ngiswele nengufo yokulala, ngingafani noMaNkonzo,
noMaNyathela, fona abathi bu ngesholo nangetshali,
kuBonakale nje ukuthi nank’amakhosikazi emizi ayo.”

Wabalisa kwaze kwasa ngelanga elalizofika
uNsikana. Ngalo lelolanga ekuseni kwema iqhude
phambi komnyango wakwafo kaNsikana lakhala, bali-
xosha bathi: “lifun’ukweqiwa amanzi.” Labuya la-
khala, baqala ukusola. Lathi lishona ilanga babona
ibika lithi ntenene namalungana emibala, balibamba
balibulala, balishis’emlilweni. Ukusola kwaendlu ya-
kwafoNsikana kwaqala kwayakwaqina.

Sekuhlwile kwathi zibe nabafana sebewakhethile
amankonyane konina bawangenisa ethombeni, nabo
bangen’endlini ukuyoth’umlilo, bezwa kukhonkotha
izinja, baphuma bazikhuza bethi “Ayisuk’uVusabantu,

yanzan'uNangumuntu—ayisukebo, mame!" Zavungama izinja zakhwec'imisila zathula. basebebona kungqongqoza umuntu nemithwalo. babona insizwa nje ende ensundu, bayibingelela bayingenisa endlini. Yahlala phansi.

Yath'ukuba ihlale yakhuleka yathi: "Wo, mame, sengihlwelwe, ngiqonde le kwaMpukunyoni ngiqhamuka ngapha oGqolweni, sengikhathele sekunqaba noma ngime."

"Qha, mntanami thina laph'ekhaya kasilalisi abafokazi bendlela, ngoaba indawo kasinayo neze, neze. Qha dlulela phambili, kungakalalwa nje mntanami. Mxosheni naweZiwedu, mthatheni nimkhombise indlela eya laphaya kulowaya muzi."

Beseyithi insizwa: "Hawu, pho, mame ungebe usanginika nokokwesul'amathe, sengilambe kangakana, futhi nokwenza ngingowezizwe? Kuthiwa mame unyawo kalunampumula, nawe ngase uthuke ufika le kwaMpukunyoni ngikuxoshe njengoba ungxosha nje."

"Ngiyobe ngiyonzani na kwaMpukunyoni ngizigugele nje—uthinina lomkhapheyana maQwabe?"

"Ngabe mhlaumbe uncisha noma uxosha umntwana wesihlobo sakho nje, ngoaba nami ngizalwa kwaQwabe."

"OQwabe befaningi nje mntanami, ucabanga ukuthi ngizohamba ngigqwaba ngibopha onke amafumbu akwaQwabe lawa? Ngabe nginemikhuba. Kungavuka uManqina kaNkontshela ngimbone ehamba ngalezi." Washo ebuka izinyawo zakhe ekhishiza nendlu yonke, abantwana bebuka noNokuthela

embukisisa lomfokazi okhulumayo. UNokuthela esemnyameni wayembuka kahle lomfokazi emhawukela kodwa wanele wambona ehleka usulu, waqala ukusola waesethi:

"Lomuntu mame uyahleka. Futhi uthe uvela oGqolweni, akukhona yini lapho, ingani bahlinzela khona abantu kwasa nje. Hhayi mame, ngiyamsola, mxoshe isigebengu lesi." Washo esukuma naye, abuye asondele kuye ambuke abuye ayohlala phansi emnyameni wakhe, ambukisise futhi, kuthi ma unina eboka, lomfokazi njalo ambone uNokuthela ehleka usulu. Wathula uNokuthela.

UNina kaNsikana waqala ukuqunga manje ebilita ebona ukuthi umfokazi akathandi ukuhamba uyazindazindela, wathi "Nans'imihlola kaManqina, niyangizwela nje webantu!" UNsikana wayemazi kahle unina, azi nokuthi unina uzothatha lapho amemeze, akhale isililo ngoaba waengafuni ukumlalisa ekhaya kwakhe nokufunga lokhu wayazi ukuthi uqinisile. Wasukuma uNsikana wathi kunina:

"Hawu mame uze ubize obabamkhulu oManqina noNkontshela nje ngoaba uqinisile ukuthi ngingumfokazi? Awusangiboni ngempela? Indodana yakho owazibona ubuntombi wangena ubufazi ngayo kanti uba? NginguNsikana, mame." UNina wathwala izandla ekhanda, wasusa isililo wakhala ngo'bxosha umntanake, ethi ungumfokazi nje.

Waphuma uNokuthela wamemeza wathi "Hawu nang'uNsikana esefikile evela ekubungukeni muzi kababa; hawu ake nizo bona." Kwabuya wonke umuzi uzwa isililo wagcwala kufo kaNsikana. bambona

bonke uNsikana bamangala. Nabafowafo bezinye izindlu babuya bazoxhawula ngoba babengakholwa ukuthi usekhona uNsikana babethi sewafa.

Ekugcineni kwafofonke kwafika ikhehla elinguyise lambingelela ngokunganaki nje libona isibunguka sifika mhlaumbe sesilethe amathambo njengazo zonke izibunguka ezifika ngoba sezizokufa noma sezifizwa amafa. Sezizofika zichithe zihlakaze imizi zithi lokhu nakhu zingamakhosana nje kuyobe kukhulume bani. Kukhohlakale ukuthi akukho nokuncane ongase ukuvune ngokudla ugwinye isithukuthuku, nezipho, nemisebenzi yabanye. Uzidlela uzigwinyela amatsh'e-zulu, azophethuka esiswini adle wena nenzalo yakho. Wabuka, wabuka uyise wahamba ephethe isagila esincane, wahamba engavalelisile kuNsikana, wabuza kubafana uZiwedu noMxosheni ukuthi izinkomo zibuye zonke na, wabuza nokuthi bazivalele kahle na, wahamba.

Kwaduma kusa ngakusasa ukuthi uNsikana ufikile, ufike njengezinye izibunguka uzofuna ukondliwa manje. Lendafo yayichunyiswa abafowafo bezinye izindlu. Kwathi oNokuthela baphenduka insini nonina ngoba phela bengabonwa begqoka beconsa amatshali aligugu namasongo afakwa ezingalweni. UNsikana wawubona lomoya womuzi kayise kodwa wathokoza ukubona umoya kanina nodadewafo bezwana naye kakhulu. Wathi ngelinye ilanga sekuhlwile wabiza unina noNokuthela wabenekela imali owayebuye nayo eThekwini wabaxoxela indaba yokusinda kwakhe, unina esakhala efuna ukubikela umuzi wonke, wambamba uNsikana wathi kuye, "thula

uz'ufe." Wayiphetha indaba yakhe ngokuthi, "Mame, nawe ntombazana yakwethu, ngithule ngifuka nje ngiyabona ukuthi umoya wendlu yakwethu ungifuiathele ungicabanga sengathi nginjengozulwane lomhlaba nesibunguki. Mina ngifuna ukushada, futhi ngizoshada nentombi yekholwa ngiphume kulomuzi kababa ngiyokwakha owami entabeni, ngakhe umuzi wesikholwa njengoba nani ngiyanibona seniyagqoka, leyonto iyonijabulisa."

"Uyoyithathaphi leyontombi yesikholwa namuhla lokhu ezasemakholweni zithi thina singamabayi sinuka izikhumba singamakhafula?"

"Thulani nithi du, ngizosuka nayo le eningayibekile nina. Ngizokweshela lentombi engizwa kuthiwa ihlala kwamfundisi uGilawoti, ngiyeshela ngiyahlule." Wathula unina wathatha imali wayisonga wahlala phezu kwayo, waphendula uNokuthela wathi: "Qha mfowethu, leyo ntombi iyingodusi yomuntu. Futhi lomuntu uyisiphakanyiswa somfundisi, kakukho ndlela nongase uyibone uyikhulumise ngayo lentombi."

"Thulani nina, musani ukuzihlupha, indaba yami leyo." Washo ephuma ehamba eyongena endlini yakhe eyilawu wayolala.

Lapha kwafo unina akalalanga nodadewafo bebala imali egibele amahhashi ebomvu, abahlale bezwa ngayo bethi isetshenzelwa eThekwini. Bayithatha bayifihla embundwini wendlu, beyivalela odiyweni oluncane, balumbela phansi.

Nabo kusuka ngalelo langa bahambela phezulu banganaka izinkulumo zomuzi ngabo. banganaka

futhi nokungavakashi kukayise lapha kwaBo kaNsikana esegcina ekhohlweni kanye namaBibi alo okuyiwona ayehlekisa ngengqadi yomuzi. Ikhohlwa leli lase liphenduke intandokazi, selihamba liqhawuzela phakathi nomuzi.

UNsikana wayehlangana nje naBo bonke, angabanaki, ahlukane naBo ngamasonto yena aziyele esontweni. Wayefike nenkositini yakhe ekwazi ukuyishaya, ma ethandle aphume ashaye leligama elaselizulisa intsha yangaleso sikhathi uma sekushaywa umqhuqhumbelo:—

s : - - : fe l : fe s : - - : r r : r
Di - - - - da No - ma - sing' - u - yang' - qa -

m : d - : f m : - m m : r d : d m : m
mbe - la Wa - tha - th' - iso - no sakho wa - si -

r : r d : r m : d : }
shi - ye - la nga - ba - nye.

Amazwi yilawa:

“Dida Nomasinga uyangiqambela: wathatha isono sakho wasishiyela ngabanye.”

Wayeluthinta ukositini umfo waseNkoBongo kuvume udadewabo, “Isibuzi esimqala,” sisho ngengila kuze kume nobekude alalele. Pho, lokhu ukositini lwaluseyindlala nje, nomuzi wakwabo kaNsikana waze wathatheka nawo uzolalela lento yabelungu ehlabelela izulisa abantu. Wayeluthinta uNsikana ngenye inkathi ahambe anyamalale ayengaseMvoti lapho wayevakashela khona umngane wakhe uNkomeni naye

wafika wamxoxela ngalendaba kaNomkhosi ngokokuqala, uNkomeni naye wabona kumnyama angayiboni indlela yokufonana nalentombazana. Ma esebuya njalo wawumuzwa umfo waseNkoBongo ezakude ekhala ngo “Dida Nomasinga,” lusho ukositini luvunywa nayizintaba, uzwe bethi ekhaya kweminye imizi, “Kuphela njalo ayikho enye into eyaziwayo.” Afike aluthi fuqa phansi ayekunina ayomxoxela ngomngane wakhe uNkomeni nezinkulumo zaBo naye. Unina ahleke lapho eyibona insizwa yakhe ixoxa kanti nakhu ubeseyiphekele mhlawumbe imifino noma amasi abesevutshiwe. Adle uNsikana ayolala.

Akunakuphikeka ukuthi unina waemthanda ngothando olumangalisayo uNsikana. Nangokufanayo izitha zakhe uNsikana zazimzonda ngenzondo ephelleyo,

Waezihambela ngelinye ilanga eyowela ngasemfuleni owela umuntu esezokhuphukela ngasekhaya. Wahlangatshezwa insizwa eyakhe ngakuBo uSmonqo yathi kuye, “wena uwela ngalelizibuko nje, kawazi yini ukuthi ngalenkathi yemini amantombazana aya-geza lapha na?”

Waphendula uNsikana wathi, “Qha mngane, into ebengingayazi leyo.”

“Angiyena umngane wakho mina, ungaphinde, ungibize uthi, mngane.”

Wath’uNsikana, “Uxolo ngoba bengingazi wethu.”

“Angiyen’uwenu! Sasishayana-phi lapho ungaze uthi nginguwenu? Saselusa ngakuliphi ithafa lapho sabonana khona ukuthi, yeBo nginguwenu?”

Wath'uNsikana, "Qha, Smonqo mfo kaZwelafo, waseMaNyandwini, kanginamagama okuwaphendula njengoba nginjengesifiki kulendawo kade ngahamba, izinto eziningi ziyangidida."

"Awu, uyangeyisa ungibiza ngegama, uthi nginguSmonqo ungilande nobabamkhulu na? Ngizwa kuthi mangife, ngife, ngifele khona lapha phambi kwakho."

Wathi eqeda lawamazwi okufutheka uSmonqo, uNsikana waehleka ephendula ethi, "Uthi mangithi mfanake, Smonqo. Sengiyaphela lapho." Wawasho lawamazwi waqonda phambili, wathi enjeyaya waphendukela kuSmonqo wathi "uma ekhona lawomantombazana akho agezayo, kofanela nami angesabe, abince ngidlule ezibukweni ngoba kangizukumila izimpiko ngindize ngingenyoni." Washo wahamba wehlela ngasemfuleni ehamba elalela uma mhlawumbe uzozwa amazwi amantombazana; kodwa akazwanga lutho. Wawela maqede waesebona ukuthi uSmonqo lo ubethunyiwe ukuaba azokulwa naye noma azopheмба uchuku ngaphandle kwesizathu.

USmonqo lo waenodadewabo omuhle impela bejwayelene noNokuthela udadewabo kaNsikana. Lentombazana uNokuthela wake wakhuluma ngayo kuNsikana wathi:

"Mfowethu, injani lentokazi na?"

Wath'uNsikana, "inhle impela dadewethu."

"Pho kunjani ngikukhulumele kuyo na?"

Wath'uNsikana, "Awukahle dadewethu, ngisabuka ngalentombazana ehlala kwamfundisi inhliziyo yami igxilile kuyo. Lindela mina ngokutshela."

"Hhayi wena mfowethu, sengike ngawaphonsa amazwi sengathi ngithunywe uwe, ngayizwa ukuthi indawo iyakuvumela."

Waphendula uNsikana wathi, "wazewangiqhatha nomhlafo Nokuthela. Ukwenzelani ukuaba unigigijimele ngaphambili sengathi ngingumntwana, ungikhulumele kulentombazana kanti mina kayikho enhliziyweni yami?"

"Ngangifona sengathi inhliziyo yakho iyobathanda bonke abathandwa yimina; kuthi nentombazana engiyithandayo ngifisa ukuaba ibe ngumfazi wakho nodadewethu futhi, nawe ngokunjalo uyoyithanda ngothando lwami. Namanje ngiyafisa ukuaba ungilalele. Lentombazana yakwamfundisi ngiyesaba ngayo, sengathi kayikufanele ingaphezu kwakho ngenxa yokuba iziphathisa okwabelungu, ihlala nabelungu, nomuntu emthandayo uziphathisa njengomlungu. Thina uma ehlangana nathi akasinaki, akaboni nokuthi singobani." Washo lawamazwi okugcina wasukuma uNokuthela wazelula kungathi uyazizwa ukuthi naye uyintombi engenakweyiswa kalula noma iyiphi insizwa kulomhlafo.

Waphendula uNsikana wathi, "Qhabo, bohlala phansi sikhulume. Wena uma ungibona ucaabanga sengathi ngiphuma emaphandleni lapho umlungu engazange abonwe, nalapho kuthi uma eqhamuka abantu batatazele. Mina ngiqhamuka eThekwini lapho kade ngihleli khona nabelungu bezinhlobo zonke. EThekwini bengibona amantombazana afana nayo le ehlala kwamfundisi, mhlawumbe aziphatha ezicwala kangcono kunayo futhi. Lento yakobelungu kangiyiboni

ngiyibingelela lapha eMvoti. Amazwi akho kawangethusi, Nokuthela.”

“Wazingani noma izovuma?”

“Kangethuswa yilokho.”

“Awuyikhulumisi ngani kuthi noma ushada nale yakwamfundisi, nayo futhi ubuye ushade nayo?” Laphoke uNsikana wasuka wahleka nje elalele udade-wabo elinga ukumdonselela kumngane wakhe.

“Kawuboni yini Nokuthela ukuthi mina nginjengekholwa umthetho kawungivumeli ngithathe isithembu na?”

“Uqale nini lowo mthetho?”

Waphendul’uNsikana wathi, “Umthetho wobukholwa lowo owafika nabefundisi. INkosi ephezulu, iTongo, uMvelinqangi akavumi isithembu.”

“Uyokubona kanjani yena lowo Mvelinqangi lokhu akafiki lapha emhlabeni na? Mhla ufayo uyoya emathongweni awoShaka, noDingane nawobabamkhulu, lapho kukhona umbuso, lapho umuntu eganwa ngokuthanda abafazi abaningi abamgayela utshwala ahlale phansi abeme igudu lakhe. Pho wena lapho ubungubani, Nsikana, ungaze udele umthetho wawo yihlomkhulu na?”

“UMvelinqangi wamakholwa mina engikolwa uye, ubona konke. Unisa izulu, alethe nokufa. Uye ophethe oNomkhulwane noMamlambo abaletha ubuhle emhlabeni kuthela izithelo, balethe nothando kwabathatheneyo. Bonke baphethwe nguyena yedwa. Uye owathi ezelwe weza kulomhlaba mandulondulo wayala ukuba abamlandelayo bathathe abafazi ngabanye.”

“Ngiyakuzwa mfowethu,” washo uNokuthela ethula ebeka phansi kwaba sengathi kukhona okumphambanisayo adinga incazelo kukho. Wahhlala wagoqa izandla zakhe emadolweni imilenze eyiphindile njengoba wena okubone amantombazana akwaZulu enza. Ikhanda lakhe laligebise eceleni izindlebe zakhe zihlongozele okukhulunywa ngumfowabo sengathi akaqondi ukuthi uthini. Ingani waekade ethule ebeke phansi, waphakamisa ikhanda waqala ukukhuluma, “uqinisile yini uma uthi amakholwa enza njengoba usho na?”

“Ngiqinisile uma ngisho njalo”

“Nami ngiqinisile uma ngithi ucabanga ukuthi wena ungehluka kanjani kobabamkhulu na? Ingani nakhu ngikhuluma nje abanumzane abadala abafike nomfundisi baqala njengoba usho nje: bathatha inkosikazi ngayinye kodwa namuhla banesithembu ngoba babona ukuthi balwa namasiko nofuzo lwawokokobabo.”

“Kangikholwa yilokho Nokuthela kababa. Noma kungaze kube iqiniso nokho akusho ukuthi umthetho uphambukile, kuphosisa bona.”

Waphendula uNokuthela wathi, “Ngikhuluma nje uMakhabeni owaganwa nguLili kaJwabu waseNanda wehluleka wabuye wagcagca nenye intombi uNomthofo kaMdladla wakwaMbambo wayakhela umuzi wakwaGqu. Namuhla uma uya olwandle ngasesizalweni solwandle uyowufica lomuzi wakhile uyinxulumama; uMqwebu washada noNozindaba kaSgwebana emthatha emundlunkulu kwaZulu, wabuye wathatha okaMathambo waseMadundube, waphinda wathatha

uBavimbile kaNgazimbi waseManyandwini; uNyokana wagcagca noPhahlakazi (uGxebe) kaMsolwa wakwa Hhosiya, wangema lapho wadlulela phambili wathatha uNomsombuluko wakwaQwabe. Ngingawabala ngiwathini, mfowethu amakholwa athatha isithembu lokho ngingaqeda izwe lonke na?"

"Mhlawumbe njalo kawasekho amanye."

Kwasengathi uyamqhubela phambili uNokuthela wathi, "Ngizokubalela abanye abanjengoMbozeyana owabaleka waya eMdlotane; uMlawu washiya waya kwaMadundube; nabanye abanjengoMbangayiya kaMhuhulu wakwaZungu. Bonke laba bayaphila ungababona, mfowethu, ngawakho amehlo. Pho wena uyophuma phi kulenqwaba na?"

"Ngingajafula uma ungangibalela futhi abangakasithathi isithembu noma bebabili nje ngiyokwaneliswa." Washo uNsikana wathula wabeka udadewabo nempendulo. "Kangibazi mfowethu kangisho nokuthi basekhona abangakasithathi isithembu kuho bonke abaqala inkolo." Washo uNokuthela esukuma esefuna ukuhamba, kodwa umfowabo wathi kuye,

"Sengizokutshela babebathathu nje kuphela ngingadluli lapho. Ngizokubalela uNtaba kaMadunjini wakwaLuthuli; ngikukhombise oJani kaNxaba kaMdleyana wakwaMsomi benoJani kaHlonono kaNqunywayo wakwaLangeni. Mina-ke ngizoba omunye walaba noma wena dadewethu ungakholwa. Musa ukungibangela ukhuvethe olungenakucishwa ngokungiqhatha nomngane wakho."

Wathi ukuba asho lawamazwi okugcina yasuka intombazana yahamba wasala yena ebalisa ngendaba

ayenziwe uSmonqo ekuseni efuna ukuxabana naye. Wayengazi ukuthi uSmonqo lo uhlangene nabafowabo laba bawonina abanye. Ubeqhutshwa yibona ukuba ayomchukuluza bethi uNsikana uthe ngodadewabo, akuntombi yalutho akafanele ukushada ngisho nokuthanda yena. Kwamthukuthelisa uSmonqo lokho. Uthe nalapho esebuya ahlulekile uSmonqo ukuqamba uchuku wabuyela kubafowabo bakaNsikana wabatshelela, bona bamkhombisa ukuthi isekhona enye intunja yokuthola uNsikana ambuze ngezinto azisho ngodadewabo.

USmonqo wathi lapho ebona naye esecabangisisa ngendaba yokuthandana kukadadewabo noNokuthela waqala ukusola sengathi abafowabo bakaNsikana bakwenza konke lokhu ngoba bemzonda, noma yingoba bona besaba ukulwa naye, befuna ukuba ingozi yehlele yena wakoSmonqo ingani akanacala nempela. Wenqaba uSmonqo ukuyingena lendaba baze abafowabo bacabanga enye indlela yokumdilizela phansi umfowabo.

Njengoba kwakuzoba khona umgcagco ngase-Nonoti kwelakwaMbozeyana baqonda ukuthi uNsikana uyothanda ukuhamba kanye nabo uyoshaya nenkositini. Uma ehamba nabo futhi ephethe inkositini ngeke bona babe nethuba lokuaba badlalisele nasesigekleni ngoba izintombi ziyobuka uNsikana kuphela eshaya lemfungumfu evela eThekwini. Futhi bona noma bethanda bengathandi kufanele batambe phansi kwesandla sikaNsikana. Lento yabahlupha kakhulu beswela ukuthi bazokwenzenjani.

USmonqo waenqaba ukuba angcweke naye noma sebemqhatha ngendlela emangalisayo yokuthi uNsikana ujjivaza udadewabo. Nabo uqobo lwabo babe-mazi uNsikana esengumfana ukuthi induku yakhe yayingavikwawikwa nje ngumfana. Wayeyingqwele esifundeni sakuho esigabeni sabo. Pho manje wasekade ahamba waya eThekwini lapho induku ingashaywa khona. Noma kunjalo akekho owayazi ukuthi njengoba eseyinsizwa nje waesityibamba kanjani induku nehawu alimise kanjani.

Into eyabethusayo ukuzwa inkulumo yakhe no-Smonqo njengoba ixoxwa uSmonqo kuona. Bathi uSmonqo uNsikana ugcine ngezwi lokuthi:

“Uthi mangithi, mfanake Smonqo. Sengiyaphela lapho.” Lawo mazwi eshiwo insizwa kwenye insizwa anesisindo asho okuningi. Uma uNsikana esakhohlwa ukuphatha induku nokuvika ubengasho kanjani ku-Smonqo ukuthi mfana na? Nokuba kuthi besakhuluma uNsikana asuke amshiye konke lokho kusho ukuthini uma engazimisele uNsikana lo ukulwa na? Yonke kwaba imibuzo eyacayiywa abafowabo baka Nsikana bebodwa bengahlushwa lutho, futhi bengeziwa muntu emalawini abo.

Ngakhoke banquma bahlanganisa ukuthi mabameme uNongunyaza wakwaManzasengwa owaeyisiqhwaga esifundeni saseMvoti. Bammelele ukuba ahambe nomthimba aye kwelakwaMbozeyana kulomgcagco owawuzogcagcwa. Baceba noNongunyaza ukuthi uyochukuluza uNsikana emgcagcweni enzela ukuba uNsikana athukuthele besebelwa. Njengeziphoxo zokulwa zonke zomhlaba uNongunyaza wavuma

wathi uyomcupha uNsikana athi uma ejoqa ekhombisa izinhlonzana amthathe ambeke phansi ngesikhwili kungabi ndabazalutho.

Kuleyonkathi amacala okulwa nokuchitha igazi ayengathethwa ndawo. Kwakungathi ngoaba umuntu ekugqekeze ingozi ekhanda besekuphuma izikhonzi zenkosi seziyokubopha uhlawuliswe ngenkomo noma ubulawe. Uma ushaya abantu abaningi ubabeke izingozi emakhanda ikakhulu umhlaba wonke wawukupha izibongo kwaziwe uma kusemgcagcweni ukuthi uma kusuka impi nawe uyobuya nabakho obashayile kuthi noma sekuxoxwa ezamagudu kushiwo ukuthi,

“Yeka umfo kaBani—uHlaba zihlangane phezulu njengokubenywa kwamagudu,” kubemnandi khona lokho. Umuntu ngaleyonkathi waeya emgcagcweni ehlome ephelele amahawu nemikhonto kube sengathi sekuyoliwa ngoaba ukusuka komntwana ekhaya eyakogana kwakuyindaaba enkulu. Kwakukhalwa sengathi kuyafiwa ngoaba kwakungukuhlukanisa inyama yomntwana neyabazali, nomntwana ebona ukuthi uyofika phambili mhlaumbe izinto zingamchumeli; mhla-wumbe aphakele izizwe angazange aziphakele ekhaya likayise; mhlawumbe apatheke kahle kungathi usezandleni zikayise nonina. Yingakho nje kwaze kwavela isaga sokuthi: “Yek’ukugana kuyinkatha yenkangala,” kushiwo ngoaba kulukhuni ukugana kahle.

UNongunyaza esevumile abafowabo bakaNsikana bathula sengathi kaBamnakile abanye abangathandi ukumxwayisa bafike nangesinye isikhathi bazomxoxisa izindaaba eziningi zempi, nezinganekwane ezindala, babuye bamncenge bathi make uNsikana

abatshele ngeTheku nezindaba zalo. Hhayi nje uNsi-kana waefaxoxela konke anamandla okufatshela khona. Bambuza futhi ngokuthi kwenziwa yini izinsizwa eziya kosebenza zijwayele ukubuya zingaphethe lutho. Laphake uNsikana waefona ukuthi abafowabo bagcona yena.

Waejwayele ukuba phendula athi akwenzeki insizwa iye eThekwini ibuye ingaphethe lutho ngoba naye noma sekudume ukuthi akaphethe lutho nje wabuya nakho okuncane okunjengezingubo zokugqoka ezibiza imali, bona abafowabo abazithenga ngezinkomo. Waebuye nazo izingubo zokulala bona abafowabo abazithenga ngemihlambi yezinkomo, futhi lezingubo bona abangenazo bengeke babenazo futhi ngapandle koba bashiye emakhaya bayosebenza. Waefagcona naye ngezingubo zokulala zezikhumba zezimbuzi ezazisetshenziswa abafowabo; indaba yayigcina njalo idle abafowabo ingcabayi.

Zaqhubeka izinsuku nomgcagco wasondela noNokuthela naye eyiphehla eyakhe indaba yomngane wakhe. Isigcino waze wafisa ukuphelezela umfowabo kebayoyibona kahle lentokazi eyayimhlanyisa imvala amehlo ukuba angaboni lutho oluhle kwamanye amantombazana, kodwa kufe yiyona kuphela. UNokuthela wacabanga ukuthi lentokazi yamdalisa umfowabo ngomanda; kodwa kuqala wayefuna ukuyibona kahle ayibukisise.

ISAHLUKO VII

Kwaku isonto elilungisela uKhisimusi ekuseni lapho kwathi kuthi dwi, kwakhala insimbi eGilawoti.

Yakhala yaduma eziweni ezisenhla noMvoti, yezwakala kwaDukuza lapho kulele khona nakalokhu “Iembe eleq’amany’amalembé.” Wavuka uNomkhosi wapheka wafeka amabodwe eziko, wagez’abantwana bomfundisi, kodwa umoya wakhe wawungathule neze. Waecabanga ngoTomasi nangamazwi awakhulumile kuye ngendaba yomshado wabo. Waeqhathanisa izinto azibonayo ngoTomasi ikakhulu umoya wakhe wobungqwele njalo lapho ekhuluma nezisebenzi zomfundisi, namhla ezelulekayo ukuba zingabuye zicoshe abahluphekile emgwaqweni oya eThekwini. Wathula, wacabanga ezulazula njalo kodwa abuye awele khona ekuthini akakho onjengoTomasi kuzozonke izinsizwa zaseMvoti, futhi umfundisi uyamthanda, uma emala angayaphi, lokhu ekhaya likayise angaba inhlekiso kufo bonke, futhi angatholi muntu.

Selifudumele ilanga waphaka wabiz’umfundisi nenkosikazi badla, wasusa izitsha wazigeza wangena naye emphahleni walungisela ukuya enkonzweni yaseмини. Isonto laligcwele kakhulu njengoba ngalezozikhathi abantu babesuka kude bahambele ukusonta kodwa. Wayivula inkonzo umfundisi, kwathi kuphathathi wavula iculo likaNomkhosi. Indlu yonke yahlo-koma yaligcina, kwathathwa umthandazo yikhehla elithize abafethi uMahawule wakwaNzama.

Kwaphuma isonto bahambisana njengamasont’-onke uTomasi noNomkhosi. UNomkhosi wamthshela uTomasi wathi, “uyizwile inkonzo yanamuhla, ngiyithandile kakhulu, bekukhona umehluko omkhulu,” “Usho ngani, lokhu umfundisi ubenjengemihla yonke?” Useth’uTomasi, “bekukhon’amazwi ezinsizwa ezimbili

ebezihleli ndawonye, kangiwajwayele.” Usethi uNomkhosi, “uqinisile nami leyonto ingimangalisile ngofo ngiwazwile lawo mazwi ezinsizwa ezimbili, engingazazi ebezihleli ndawonye. Ngiwathandile kodwa ngakhohlwa nje ukuthi ezaphi,” Usethi umfo kaNogiyela “Zibukeka zihlanzekile, ziqonda ngempela izindafo zakithi esilungwini,” Uth’uNomkhosi, “Kuyamangalisa ngempela, amazwi afo abemnandi ngokweqile.”

Kuthi kunjalo kufike umfana athi kuTomasi, “bakhona abafuna ukukhuluma nawe babili bangalaphaya kwesonto, bayizihambi.” Asuke njalo uTomasi abesethi, “ngilinde lapha, Nomkhosi, ngizobuya khona manje.” Amthathe umfana aye ambeke ezinsizweni ezimbili lezo akade ekhuluma ngazo. Zethule izigqoko izinsizwa zimbingelele besezithi: “Xola, nkosana, thina singaba le eNkoobongo besicela ukukhuluma nalentombazana yakwenu ohamba nayo, sinomyalezo kuyo omncane nje.”

“Umyalezo kuyo?”

“Ehhe, sinomyalezo kuyo” basho bagcizelele, besebebukana emehlweni.

“Qha, madoda, kanginakuninika lelo thufa lokuyaleza entombazaneni, nginganazi noma niqondeni.” Asho efulathela.

“Musa ukusishiya kanjalo wethu, siyacela nje,” kusho uNkomeni inhliziyo isithi xhifi. Abesethi kuNsikana, “AwuBonike, ngitheni? Leli boxongwane liyifukamele kalifuni noma ingabonwa naubani. Ngimfung’uMantombi kaBaba ekwaMthethwa, siyoyilandela nomaphi.”

“Kangisafuni nokukhuluma, sengifile ukuthukuthela. Hawu wethu, sengiyibonile namhla kanti seyahlufo yafa njena! Pho, ngiyishiye, mina bani? Yangithembisa wethu, yathi iyongilindela “NOMA NINI,” nginamathele kulelozwi.”

“Kakusho wena ngiyibuka ngiyifanise nezidletheva zakwethu eThekwini ebekuthi uma zingena endlini yesonto, uzwe izinsizwa zidonsa imilenze, zibukana emehlweni sengathi zithi, nakho phela nithi niyizinsizwa, nanso intombi yenkani”, Kusho uNkomeni.

Sebekhuluma bodwa nje sekuthe wi abantu sebehambile sebegcwele imigwaqo yonke baqonde emakhaya afo. bona amakhaya afo ayekude, futhi bengaqonde kuya nokuya ekhaya ngaleyonkathi. “Asihambe wethu, siyofuna esingase sikwenze mayelana naloludaba,” “Yebo masichitheke,” basho behamba.

Ekumshiyeni kwakhe uTomasi uNomkhosi wazihlalela phansi wamlinda edlala ngotshani ebuphatha ebenza ubusenga. Esebuya uTomasi wahleka wathi, “Awuzwe Nomkhosi, lomfana ungiBiza nje ungiBizela lezo nsizwa ezimbili ekade zihlabelela esontweni.”

“Zithini kuwena?”

“Zithi zicela ukukhuluma nawe,”

“Zingezaphi zona,” kubuza uNomkhosi ngezwi lokunengwa,” zingaze zifune ukukhuluma nami nje lapha esontweni?”

“Zithi ziqhamuka eNkoobongo, naziya zimi ngale kwesonto.” Washo wathula wacabanga esaphendula, wathula isikhashana, wasukuma wahamba noTomasi.

“Pho wena utheni kuzona?”

“Ngisimze ngathi, kayikho indaba enjalo, kungathi intombazana ihamba nami nithi nizocela ukukhuluma nayo?” Ngisuke ngafulathela ngashaya utshani, nakhu ngilapha.

Wathi ebeka emuva uNomkhosi wazibona zibeke kancane lezinsizwa emuva kwaBo, wayelokhu ezikha ngeziqhu zamehlo uTomasi engaboni, baze baphambuka baya kwamfundisi nazo zaqonda phambili, zafika zema zababuka baye bangena kwamfundisi. UTomasi wayeziqhenya impela naye ezizwa ukuthi uhamba nentombi; kodwa wasola lezinsizwa ezivela eNkoboongo ezicela ukukhuluma noNomkhosi.

Behlukana wangena endlini uNomkhosi uTomasi wayedlula eya phansi komthombe eyohlola amahhashi ayebooshiwe edla ubabe ngoBa ngakusasa ayezohamba indlela ende eya eThekwini. Waesehamba eya endlini yakhe eyayibuqamamana neyakwamfundisi.

Babezovakasha futhi baye kwaBoNomkhosi ngalelelanga ngesonto ntambama. Baphekezelana oNomkhosi noTomasi kwafikwa ekhaya kwajathshulwa babungazwa ngokudla babusa ngemuva kwalokho izintombi zakwaBo Nomkhosi zamdonsela nhlanye, noTomasi wasala elibele nabanye besilisa. Izintombi zakwaBo Nomkhosi zazifuna ukwazi ukuthi amahemuhemu lawa ezaziwezwa emilonyeni yabantu ayeleliqiniso yini. Ukuthi ikhona yini insizwa eyayingaseThekwini yangaseMhlali eyayimeshela noma owayeyithanda na?

“Siyafuna usitshela ngoBa uwena wedwa izindaba zakho esingazaziyo. Sinomthetho wokukubuza lokhu.

Nalo mfokazi osendlini sabona ngoBa sekufika abakoNogiyela nje, sekukikizwa kodwa singazi.”

“Mina ngangithi niyazi”

“Sitshelwa nguBani na?”

“Ngangithi senizwile”

“Asifuni ukuyizwa indaba sifuna ukuyitshelwa nguwe. Akuyona indlela leyo.”

“Impela ngiyaxolisa ngoBa bengingazi. Ngingazi kanjani izinto ngihlala ngedwa ngingalulekwa muntu. Nami ngiyintombazana njengawo wonke umuntu ngezwa ngiqhutshwa uthando ngathanda, ngezwa kuthiwa kuyaganwa ngavuma ngacelwa, naku sengizoshada. Kodwa kangiyazi into engiyishadelayo.”

“Thina kasikho kukho konke lokho, kuphela ubositshela konke okwenzayo kulezizinto.”

“Impela niqinisile bodadewethu.”

Usethi udadewaBo omkhulu uNontula, “Khona namhlanje kade kufike izinsizwa ezimbili zazidlisa satshanyana lapha, zasezicela amanzi, baziphuzisa. bezivelaphi?”

“Kangazi ngoBa ziningi izinsizwa ezihamba ngambili lapha eMvoti” kusho uNomkhosi.

“Kakunsizwa nje ezivamile, besithi zivela kwamfundisi, zidlulile zifuna ezikufunayo.”

“Qha angizazi mina nje nempela.” Waesecabanga esebona ukuthi yizo lezizinsizwa ezicele ukukhuluma naye kuTomasi, kodwa uTomasi wazihebeza. Esecabanga ukuthi ngabe zingobani wehluleka ukuzithola, ngakhoke wayishiya phansi indaba.

Lokhu kufika kukaNomkhosi ekhaya waesezocimela kodadewaBo. Sekusondele isikhathi sokuhamba

wakhuluma kudadewabo uNontula wathi, “dadewethu sengiyahamba” “Pho uthi mangenzi?,” kubuza uNontula.

“Qha ngizocimela kinina nonke”

“Kangikwazi ukucimelisa umuntu engingamazi izindaba zakhe, Nomkhosi, ngoaba ngabe ngiyakona.”

“Ukusho ukuthi, ngesiphosiso sami uyangilahla yini dadewethu?”

Usephendula uNontula ethi, “kambe ngingaka nje ngiyazi nanduku noma umnqwazi, noma iduku, noma ubusenga bodwa lobu obuvela kwaNogiyela ngiyinkosazana kaMakhwatha? Awusho phela.”

“Ngiyazi ukuthi kawuna lutho”

“Pho khona ukuhlonipha, ngihloniphe abakoNogiyela ngiyobahlonipha kanjani? Amagama abo bavavale ngani kulo mlomo wakoMakhwatha?” Washo ethinta izindebe zakhe, enikina inhloko, ngoaba phela waebinca.

“Ngiyezwa dadewethu. Pho ngingenzi?”

“Ingani futhi uhleli laphaya nje, akasazi thina noma singobani, ukhuluma nabakhulu thina esingagqokiyo siyizidwedwe nje.”

“Kangazike, ngizohamba ngimtshela lokhu endleleni sesibuyela emuva naye.”

“Kuvuke oabamkhulu, Nomkhosi, kawusahambile naye, uzohamba nathi namuhla siye sikubeke kwamfundisi. Yena uyozwa kuthiwa usuhambile noma uyokubona usukude.

Wathi esho njalo waethatha ibayi lakhe eliphonsa emhlane esukuma ethatha iqhabanga lakhe; waqala wagcoba izitho zakhe ngamafutha, umfuma, za-

cwebezela ngoaba phela, kanti kwakungentombi ethanda koMkhwethu yini?. UMkhwethu ingani kwakuyinkosi yaseMzwangedwa kwaGumede, ebusa wonke uQwabe owawuseMvoti?

Wagqokake uNontula wahamba ephekezela uNomkhosi, kanye namanye amantombazana akwabo, lapha phela koMakhwatha. UNomkhosi wathinteka inhliziyi yakhe kodwa wezwa sengathi kukhona ukukhululeka okuthize ngoaba ehamba nodadewabo kunoba ehamba noTomasi. Bahamba naye baye bamweza uMvoti bambona ekhuphukela kwamfundisi, emva kokuba bamvalelise.

Kanti bathi besuka nje ekhaya wababona uTomasi behamba umshungu, zonke izintombi zikaMakhwatha wabona ukuthi, qha, kukhona okukhona, ziyaxoxa izintokazi, ngakhokhe akangaziphazamisi. Wasale esehlala.

Sezibuya izintombi zahlangana naye uTomasi naye esebuya yedwa, zambuka umkhwenyana wawabo, zadlula zangasho lutho, yena wazibingelela. Lokhu kuthula kwazo kwamsebenza eseyedwa okaNogiyela.

Ngelanga likaKhisimusi kuvamile eGilawoti ukuhlangana wonke futhi umuntu kube inkonzo kuqala, besekuaba ihlahla. Lapha ehlahleni kubakhona ukuphona izipho zezinhlobo ngezinhlobo. Kuhlabelele abantwana nezinsizwa nezintombi. Njalo umuntu ubala igama lomuntu amupha impahla negama lalona evela kuye. Kuhlatshelelwe kubuye kubizwe izipho, kuphonswe amazwi amadoda athize ethakazela umsebenzi owenziwa intsha.

Ngalowo Khisimusi uNomkhosi njengoba wae-
thandeka phakathi komuzi wathola impahla eningi
nenhle kakhulu angazange ayithole ngaphambili.
Kwathi nje ephuma esontweni neqoma elithwele
impahla yakhe neyazingane zomfundisi, esehlala kwa-
mfundisi walandelwa yintombazana egqoke uma bu-
bane ozenza imbeshe yathi kuye:

“Umfowethu uthe angikunike lokhu, ngikubeke
ehlahleni kodwa manje ngifike muva, manjenake se-
ngikuletha kuwe njengomyalo enginikwe wona.”
UNomkhosi wathi:-

“Wena ungowaphi mntwana na?”

“Kuthiwena ngingasho ukuthi ngingowaphi isi-
bongo futhi, e—e—eh, kodwa angokusho kuphela
indawo lapho ngivela khona.”

“Indawo pho uqhamukaphi?”

“Kuthiwena, e—e—eh, impahla iyokukutshela
wena. Kodwake mina ekhaya lami kungapha eNko-
bongo.”

“Ngiyabongake mntanami, wena ongenasibongo,
kodwa ngizothi MaNkobongo.” Yahleka intombaza-
nyana encane, yavalelisa yagijima yaya emantomba-
zaneni amanye akubo angangayo ayeyilinde kudana.

Wayithatha ngezandla ezingabazayo impahla
uNomkhosi wahamba waye wangena endlini yakhe.
Wazivula zonke izimpahla zakhe wathi kodwa uyo-
gcina ngale efike nengane kuye. Walungisa ukudla
kwakusihlwa ngokushesha walalisa abantwana, wa-
geza nezitsha wayovala nezibuko nakho konke oku-
dinga ukwenziwa wakugcina kahle, waesengena
endlini yakhe wazivalela wahlala phansi eshaywa

uvalo lulokhu luthi nqe, nqe, nqe, kancane. Wayi-
thatha lempahla wayivula. Kwaqhilika iduku elimnya-
ma lika silika, kulona kuthekwe ipheshana elibalwe
ukuthi, “NOMA NINI.”

UNomkhosi waphithana emangala okokuqala
ukuthi ubani u“NOMA NINI” amaziyo kuwo wonke
uMvoti; kodwa wayebesacabange adukuze ofini lwe-
nkomo angaphumi ndawo. Waphumela phandle wa-
yohlala ngasentshonalanga lapho kwakuthule khona.
Umfundisi waengakalali naye nenkosikazi, babehleli
ngaphambili, bebekwe enyakatho bebukana namanzi
oMvoti ehlafa intambo ende kalayini, enza ulunge-
lunge eyozilahla olwandle. Umoya wawushaya ka-
ncane upholile, wenza nezinto zonke zobumnyama
nazo zichayiye. Enzansi emfuleni lapho amanzi aye-
shaya khona umgadlela adlule aye afike emgadlelweni,
kwakuchwensa amadwi esiziba, nezingxangxa nazo
zibonga uKhisimusi omkhulu. Amajuba asendle ema-
hlathini ayethul’athule besevuk’akhale njengokusho
kwaafana ethi, “wangendisel’exhegwini,” namanye
futhi ekhala isililo samaphuphu ayethathwe abafana
bayokhisimusana ngawo ethi: “UMalusi, nobongile,
bathath’indlu yami, nabantabami—manje—inhliziyo ya-
mi ithi, to—toto—totototo.” Kude enzansi noMvoti
lapho kwakwakhe khona abafu bawo Nongayeyana
kwakukhala uMabengwane ethi: “Gudugudu, we,
Mabengwane.” Ngofo phela izinyoni zonke zinolimi
lwazo oluqondwa kuphela abazingeli abakhuluma nazo
mihlanayizolo.

Nomuzi wonke kaGilawoti wawuduma imisizi
le eqhunyiswa ngabafana; izingane zimemeza zikla-

balasile zenziwa ukuthokozela usuku olumangalisayo olufika kanye ngonyaka.

Yonke lemisindo bayizwa ababenezindlebe zokuzwa ngaphandle kukaNomkhosi wayethule ethe du, ebeke phezulu sengathi ubala izinkanyezi zezulu. Ngalelo langa waengazibala zonke, abuye abone nezincane ezihlobise umthala. Inhliziyo yakhe yayiginqigingqika njengegade uliphonse esiweni lingena kuphuma ngaphezulu lilokhu libeke phansi lehla, libutuzeka liphela. Wayengazi into ayenzayo edidekile, elokhu ephinda njalo amazwi aphume edukwini ethi, "NOMA NINI." Wafunisisa ukuthi ngabe mhlawumbe aqondisani, umqondo wakhe uphekequla yonke inkambo yokukhula kwakhe; abuye ahleke sengathi kayikho into ekhona emhlabeni ngaphandle kwakhe yedwa nemcabango yakhe. Waze wafika esikhathini sokuaba esalusa eyintombazanyana kanye neNkondlwana yakhe, ebona abantwana abanye beya esikoleni, yena engazi lutho. Wabona abaningi balezo zingane sezikhulile sezingamaqhikiza nezinsizwa, ezinye sezagana. Abuye afike nalapho umfanyana othize waelokhu emkhuza—waphubuka wahleka yedwa wathi: "Hhe, ukuhamba komhlaba empilweni yomuntu kungumzwangedwa."

Wadlula lapho wafika nangenkathi esecelwa umfundisi uku'azohlala kwakhe, inhliziyo yakhe yabonga ukuaba naye usefundisiwe njengeningi, noma angase ahambe namhlanje kwamfundisi naye angase azisebenzele kumlungu. Lomcabango wokucina wawukhahlela ngoaba umufi. Yena bani owayengase ashiye umfundisi onjengoyise kuye; osemenzele oku-

hle okuningi kangaka? Wazidela yena ngokwakhe, wanquma emphefumulweni wakhe ukuaba uyokufa engumntwana womfundisi, amhloniphe, amjabulise.

Esefike lapha waqabuka esekhanyelwa ukuthi, obani lezizinsizwa ezixoshwe uTomasi zifuna ukukhuluma naye emasontweni adlule? Futhi zabuye zayocela amanzi kwabo? Esefika lapha futhi kwakhanya ngokunye wabona ukuthi leliduku livela kulowaya mfana owayemkhuza owahamba waya eThekwini wayosebenza kudala, esebenza kubelungu. Ingane le ebilethe iduku eyaseNkobongo kuho kalomfana. Kwabuye kwasa futhi emqondweni wakhe ukuthi waemthembisile lomfana ukuthi uyolinda impendulo yakhe, "NOMA NINI."

Washaywa uvalo ingqondo yakhe kwayikhani ibuyelana, waqonda ukuthi lomfana usebuyile, uyamkhumbuza manje ngesithembiso sakhe. Waqalaza macala onke wabona ukuthi uyena yedwa ongakalali, futhi nomsindo wabantwana obukad'ukhona, namazwi omfundisi nenkosikazi efebekhuluma ngaphambili—nawo kade eshabalele. Kwase kuthe wi, kuyindlu yakhe yodwa eyayisakhanyisiwe. Wathi nyathunyathu, wavula isivalo sendlu yakhe wangena. Walibona iduku liqhilike njengoba elishiyile nephepha elinanyathiselwe, namagama athi kulo, "NOMA NINI," wasimze wahleka walisonga njengoba belisongiwe, waliphindelisela ebokisaneni elincane eliluhlazana walibeka ecaleni.

Wagumula waziphonsa em-bedeni wakhe walala engalele. Umqondo walwa nokuthi uTomasi angenze njani uma ebona leliduku, njengoba enesikhwele esi-

ngaka na? Nokuthi leliduku liyisibonakaliso sothando lwalomfana waseNkoboongo. UTomasi wayeke wamnikani? Futhi uTomasi waesengamenzi lutho. UTomasi waemthatha uNomkhosi njengekhasi azi ukuthi uNomkhosi akanakwenza lutho ngoaba umfundisi wayemi ngakuye yena wakoNogiyela. “Nansi insizwa phambi kwami,” sekusho uNomkhosi enhliziyweni yakhe, “iyangithanda, iyangikhonza, iyangibona ubuntombi bami, pho, yini ngingayigculisi?” Waba bona emsamo othile wekhanda lakhe obona konke, waba bona oTomasi nomfana waseNkoboongo benephuzana, bebangisana yena yedwa ngenxa yesiphosiso sakhe sokuba wavuma ukuthanda uTomasi, wakhohlwa ukukhumbula isithembiso sakhe kumfokazi waseNkoboongo. Nango phela manje umfokazi esefikile, naye usefuna okwakhe. UTomasi uthi:

“Nami, sengimcelile, sengizethulile kuMakhwatha; UNSikana uthi:—

“Nami, ngibambe elentulo lokhu kwathiwa kimina ngiyolindelwa “NOMA NINI,” nokuthi izwi labadala lithi: fuchitheka bugayiwe? Ngimi lapho.”

Imicabango yakhe yabuye yabuyelana yathatheka ngomunye umunxa waesethi: “Hhiya suka, umdlalo lo, ukhona umuntu othi eceliwe abuye alokhu ezihlupha ngomuntu engamazi, mhlawumbe akusuye, yena sewafa. Ukuba usekhona ngabe wangibalela. UTomasi anginakumala noma kumnyama.” Ngalawa mazwi walala phansi wazunywa ubuthongo ecabanga ukuthi indlondlo uyibambe ngomsila wayibufububuza phansi yafa, yathathwa abakwaubuthongo.

Kwakungumkhuba njalo womka-mfundisi ukuba athi ngaphambi kokuaba ayolala ayolunguza ukuba abantwana noNomkhosi balele kahle na, ebese esho imithandazo phezu kwamakhanda abo ngamunye, ngamunye aze abaqede. Ngalelo langa elikhulu likaKhisimusi inkosikazi yalunguza yafumanisa konke kulungile kodwa uNomkhosi engekho. Waya embedeni wakhe wafumanisa leliduku likaKhisimusi elingandile libalwe nokuthi “NOMA NINI,” wangenelwa ukusola ekhanda lakhe futhi wadideka ngoaba uTomasi waengenamali yokuthenga iduku lemali engaka. Ngakhoke lalizivelela emazombeni kaNomkhosi.

Kuthe esalalele wezwa ukunyakaza komuntu ngasentshonalanga, walunguza ngesibuko ephenye kancane indwangu, ngalapho ezwe khona kunyakaza efuna ukubona ukuthi ubani: Wabona ukuthi uNomkhosi, uthule ubuka izinkanyezi. Wajabula umkamfundisi wacabanga ukuthi uNomkhosi uyathandaza ngengqondo yakhe. Ngaphambi kokuaba asuke wezwa uNomkhosi ethi: “ukhona umuntu othi eceliwe abuye alokhu ezihlupha ngomuntu engamazi?” Wasuka umka-mfundisi eqonda yonke into esenziziyweni kaNomkhosi, wathula wayolala naye ikhanda lakhe lihlaphekile ngoaba wayazi ukuthi ukhona umuntu owaeseqala ukubonwa uNomkhosi ngaphandle kukaTomasi.

Indaba le, wayitshela umfundisi unkosikazi naye umfundisi wathi kuhle bathule bangasho lutho ngayo, ngoaba izoziqhumela yona ngokwayo. Hhayike bathula, babuka, bahloma amehlo nezindlebe macala onke. UNomkhosi akakhombisanga kwethuka noma ukushintsha kodwa lokhu ekuhambeni kwakhe. Umse-

benzi wayewenza njengakuqala, ekhwishiza, noma ethunyiwe emfuleni, noma eyotheza kungezwakali ukuthi ikhona insizwa eke imgasele imumise ikhuluma ezakomashela—ntombi.

Pho, leliduku lalivelaphi na? UTomasi waelithathephi na? Uma [kungelikaTomasi pho akalifaki ngani na? Qha mhlawumbe ulinde usuku lomgcagco khona liyoba umnqwazi wakhe. Wo, hhiya, qha, mhlawumbe uyise uMakhwatha umfunele lona. Imicabango yomfundisi nenkosikazi lena.

ISAHLUKO VIII

Langathize mathambama lapho ilanga selibantu bahle umfundisi wavakashelwa insizwa izocela iseluleko ngezindaba zokholo. Lensizwa yayihamba nentombi eyase iqinile. Seyikhulekile, umfundisi wathatha isihlalo bahlala ngaphansi kuka vulanda yakhuluma insizwa yathi:-

“Qhabo mfundisi, kangize ngalutho nje ngizocela iseluleko. Ngiyimphohlo ngifuna ukushada kodwa indlela yami imnyama. Ngiqhamuka ngapha eNkobo-fongo.”

Ngalenkathi insizwa isho igama laseNkobo-fongo uNomkhosi waesendlini eqondene nabo. bekhuluma umfundisi nensizwa le. Wema, wayibukisisa insizwa kodwa wabona ingozi idwebhe phezu kweso lesinxele, futhi wabona lentombi ehamba nalensizwa, waesecabanga ukuthi, abantu abazozishadela nje.

“Pho ngingakusiza ngandlelani mntanami?”

“Ngibuza ngendaba yomshado wamakholwa mfundisi.”

“Yebo mntanami, sekuyisikhathi ukufa izithelo zemisebenzi yethu sizibone. Njengoaba uthi uqhamuka eNkobo-fongo nalentombazana kungakuhle kakhulu ukuaba nikhumbule njalo ukuaba umshado uphaswa iThongo.”

“Angizwa lapho mfundisi uma uphatha iThongo ngoaba phela amathongo awakithi kwaZulu, kuthiwa masiwayeke.”

“Qhabo mina ngisho iThongo lamathongo, uMvelinqangi, uChibi elinomnqwazi phakathi, onguSimakade, ohlala le ezulwini,” lasho iKhehla likhomba esibakabakeni esiluhlaza, esingenafu.

“Sengiyezwa mfundisi”

“Mntanami, izithembiso zenu nizigcine kuye wonke umuntu ningazikhohlwa.

Yaphendula insizwa yathi: “mfundisi lelozwi lakho lilukhuni. Uma mhlawumbe isithembiso lesu wawusenze usemncane uthi uyosigcina usumdala kufanele yini sikurophe na?”

Yaphendula impunga yathi: “Yebo mntanami, impela kufanele, ngaphandle kokuba kuyinto embi.”

UNomkhosi owayelungisa endlini leyo wakhwehlele ngaphakathi ngoaba waezwa konke okukhulunywa phandle, naye eselalele ngoaba wezwa edonseka nje kulenkulumo yomfundisi nalensizwa.

Waqhubeka umfundisi wathi: “Kuvamile kinina zinsizwa zakwaQwabe ukuaba nithi nidlala ubusoka, nithandwe izintombi eziningi kuzozonke izigodi nezi-

ntaba lezi. Nidlala ngamantombazana, nikhohlwe ukuthi isithembu emakholweni kasivunyelwe. Onke lawamantombazana ningabuye niwathathe. Mina angikufuni lokhu, insizwa enjalo angiyishadisi.”

Yahlabeka insizwa yathi, “mfundisi, seloku ngazalwa kangikathandwa yintombi. Ngakhula kanzima kusaqala isikole laphaya egqumeni eliseTsheni lika Shaka, lapho kwakhe khona uMdleyana wasemaNso-mini amhlophe. Ngangisuka ekuseni malanga onke ngiza esikoleni, ngibuye ngilal’ekhaya. Ubafa wangiyekisa imfundo wangibopha ukuaba ngiyosebenza eThekwini.”

Wathi esho njalo, uNomkhosi waqhamuka ephethe ibakede ngesandla eyolichitha ezimbalini, ephuma nalo endlini le alungisa kuyo. Waphuma wayibona lensizwa ngamehlo waqonda ukuthi uye uNsikana lo. Pho, lo ahamba naye ngubani njengoba bazoshada naye nje. Wanganelwa umona omangalisayo nanjengoba lensizwa yayiphucuzekile, eyibona idabule ulayini ekhanda, ihamba ngezicathulo iphethe isigqoko ngesandla. Intombazana yayingayifanele lensizwa; nokho uthando kalukhethi ludwani oluwela kulo, luqathaka nalapho ungaqonde khona, ubone ivukana nje lensizwa ligangelwa isihlandla sentombi ubuke uthi, “wena baaba!” Wadlula kuBo uNomkhosi esewachithile amanzi ehambela phezulu efuna ukuaba lensizwa imbene, wathi ukufika ngasemnyango waphenduka wesula izinyawo uthuli wathi ukweba ngamehlo lensizwa, wafika ithe nzo kuye ngamehlo sengathi ithi: “Lala lulaza, yimi lo engigxiza amanzi njengengcuba, ngilala emlotheni ngawe ntombazana?” Yaphenduka

intokazi kaMakhwatha yangena endlini, wayizwa uNsikana isefenza kuyo leyondlu.

Waqhubeka uNsikana nendaba wathi: “Ubafa wangibopha wangibamba ngesidlozana ngayiswa eThekwini. Nalapho ngangihlala nezimpohlo zezinsizwa ngipheka, ngingenasikhathi sokuyaphi. Kodwa sonke lesosikhathi mfundisi, umqondo wami wawulapha eMvoti ngithanda ukushada nomntwana wakithi wozalo, owakhulela kithi ebonwa abazali bami. Manje ngizocela wena, baaba mfundisi, ukuaba ungisize uma ungaaba namandla okungisiza.”

Washo uNsikana eneqholo enhliziyweni ngoaba naye eyibonile intombi le ukuaba sengathi iyamdlezela ngokuphuma kwayo phandle.

Waphendula umfundisi kade naye elalele ngokucophelela: “Inkulumo yakho, mntanami, iyangiye-nga njengodofo oluyenga inhlanzi emanzini. Ingingenisa umunyu, sengathi ngiyaqala ukukhuluma nomuntu ngizwe inhliziyo yakhe eyendlala ngalolu- hlobo phambi kwami. Ngizokusiza noma kanjani.” Wathembisa umfundisi nensizwa yamuzwa ethembisa, nentombazana yamuzwa ethembisa, neqilikazana elingumNomkhosi lamuzwa licashile sengathi liyasebenza.

“Qhafo mfundisi eyami indaba ilukhuni ingimele kaBi, nawe mhlawumbe ikumele kaBi, mfundisi.”

“Sengishilo ngathi ngizokusiza.”

Wathembisake umfundisi. Ziningi izinto esizithembisa singabekile phambili, zisibophe kanzima, kumbe zisiqondise kokubi noma kokuhle. Kukhona njalo amathunzi endleleni yomuntu, neso lakhe lixhoshwa libekile.

“Mfundisi,” sekusho insizwa le, “ngise umfana ngathenjiswa yintombazana ehlala lapho kwakho ukuthi iyongilindela nezwi lami “NOMA NINI.”

“Usho yiphi? Yona le ekade idlula lapha iphe-the ibakede, yachitha amanzi, laphaya, laphaya khona manje?”

“Ngisho yona mfundisi, uma igama layo kungu Nomkhosi, wakwa Makhwatha laphaya enhla noMvoti,” esho ekhomba imizi yakwaBo Nomkhosi.

“Qhabo kangiyizwa indaba yakho mntanami.”

“Ngiqinisile mfundisi, ngisho yona lentombazana yakho ekade idlula lapha. Akunjalo Nokuthela da-dewethu na?”

“YeBo kunjalo mfowethu, yiyo intombazana egama layo lingu Nomkhosi.”

“Ngiyehluleka bantabami, ngipel’amandla.”

“Ake ngiqede indaba yami mfundisi,” sekusho uNsikana ebona ukuthi usemhlabhe ngomkhonto wakhe umfundisi, usumngene ezibilinini, akasenukwukhipha. “NgiseThekwini, nami ngazilonda, ngayosebenza imadlana engafika nayo ngalezinyanga ezidlule, nakhu namhla sengizozibika kuwe. Ngiyazi mfundisi ukuthi lentombazana isiceliwe omunye wezinsizwa ezithan-deka kuwe; kodwa nami ngizobeka enginakho ngoBa ngethenjiswa iyona intombazana sisebancane yathi iyongilindela “NOMA NINI.”

Umfundisi kwaBa sengathi ikhanda lakhe liya-ndiyazela, akezwisisi kahle yonke inkulumo yensizwa le. Waqala ukubona ukuthi useyethembisile insizwa uku-ba ayifunele intombi, nokuthi uNomkhosi wayethembisa lensizwa. Wakhumbula futhi umfundisi ukuthi inko-

sikazi yakhe yayimhlebele yamtshela ngoKhisimusi kusihlwa ngeduku elithize elalisembedeni kaNomkhosi libalwe ukuthi “NOMA NINI.” Konke kwaqala ukusa ngokunye. Wasonga izandla, waphulula intshebe eyase imhlophe, ehla nayo esuka ehwanqeni ehla nayo. Amehlo akhe ayegxile lapho uNomkhosi wae-kade echitha khona amanzi ngebakede, waBuka khona isikhathi esikhulu, ethule ethe nya. Insizwa yabona ukuthi umfundisi uyacabanga ekhanda lakhe waesethi kuye:

“Mfundisi sengiyavalelisa. Igama lami ngingu-Nsikana wakwaMbokazi indodana kaBoqo waseNko-bongo. Sala kahle mfundisi.”

UNomkhosi esezwile konke ayethanda ukuku-zwa wathi shelele engaziwa muntu ngenkathi sebe-valelisa waqonda ngasemfuleni ukuyokha amanzi kanti uzothi ethi uyabuya athi, nqamanqa nabo, uNsikana noNokuthela, wakhohlwa nje ukuthi uzo-shonaphi ngoBa naye indaba le ekade ikhulunywa imngenile yamcoBa amathambo. Waqunga isibindi wazenza ongabaziyo labaBantu waqonda kuBo pha-kathi komgwaqo, wahamba, ingani wayeyekelele ekhanda ibakede walibamba ngesandla; waqhuzulwa yisidindi laphaya, kodwa yema, yahamba intokazi yakwaBo emehlo sengathi akhishwa intuthu yegudu, eyayibuhle sengathi yazalwa yagezwa ngobisi lwezim-vu ezimhlophe zaseAngora. Yashaya yadlula pha-kathi komgwaqo, wema uNsikana kwathi makakhu-lume, kodwa wehluleka ukuthi uzothini, wafela pha-kathi, waguquka wayibuka isifulathele, izingubo zayo ezithweni zizilahla ngala nangala, zingapheshulwa

moya kodwa zitshingwa umzimba wayo intokazi. Wasuke wahleka umfo kaBoqo, wathi uNokuthela:—

“Nakho phela mfowethu, uhlale uthi ungase uyigasele, wema, nansiya ihamba!” Wathula nje uNsikana kanti ucabanga ngoTomasi okuthiwa uye ozoshada nentokazi enje, efanele yena.

Kwathi kuthi lapho akahambe ayesaŋe intombazana akhala ezindlebeni zakhe amazwi akaNokuthela okuthi:

“Nakho phela mfowethu uhlale uthi ungase uyigasele;” wema wathi qikilili wabuka udadewabo wamfumanisa ehleka, ehleka yena, waphenduka wayibona into yomuntu isiliyekelele ibakede ekhanda, ikhwela iya iqonde ekhaya. Wathatha izinyawo wayifika, wangavimba ngaphambili kwayo njengokwenza kwethu kwelomdabu, kodwa wayethulela isigqoko wathi:

“Ngcicela ukukhuluma nawe mntanenkosi, wena othe lapho sehlisa imihosha sisika ingca siyokwakha amadlangala, wawukhuphukela ezindlini ezimhlophe, ezicakwe ngodaka lwaphesheya. Ngiyakhuleka nkosazana, isikhashana nje.”

Wema uNomkhosi wezwa kuxega onke amalungu omzimba wakhe kwathi pheze emqondweni wakhe ecabanga ukuthi mhlawumbe lensizwa imeqa ngesiphoso yini, kodwa kwathi lapho eyibuka wayifumanisa igqokile ingafake luphondo entanyeni, futhi ingazange imphathe nokumphatha ngesandla. Wema uNomkhosi wavaleka umlomo kwakude ukuŋa akhulume. Waphinda uNsikana wathi:

“Uxolo nkosazana kade ngangifisa ukukhuluma nawe kodwa ithuŋa ngingalitholi. Akuwena yini uNomkhosi wakoMakhwatha eMzwangedwa na?”

Yath'intombazana, “Yimina.”

Wath'uNsikana, “Usangibona mina na?” Yath'intombazana, “Ungubani wena na?” Waziba uNsikana wayibuk'emehlweni intombazana, yakhophoza ingani ibisiqinise namehlo icabanga ukuthi uzoxoxa indaba.

“Ngesonto sacela ukukhuluma nawe kodwa wawuhamba nensizwa ehloniphekile sesaba, kwathi noma sicela kuyo yathi, qha, kawunathuŋa uyashesha. Minake mhlawumbe sewakhohlwa ngami. Futhi kangingaze ngithi mhlawumbe, mangithi nje, sewakhohlwa ngami,” kusho umfo kaBoqo, naye esequnge isibindi ebona ukuthi intombazana nayo seyimi ilalele kayiphangi lutho emuva.

“Ngingakhohlwa ngawe wena ungubani na?” Kubuza intombazana, kanti futhi iyamhleka sengathi iyam-binqa.

“Qha, uyazibuzisa mntanenkosi, ubukeka nalapho uhleka ukuthi uyazibuzisa.”

“Ngiqinisile ngoŋa seloku ngafika lapha kwamfundisi kangikaze ngihlangane nomfokazi onjengawe nje. Wena futhi kawusiye owalelizwe,” washo esiphul'induli uNomkhosi edlala ngayo eyihlafuna, unyawo lwakhe lulokhu lubala phansi okomuntu eficekile engazi ukuthi angaphuma kanjani.

“Yeboke mfokazi ongamaziyo! Seyashonaphiinja yakho, iNkondlwana? Usakwazi nje ukwalusa nokusenga? Ake ngibone izandla zakho ukuthi zisengamaqokoma njengakuqala nje na. Namanje usathi

ngingumfokazi ongamaziyo?” Wazithulela uNomkhosi ngoBa waesebambekile, ikakhulu uma emkhumbuza izikhathi zokwalusa waemehlisa embukela phansi waeseqala ukuxwayisa amehlo efukumala; waBona uNsikana ukuthi naye usebenzise izwi elibi lokuthi “izandla ezingamaqokoma,” wakhuluma wathi,

“Uwe Nomkhosi owathi singabantwana phansi laphaya ngakwaMandelu, wangithembisa wathi uyongilindela, mntanenkosi, washo wathi uyongilindela, “NOMA NINI.” Namhla ngifikile sengikhulile ngaba insizwa ngingaka. Nawe usukhulile waba intokazi usungaka: sengiland’okwami, nawe that’okwakho.” Wathi esho njalo ngezwi eliphansi wahlehla uNomkhosi waBeka phansi ibakede wahlala phansi phezu kwe-sidindi sesikhonko wathula walalela. Kude laphaya enzansi uNokuthela wayeyibukela impi ixoshana, iyibedula eyakoBoqo ibuye iyibedule eyakoMakhwatha; kodwa ngenkathi eBona uNomkhosi ehlala phansi waqonda ukuthi kukhona lapho uNsikana eyahlula khona lentombazana edlule iqhawuzela nobukholwa bayo, waze wathi yena kumfowaBo angeke ayigangele, Wafikelwa ukujabula kwaBuye kwafika ifu lokuyizonda lentombazana ethi yeshelwa umfowaBo kodwa imedlule umfowaBo ehamba naye yena Nokuthela owaziwayo, isimze yedlule inganaki lutho. Wacabanga waBona imthatha umfowaBo imuka naye iqonda eThekwini, ibunguka naye mhlawumbe nomfundisi abathathe abaweze nezilwandle, asale yedwa nonina uNokuthela bahlupheke futhi. WaziBuza yena wathi kungeBe ngcono yini umfowaBo athandwe yintombazana engakaphucuzeki njengalena na?

Wayehleli phansi uNomkhosi engenamazwi okuphendula. WaBuza uNsikana wathi: “Usuyangibona manje na?”

Wathi uNomkhosi, “Ngephuzile ukukuBona, futhi angisenamandla okwamukela noma yini ongayisho. Sengiyingodosi yomuntu”

“Uyingodosi yaleyansizwa ohamba nayo njalo na? YeBo ngiyabona, futhi bengikwazi lokho ngiza kuwe nje ngiyakwazi lokho, ngikuzwe ngiseThekwini Isaga sakwaZulu sithi, Akunkwali yaphandela enye; fuchitheka sebugayiwe. Angazike lokhu kuwena kangikezwa ukuthi sebugayiwe, nokuthi abantu sebe-fsheliwe bamenywa nokuthi maBacwilise.”

“Kangisho ukuthi kuyokusiza ukuqulusela kule-ndaBa. Isikhathi sesiyangishiya sengiyahamba, umfundisi uzongidinga khona manje.” Washo njalo wasukuma waBeka ibakede ekhanda, kodwa washesha walithatha uNsikana wamethwesa lona. KuNomkhosi kwaBuya okuningi, wamangala ukuBona okokuqala uNsikana lo akamvimbelanga endleleni ngesikhathi behlangana. Namanje esikundleni sokuBa amyekele nebakede ulithathile wamethwesa lona. Yaze yehluka lento ekwenzeni kukaTomasi yena ozibukelayo nje noma uNomkhosi esindwa inyanda yezinkuni. Kwamthokozisa kwathi noma uNsikana embamba ngengalo akayidlukumezanga wayidonsa, kodwa wayiyeka lapho ikhona waze wakhuluma uNsikana wathi:

“Kangizimisele ukudedela leyonsizwa yakoNogiyela. Njengoba ngalinda kwaze kwamanje, kanjalo isithembiso sakho sisengabantwana abadlala ngebumba sibumba izinkomo nabantwana, nginamathele

kuso, mntanenkosi. Ngiyokulandela noma ungase ungale ilanga liphuma lize liyoshona. Ngiyokulandela umuhle njengoba usenjengezihlabathi zolwandle, uqhilika izihlathi njengamagula abakhwenyana uze ube mibimbi yawogogo; uyobeka emuva ungibone ngiza ngiqonde kuwe; uyobeka phambili uhambe izindlebe zakho ziyongizwa ngiza ngezigi ezinzima. Uyokhathala uhlale phansi kwemikhiwane enomthunzi ngifike ngikulinde uze uphumule ngikulandele futhi. Uyoze ufe nalapho ngiyokulandela ngikuxoshe nje-ngomoya ngize ngikuzwe uthi kimi—yebo Nsikana.”

Wathi la esho elokugcina izwi waesiyeka isandla sikaNomkhosi sawa sawela engutsheni yakhe, naye wathula waba namahloni amakhulu, waguquka wahamba noNsikana wahamba wangabeka ngemuva.

Sebehlukene noNomkhosi wacabanga ngamazwi akaNsikana lapho ekhuluma ngokumlandela angazi ukuthi usho ukuthini uma ekhuluma kanje. Ikakhulu uma ethi uyomlandela noma esefile, sebengomoya bobabili. Wazibuza wathi kanti kukhona lapho abantu bafike balungise khona amacala abo uma sebefile na? Uma kunjalo uqinisile uNsikana uma ethi uyomlandela noma esefile. Kodwa uma kungenjalo uyahlanya lomfokazi. Noma esho njalo enhliziyweni yakhe kwakukhona unembeza othi qha, lensizwa ikhuluma into egijima ishaye enhliziyweni, ihlale ingafuni ukuphuma njengezintshumayelo zabefundisi abelulekayo beyala umuntu owedukayo.

Wakhuphuka eqhamuka emfuleni indlela engayizwa nebakede ekhanda engalizwa kodwa udlebe lwakhe luzwa phansi ngasemfuleni uKositini lukhala

kancane lushaya “uDida nomadida, uyangiqambela.” Lusho ngezwi elincane lubuye luthule aluvumele umntwana wabantu ngengila, naye uNomkhosi wabuye walalela engenakwenza ngokunye. Wazibonela naye engengane yona ekhonjiswayo ukuthi qha, lomuntu okhuluma kanje noshaya ukositini ngendlela eletha umunyu kanje, omunye umuntu, wahlukile kwabanye unewozawoza kuyena kuthi lapho esehambile kusale kubekhona isizungu sakhe sengathi angahlala angayi kude.

Wafika ekhaya wangena ngemuva wabeka amanzi wahamba wayohlola ukuthi umfundisi akakamfuni yini.

Umfundisi wayelokhu ehleli lapho bemshiye khona. Elokhu ebeke phansi umoya wakhe waphukile ngoba waecabanga yena ngokwakhe ukuthi intombazana le eyayihamba nomfana iyona eyayizogana yena umfana, esethi uzobashadisa. Kuqala kwakungalokhu kuyiwa enhla nasenzansi nezinkantolo, kwakusuka nje umfundisi abophe ifindo lalabo abafike kuye abek'izandla phezu kwabo, bahambe. Ukholo lwalungakaqini. Ngaphandle kwalabo baphakathi komuzi ababephekezela abakubo, bebakikizela. Abavela kude waebalungiselela nje umfundisi, iphoyisa, liyobabuzela esifundeni senkosi yakubo yena kade eqedile. Abanye abanenkani babelivinga ngenduku iphoyisa, khona lapho lingabe lisabuza lutho. Ukuzala nezinkantolo lokhu into yayizolo ngoba abantu sebegala ukubona izinembe nesipele.

UNomkhosi lo, ukuba awabeke amanzi inhliziyo yakhe ishaya ithi hluthu, hluthu, waesehamba eyodlala

nezingane, ethi uziba “izindaba zakho Mngoma,” kwa-sho ababulayo. Wamthuma umfundisi ukuba ayobiza inkosikazi ekade isemhlanganweni esontweni, ingekho. UNomkhosi njengoba indaba waeseyizwe yonke, akabuyanga esasola ukuthi inkosikazi ibizelwani. Wakhumbula nokuthi konje mhla ehleli ngaphandle ngoKhisimusi wakhohlwa iduku em-bedeni. Njengoba umka-mfundisi engena njalo endlini yakhe ngaphambi kokuba ayolala, kwakufanele ukuba alibone leliduku. Wasola ngoba futhi umka-mfundisi waejwayele njalo ngoKhisimusi ukuba abuze zonke izimpahla yena uNomkhosi azitholileyo, kodwa namuhla akabuzanga, kodwa ngabe kwenziwa yini?

Waziphendula yena wathi: “Inkosikazi iyayazi indaba yami. Uma kungenjalo khona namhlanje uzoyazi, amathumbu ayo.”

Inkosikazi yafika kumfundisi bakhuluma behamba beyenhla beya enzansi egcekeni babuye bame sengathi bayaphikisana—into eyayingavamile.

Babekhuluma ngolwezizwe ulimi kodwa lapha sihumusha nje ngokwakithi. Uthi umfundisi: “Ehhe, insizwa le ithi ifindo layo noNomkhosi lidala. Elika Tomasi leli lisha.”

“Pho thina singena kanjani kulendaba?”

“Siphakathi kuyo ngoba umntwana lo uhlala kithi futhi uTomasi ungumuntu wethu.”

“Kasibayeke bodwa bazozizazulula.”

“Mina sengenze isiphosiso ngathi, ngizosiza le-nsizwa ekade ilapha.”

“Ubungayenza kanjani indaba enjalo na? Lokhu

lento izokungenisa ekukhulumeni unguMgcotshwa kaNkulunkulu na?”

“Qha, kangingenanga ngibona.”

“Pho ungene kanjani na?”

“Lomfana ufike nentombazana mina ngikhuluma naye nje ngithi lentombazana ahamba nayo iyona engizomshadisa nayo. Sengimthembisa ukuthi ngizomenzela konke ukuba umshado wakhe ufe muhle ufe owesikholwa. Wathi umfana mangithembise, ngathembisa.”

“Pho uNomkhosi ungena kanjani na?”

“Phela uNomkhosi wamethembisa lomfana ngaphambi kokuba aye eThekwini wathi uyomlindela “NOMA NINI”. Umfana usebuyile usezokhumbuza uNomkhosi.”

“Sebeke bakhuluma yini noNomkhosi?”

“Hhayi phambi kwami.”

“Wo, sekuyakhanya ukuthi kanti leliduku engangilibona ngoKhisimusi, nakhu mhla ngithi mina kuwe uNomkhosi akekho endlini yakhe; kuyabonakala ukuthi lalivela kulomfana njengoba nakhu libalwe amagama esithembiso sabo sika “NOMA NINI.”

“Sizokwenza njani pho na?”

“Qha indaba ilula, mfundisi,” kusho inkosikazi. “Sengizifundile izindlela zesizwe sakwaZulu. Yenza nje. Biza uMakhwatha uyise wentombazana umchazele yonke indaba. Uyena oyoyihlela. Futhi ngeke ayihlele; uyoyidlulisela ezintombini zomkhaya wakwake. Yizona ezizokwenza isinqumo yena asithathe nathi sibande ngaso, indaba le singayingeni.”

“Uqinisile wakwami,” sekusho umfundisi isibindi sesithe gidi, ngoaba yena waengayiboni indlela enye yokuphuma kulolubishi owaesezifake kulo. “Yebo uqinisile.”

“Noma ilahla bani phakathi kwalezinsizwa thina siyoshadisa lowo okhethiweyo. Ngoaba sazi ngani ngoaba uma yena lo onguNsikana waengakwazi ukuhlala eThekwini iminyaka emithathu abuye engonakele, ephethe imali engaka—sazingani ingabe uyena njalo uSomandla angase asinike yena abe umqhubi weVangeli phakathi kwalo mhlambi,” kusho umkamfundisi. Babuye bahambe, umfundisi naye eseqine amadolo kulendaba.

“Inye into esingase siyenze thina” kusho umfundisi, “kufanele sikhuleke sicele ukuaba kukhetheke oyoba udondolo lwethu.”

Banqumake ukuaba umfana abizwe ahambe eku-seni kusa ngakusasa ngoaba kwasekuhwelele kakhulu. Umfana waezohamba ayobiza uMakhwatha eMzwangedwa afike naye lapha benobantukabezwa owayenjengomfowabo. Nempela umfana wavuka ekuseni wawela uMvoti wayobiza uMakhwatha beno bantukabezwa. Wafika bengekho beyophuza enkosini uMkhwe-thu njengoba phela kwakuyizinduna, kodwa wawushiya umyalezo koMaMthimkhulu noMaCele ukuaba bayibike kubanumzane.

Kwathi seliyoshona ilanga afika amakhehla aye-made uMakhwatha emhlophe ekhanda enziwa ufuzo, nobantukabezwa eyingengelezi yempandla. Bafika bahlaliswa emigqikini emihle. Ongiyane babo babe bacwayile befanelwa nayimitsha yabo.

Akakho owaziyo inkulumo yomfundisi beno-Makhwatha nobantukabezwa bebobathathu. Kakwaziwa ukuaba waebabizelani bobabili kodwa sikufumanisa ngezinhlansana eziqhuma kuleminqa yenkondlo eyayihutshwa eMzwangedwa njalonjalo ngemuva kwesikhathi.

$$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} :m \quad | - \quad .r \quad | \quad d \quad : - .m_1 \quad | \quad s_1 \quad : s_1 \quad | \quad s_1 \quad : m \quad | - \quad : r \\ \text{Wo} \quad \quad \quad \text{wa -} \quad | \quad \text{nge - nz'uMa - mla -} \quad | \quad \text{mbo Wo,} \quad \quad \quad \text{wa -} \end{array} \right.$$

$$\left| \begin{array}{l} d \quad : - .m_1 \quad | \quad s_1 \quad : s_1 \quad | \quad \frac{m_1 r d_1}{mbo} \\ \text{nge - nz'u - Mamla -} \quad | \quad \end{array} \right.$$

Laliqhubeka njalo lithi:—

*Sibuza kuwe Makholweni
Nakuwe wasoGqolweni
Wayilobola ngemali
Kant'ilotsholwa ngenkomo,
Sikhalel'izinkomo zawobaba,
Wo, wangenz'uMaMlambo.”*

Abashoyo bathi laqanjwa mhla kwemula yena uNontula, inkosazana kaMakhwatha, iliqamba yona luqobo lwayo, yalinika izintombi zikayise ukuaba zisine ngalo. Laya ngokuya lachuma lagcwala izigodi. Bonke bekhala ngoMaMlambo.

ISAHLUKO IX

Njengoba kwase kufike abefundisi, umhlaŋa wawuhlukene izigaba zozalo, nenkolo, nempucuko. Laba abathi befika nje abefundisi babethatha ukholo lwabo baqala ukuzahlukanisa kulaŋa ababesaba ukukholwa. Lawamaqhawe okholo nenzalo yawo azibiza ngokuthi ononhlevu. Udumo lwabo lwalulukhulu kakhulu kuyo yonke indawo ngaleyo nkathi, yiŋo abafukamele imfundo bathi ngokukhanya kwabo bashesha bathenga imihlaŋa yokulima nokwakha. Balalela ize-luleko zomfundisi owaebatshele ngezikhathi ezizayo, abakhanyisele ngenhlalo yesikhathi esizayo lapho oSomsewu beyowudabula phakathi umhlaŋa kaZulu bawehlulele amakhosi ayinhlakanhlaka. Wabendlalela izikhathi zanamuhla lapho sesindinda nemihlaŋa yonke singenalutho kodwa sibonga ilanga liphuma nalapho lishona. Wabakhombisa umhlaŋa usathengwa ngenkabi emalunda, ngayo yodwa nje udwengule umhlaŋa okunamuhla okhipha kuyo izinkabi eziyizinkulungwane.

Kuyoyonke indawo lapho abefundisi baqala khona umsebenzi wenkosi kulezinsuku zanamuhla sekubonakala njalo ukuthi inzalo yawononhlevu ayisahambi ezinyathelweni zawoyise, ngisho nemfundo sekuyinto abayibukela phansi. Sebenjengeqhude lona elithi lingagxuma likhwele othangweni, libakuze amaphiko alo, likhale, liwufuke wonke umhlaŋa ukuthi kawulutho: likhohlwe ukuthi liyobuye lehle licoshe inhlabathi yeshongololo njengezinye izinkuku, nokuthi ngelinye ilanga liyokweqiwa ngamanzi, ngisho nenzalo yalo, kufuywe futhi ezinye izinkuku endaweni yalo.

Yeŋo uNomkhosi waezalwa ibinca kodwa yena engunonhlevu, kuyinto efanayo futhi noNsikana. Phakathi kwezwe lakuŋo waegqoka njengezinsizwa zamabinca uma kuyiwa emaceceni, aphonse isiqhova esikhulu senqe esibilwe ngezimpaphe zempangele ekhal'igijima, nezinye izimpaphe zenqe elimthika; besephatha inkumba yehawu lenkab'elunga ngokumnyama nokumhlophe. Waethi lapha emahlombe agaxe amabeqe ensimango ethungelwe emqaleni nensimba. Waengenakwenza ngokunye kwakufanele athi noma eziphatha okomlungu kodwa akhombise ukuthi okwakuŋo kwemvelo akakulahlile nya njengasezinsukwini zanamuhla, lapho kukhona abathi balandela abelungu kodwa bengaqedi izindlela zakobelungu, babuye bathi bamnyama kodwa bengazi lutho lwakobantu.

Kwakulilanga elikhulu mhla ephuma egqoke njengensizwa yangaphandle mhla kuyiwa emgcagcwe-ni womzala wakhe ngasolwandle lapho manje kwakhe khona abakwaMbozeyana. Babehamba isishomo nje sezinsizwa nezintombi, bahamba banqamula eMvoti indlela idlula phakathi nomuzi, kodwa akakho owambo-nayo eningini lezinsizwa. UNsikana waekwazi ukusina nokudlalisele kangangoba ziningi izintombi zangaphandle ezazikhala ngaye zihlupheka nje ukuthi ngabe uthandwaphi. Ukuba abe isilomo sezintombi kwamenza waba isitha kowabo nakwabanye abadala.

Kuŋo abakwaŋo waengathandeki khona efika nje. Bamkhomba ngenjumbane bethi, "wo-eya kuyaziqhenya lokhu, selokhu kwabuya eThekwini kuthi kungumlungu." Ezinye izintombi zimzonda, zingamfuni nalapho ehambe khona ngoŋa zithi akesheli

kuzo nje ngoBa zona zingamaqaba, zinuka ibayi ne-sibuda. Khona sekuzwakala ukuthi uJwayelene ne-sizwa yasemakholweni aseMvoti phakathi, indaba yaBankulu. Kukho konke uNsikana akavulanga mlo-mo wathula nje wabajwayela bonke bona labo aban-gasamkhulumisi waya kuBo wabahambela ngempela.

Kwakuyilo leli langa lecece lakwaMbozeyana lapho izinsizwa zazifuna ukumakhela uzungu, zifuna ukumqhatha nesigwedleBa sensizwa yakwaNdimande. Indaba yayisuka ngasekugiyeni kuthi lapho sekugiya abakwaMbozeyana, bakhipe yena ngapha ngakuBo agiye, abeyathe bamBonge khona insizwa le abekene nayo izothukuthela igiye ize imkhasele ngenduku. Babazi bona ukuthi kakubuyi lutho oluphilayo kule-nsizwa:—

*“Ingongoni yakwaManzasengwa
UNongunyaza ulukhuni
Ngokwelamela ngish'izigaqa.”*

Sekugiywa yaphuma lensizwa yakwaNdimande yagiya yasinek'amazinyo, yagiya kwavuka iqungo ekhanda, yagiya yaze yamfoma amathe kwafumanise-ka ukuthi sekuthi makukhale omame ngoBa kwase-kuzocitheka igazi uma kukekwaphuma omunye nje. Kwathi ethi uyaqeda bamkhipha uNsikana wathi uthi thathatha, uyathathela ukugiya yahleka insizwa ya-kwabo yafika yathi kuye wu, ngehawu uNsikana wema wayibuka, yahleka yathi:—

“Hawu bangikhiphela umfana nginganga lokhu ngingaka na? Bayangeyisa? Phindel'emuva mfana kangiqonde kulwa nabafana, phindel'emuva.”

Bamangala bonke ababebuka bacabanga ukuthi uNsikana unomuthi omubi, unesitilomu lesi esiphathwa abelungu ukutobisa izinhlanga eMgungundlovu. Babeqonde ukuba emva kwalokho bamshaye bamshaye, bamshiye khona lapho ececeni, kungabi ndaba zalutho. Ngesikhathi sekusina umthimba futhi wadlalisele umfo kaMbokazi waze waba umbukiswano. Amakhehla angenamona akwaMbozeyana ambiza amhlalisa phakathi kwawo amBuza ukuthi sewaganwa yini na, nokuthi uzalwa ubani eNkobongo waphendula wathi, “Ngizalwa uBoqo wakwaMbokazi.” Ayesethi sondela mfana, uphuze kulolukhamba.” Wasondela uNsikana ngokuhlonipha waphuza, walubeka phansi ukhamba walwesula ngezandla ndawozonke.

Nezintombi zakwaMbozeyana nakwaDlozi zase-Nonoti nazo azikhohlwanga, zahamba zifakana imilomo zisho zithi kuyazalwa eNkobongo. Lezizinkulumo zezwakala kaningi zabaphatha kabi abafowabo.

Kwasondela isikhathi sokuBa kudliwe kuthungwe notshwala, abanumzane bawehlukanisa amaqembu onke ngezigaBa zawo zobudala, nangezifunda lezo. Izinsizwa zaseNkobongo zahlaliswa ndawonye exhibeni zathungelwa kona utshwala. Zona zazithungelwa inkosikazi yomuzi isizwa enye nje. Yathi lenkosikazi ezinsizweni kuhle kuthi lowo ukhamba olugcina ngakuye alulethe kuyena exhibeni lapho ebuthunga khona utshwala. Waekusho lokho ngoBa waethanda ukukhuluma noNsikana.

Njengoba uNsikana waesekhishwe inyumbazana izinsizwa zenza isu lokuba njalo udiwo lugcine ngakuye kube uye aluyisa kumame owayebathungela.

Kwakuba insini enkulu leyo lapha esukuma eluthwala ukhamba kodwa yena akanakanga neze. Wathi ukufika exhibeni owesifazane lowo wameluleka wathi:—

“Mntanami, angikwazi nala ungowakhona, nokuthi uzalwa ubani. Kodwa ngiyakuzwela. Kade ngilalele izintombi zakithi zikhuluma ngawe zithi ziyakuzwela ngento eziyizwe ikhulunywa ihletshwa emfuleni izinsizwa zakini. Wena ngeke ubuyele ekhaya, uwadle amabele uma ungathathi lesiseluleko sami”

UNSikana wamangala wathi: “Hawu uthini mame na?”

Wathi owesifazane: “Yebo ngiqinisele.”

Usethi uNSikana: “Ake ungiyeke ngibuyisele utshwala lobu endlini, ngizobuya ngizwe kahle.”

“Yizwa kahle manje mntanami, isikhathi kasikho esinye enginaso sengizohamba ngiyopha abanye.”

“Qha linda mame, ngoba uma ngilibala bazosola endlini besebengilunguza.”

“Hambake ngizolinda isikhashana”

“Ngizolithola icebo loku buyela lapha.” Nempela wabuthatha utshwala ngokhamba wabuphindiselala endlini, waeseba umuntu osayochith’amanzi; waphuma njalo, wafika kowesifazane owaebapha utshwala.

“Sengizokwelulekake mntanami,” sekusho owesifazane. “Thatha impahla yakho unyenye ubang’ekhaya, ube sengathi uyagula noma ophuthuma umkhosi othize ekhaya. Ilanga lisekhona.”

“Hawu uthini mame na?”

“Ngisho njalo. Koswelela ungena kwaDukuza, kothi belala bebeka izinhlangothi abantu, uyobe ungena

eMvoti emzini wamakholwa. Laphoke ungalala kwamlungu oyimpunga nje abathi ungumfundisi Mgalothi. Bonke abahlwelwe uyaabemukela abaphathe kahle; nabafana nathi nawe nje, ababincayo, kuyena kawukho umehluko.”

“Sengizwile mame, ngiyabonga kakhulu. Wena ungowaphi khona ngiyokukhumbula noma sengiphi?”

“Kakuswelekile wazi igama lami, ngithathe nje-ngonyoko nje waneliswe, uze ungikhumbule ususe khaya kunyoko lapho uvela khona.”

“Impela ngiyabongake mame, angiphuthume isikhathi sisekhona nje.”

UNSikana wacabanga. Kwakunzima lokhu kuye, ukuba asuke ekhaya ezophelezela umzala wakhe manje abeseshiya icece likamzala wakhe, abalekele ezinye izinsizwa; okwesibili abuye ayolala kwamfundisi uGilawoti, engagqokile ebincile. Funa umfundisi ambone noNomkhosi ambone, konke alinga ukukulungisa, kumdilikele phansi. Kwakusiza ngani ukuhlala kwakhe lokhu abakubo babezombulala endleleni? Wathula, wathula wangena endlini, waphuza ngempela wadla nenyama njengabanye.

Sekuphunywa kuchithekwa, sekudlalwa okwakusihlwa, uNSikana wathatha izihlangu zakhe waba oya emfuleni. Wagudla ihlathi ekhuphuka waze wangena endleleni eqonde eMbozamo ehamb’egijima njengeqhina. Kwathi lithi gqwambi ilanga waebekene noDukuza. Izwe laliseyihlane ngalezozinsuku. Abantu babekholwa ukuthi ngomgwaqo oqhamuka kwaDukuza kukhona imikhovu, nezimpaka zabanumzane

naBaninizo. Bakhona nanamuhla eMvoti abantu abake bathwalwa yizilwane zabaphansi. Nami ngake ngababona, kodwa phela kanginakuqinisa ngigomelele ngithi: “mkhovu nawe mpaka ukhona noma kawukho, ngoba kangiwazi bakwethu;” lokhu siyakuyekela isizukulwane esizayo ukuaba sikucinge sikuhlolisise amaqiniso namanga akho.

Wahambake uNsikana, kwaze kwathi esehlela eNgudwini kwaqala ukushwaqa izinwele zakhe, kwaxega amadolo, wahluleka ukuhamba. Wasola ukuthi mhlawumbe lowesifazane ubemkhohlisa efuna ukuaba alimale. Ikhanda lakhe lasongelana waqala ukuzibuza ukuthi abantu bakubo bebengakwenza kanjani ukuaba bafune ukumbulala engenanxa, nazwi nabo na? Bekake manje waesengozini yokufela ehlane. Nkathi leyo wabona into sengathi imfene inquma phambi kwakhe yama, yambuka, yabaleka yanyamalala. Eyibekisisa wayibona ukuthi impunzi iyozi funela utshani bensinde. Umqondo wakhe wabuyela wamtshela ukuthi impunzi kayidli lapho kukhona ezinye izilwane khona, ngakhoke ukushwaqa kwezizwele ekhanda bekwenziwa amehlo empunzi. Wasubatha ngejubane wazewawela amanzi eMvoti sekuhlwile ngempela.

Njengoba kwamfundisi kwakuseduze noMvoti ngaphezulu nje, waqala ukuzwa amazwi ezingane zikhala, ezinye zixoshana egcekeni. Emizini esecaleni wezwa abashayeli bekhuzela, begumula izinkabi nama-joka egenqeza phansi; abashayeli betshela abafana ukuaba baziqhube baziqise ethafeni kwaMandelu. Wafisa ukugoduka kodwa waesekhathele okokufa. Wazidonsa amadolo wakhuphukela kwamfundisi wathi ethi

qhamu wabona umfundisi ehleli, wafuna ukuabaleka kodwa umfundisi waesembonile. Waesondela, wakhuleka indawo yokulala.

Umfundisi wambuza ukuthi ungowaphi wathi umfokazi: “Ngingowangapha eNonoti, nkosi yami,”

“Pho, uqondephi?”

“Ngiqonde eThekwini esilungwini ukuyofuna umsebenzi nokuthola imali.”

Umfundisi wabiza uNomkhosi wamyala ukuaba athathe umfokazi lo amyise exhibeni lezihambi, amnike nokudla. Nempela uNomkhosi wamthatha umfokazi wambuza wathi:-

“Kodwa ebusuku lokhu babu uqhamuka ngaphi, ulibangisephi?”

“Ngiqhamuka le eNonoti, ngiqonde ngapha oThungulu, eThekwini.”

“Bonk’abantu laba babukeka bethanda ukuya eThekwini. Nami ukhona umzala wami okade esebenza eThekwini. Wabuya engiphathele izinto eziningi.”

“Hhawu uqinisile mntanenkosi, kakusho wena uyabonakala”, kusho umfokazi.

“Babonakala kanjani abanabazala babo abavela eThekwini?”

“Abanye ngibona begqoka amalokwe asesilungwini, izintombi zingabe zisakhehla, zifaka iminqwazi emnyama ecwebazelayo.” Lapho uNomkhosi wahleka, wachobozela ngoba waemkitaza umfokazi. Naye umfokazi waeyazi into ayenzayo efaka izikhuni emlilweni ezizofika zivuthe, ziwuhlokoze.

“Wena uyovuk’uhambe ekuseni kakhulu yini?”, sekubuza uNomkhosi, waphendula umfokazi wathi:

“Yebo mntanenkosi. Umuhle kangangoba ufa-nelwe nala ukhuluma nkosazana, ingabe uzalwaphi.”

“Qha, mina ngingowakhona lapha kwamfundisi.” Waphendula uNomkhosi elokhu ekitazekile ngoba kwakumnandi ukukhiwa umuntu walekwaZulu emtshe-la ubuhle bakhe. Kanti ukuBa kwakufika omunye osebangeni lakhe emgcofa ngamazwi amnandi wae-zokwethuka. Nempela uNsikana ebona ukuthi ucha-kide uyasiheha isikhukukazi ngokusivezela isibelu sakhe, isikhukukazi singaboni ukuthi, ‘nkombose limi ngothi,’ naye waqhubela phambili wathi: “Hhawu, umuhle ntokazi yabantu, kwanga wawuzelwe kwa-Zulu, nami ngingaka nje ngiphonse okungenani ama-bili.” Wakhuluma ezenza umuntu omdala, nentomba-zana yalutheka.

Waesehamba uNomkhosi naye eseqinise ikhanda ephindela emuva eshesha eyothatha ukudla wakubu-yisa, wazopha umfokazi. Ngenkathi edla umfokazi lo uNomkhosi waemi ngaphandle exhifeni elinde izi-tsha, efuka enzansi eMvoti, imicabango yakhe ilahle-kile, sengathi uyakhohlwa nokuthi ukhona umuntu ombukayo. UNSikana wadla engadli, elokhu eyibuka lentombi aseyiBona ukuthi kanti isiyamthanda ngoba imbiza ngokuthi ungumzala wayo, kwaBangaziyo. Wamangaliswa ubuhle bentombi obungaka, kwaBa sengathi ingelosi emnyama ize phansi kwaMhlaba izomgabisela. Nempela intombi uzimisele ngayo usa-yeshela, nalapho isikuthanda injengengelosi, enhlizi-yneni yakho. Pho, ibenjani lapho uqonde ukushada

nayo na? Buyakhula ubuhle bayo, buqine buze buthele iminduze usuyishadile. Konke lokhu uNsika-na wakuBona wadla engadli.

WayiBona into kaMakhwatha imi ngasesicabeni iluswazi logonothi phakathi ehlozini. WayiBona iyi-nde, insundu, inamehlo amakhulu ayizimbulunga, ne-ngaga eyayigcwele, ilugamfu ngesisu okomnyovu igijima ezimbalini, yayigcwele kwesiphansi njengezi-ntombi zawo onke amaQwabe. Izinwele lezi zazi-mashoba zimnyama sengathi zigcotshwe insizi, zalu-kwe zatatshulwa phakathi, zawa ngala nangalapha kwekhanda zingamagoda. Ethule, kwathi uNsikana makathi “Thambo lenyoka, hlab’omzondayo, duz’ayi-khahlele, hamba ntombazana, yimi lo uNsikana, okade waekhala ngawe.”

Wabuye waziBamba wacabanga, naye walahleka imicabango ekhanda esecabanga nangeduku wathuka esethe: “Akulutho nje “NOMA NINI.” UNomkhosi wethuka wabuza wathi, “usuqedile yini?”

Wathi, “sengizoqeda mntanenkosi.”

Wathi uNomkhosi: “Pho ngizwa sengathi uya-khuluma.”

Wathi umfokazi: “Wo, mntanenkosi ngicabanga ngendlela engisazoyihamba ngisuka lapha ngiye ngi-fike eThekwini. Sengibuka ukuthi noma ngingakha-thala ngibe nje ngiyohamba ngiyengifike khona ngi-fung’uNokuthela kaBaba.”

UNomkhosi wahleka wathula, wasonga izandla zakhe esifubeni, umqondo wakhe wabuye walahleka emicabangweni yakhe yedwa. UNSikana wabuka, wabuka wathula, wamangala ubuhle obunje. Kwathi

makasukume azibike, kodwa waqumbelana phakathi lapho ebona umutsha, nehawu, nesiqhoza sakhe wabona ukuthi ngabe ukuzinqumela ogodweni, wagcina wathi:

“Sengiqedile nkosazana, hhawu ngiyawubonga umusa wakho. Noma sengikhathele nginje sengizowathola amandla okuvuka ekuseni ngihambe, mhla-wumbe ngiyobuya ngikubone. Ngiyabonga kakhulu.” Waezithatha izitsha uNomkhosi eziqoqa waphuma, wathi umfokazi, “Hamba kahle mntanenkosi.” behluka-wahamba uNomkhosi engazilutho futhi engasoli ngomfokazi olele exhibeni.

Wadlula khona noTomasi eseqhamuka emsebenzini wakhe njengoba waejwayele ukuba alokhu ebavakashela abalele exhibeni kuzokusa badlule. Wafika wathi: “E, mnumzane, kuyiwaphike namuhla?”

Wathi umfokazi: “Ngilifangise oThungulu lapho kubuswa khona.”

“Uqhamuka phi?”

“Ngiqhamuka kwelakwaZulu.”

“Unjani umbuso kaCetshwayo lokhu sizwa sengathi sekunguye inkunzi nje?”

“Wo qha, uyabusa nje, kodwa sengathi uzofuza yena uyisekazi uDingana ngonya analo.”

Ukhuluma nje uTomasi uNsikana lo kade emhlole wabona ukuthi iyo le imbangi yakhe, waesezenzisa sengathi ukhathele kakhulu akathandi ukukhuluma. Waesaba ukuthi funa babonane bese emdungela uTomasi amanzi ngenhla, angabe esawaphuza. Nempela uTomasi wadlula kwasengathi uyama uqalaza ngakwamfundisi, wakhwelela kakhulu, wazenza ohlab-

lelayo, wabona uNsikana engengane ukuthi, qha, insizwa le ibiza intombi yayo. Nempela waqhamuka uNomkhosi ehamba eqalaza ngemuva sengathi akafuni ukuba abonwe. Bathi ukuma isikhathi, bekhuluma behlekela phansi amazwi abo enyenyeza, wabeyathe uNsikana uyalalelisa kodwa akezwanga. Enhliziyweni yakhe wezwa kuthi xhifi. Wakhumbula ukuthi konje iyo lensizwa okwathi bephuma esontweni nge-linye ilanga yala ukuba akhulume noNomkhosi. Wacabanga ukuthi kunganjani ayiphundle ngenduku ayehlukanise nalentombi naye ayifunayo. Noma amjuqajuqe nje ngenduku, uma efa icala kalinakuthethwa ndawo; kodwa unembeza wakhe wathi kuye: “Ungabulali.” Kwavuka kuye inhliziyi yobukholwa, kwafa eyobuqaba, wahlala phansi ingani waesesukume naphansi. Umona wawusumqedile engenakumela ukuba intombi eyithanda kodwa ibe ithanda enye insizwa ngaloluhlobo.

Bathi ukuma isikhashana uTomasi noNomkhosi, wabuye wakhwelela uNsikana waphumela phandle wathi swace ngendlu ethi uyaziba, wathi ebuya wezwa izigi zidlula ngendlu ayezolala kuyo; kanti sekunguTomasi useyagoduka. Walilahla ithemba umfo kaBoqo wabona ukuthi lendaba yakhe injengokuziqandula edwaleni ngekhandu. Onke amathemba aye-nawo ashabalalisa okwengkungu sekuphume ilanga. Nakuye kwasa kwathi ngqe, wakhuluma yedwa okohlanya. Wabuye wazimisela okwesibili futhi ukuthi uyolwa kuze kufike emgomeni wokuba azilahle phansi phambi kwayo akhulume nayo lentombi emi kahle, ayikhumbuze isithembiso sayo. Futhi wabuye wami-

swa ithemba ukuba intombi le kayilibuyisi iduku lakhe. Uma imala ngempela ngabe iduku selabuya njengomthetho wakwaZulu. Nayo mayenze njalo.

ISAHLUKO X

“Ngiyawezwa amazwi akho, kodwa lendaba oyikhuluma kimina ilukhuni, kangikwazi ukuyivulela amadlebe ami.”

“Kholwa yimina, ngiyakuthanda mntakaMakhwatha, ngikuthanda ngimi, noma ngihleli, zonke lezintaba zingikhumbuza wena. Kangisalali ngiphupha wena.”

“Kangiphathi mithi, pho ungangiphupha kanjani? Musa ukuzwisa abantu kabi.”

“Lalela kahle.”

“Ngilaleleni kahle lokhu wena ungumkhwenyana njena?”

“Beka phansi lokhu yindaba yami ngedwa leyo, wena awunakuyingena.”

“Kufanele ngiyingene ngoaba ubaba angangibulala angithi nya uma ezwa nokuthi ngike ngiphume ngalesikhathi ngiphumele wena.”

“Kodwa wena uma ucabanga uyakholwa ukuthi kufanele ngithatheke ngempela uNomkhosi, eyini yena? Into yokutholwa le? Unina ubani? Nginjengoba nginje?”

“Ehhe ukhuluma kahle ngoaba wathi umeshela: wawukwazi lokho kodwa kunamuhla uwena osubona lawo mabala kudadewethu uNomkhosi.”

“Musa, akayena udadewenu”

“Ngimphikeleni? Uyena udadewethu, futhi musa ukungephula ingalo, ngiyeke,” kusho uNtombinjani owayezalwa kwenye indlu yakwaMakhwatha kodwa engesiye owakwafo kaNontula. UTomasi wathi lapho embona ukuthi yilokhu emphikisa inkani, wambamba ingalo wathi ukuyisonta, yase ikhala intombazana.

“Ngiqinisile uma ngithi akuyena udadewenu, uyinto yokutholwa nje. Kangisamthandi, ngifuna wena manje. Beka inhlalo ongaba nayo nami, uhlala endlini engcono, usuke lapha emaqhugwaneni uyohlala laphaya ngaphesheya ezindlini zamakholwa. Kuhle kangakanani ukuaba inkosikazi yekholwa!”

“Uyangiyenga ungiqhatha nendlu kababa, ufuna ukusahlukanisa phakathi singabuye sizwane futhi nanini.”

“Qha, amazwi ami ayisiminya ungeke ungibone ngikhuluma noNomkhosi, kangisamthandi. Kanginasizathu kodwa kuphele lona nje uthando, Ntombinjani.”

Wathi esho njalo waebamba umgexo owawuse-ntanyeni kuNtombinjani, wanamathela kuwo, wathi dlu kudluku uNtombinjani kodwa engenzi ngenkani, wawubamba umfo kaNogiyela, wama-nje. Wawuthatha wawugumula enkintshweni yawo wawufaka ephaketheni lebulukwe, wabamba ithambo wema, wayibuka emehlweni lentombazana, wayibona iyinhle, nayo yamuthi jeqe ngamehlo yacobeka, wasidedela isandla, wahamba. Wahambela phezulu umfo kaNogiyela esethandwa izintombi ezimbili.

Ngempela waengaqonde nolunci ngoNtombinjani, waedlala ngaye nje kusashisa igazi likaShaka lobu-

soka. Yena waezimisele ngoNomkhosi, futhi aze akwenze-nje lokhu waeqonda ukuthi uNomkhosi ngeke amale noma kunjani. Wabona ukuthi kulula ukumehlula uNtombinjani uma emngenela ngasenxe-beni lokuḡa agxeke ingodosi yakhe, ayinembe ngokuthi iyisitholwa lapha kwaMakhwatha. Nempela uNtombinjani wathatheka kalula.

Efika ekhaya uNtombinjani wethuka esekhum-bula ukuthi odadewabo bazomkumbuza ngomgexo wakhe. Ngakhoke wahlangana nodadewabo omkhulu owayengezwani noNontula, wayethula kuye yonke indaba, udadewabo lo, uPhikiwe negama lakhe, wayemukela indaba kodwa wathi uNontula angayizwa neze ngoḡa funa ayonele phansi. Nempela uTomasi waesefika kahle nje ma sekuswelele acashe ngakwabo kaPhikiwe abesebonana noNtombinjani baphekezelane sekuhlwile kungaboni muntu. Onina laba basebeyazi indaba kodwa beyifihla bengathandi ukuba izwakale. Babenengwa ukuthi umntwana eyisitholwa kodwa agane kuqala kunaḡantwana bomkhaya; kunjalo nje agane injitimane yasesilungwini. Bakusola lokho. Babefuna ukonela phansi konke kuphumelele indaba kaNtombinjani.

Akwenzeki ukuba enxulumeni wonke umuzi uzwane, kubakhona njalo abavumelana nobubi. Ezintombini lapha ezinye zawubuzisisa umgexo kaNtombinjani zawuhlalela phansi lezi ezingowabo ezimazela konke. Waze waqhuma umoyana bewuthola ngabafana abelusayo ukuthi, umkhwenyana lo usefikela lapha kwaboPhikiwe, bese njalo ephekezelana noNtombinjani. Bayixoxa-nje abafana bayiqinisa

lapho bebuzwa, yakholeka lapha emantombazaneni; kodwa athi azozidelisa wona azibonele ngamehlo. Nempela ahlala ngokunye ukuhlwa ngaphandle alinda. Abona umkhwenyana engena kuḡo kaPhikiwe, bahlala bamlinda; bambona futhi ephuma, uNtombinjani esemlinda ngaphandle komuzi. Athula amantombazana, asuka ahamba engakhulumisani. Yathi enye:

“Kanti nasemakholweni izinsizwa ziyahamba izindlela zamasoka?”

Yathi enye, “pho kusiza ngani ukucela intombi ibenye umuntu ashade nayo; kungcono ngizilahle esithenjini, uma ngingakohliseka kanje.”

“Uqinisile, dadewethu, ngoḡa esithenjini uyewazi kahle ukuthi nibaningi, nonke nizomnakekela umnumzane, kunoba ugqume endlini uphekela indoda uthi eyakho wedwa kanti kukhona abakhulu kunawe abayithatha bamuke nayo nje.”

“Ngingazibulala,” kusho lentombazana enye. “Pho sizokwenza njani?”

“Masiyibike lendaḡa kuNontula kusasa ekuseni.”

“Imisebenzi kaPhikiwe yonke le. Usengenisa uNtombinjani kuyona, ngoḡa efuna ukuba yingqwele yethu sonke kanti akaveli endlini enkulu. Futhi angasiphatha kanjani lokhu unolimi oluyizimbaxa nje-ngoluka xamu?”

Yaphendula enye yathi, “Mina ngifuna ukuphathwa uNontula yena ozoganela eNkosini, nathi sonke thina bodadewabo sithole isithunzi saziwe ukuthi, hhawu nazizintombi zendoda, ezinegama eMzwangedwa.”

Ekuseni kwasa ngakusa yahamba lentombazana

kanye noNontula ngenkathi eyakogeza yamphekezela. Sebechopha izinyawo yathi:

“Dadewethu, nginendaba engizokutshela yona mhlawumbe izokwehlisa igama lethu.”

“Uthini, ukhona yini olahlekelwe ubuntombi bakhe kinina?”

“Qha dadewethu, indaba kaNtombinjani, iyangihlupha. Kusihlwa besimi nje laphaya sabona umkhwenyana evela kuBo kaPhikiwe, waesehambisana noNtombinjani.”

“Pho, yisiphosiso sini esilapho, lokhu ubezihambela nomlamu wakhe?”

“Qha, sesizwile ukuthi kakusenandlela ukuzwana kubo kobulamu. Angamnika kanjani umgexo wakhe uma kungumlamu na? Ingani uwe owathi singamniki umgexo umfana eseshela na? Thina sibona ukuthi sebeyezwana.”

Bachopha baqeda, uNontula engaphendulanga. Intombazana yayazi ukuthi ngeke ayixoxise yona lendaba. Yejabula nokho ukuBona ukuthi uNontula akathukuthelanga, wasimze wathula nje, wachopha njalo izinyawo wanganaka. Basebethwala izigubu zabo zamanzi bakhuphuka beya ekhaya uNontula ethule engazange ayiphathe lendaba. Yaphela khona lapho. Nentombazana kayibuyanga iyikhulume. Yaya kumngane wayo yamtshela konke, bagcina ngokuthi: “Masithule siqaphele ukuthi kakuzunuka santungwana na?” YeBo, bathula baqaphela. UTomasi bambona ezifikela ngesikhathi afika ngaso kuBo kaPhikiwe abuye ahambe nje ebonene noNtombinjani. UNontula akayinakanga lendaba wayizifa, wayivalela emgodini.

ISAHLUKO XI

Wavuka phakathi kokuthatha ukusa umfo kaBoqo, wanyathela eqonde eNkobongo engafuni ukuBa abo-nwe njenempela abantu basemVoti. Wafika ekhaya liphuma ilanga, wangena endlini kanina wacela ukudla wadla walala lonke ilanga engakhulumise muntu. Kwathi ebusuku kwezwakala amazwi okuhlabelela esho kude ekhala ngo“Dida noMasinga, uyangiqambela,” esho eza ekhaya. Kwaphuma intsha encane eyayingayile ececeni yabahlangabeza beza ekhaya sekuyimpi.

LaBa basekhaya babengambonanga uNsikana ukuthi ufike ekuseni yena. Kwathi lapho ebuzwa bathi bamshiye ezihlotsheni zakhe abambonanga sekubuywa. Yaphela nje lapho, kwaxoxwa ukuthi icece belinjani balibabaza ufuhle, bencoma nesandla soku-phatha ukudla sakoMbozeyana. Kwajathulwa.

Ekuseni uNsikana bambona ephuma esezigqokele kahle ephethe uKositini lwakhe elushaya eqonde ngaseMvoti kumngane wakhe. Waengakayixoxi indaba yakhe nabasekhaya kabanakanga ukubuza ngoba kwakungumuntu ongathandi njalo ukukhuluma.

Wafika kuNkomeni wahlala, wayixoxa yonke indaba:

“Ngahamba wethu, ngaya ngalapha eNonoti siye ececeni. Abantu bathi abangibulalele khona, ngasinda nje nami ngokwelulekwa inkosikazi enye yathi mangibaleke.”

“Hau, wasizakala nawe wabaleka ubalekela amanye amadoda na?”

“Uthini lo? Usho ngoba ungaze ungababona abantu bekuzondela ukufa nokuphila, bekubuka ngamehlo engwe incinda izindevu nezindebe ibona inyamazane.”

“Noma kunjalo wethu, pho ngibaleke? Ngingafela khona ngifunga uZiwelile kababa,” kusho uNkomeni wakwaKhuzwayo, iZulu lokulethwa, washo wakhwifamate.

“Impela wethu ngibalekile; kodwa phela iyeza indaba ejabulisayo”

“Lapho sebekuxosha weqa izihlahla?”

“Hhayi kangikho lapho manje.”

“Pho qhubeka ngoba mina ngisanengiwe sengathi singake siyobashaya ngelinye ilanga uma unge-sabi”

“Ayidlule leyo wethu. Kuthe ngibuya, ngalala kwaMfundisi, Silwane-somhlola, ngayibona lentombi.”

“Weu, nakhoke futhi! Usuyelani kwamfundisi ebusuku, ubincile uyozihlazisa entombini uyibona injengalokhu injena na?”

“Hhayi kahle, wena uthathela phezulu. Ngaba imvu-mbumbulu, ngazenza umfokazana ngalaliswa exhibeni, kwathunywa yona yazongipha ukudla.

“Wenake yathi ifika wase uyikhulumisa usungenisa ezakho izindaba, ngoba angikwazi ukuthi unjani.”

“Qha wethu uyaphasalaza. Ngayibuza ngayiyisa le, nayo yabeka le, kwaze kwafika leliboxongwane layo. Lapho kwathi mangisukume ngithi—ufunani lapho? Kanti yimi okwakufanele ngibuzwe kunjalo.”

“Minake lapho wethu ngangiyophonsa igabade besengilala ngizenzisa. Kuthi lapho engabaleki ngi-

phonse elinye igabade liphuhluzekele kuye. Waeyobona ngani ukuthi uwe? Wo, thina kade sasiwuhamba umhlaba.”

“Qha wethu, ngathula-nje ngifuna ukubona ngempela ukuthi iyamthanda ngenhliziyo na. Noma isipho sami iyasibona, noma imqhuba ngamadolo.”

“Wafumanisani?”

“Qha, iyamthanda wethu, indlela ilukhuni. Kodwa ngisafisa sikhulume nayo, yangitshela ngomzala wayo oyithumela izinto eThekwini. Ngabona ukuthi iduku lami iyalithanda.”

“Angivumi lapho wethu. Akusizi uma silokhu sica bangela, intombi, yintombi ngisho sekuthiwani, iyadlala ngabantu. Awuze ungezwa yini kuthiwa izinsizwa ziyabulalana ngenxa yentombi? Ingani khona lapha basanda kubulala insizwa iyodwa kunina, bayiphisela ngempiselo enhlafunweni yafa, ngenxa yentombazana eyayibathanda ibabangqa abafana.”

“Uthi kambe nakimi iso lesa na? Lentombazana ithanda mina ibuye iyozwana nesoka layo elidala na? Ingakwenza kanjani lokho ingeyekholwa, futhi inganiniki izwi layo?”

“Mina angikhulumi konke lokho, ngikutshela izinto ezehlakala phandle kuphela, hhayi wena oabanga ukuwa zibenjalo ngoba kunje.”

“Angikholwa into enjalo, Nkomeni, wena weqhawe, kangikholwa, wethu, ngoba funa ngife, ngife ngingakaboni umhlaba.”

“Yenza nje wethu, sengiyakubona ukuthi uzimi-sele kulentombazana. Yenza nje.”

“Ngenze kanjani?”

“Lalela mina, uthule uzufe. Suka lapha uyeko-Makhwatha, uqonde khona uthi ngqo.”

“Uthini lo, wake wezwa kwenziwa lokho, ufuna ukungenza impatha, wethu?”

“Ngithe thula uzufe,” kusho into kaZululokulethwa. “Ngiyaphinda futhi ngithi suka lapha uye ko-Makhwatha, uqonde uthi ngqo. Uyofika khona ukhuleke ufune ukukhuluma nenkosazana yomuzi, igama layo nguNontula. Uzibike kuyo, uyeneke indaba yakho kahle.”

“Sengiyezwa mfan’omdala, ukhuluma ubudoda manje, kade uphakuzela kuqala.”

“Akakho umuntu oyofika akuxwaye uma ufuna uNontula ngoba sekuyiqhikiza eliyigunqele. Uya bona lapha kwamfundisi ngeke uyibone lentombi ngoba umfundisi akafuni ukulokhu ebona amabulukwana ehwathuzela egcekeni engathunywe lutho. Ngisho uze ezisebenzini akusizi ngoba awunakuyithola. Noma uma ngasemfuleni, wazi ngani noma umfundisi nangu khona lapha.”

“Uqinisile ngoba amehlo akhe akabekeki noma uhlangana nje naye emgwaqweni egibele injomane. Kangakananike uma ekufika ukhuluma nentombazana yakhe! Ilukhuni lendaba.”

“Mina ngikutshela okuyilona lisu kuphela loku-nqoba lendaba. Uma wehluleka ngalelisu, sesiyogeza izandla, noma siye kuSandlasikhulu siyobula ngamathambo siyiphuphise ebusuku, siyifake isidina nalo mfana kaNogiyela.”

“Ukudlalake lokho wethu ngoba ngafunga ngathi mhla ngibekwa amanzi ebunzini lami, ngingeke

ngikholwe amalutha, nokuthi imisebenzi yobumnyama ngiyoyilahla phansi.”

“fengazi Nsikana. Kodwa mina ngithi ngisiza wena, uma wena ungathandi, ngigez’izandla. Ake sithike uNontula lowo akayithathi indaba yakho, noma yena ube-yathe uyakukhuluma intombazana imudle ngamazinyo, uyokwenza kanjani?”

“Ngiyohlala phansi ngithathe imithwalo yami ngiyosebenza eThekwini ngibunguke, ngoba anginakumela ukubona uNomkhosi eshada nomunye umuntu. Noma ngiyokuya kumfundisi uqobo lwakhe ngimtshela ukuthi makakhumbule isethembiso sakhe, angidedele okungenani kengizikhulumele noNomkhosi isikhathi esithile. Lezondlela ezimbili engizimisele ukuzenza.”

“Yebo indaba yakho ilukhuni ingaliwa ngezindlela eziningi. Thina bothina nje singadonsa uphondo khona manje,” washo eludonsa phezu kwendlu ezintingweni, “silukolombe, sikhwife le, nale, siyibize igama layo sihlale phansi, sibone ukuthi ingengene yini lapha ngomnyango uyibone nawe ngamehlo.”

Wathula uNsikana ebuka umngane wakhe waze waqeda emkhombisa ukuphoswa kwentombi. Ngenxa yobugagu bukaNkomeni waze wathatheka uNsikana wasebuza ethi:

“Kwenziwa lokhu nje kuphela na? Beseikuthanda njalo intombi? Uhamba kanjani wona umuthi uya entombini wena ulapha yona ile kude? Kodwa phela ikhona into engamanga kulokhukuloya kwenu.”

Hhayi behlukana noNsikana waqonda ekhaya eqonde ukubuya kusa ngakusasa adlule ayobona uNontula. Efika ekhaya udadewabo waeshisa eyizi-

nkuni eyidela lentombazana ngofo kuthi isilithathile iduku lomfowabo kodwa ibe isahamba noTomasi. Lesisenzo senziwa amantombazana angenazimilo. Wakhuluma kakhulu nonina ethi naye lendaba iyamxaka ukuba ithi phela intombi isiyamukele isipho somfana kodwa ibuye ihambe nembali yakhe.

Babekohlwa yinto enkulu kakhulu ukuthi ngomthetho wakwaZulu umfana akayiniki lutho intombazana kodwa uma intombazana inika umfana into, isuke seyikhombisa ukuthi yona isikhona inhlaso evuthela umfana lowo. Pho babengamlahla kanjani uNomkhosi yena engazange amuphe into uNsikana? Mhlawumbe nabo basebezile ngezindaba zasesilungwini lapho amantombazana emukela khona izipho zezinsizwa ezeshelayo ngalokho sezikhombisa ukuthi sekusondele zivume? Pho ubani owayesesiphosisweni kulendaba na? UNomkhosi wayekwenzelani lokhu njengoba yena wazazi izindlela zasesilungwini, futhi ezangaphandle izindlela eziqonda? Walandela yiphi kuzo zozimbili lezizindlela na?

ISAHLUKO XII

EThekwini kwakugcwele abelungu imvama yabo kungamaNgisi, benza imisebenzi eyahlukeneyo. Kwasekusobala ukuthi abelungu laba bazohlala abavakashile. Nabantu basebefona abanokuzibonela ukuthi izinto seziguqule. Enyakatho oMbuyazi weTheku basebeganwe ngabantu bahlala inhlalo yakwaZulu sebenezifunda abazibusayo. Phakathi kwaZulu uqobo lwakhona kwakukhona abelungu abasebenamandla

njengoSomsewu. Kwakukhona nomunye owayekade eshade nelawu eligama lalo linguGadeleni. Lomlungu nguJanitoni owafika njengesitholwa kwaZulu watholwa uMpande wazewaba liphisi likaCetshwayo ekhonzwe njengomuntu wakhe.

Nanjengoba abelungu babekhonze ngohlobo olunjengolwawoJanitoni kubantu, kanjalo futhi nabantu basondela izigaba ngezigaba phakathi kwabelungu eThekwini. Umlungu weza nofuzo lwakhe aluncela kunina noyise, nomuntu weza nemfundiso yakhe yesizwe sakuwo kwaZulu. Kwakuhlanganwa ngasemsebenzini umuntu elinga ngawo onke amandla akhe ukujabulisa umlungu, echitha negazi lakhe aqome ukulwa nohlanga lwakubo kunoba aziwe njengomhlobuki. Konke lokhu umuntu omnyama waekwenzela ukuba azephephise onyeni lwamakhozi akwaZulu ayebusa ngezikhali zegazi njengawo onke amakhozi ezizwe ezingakangenwa ubukholwa. UNdongeni wazidela amathambo washaya amanzi omtate wawelala esibubulungu ephekezela uDiki wayewafika eHini engabekwe kubongwa izimbongi zabamhlophe nabamnyama konke ekwenzela ukuba akhombise inhliziyi yakhe ekuthandeni lowo asemkethile waba yinkosi yakhe. Kwabanjalo futhi kuNdaBankulu kaNkontshela wasemaNgwaneni lapho bezingela nabelungu ehlathini laseNkandla lapho kwathi umlungu wadubula ingwe wayishaya esiswini yangafa yacasha ehlozini. Waesondela lomlungu ethi wenzela ukuba ayishaye maduze ingwe kanti ithe ukungena lapha ehlozini yabuya yazocasha ngomngqangu engene ngawo. Wathi ethuka umlungu lo ingwe yayimngxu-

mela kanti uNdaBankulu uyifonile washesha waphonseka phakathi kwayo nomlungu lapho isathi igxumile ingwe. Yath'iwa yawela phezu kukaNdaBankulu, yamnikiza phansi yamdwengula isisu amathumbu alenga phansi. Wathi eyiduBula umlungu ifa yona yase imonele phansi uNdaBankulu. Kuthiwa bathi bemkhalela yena waezilungisa eqoqela amathumbu akhe esiswini. BamBamba bamBeka phansi bamthunga ngezintambo ezincane zosolo kodwa uNdaBankulu akakhalanga nokukhala. Walala phansi isonto wavuka wahamba njengabanye. Lento bayibukisisa abelungu bayiqopha ikakhulu umoya wokuzinikela womuntu omnyama wakwaZulu edela impilo yakhe ezidela namathambo ngenxa yomlungu.

Kubo bonke lobuBuqhawe bendlu emnyama babemangala ukuBa kwenziwa yini ukuBa labaBantu abayiziqhwaga namajaha alukhuni kangaka asimze aqhoboKe nje uma sebebekene namandla ezangoma sezibula ngoBa noma iqhawe selake lahlabana ezimpini kodwa uma libizelwe engombocweni, izangoma nezanusi sezishikisha zithwele amashoBa amhlophe namanye amnyama ezinkonkoni, amaqhawe uqobo ayakhophoza aqhaqhazele njengehlamvu lomuthi lipheshazelwa umoya ovunguza kancane emafini. Abelungu babemangala ukuthi yini eBanga lokhu.

Lolufuzo abantu abamnyama ababenalalo lwaBalandela noma sebengenwe ukukholwa. Ubunzima namandla obumnyama alandela kawasalanga kwaZulu. Izintombi zikaZulu kazithanga ngoBa sezifike esilungwini zasezithi uma insizwa ifika ithi: "Qoma mntanenkosi," zasezithi "wo yeBo nsizwandini ngiyavuma."

UNomkhosi uqobo lwakhe waengezukupuma nje noma usNikana efika evela eThekwini efuna uthando lwakhe alubeka kuye besengabantwana bese ethi "yeBo Nsikana." Amenze njani uTomasi owamthanda ilanga libalele kwaziwa uMvoti wonke?

NoNsikana waenokwakhe ukuhlupheka ngoNomkhosi ikakhulu lapho ebona ukuthi ngempela uNomkhosi uyezwana noTomasi.

NoTomasi wezwa ngoSizwile ukuthi uNsikana wake wafika lapha kwamfundisi wathi lapho ebuza ukuthi waezokwenzani uNomkhosi wathi naye akazi. NaBanye bafika kuTomasi bamtshele bathi lensizwa yaseNkoBongo kade ikwamfundisi isikhathi eside iphelekezela udadewabo yaphuma yaqonda ngasemfuleni, kanti nangu noNomkhosi naye uhambe waqonda ngasemfuleni. Sebeyabuza kuTomasi ukuthi uma lentombazana yayinganiki Nsikana ithuba lokuBa akhulume nayo pho yamelani isikhathi naye yaze yethula isigubu ekhanda yahlala phansi na? Uma yona intombazana le uNomkhosi yayingenaluthando lukaNsikana, pho uNsikana watshelwa nguBani ukuthi isemfuleni angaze yena aphume kwamfundisi aye ngasemfuleni.

Babuza kanjalo abaseMvoti ozisini abayifunda ivaliwe. Bambuza uTomasi naye waze wabona noma ebengaboni, waqala ukuBona ukuthi qha, intombi le isiyemuka kuyena isiyiqoma koBoqo eNkoBongo. Wafikelwa iqunga lomona omkhulu lagubuzela yonke imicabango yakhe wazimisela ukuBa ngaphambi kokuBa imale intombi le kuhle afune izindlela zokuyibamba ibuye ibeke kuye kuphela. Wacabanga nge-

zinyanga eziningi ezazingase zimsize zimnike imithi yokuzigcaba nokuphonsa uNomkhosi kuze abuye kuye. Kwakulukhuni ukuba ayengakwaManzasengwa ayobula athathe imithi kuJevuza; kwakulukhuni ukuba awele uMvoti akhuphuke ayekwaQwabe kuManzohlanya ayothatha isiposo ngoba kwakuzoshesha ku-zwakale emakholweni ukuthi isithenjwa somuzi nesomfundisi siyabula futhi siyaphonsa.

Phakathi eThekwini kwakukhona uSihlangusinye owayebula ngohlobo olusha oluphethe ukuhlakanipha kwaabantu kwezinyanga zakwaZulu nezasemaMpoundweni, phansi kwaFaku nokuhlakanipha kwezanusi zasoSuthu kwaMshweshwe ezithakatha ngezulu. Lokhu kuhlakanipha konke uSihlangusinye waesekuhlanganise nokuhlakanipha kwezinyanga zabelungu ezawela ulwandle zeza kwaZulu naseThekwini.

Ngaphandle kwamafutha esothamlilo abamba umuntu amgozobalise ndawonye angalokhu eyaluza ikakhulu entombini, uSihlangusinye waephethe amafutha ephumalimi okuyiwona amisa izindaba zensizwa konke kuyilungele kahle.

Wabanodumo uSihlangusinye kufika abantu abavela kude bezofuna imithi yakhe bafike beqhuba izinkomo namahashi. Abantu babengazi ukuthi amandla angaka uSihlangusinye ubuye awengezwe umkhuba wakhe wokusebenzisa isibuko esikhulu owayefika asigxumeke phambi komuntu ebesezibuka isikhathi esifushane umuntu ekhuluma, lokhu kumqede amandla umuntu ezibuka ekhuluma nezwi lakhe libuye lizongena ezindlebeni zakhe azibone futhi esifanekisweni kunyakaza izindebe zomlomo wakhe, abesekhu-

luma ngezwi elesabekayo uSihlangusinye embuza umuntu ukuthi ufunani. Umuntu aphenjule eqhaqhazela kanti nanku umuthi yena ubesewulungisile uma efuna owokuphosa amnike wona athi kuye:

“Uyasibona lesisithunzi okade usibona sikhuluma nawe laphaya esibukweni?”

Athi umuntu: “Ehhe ngisibonile baba.”

“Yilona dlozi lakho lelo elikumisa ezindatsheni zakho. Lomuthi engikunika wona ngiwuthatha kulo ngoba lona liyazi konke okufunayo.”

Abuze umuntu athi: “Lokhu liyazi izinto engizifunayo, pho, alingitsheli ngani?”

Aphenjule uSihlangusinye athi, “yingoba wena ungcolile ungafanele.”

“Yini engingcolisile na?”

“Yingoba senihlale kakhulu nabelungu, imithi yakobantu kayisangeni?”

“Kusho ukuthini lokho wena okhuluma naba-phansi naphezulu na?”

“Thula, ungaabuzi okuningi funa ungaabe usaphuma kulendlu, ufe nokufa ungaababonanga abantabakho nabakwenu.”

“Ngiyezwa mngoma, ngiyezwa.” Athi lapho ethi uyaphuma uSihlangusinye ambambe ngesandla ambuze umbuzo ubemunye athi:

“Izindaba zakho, zokulungela ngamafuta ephumalimi. Uyezwa?” Asho emnika umuntu ibodlelana elincane elinamafushana anuka okukhulu ukukhunta, amyale athi akolokhu ewabeca esimongweni lapho ezokhuluma nayo intombi.

Kwahamba, kwahamba, abantu baqala ukuḅa babuzane bodwa ukuthi iphumalimi yini yona. Abanye abaziyo ababehlala noSihlangusinye eMsizini ngaseMtateni bathi iphumalimi elinye igama lalezizinguluḅe zasolwandle ezithiwa amahlengethwa ngoḅa aphuma njalo alunguze emanzini ame ngemisila; abanye bathi bayaphosisa laḅo abasho njalo ngoḅa iphumalimi liqondisa injomane yona enamandla amakhulu okugijima kuḅe umuntu eyigibele. Abanye baze balithola leligama lephumalimi ukuthi liqondisani, baqala ukulifafaza kwaḅanye. Emaphandleni kude izinyanga zaqala ukuhlomela ikakhulu izihambi ezimhlophe. Izinyanga zaziqoqa amadoda athize ayizigcwelegcwele ziwatshela ukuḅamba noma yimuphi umlungu amkhiphethe onke amafutha emzimbeni athathwe ayiswe kuzona izinyanga.

Zona zazifika lawamafutha ziwachochobalise ziwaxhoxhe, ziwatwene, ziwafake emagabeni, zilokhu ziwacaphuna. Eduze neTheku abantu ababanjwe bebulele umlungu babebanjwa naḅo babulawe ngokunjalo. Ngenxa yalokhu kubanjwa izinyanga zazithatha manje ziqaphele uma kade kungcwatshwa umuntu (umlungu) zithi phakathi kobusuku zithathe ziyombulula ithuna zisithathe isidumbu ziyosicwaya zisikhiphe zonke izicucwana ezidingwa ekwelapheni.

Lento kayigcinanga lapha kuphela ngoḅa abanye babebanjwa besathi bayamba lapha emangcwabeni baboshwe. Manje basebeqaphela noma yimuphi umlungu bambambe bambulalele lapho uhulumeni wabamhlophe engeke amthole khona. Abantu abasebenza lomsebenzi babebizwa ngokuthi yizinswelaḅoya. Yeḅo,

baningi abantu abacetshiswa amafutha ephumalimi kwathi noma engumfokazana nje umuntu wahluma waba ngumnumzane waqhuba imihlambi yezinkomo, wagumuka umkhaba wahlala phansi. USihlangusinye waewaphethe lawamafutha enjengomphongolo yena okucashunwa kuwo.

Wazifumanisa naye ngelinye ilanga uTomasi esemi ngaphambi kukaSihlangusinye eqala ukuya eThekwini. Wavuka ekuseni ngelinye ilanga watshelelwa umfundisi uTomasi ukuthi ngakusasa uyovuka aye eThekwini ahambe ngengqokumbane yezinkabi ngoḅa kwakuzofika omunye wabefundisi ezobona umsebenzi wenkolo owawenziwa phakathi kwamaZulu.

UTomasi washo wathi:

“Ngibonwa yini mina kaḅaba ngizoya eThekwini.” Waqala ukucabanga indlela yokubonana noSihlangusinye amnike amandla okubuyisa uNomkhosi ngoḅa waengasathandi ukukhuluma naye njalo kuthi noma eya kwaḅo ngaphesheya koMvoti azihambele yedwa angenzi njengakuqala lapho waeyaphekezelwe nguTomasi.

Wahamba wasuka ekuseni kakhulu ehamba nabashayeli bezinkabi bayebalala oThongathi bafumanisa khona esikhumulweni izinsizwa zizingi kukhunyulwe kuxoxwa izindaba. Abanye babevela eThekwini kade bahamba sebeqabuka izinto eziningi, bebona nemigwaqo yezinqola seyacabeka yabuduleka. Abanye ikakhulu abasha beqoqene emaziko omlilo bexoxa izindaba zabantu abasha. Bebuza kwaḅavela emakhaya ukuthi uNosibanibani nobani, wasekuthini usa-

mthanda uBani na? Nokuthi leyantombi eyayingaka ngesikhathi ngihamba seyabangakanani na?

Wahlala phansi uTomasi elalele wazewathi omunye kuzona izinsizwa:

“Leyantombazana yakwaMakhwatha eyatholwayo isingakanani na?”

Wathi omunye, “Usho yiphi na?”

Waphendula obelalele wathi, “Kanti ikhona yini intombazana enye eyatholwayo nguMakhwatha ngaphandle kwalena ayithola mhla kugqabuka igoda likaMpande noDingana na?”

Wathi omunye, “Nami bengisho yona leyo.”

Obefuza waqhubeke, “Ngayishiya isencane ngayisongela ngathi kothi mhla ikhulayo ngiyisukele.”

Wathi omunye, “uma usho leya eyatholwayo, ungayibona namuhla. Ungeke uwuvale umlomo, wethu, ungalokhu uwukhexile.”

“Uthini wethu na?”

Wathi omunye, “Ngiqinisile ngeke uyibeke ungalokhu, ngifung’uMantombi.”

“Ucabang’ukuthi kungathi noma sengikhiphe inkomo yakwabo yembilijisi engiyithengele ukuvela ngayo esontweni ngelinye ilanga, ingahlule na?”

Wath’omunye, “Inkomo yakwenu yembilijisi, yini yona leyo na?”

“Konje nina nisalibele amabeshu ezikhumba? Thina sesifaka ezaseThekwini.”

“Musa ukulokhu ungihleka ngitshele ukuthi yini yona imbilijisi,” kusho lona obefuzile.

“Qha, ngeke ngikutshela ngoBa usaya eThekwini, funa imali yakho iphelele khona ungasuyi nalutho lokulobola ngisho nengodosi yakho.”

Usethi lona obefuza “ngisho ungala ukungitshela ukuthi imbilijisi yini yona leyo, kodwa uyaya ekhaya eMvoti lapho uyohlangana noNomkhosi.”

“Ufani yena lowo uNomkhosi?”

“Kanti uqinela ukuthi injani intombazana yakwaMakhwatha negama layo kawulazi?”

Usethi lona ovela eThekwini, “uma ingehlula ngazozonke ezinye izindlela ngiyoyifikela ngenye indlela.”

“Ayikho enye indlela kuleyantombi, ngoBa ngisho ungeza nemithi yakwenu, uyobe ushaye phansi.”

“Mina angiyukuza nemithi yakwethu ngoBa kayikho kwethu inyanga, kodwa ngoza njengoba nginje, uma ingahlula ngiyifikele nephumalimi.”

Wathi lapho ethi “iphumalimi” naba befukela lenkulumo bahlonga izindlebe basondela, abanye beqisa amehlo phezu kwemililo yabo balalela befuna incasiso yaleligama elithi, “iphumalimi.”

“Awu, uthini wethu na? Uyoyifikela nephumalimi, ulithathaphi unjengoba unje na?” kuBuza obekade engalalele.

“Ush’ukuthini uma uthi nginjengoba nginje? Ukhuluma izwi elibi lokungeyisa phakathi kwezinsizwa kuxoxwa indaba?” Washo wagcwala ulaka, lapho abanye bahlanganisela ngomsindo balinga ukuthulisa lensizwa evela eThekwini.

“Qha, bengingaqonde lizwi lokweyisa. Ngisho ngoBa ngikubona ugqoke njengamakholwa, ungasuyi.”

migodla ngisho nezimpondo zemithi entanyeni nje-ngezinyanga zonke. Ngimangaliswa ukuthi njengoba ungafake lutho unjena nje, uyowathathaphi amafutha ephumalimi.” Washo umfo wakwaZulu ongazi lutho ngezindlela zamakholwa, washo wathula wadla imihlathi wabuka emlilweni

Sonke lesisikhathi uNsikana uyabukela, udlwa imicabango. Okokuqala washaywa uvalo lapho ezwa igama likaNomkhosi liphatheka endle enkangala lapho waengazani namuntu yena ecabanga ukuthi uNomkhosi waeyimfihlo yakhe ayibangisana noTomasi kuphela. Nakhu lapha endle esefumanisa isixuku sezinsizwa zikhuluma ngoNomkhosi. Wazibuza ukuthi konje negama lilandela umninilo na? Lentombazana yayitholwe ngelanga kushaywa imikhosi, kanjalo negama layo lihambe lishayelwa imikhosi yonke indawo emhlabeni. Wangenelwa ukunengwa okukhulu kodwa wahlala phansi emlilweni wangafuna ngisho nokunyakaza ngoba waezobakhombisa abanye abantu ukuthi ukhona, mhlawumbe kanti ukhona omaziyo ukuthi uhlala kwamfundisi ebese emdalula. Kwaabakuhle ngoba kulawamaziko ayehleli eduze kwawo uTomasi kwakungekho muntu wesipani sakhe sezinkabi, ngoba waezothuka ephahluluka athi uyamazi uNomkhosi, nokuaba khona lapha ezinqoleni kukhona isoka lakhe; lento mhlawumbe ibisiholela lezizinsizwa ezigodukela ukokweshela kuNomkhosi ukuaba zimbake zimbulale, uTomasi engenacala.

Umcabango wakhe wabuya waguquka wambukela phansi uNomkhosi lapho kuvela isifanekiso sikaNtombinjani emqondweni wakhe. Wambona uNto-

mbinjani emjwayeza namakhosikazi amaningi akwaMakhwatha, nokuaba uma efika kulezizindlu lapho uNtombinjani waezalwa khona bonke babemgqigqizelela alethelwe amanzi ageze izandla kulethwe nokudla adle. Kuthi lapho ehamba noNomkhosi afike njalo ezindlini ezingenhla aphantsi njengomfokazana, nezintombi zakhona oNontula zifike zingamnaki zithande ukuaba akhonze kuzo, yena enguTomasi kaNogiyela owaziwayo kulolonke laseMvoti, naseMzwangedwa kwaQwabe nakwaNodunge.

Wathi lapho efika ekuzibongeni, wabuye wabuya wazibuza umbuzo ukuthi njengoba uNtombinjani engcono kunoNomkhosi, pho kwenziwa yini izinsizwa zonke zikhala ngoNomkhosi, hhayi ngoNtombinjani? Nokuaba umfundisi wathi ebuthweni lonke lezintombi zikaMakhwatha wakha uNomkhosi, kwakwenziwa yini? Wathi lapho eseqala ukumbona futhi uNomkhosi emqondweni wakhe ehamba egqishazela, nezinwele ezingamagoda ekhanda ezingalukiwe nje-ngezezinkehli, naye kwafika ubuthongwana lobu obufikela umuntu lapho otha umlilo usumnandi usungena ngezitho, sekulokhu kuthi umuntu akaphulule izitho zize zibe nezimbali. Kwathi lapho bufika ubuthongo bumnandi kodwa esezwa kancane sabuthongweni, wezwa igama “lephumalimi,” wavuka kwaphela ubuthongo wathi lapho ethi uyalalelisa ngephumalimi zaxabana izinsizwa wangezwa ncazelo ngephumalimi.

Kwalalwa izinqola ziphambene ezibeke eThekwini ziqondise odesibuma bazo bebeke eningizimu nalezo ezivela eThekwini ezibange ngakwaZulu zibeke enyakatho. Emajokeni kwakuboshwe izinkabi

ngezintambo zilele zetshisa utshani bensinda baso-Thongathi. Kwakuthi njalo uzwe enye ibubula, ezinye zigeqazisa amajoka zinyakaza, ezinye zigwazana, nezinye ziziphunga ngamashoba emzimbeni zilunywa yizibawu. Kwalalwa endle umoya wawupholile uletha ubuthongo obuthule. Kuthi lapho kusathule kuthe nya uzwa kude phakathi nomnyama wobusuku ombengwana befizana omunye ethi: “mgudugudu—we!” Aphendule omunye athi:

“Thula, Sekuyasa. Thula Mabengwana.”

Njalo lezizinyoni zisho njalo kwaze kwaphuma ikhwezi enzansi olwandle, laba abashayeli abaphuthuma ukulala kwaDukuza babophela zesuka, kwathi emva kwalokho kwabophela abaya eThekwini, ngokuthatha kokusa. Yahamba lensizwa eyayisongela uNomkhosi wayibona uTomasi ihamba ishona kude inqola yayo yaze yaba inhlansana yethunzi phakathi komkhathi welanga nomhlaaba. Inhliziyo yakhe yahlabeke wakhumbula emuva ekhaya wafisa sengathi ngabe naye useyagoduka ahambisane nalensizwa efuna ingodosi yakhe.

Lathi liqonga ilanga selishisa impela babedlula eMdloti beqonde ukukhumulela enzansi neMawoti khona izinkabi zizothola amanzi notshani obuhle. Ntambama selibantu bahle bazifaka emajokeni zanyathela. Kwathi kuhwelela zaziwela uMngeni. Waqala ukumangala uTomasi ukuhona izindlu eziningi ezisondelene kanjena kuzozonke kukhanya izibani zilokoza kude. Wadlula kwezinye izindlu wezwa kukhala izinkositini nezinsizwa zivungama ezinye zigadlela ezinye zihlabelela nje zichopha izinyawo ngoaba zivela

emsebenzini. Wafika esikhumulweni maqede uTomasi waqala ukuzula ngoaba waefuna lapho engatholana khona noSihlangusinye.

Ngokokuqala wahlala phansi wakhuluma isifuba sakhe nomshayeli wenqola owayekade engamnaki ngisho ekhaya.

“Ngizocela, Ndosi, ukuaba ungitshela into engihluphayo ngoaba umoya wami kawuthule ungaboni ngoaba ngingakhulumi.”

“Pho ngingakusiza ngaluphi uhlobo” kusho umshayeli, “lokhu phela thina kasibantu balutho.”

“Qha nje, into encane kayinkulu.”

“Khuluma phela sizwe.”

“Uyazi Ndosi ukuthi ekhaya nginengodosi, uNomkhosi.”

Athi umshayeli, “Yebo lokho ngiyakwazi ngenpela.”

“Lengodosi inhliziyo yami kayisagculile ngayo nempela.”

“Usho ukuthini uma uti inhliziyo yakho kayisagculile ngengodosi yakho? Thina sazi ukuthi ingodosi yakho “zemuka nezinhlanga” kuyo nomfo kaBoqo eNkobongo; nokuthi iyona engasagculiswa uwe,” kusho umshayeli.

Wahlabeke uTomasi ukuhona ukuthi abantu lapha ngaphandle sebeyabona ukuthi uNomkhosi use-sendleleni yokumala. Kodwa wangathanda ukumkhombisa umshayeli waqunga isibindi kwasengathi akawezwanga amazwi kaNdosi, waesethi:

“Ngizwa kuthiwa (njengoba nina nazi lapha eThekwini) kukhona inyanga egama layo uSihlangu-

sinye. Uyayazi lapho ihlala khona, ungengithathe ungyise khona?”

“Ufunani kuSihlangusinye lokhu thina nawe singamakholwa, savuma ukuthi izinyanga ezibulayo kasisoze sahlanguana nazo na? Uyothini umfundisi uma simtshela ukuthi wena ubuye kuSihlangusinye?”

Waphendula uTomasi wathi, “Noma ungaya kumfundisi ungicebe uthini, akasoze akholwa yinto omtshela yona ngami.”

“Ucabanga kanjalo na? Musa ukuzikhohlisa mfo kaNogiyela. Ngimdala kunawe,” washo umshayeli ecofelela ipipi lakhe eshaya umentshisi elokhela ebema sengathi akakhulumanga noma usekhohliwe into abeyikhuluma. Wabuye waqhubeka wathi, qha yisho nje ukuthi uyofuna uSihlangusinye akucobebele ubuyise ingodosi yakho le esikushiya ngejubane.”

“Qha ngiqonde ukuyothola umhlabele ngoβα selokhu ngawa ehhashini lomfundisi unyawo lwami aluthandi ukululama amathambo aphele ubuhlungu. Awu, ucabanga ukuthi ngingaya kofuna imithi yokuphosa?”

Wathi umshayeli, “asazi.”

Emva komzuzwana umuntu wabona indoda esikhulile nje ihambe ilandelwa insizwa, beshesha bechusha ezindleleni ezeqa zidlula izindlu, zibuye zishone ezihlahleni kwaze kwaqala ukunuka usi lwenyama eyosiwayo, kwabonakala amaqhugwane abantu evela, washo umshayeli wenqola yomfundisi wathi, “sesifikile.”

Wabuza uTomasi wathi, “iyiphi indlu kaSihlangusinye laphaya na?”

Wath'umshayeli. “Uyazibona leziya zindlu ezimbili, uyoswacela ngakuzona, uyothi uthi qhamu uyibone enye uqonde kuyo ngqo, ufike ushaye emnyango, uyomfumanisa phakathi omfunayo.”

Wahamba uTomasi njengoba etshelwa, izithukuthuku sezehla esimongweni nasemihlathini yakhe, wonke umzimba wakhe usushisa ugcwele izithukuthuku zokushesha elandela uNdosi obengafuni ukuza kwaSihlangusinye nangenxa yalokhukungafuni wathi yena ngeke angene uyoma ngaphandle komuzi amlinde khona. Wafika uTomasi washaya ngomunwe wakhe omude wesidla, washaywa kancane uvalo emnyango esaba sengathi uzovusa abantu abasondelene nalendlu. Abangaphakathi kabezwanga, wabuye washaya kakhulu kwaphendula izwi elikhulu lathi:

“Ubani lowo, ongqongqoza ngalenkathi?” Wathula uTomasi esaba ukuphendula ngoβα izwi lakhe kwakuzoba sengathi uyamemeza. Wabuye waphinda uSihlangusinye ngaphakathi wathi,

“Ubani lowo na?”

Waphendula uTomasi wathi, “yimi baba.”

“UWena unguβani igama lakho? Awunagama yini na?”

“Yimina baba, ngingumhambi wendlela ngizobonana nawe ngiqhamuka kude le ngakwaZulu.”

“Sengilele manje kangifuni ukuβona muntu,” washo uSihlangusinye kwezwakala imbokodwe igxoba sengathi ugxoba imithi engamakhambi.

Wema uTomasi phandle ethithifele esecabanga ukuthi konje uma ebuya ngakusasa isikhathi ngeke

asithole ngoḡa kofanela ayofuna umfundisi ofikileyo abuye naye futhi alale oThongathi. Wabuye wangqo-
ngqoza uTomasi wakhuleka wathi:

“Wo, wena okhuluma nabaphansi nabaphezulu, owathi uvulwa amehlo thina sasibekiswa phansi sangabona okubonwa nguwe, ngivulele ngingene, mina mhambi odinga usizo lwakho ngalenkathi yobusuku ngingenayo enye ngaphandle kwalena.” Washo wabuye wamangala ukuthi amazwi anesibindi nokuḡo-
nga okungaka uwakhiphephi lokhu akayona nambongi. Wezwa isivalo sithi gembeqe, walunguza, wangena, waqoshama ngasemnyango. Okokuqala amehlo akhe akabonanga lutho. Wanduluza nje egqolozele emnyameni engaboni lutho ngaphandle komlilo owawuvutha emsamo, amehlo akhe aze ayajwayela njengawekati wabona umuntu ehlezi ethe thekence elule imilenze phakathi kwayo kukhona itshe lokugaya imithi eliyisicaba nembokodwe eyimbulunga. Emaceleni kwakukhona imithi engamahlamvu iboshwe izithungu ngezithungu. Wabuye waqalaza emaceleni wabona izimbiza-mbiza zigxunyekiwe ngobukhulu nangamanani azo, wathi lapho amehlo akhe ebeka phezulu wabona izimpondo eziningi zilenga zibonakala ukuthi zigxushwe imithi, nezimpaphe zezinyoni ngezinyoni zindiza phezulu sezagcwala umule wentuthu. Wabuye wacikica amehlo akhe wabukisisa uSihlangusinye uqobo lwakhe wabona enganake lutho esila imithi yakhe etsheni elibekwe phakathi kwamadolo akhe, wathi lapho embukisisa wabona ukuthi ekhanda ufake ungiyane nokuthi ikhanda linezinwele ezimbalwa ziyimithonseyana nje.

Wabuye wabukisisa endlini wabona imikhonto namahawu elenga emgibeni emsamo, komunye umgibe kulenga amacansi. Waguquka amehlo akhe ahlangana namehlo omuntu ohleli ngasemnyango okade emgqolozele embuka. Waesebona ukuthi lomuntu uyena okade evula umnyango. Amakhala aqala ukunuka amaphunga emithi egaywayo, nesigayiwe, namafutha ezilwane eziningi, kodwa engezwa lutho ngaphandle komsindo wembokodwe owawuzwakala lapho igijima phezu kwetshe lokugaya.

Ngesikade uSihlangusinye wabuza wathi, “ufunanike?”

“Wo, baḡa, ngize kuwe ngoḡa ngibalekelwa ingodosi yami, ebesengiyicelile, manje isifuna ukuthanda omunye.”

“Pho, usuzoyinika mina yini, lokhu sengigugile?”

“Qha, baḡa, ngizokumema ungibonise okungenziwa.” Waqala ukubona ukuthi kanti uSihlangusinye indoda entelayo nenomusa. Yase ithi inyanga,

“Sekumnyama mntanami kangikwazi ukusebenza kahle sekumnyama, ngoḡa indoda engikhuluma ngayo nansiya laphaya,” wathi ekhomba wa esuka lomuntu obehlezi ngasemnyango eyoguqula isibuko esikhulu sibeke kuTomasi, wabuye wasivala. Kayiko into eyamangalisa uTomasi kulesisibuko ngoḡa wae-kade esibona kaningi kwamfundisi esingaphezu kwaso. Kodwa abantu abaningi babeye bashaywe uvalo uma siguqulelwa kubona lesisibuko.

Waeseychaza indaba yakhe yonke uTomasi eyithi du, wasukuma phansi uSihlangusinye wathunutha ibeshu lakhe wayohosha isikhwama esasinama-

bodlelana amancane wathi ukugcwalisa elinye ngamafushana; wathatha omunye umuthi oyimpushana wawufaka kwelinye ibodlelana, wayichaza ukwenziwa kwayo; wabuye wathatha omunye wawuvuzela edosheni wamnika uTomasi wabuza ukuthi zingaki izinkomo afike nazo, wathi uTomasi:

“Kanginankomo ehamba ngezinyawo.”

“Pho unehamba ngani? Ngekhanda?”

“Qha, baba, nginohlamvu, izikotshimani ezintathu.”

“Kulungile, yamukela mfana, uyogcina lapho kugcinwa khona.” Wayamukela umfana imali, wavalelisa uTomasi, washo uSihlangusinye wathi, “amafutha lawo ngawephumalimi, nezindaba zakho zokumela njalo.” Waekade uTomasi ebekile ukuzwa ngephumalimi ngoaba waeseqala ukuba angabaze sengathi lendawo uNdosi amlethe kuyo kakusiyo eyakwaSihlangusinye. Wathatha imithi yakhe wayifaka emakhukhwini akhe angaphakathi, emva kokuba ayisonge. Waphuma phandle kwabasengathi kusemini ebona izinkanyezi zisakhanya ziqhakazile, waphefumula kakhulu umoya omnandi owawushaya ngoaba waekade evaleleke emnyameni onephunga likaSihlangusinye nephumalimi lakhe. KuTomasi kwabasengathi kade esesihogweni esincane esingavuthi mlilo kodwa esivuthiswa ubumnyama.

Waphuma wathi thathatha, wadlula ezindlini ezimbili abezitshelwe nguNdosi wathi ukukhwehlela, kwangezwakala lutho, wema kwathi makamemeze, waeseqhamuka uNdosi wangakhuluma lutho wahola indlela wahamba, walandela uTomasi. Wathi ekhuluma sebehambe ibangana wathi,

“Idolo lakho uSihlangusinye uthe linani?”

“Wo, qha, unginike umuthi wokuhlikihla wathi ngiyolokhu ngilibopha ngawo.”

Wathi umshayeli, “pho, sonke lesisikhathi umuthi wokuhlikihla nje kuphela na?”

Wathi uTomasi, “hhayi, phela ubuye wangigcaba ngensinga, wangikhipha igazi elibi.”

“Unamehloke noSihlangusinye ongagcaba umuntu emnyameni onjenga lowaya othe ungena ngawubonela kude.”

Washo umshayeli wahamba ngokushesha ngoaba basebelibele bengashongo nakubafana lapho beya khona. Nokho bafumanisa abafana sebebasile bawapheka namanzi okubilisa izinkobe zendlela yakusasa, futhi sebekufudumezile ukudla. Bahlala phansi badla, balala. Waeqalisa uTomasi ukulala endaweni lapho kuze kuse kukhona umsindo wabantu abangalaliyo; lomsindo uxubana nokuduma kolwandle khona lapha eduze amadlambi edlala eshayana, kuthi le enzansi uzwe izitimela zamanzi zikhala sengathi zilahlekile. Kwaze kwacishe ukusa uTomasi engalele. Wathi elala waphupha, ephupha ewela emfuleni, wagcwalelwa amanzi amthatha kwathi lapho eseminza kwafika umuntu wathi ethi uyambamba nje engakaboni nokuthi uyamkhipha yini, waphaphama uTomasi. Wavuka lapho esemanzi ukujuluka.

Kwasa kwathi emini bafika abelungu esikhumuluweni befuna izinkabi zomfundisi uGilawoti, bazibona. Balayisha izimpahla, bavusa netende lokuhlala kukhosele abefundisi labo, babophela, basuka sebeqonde emuva eMvoti. Njengoaba basuka muva bona ezinye

izinqola zase zikude impela. Nokho kwathi ebusuku kungakalalwa babefika oThongathi, bakhumula bazi-dedela izinkabi, umshayeli wathi uzozibeka ubusuku bonke, uTomasi nabafana basale enqoleni babeke abefundisi khona bezolala bangaphazanyiswa lutho.

Babophela ekuseni kakhulu beqonde ukungena eMvoti lapho ilanga lishonayo ngoba uTomasi wae-phuthuma efuna ukuzizwela ngamafutha ephumalimi kuNomkhosi.

ISAHLUKO XIII

KwaZulu uma izinsizwa zifuna ukwazi ngentombi yesifunda esithize kaziqondi kubantu bakhona abadala ziyobuza ngoba funa babatshela into engayikhona engamanga. Okokuqala zijwayelana nabafana balesosifunda, besezibuza ukuthi, “webafana!”

Basabele abafana. Besezithi, “kukhona ntombi nje laphaya kulowaya muzi?”

Bathi abafana, “ehhe, kayiyinye ziningi.”

“Pho zihlalaphi ngingeze ngazibona nje na?” Kusho umntwana wensizwa esenconde ngenduku yakhe.

Bathi abafana, “ungazibona kanjani ungeyena owalapha nje na? Bofika lapha ngesikhathi esingukuthi nokuthi, thina siyokukhombisa zona. Zitheza laphaya kuleliya hlathi; ziwakha laphaya amanzi; no-kugeza zigeza kuleliya zibuko.”

“Obani amagama azo, bangane bami na?” Asho umfo wakhona alandelisele nemibuzo yakhe, kanti yena uyalazi igama layo intombi ayiqondile. Bayo-

zibala, bazibale abafana bazebafike egameni laleyo eqondwe nguyena abesebuza ethi,

“Pho, uNobanibani lowo uthandaphi bangane bami? Ezaphi izinsizwa ezilokhu zimmisa, nabantwana abalokhu bemvakashela?” Abafana bona bengaqonde lutho olubi noluhle, bezixoxela indaba nje besebesho bethi,

“UNobanibani lowo ombuzayo uthanda ekuthini insizwa egama layo lingu bani. Thina asize singabona ema nomunye. Ngelinye ilanga insizwa ethize, nethize yalinga ukummisa engathandi, wayibamba wayilahla phansi, wayibophela esiqundwini.” Lapha abanye abafana besebeyithatha indaba sengathi eyabo njengoba kuyabunjwa emtatsheni webumba, kwalusiwe, omunye abuze athi,

“Yaze yenze njani insizwa wethu?”

Aphendule omunye athi, “Yabe iyathe shuku-shuku, kwala yangagumuka yaqala manje ukusibiza yathi, we bafana ake nize lapha. Nempela seza thina. Yathi ngigumuleni lapha. Sayigumula. Yavuka yachitheka, nezinduku zayo intokazi isihambe nazo yoyohlabana ngazo ekhaya.”

Bahleka bonke abafana, abangamashingana bathi, “Awu wethu, ucabanga ukuthi ingangenza mina kanjalo?”

Athi omunye, “ngeke.” Baqhibuke bahleke bonke. Ulalele njalo umntwana wensizwa ngoba yena uzele ukuzohlola izimilo zamantombazana aleso sifunda.

Uma intombazana ingenasimilo abafana bazophikisana ngayo athi omunye: “iyama noSifanibani wasekuthini.” Nomunye athi, “Ayimi nalowo yedwa, futhi iyama noSifanibani.” Nomunye aqhamuke athi, “ingani mina ulokhu engithuma ubani athi angombizela yona njalo.”

Noma iqale kanjani indaba iphethwa ngamashi-nga adlale ngayo asho into wona angayenza uma izinto zihamba kanje. Ngakhoke omunye athi,

“Mina udadewethu ngingamkhelela ngenduku evuma ukukhuluma nawo onke amabihi lawa.” Omunye adlakavule athi: “Awu madoda, pho umuntu lowo?”

Umntwana wensizwa esekutholile akufunayo asimze anyamalale nje, nabo abafana banganaki.

Ngelinye ilanga kwafika endle abafana belusile indoda yabangena ngendlela enje yabuza ngezintombi zikaMakhwatha yaqala ngokokuqala ngengqwele yazo uNontula yathi:

“Ake ningitshela bafana, leliya qhikiza lakoMakhwatha ubani igama lalo?”

“Usho liphi? Leliya eliyinhloko yezintombi zakhona? Awu, uqhamukaphi wena ongaziyo ukuthi uNontula uzogana koMkhwethu laphaya kondlunkulu?” kuphendula abafana.

Yathi indoda, “qhafo bafana ngingowakude kangizazi izindaba zonke. Pho ngizwa kuthiwa ikhona enye eyatholwayo, yona ithandaphi?” Bathula abafana kwaze kwaphendula omunye ekhuluma eqondise kwabanye wathi,

“Usho uNomkhosi lona ohlala kwamfundisi.” Waphendula omunye wathi,

“Lowo kasimazi kodwa uhlale wahamba nenjiti-mane yalaphaya emakholweni, imphelekezela. Amukho omunye oke ahambe naye.”

“Hhayi suka,” kusho omunye umfana owayebumba inkomo yakhe eseyicwala, eyiqeda washo futhi wathi, “leyonsizwa yasesilungwini asiqiqondi thina.”

Yaqaphelisa indoda yasondela ngakumfana owaenganake lutho ebeke inkomo yakhe le owaeyibumba, waqhubeka eyicwala abuye ayibeke phansi ayihlole. Waesebuza lo oyindoda ethi,

“Usho ngani mngane wami lokho okukhulumayo?”

“Ngisho ngoba njalo uma sekuhwelele ngesikhathi sibuyisa amathole sesiwakhetha konina siyayibona lensizwa ingena kwafo kaNtombinjani.”

“Ubani uNtombinjani mfana?”

Kubuye kuthathe omunye osecaleni umfana naye olalele athi:

“UNtombinjani udadewabo kaNomkhosi wenye indlu, kodwa sengathi yena uyezwana nalensizwa ethandwa ngudadewabo.”

“Ukubona ngani lokho wena mfana?”

“Ngikubona ngamehlo njalo ngoba kuthi uma esehamba uNtombinjani aphume namanye amantombazana bamphelezele lomuntu, kuthi ngaphambi komuzi abesehlala phansi lawa amanye amantombazana, insizwa imele kudana noNtombinjani kukhulunya izindaba zafo.”

“Anizazi ukuthi basuke bethini, bafana na?” Ibisihleka indoda le, nabafana basukume sekufike

isikhathi sokusenga. Abesebembuka lomuntu abakhuluma naye sebemhlolisisa ngoaba eyindoda kungensizwa yona esuka ibuzela ikokweshela.

“Ningibuka nje bafana niyangiqala yini?” besebethula abafana beqhelela kude abesethi omunye,

“Awu sengathi ngikengikubone. Akuwena oshayela izinkabi zakwamfundisi na? Ngike ngikubone uhamba enqoleni nalensizwa ethandwa uNtombinjani.” Ibisibona indoda ukuthi abafana bayayibona ukuthi igama layo uNdosi oshayela kwamfundisi, bese ihamba icobelele ipipi ihambe iye ishone kude iyohlola izinkabi zomfundisi ukuaba zidla kanjani.

UNdosi wayefunani kuNtombinjani, angaze ambuze kuabafana nje? Ukuaba waengafuni yena waeyodlulela phambili kwenye yamantombazana akaMakhwatha ayibuze nayo ngezesheli zayo. UNdosi waelikholwa eliqinile eseshadile, enomuzi ohleli kahle, isithembu engasithandi, nayo yonke imikhuaba yobumnyama engahambelani nayo. Pho waefunani kuNtombinjani?

Ngaphambi kokuaba ahambe uNdosi wabuza indawo lapho bethenza khona oNtombinjani. Abafana bamtshela, besho nesikhathi amantombazana aye ehle ngaso noma akhuphuke eya ehlathini eyotheza izinkuni.

Wathi ukufika ekhaya uNdosi wahlala phansi njengoba waehlala lapha kwamfundisi umuzi wakhe uyibangana. Wacabanga efuna ukukhuluma noNomkhosi kodwa engazi ukuthi angamthola kanjani ehlane. Walala ecabanga kwazekwasa wabona uTomasi ebophela ingqokumbane eyayidonswa izinjomane ezimbili.

Kwathi dukuduku wabona umfundisi nenkosikazi yakhe bekwela beshayelelwa uTomasi, bahamba bevakashela amakholwa akudana. babezobuya ntambama. Naye uNdosi waengezukuobophela ngalelo langa.

Wathi ukuaba abone ukuthi sebekude, wasondela ngasendlini yomfundisi uNdosi wangqongqoza, yaphendula intombazana yathi,

“Ubani lowo?”

Wathi uNdosi “yimina nkosazana.” Wathi esasho njalo kwaqhamuka izingane zomfundisi zihleka, izinwele ziwe insepunsephu ekhanda, naye wahleka uNdosi wazifingelela. Wasondela uNomkhosi wabuza wathi,

“Ufunani Ndosi? Ulambile? Hlala phansi ngikuphe, kuningi ukudla lapha endlini induna kayikho ezokuthethisa uma ikubona udlela lapha.” Washo wangena endlini, wabuya nepuleti ligcwele ukudla okwagcwalisa amathe emlonyeni kuseza ngenxa yephunga lakho.

Ingani uNdosi waekade edla esuthi futhi, akenqabanga ngoaba wabona ukuthi uma enqaba ngabe uyazilimaza nendatshana eza nayo kuNomkhosi funa inganambitheki. Wamnika ukhezo, wadla uNdosi, naye uNomkhosi wathatha isigqiki wasibeka laphaya wahlala ekakwe ngabantwana.

Waqala ukukhuluma uNdosi wathi,

“Kade sawubeka umshado wakho nkosazana, kanti usuyoze ushade nini na?”

Wath'uNomkhosi, “usho mina? Kangazi ngilinde ngakumkhwenyana uyena owaziyo.”

“Hhayi kawusho khona. Ingani naye ukhomba wena uthi akazi kuwe.”

“Qha, usuk’ekukhohlisa.”

“Ngqiqinisile, uwe lona olokhu ugqizela emuva. Awusuvulwe amanye amehlo nje nkosazana? Ngitshele ngimdala kuwe noma phela isikhudla sami si-phansi kwesakho sidinga ukuba ngikuhloniphe, nokho ngimdala ngokwanele ukuba ngibe nguyihlo.”

“Ayikho into engingakutshela yona, ngaphandle kokuthi ngilinde umkhwenyana.”

“Mina wakoNdosi ngizokutshela kahle ukuthi icala lingakuwe. UTomasi usuyambalekela ingabe uthi uyomtholaphi onjengaye.”

Waba sengathi uyathukuthela uNomkhosi wasukuma engathandi ukuba umuntu onjengoNdosi akhulume kuye kanje, wathi,

“Yikhona kubonga kwakho lokho Ndosi, ngikunika ukudla ulambile, ubusubonga kanjalo kimina?”

“Qha nkosazana, mus’ukuthukuthela. Mina bengingalambile neze.”

“Pho ukwamukeleleni ukudla kwami na?”

“Ngikwamukelele ngoaba ngifuna ithuba lokukhuluma nawe kuphela. Hlala phansi sikhulume nami ngiqedele ukudla kwami lokhu onginike khona.” Washo umshayeli womfundisi wayefaka umthamo emlonyeni, nentombazana yama yambuka lomuntu oyedelela kanje. Yama yakhexa yasonga izandla ngefasi-kote layo yambuka uNdosi yathula. Wathi uNdosi, “Hlala phansi nkosazana ngoaba funa nezi-ndaba zakho zikumele, njengoaba zikumele nje.”

“Usho ukuthini nalokhu kukhuluma okunje ongfikela nakho?”

“Qhabo nkosazana ngiyazi ukuthi wena uyingo-dosi yenduna uTomasi. Phezu kwalokho ngiyazi futhi ukuthi inhliziyo yakho kayisagculisiwe uye.”

“Ukusho ngani konke lokhu kimina?” Yasho intombazana yahlegezela izinyembezi ngoaba kwakuyihlaba ukukhuluma kukaNdosi; uNdosi lo ongakho-nbisi ukubonga nempela noma enikwa ukudla; uNdosi lo okhuluma ngokungazi uma ekhuluma noNomkhosi owesatshwayo izisebenzi zomfundisi, nangabantu bonke.

“Qhabo nkosazana, ngithe hlala phansi ngikhulume nawe ngimdala.” Wahlala phansi uNomkhosi enengiwe sekuvuke ulaka lomuntu wesifazane uma edeleliwe. Wakhuluma uNdosi wathi, “Kade sise-Thekwini nomyeni wakho. Wangibuza ukuthi uSihlangusinye uhlalaphi. Ngamangala ukuba yena ethenjiwe, futhi eqala nokuya eThekwini into yokuqala ayibuzayo kube uSihlangusinye, kungabi yizitolo lapho kuthengwa khona izinkositini nezingubo zokugqoka.”

“Kangizwa uthini Ndosi na?” Sekusho uNomkhosi, washo wesula amehlo, wahlala manje njengomuntu oselalele efuna ukuzwa yonke indaba.

“Ngqiqinisile ngisho njalo.”

“Usho njalo uthini?”

“Ngithi umyeni wakho waya kwaSihlangusinye”

“KwaSihlangusinye na? Uqinisile?”

Washo uNdosi wathi, “sayanaye ngalezizinyawo zami, ngambona ngalawa amehlo ami. Wangena

yedwa endlini kodwa ngenxa yokuba ngithanda ukuzwa into ayiyele, kade engiqhuba ukuza ngimphelekezele, ngathi ukuza ngimbone ukuthi usengene endlini, ngasondela. Nganyonyoba, ngaze nganama-thela ezithungwini zotshani, ngalalela ngoba wathi kimina lapho ngimbuza, uyofuna umuthi wedolo ngoba wenyeliswa ihhashi.”

“Pho lokhu waeyofuna umuthi wedolo nje? Kawazi yini ukuthi wake wawa ehhashini? Qha, musa usahe usaqhubekela phambili ungumxabanisi ufuna ukusixabanisa noTomasi. Thula sengiyahamba.” Wasukuma uNomkhosi.

Wathi uNdosi, “ngithe kuwe hlala phansi yikho izindaba zakho zikumela nje.”

Ngihlaleleni lokhu ukhuluma kabi ngomuntu ozoza indoda yami na? Ungcolisa izindlebe zami. Wawuthunywe yimi yini ukuyolalela ezithungwini zotshani?” Washo wahamba uNomkhosi wabiza isitsha, nabantwana bomfundisi wangena endlini, wavala isivalo.

Wasukuma uNdosi, wema, waphenduka isiphukuphuku. Waecabanga ukuthi uNomkhosi uzofuna ukuzwa ubufi bukaTomasi abenza ngasese. Wamanjala ukubona intombazana immela umyeni wayo, ingafuni nokulalela izinto ezinganambitheki ngesoka layo. Wahamba waxegezela wabuyela emuva.

NoNomkhosi wangena endlini maqede esebeke ne nendlu nabantwana abangazi lutho; ebona izitsha zokudla, nemibede, namabodwe apheke ukudla eziko, umqondo wakhe wabuya wazisola sengathi ngaezibambile walalela amazwi akaNdosi ngokuya kuka-

Tomasi kuSihlangusinye. UNdosi waengeyena umuntu okhulumayo; kodwa namhla waba naso isifindi sokusondela akhulume noNomkhosi. Ikhona indaba ekhona phakathi kukaTomasi noSihlangusinye. Naye uNomkhosi uphathekile phakathi kulendaba. Wakhuluma yedwa uNomkhosi, nempela wazibona izindaba zakhe ziqala ukuma; wathi lapho eyongena endlini yakhe evula ebokisini walibona iduku elimnyama likasilika wabona ezinye izindaba zakhe zima zibika uNsikana. Waqala ukwenqena ngamazwi akaNdosi okuthi: “Hlala phansi yikho izindaba zakho zikumela.”

Ukusuka kwakhe lapho uNdosi wagoduka waya ekhaya lakhe wahlala phansi, wacabanga ngoba wengamthandi uTomasi. UTomasi waebahlupha enonya, futhi ethandana noNtombinani eyikhohlisa intombazana eyethembekileyo kuye kangaka. Phezu kwalokho wabuye wahlangana nezangoma eziphatha imithi emibi ingani yena ulikholwa. Wazibuza ukuza umfundisi angathini ngalokho na? Wazimisela ukuza enze konke okusemandleni akhe lendaba kube iyo eyokwahlukanisa uTomasi noNomkhosi. Kodwa lokhu kwahlukana kwakulukhuni ngoba intombazana yayizimisele ngoTomasi njengenkulamo yayo. NoTomasi waezimisele ngoNomkhosi, uNtombinani edlala ngaye nje. Uma waengazimisele ngoNomkhosi pho yini eyenza ukuza aze ahambe ayofuna imithi kuSihlangusinye?

UNdosi waeyazi indaba kaNsikana ukuthi naye unamazwi kuNomkhosi. Kodwa waengazi ukuthi sebabekanaphi. UNdosi waemthanda uNsikana kuthi noma ehlangana naye babingelelane nje badlule.

Ayikhe lensizwa eligagu ehlabelela ngenkositini ishaya uzulwane lwegama u“Dida Nomasinga uyangiqambela.” Wayibona futhi ukuthi lensizwa ilikholwa iyahlonipheka. Wazimisela ukuaba ayitshela ukuaba ukuze inqobe kuNomkhosi kuhle isebenzise nayo amafutha ephumalimi, okungenani, kunokuaba ishade noTomasi.

Ngelinye ilanga wahlangana naye uNsikana ehamba eza ngakhona eMvoti, wammisa wamnekela yonke indaba; ubulukhuni bayo nokuba isizathu esenza ukuaba manje intombi ingamvumi kungenzeka ukuaba uTomasi se wayifaka amafutha ephumalimi. Ngenkathi esho lokhu uNsikana umfo kaBoqo wahleka uhleko olude wathi:-

“Ngivela khona eThekwini baaba, leyomikhuba ngiyayazi ngokuzwa ngayo. Kungenzeka kanjani ukuaba amafutha omuntu okhulumayo asebenze ubuhle na? Ingani imbangi yami ilikholwa na? Ngiyavuma ukuthi lawo mafutha angabusebenza ubufi kodwa ubuhle—qha, ngiyaphika.”

“Uqinisile mntanami, uqinisile ngiyabona nami ukuthi ngiyaphosisa ngoaba thina njengamakholwa ukhona owethu uNkulunkulu okufanele ukuaba kuthi uma simdumisa azosisiza.”

“Usukhohliwe yini ukuthi kuthiwa esihlabelelweni sikaDavida “Noma ngihamba egodini lethunzi lokufa kangiyikwesaba okubi?” Washo uNsikana wabuye wambeka umshayeli womfundisi sengathi uthi, ukukholwa kwakho kusekuncane kangaka!

Wadumala ndawozonke uNdosi efuna ukusiza abantu abangafuniyo ukusizwa. Wathi esuka kuNsikana behlukana wayethi akazange asibone isiphuku-

phuku sensizwa esinjengaye ngoaba bekufanele okungenani asho athi naye uzokuya kwaBayane bamco-belele kuze kuthi uma ethuka eyibona intombi le, angathelwa umnyama wayo. Phakathi kunembeza wakhe wezwa izwi likhuluma lithi kuhle ahlale abukele ngoaba amandla kaNkulunkulu omusha ofike wachazwa ngabefundisi yena ubengakawaboni. Njengoaba uNsikana ethemba kangaka kuNkulunkulu lona uzolinda abone. Kanjalo walinda wabukela ukufona amandla kaNkulunkulu osezulwini, hhayi lona wamadlozi obulelwa yizangoma nezanusi.

NoNsikana wahlukana noNdosi wahamba eqonde ngaseMvoti kumngane wakhe uNkomeni wafike wamtshela wathi,

“Wethu, ngihlangane nofana nawe namhlanje. Into engimangalisayo uzwelo abenalo kimina ngendaba kaNomkhosi, ingani yena ungumshayeli wakwamfundisi.”

Waphendula uNkomeni wathi, “kanti kawazi yini ukuthi imbangi yakho le kayithandwa muntu nakwamfundisi uqobo? Zonke izisebenzi kazimfuni zithi unonya.”

“Uthi kimi umshayeli lona mangiqaphele ngeke ngiyithole lentombazana ngoaba manje imbangi yami isiyeye phansi ubukholwa isiphethe imithi kaSihlangu-sinye.”

“Ngathini kuwena? Kangishongo ukuthi kuhle ukusebenzise imithana kancane, wena wasimze wanguhleka nje sengathi ngiyisilima.”

“Ngangikuhleka ngakhona ngoaba nanamhlanje ngisakuhleka. Lezizinto zenu ngiyozenza mhla se-

ngiphele ithemba kuyoyonke into engiyenzayo emhlabeni. Noma ngingahluleka kuNomkhosi ngiyobuye ngihlale phansi ngiyosebenza imali ngondle umame nodadewethu ngoba nobaba akasakhathali ngabo ngoba sebaphenduka babangamakholwa.”

“Njengoba ungafuni ukulandela izinyathelo esikweluleka ngazo,” sekusho uNkomeni, “uyile-ke kwaMakhwatha wayobonana noNontula na?”

“Yebo ngiyile.”

“Ufike wathini?”

“Ngifike ngakhuleka ngahlala khona kubo ngoba besebengiyalele abantu engibuze kubo. Ngsengicela amanzi ngaphuza, nginikezwa uye uqobo lwakhe uNontula. Uthe eqeda ukungiphuzisa ngingithi kuye ngicela ukukhuluma naye.”

“Ubungaqhaqhazeli nje wethu?”

“Kuqhaqhazele bani?”

“Wena, kanti ubukhuluma nobani?”

“Ngakhuluma naye phandle ngamtshela yonke indaba yohambo lwami kuye; kodwa wangaphendula lutho yena, wavuma wathi uyezwa. Wangibuza igama lami, ngalisho. Wangihleka lapho ngizisho ngegama. Kwakuphelake.” Washaya inkositini yakhe uNsikana wagoduka.

ISAHLUKO XIV



Photo: Mariannahill

“UNontula noNomkhosi kaBaba.”

Ngokokuqala ngqa uNontula wavakasha kwamfundisi kuNomkhosi. Wazicwala inkehli yakhe wa-gqoka isidwaba sakhe senkonkoni esasishukwa le kwaZulu sathengwa ngenkabi emnyama emanqindi, waesegaxa ibayi lakhe elibopha isifuba ehlonipha ngoBa eya esilungwini, wahlela kahle bonke ubuse-nga oBabusezithweni nasezingalweni, wagcoba ama-kha anuka kamnandi, wahamba wadishizela ephethe iqhabanga lakhe owayeliphiwe nguyise ethi ngalo makeluse umhlambi wezintombi zasekhaya. Wakwe-nza konke lokhu ngoBa eqonde ukulala khona. Wa-suka ntambama wafika lishona wahlala phansi kwe-mithi ephola, nokudla bamlethela khona wadla wa-ngena endlini ngoBa eseyolala. Ngalelo langa uNo-mkhosi washintsha izindlu, walala kanye nodadewabo abantwana baya ngakunina. Wendlala phansi uNo-ntula noNomkhosi wenza njalo ngoBa esaba ukuba alale phezulu ambukele phansi udadewabo omkhulu.

Sekuhlwile baqala ukukhuluma bodwa ngendaba yokucelwa kukaNomkhosi nokushada kwakhe. Wathi uNontula:- “Beka Nomkhosi anginanxa nokushada kwakho koNogiyela. Ngiyakushayela ihlombe nge-mpela. Kepha ngifuna ugawule ubeke ngoBa akukho mgwaqo ungenazisele mntakababa. Inye into engi-ngayithandi, ukuzwa imimoya yokuthi umkhwenyana lona uNtombinjani wakwethu ukhuluma amazwi amnandi ngaye. Kukhona ukuzwana phakathi kuka-mkhwenyana noNtombinjani. Lokhu kuzwana ngi-kufel’amathe ngoBa kuyangisolisa.”

“Ngiyezwa mntakaaba, kodwa uTomasi ngime-
thembe kangangoba angiboni ukuba ukhona omunye
umuntu amcabanga ngaphandle kwami.”

“Angisukubangisa nkani lapho ngoba uTomasi
umazi ngaphezu kwami, mina ngimbonela kude.
Ebudaleni bami ungibona ngingaka nje umhlaba ngi-
yawazi, Nomkhosi, nabantu laba ezindabeni zobusha
babo ngiyabazi, okunye ngiyengikushiye nje uma
ngingathandi ukuphika inkani.”

“Nami kanginakukuphikisa inkani lapho ngoba
ngiyamazi uTomasi kakhulu.”

“Uyamazi ngempela na?” Kusho uNontula.

“Ngiyamazi ngempela ngingetshelwe muntu
ngaye.”

“Nalapho enyathela khona uyamazi na?”

“Ehhe ngiyamazi dadewethu, ngiqinisile ngiya-
mazi, ngoba akayindawo, uphuma emsebenzini aye
endlini yakhe.”

“Uma kuvela umuntu lapha athi nakhu, Nom-
khosi uTomasi uthe wathi ngawe, nokuthi uTomasi
akasakuthandi, ngeke ukholwe na?”

“Ngeke ngikholwe ngoba ngiyamazi uTomasi,
ngabe umona nje lowo dadewethu.”

“Hhayike ntomb’emhlophe yakwethu, uyamethe-
mba uTomasi nami ngiyamethemba njengawe, kase-
hlukane lapho sima siwe kanye kanye.”

“Uma sengilahlwa uwe bengingashonaphi na?”

Wathi esho njalo wezwa esehonqa uNontula,
kanti usezunywe ubuthongo uselele. Naye ingani
waesenengiwe sengathi uNontula uzomcasula, wathola

ithuba lokuba abuyekeze yonke indaba ekhulunywe
uNontula. Wayibona ukuthi mhlawumbe kungayiqi-
niso ngoba ubesejwayele uTomasi ukuba athi ukha-
thele uzoya ngasendlini yakhe, ufuna ukushesha adle,
ngoba phela zonke izisebenzi zazikuthatha lapha kwa-
mfundisi ukudla kwazo. Nempela athi lapho esedlile
ahambe ashone ngasendlini yakhe ayolala. Noma
wayefike alale ngempela, uNomkhosi waengazi.
Nansi into owayeyazi ukuthi uTomasi akanabuthongo
obukhulu, ngakhoke uyephuza ukulala; kodwa ngale-
zinsuku usheshelani ukuhamba kangaka.

Nayewayekathele uNomkhosi wethuka eselele,
esekwesikaBadakazi. Waphupha ebona uNontula
ekhula phezu kwakhe edlondlobala esabeka. Kwaba
sengathi unezimpiko ezinde ezinamaqubu ayinofonofu
avimbela amakaza. Kwathi lapho ewaphakamisa
emkhombisa wona kwavela ngaphansi kwawo insizwa
iyinhle, yeza yaqonda kuye uNomkhosi, wabe uyathe
uyayigudlukela lensizwa yaqonda njalo kuye. Yaye-
sabeka kodwa ingenabo ububi kuyona. Into eyayi-
mangalisa ingoba kwakuthi uma eyigudlukela inga-
suki endleleni ilokhu iqonde kuye amehlo ethe ngqo
ingaqwayizi. Waphaphama uNomkhosi, waqalaza
endlini yonke wezwa uNontula ehonqa elele ezume-
kile. Wabuya wabeka phansi uhlangothi walala.
Wazumeka kwesikaBadakazi, ku be kabufikile ubu-
thongo ambone futhi uNontula nezimpiko zakhe zi-
vuleka kuphume kuye lensizwa, ize iqonde kuye.
Wothi evuka azifumanise ejuluke emanzi ethe vo inxa
yokwethuka. Wazewaquba manje kwaya ngokuya
walala kwasa.

Wavuka wagoduka uNontula emva kokuba amyaleze uNomkhosi ukuba uyobuya ngomhlomunye, aze amlindele kodwa ngeke alale ngalelolanga. Wabuya nempela uNontula bahlangana nodadewabo emfuleni eyowasha izingubo. Bahlala phansi emadwaleni baxoxa. Wakhuluma uNontula wathambeleka endabeni kaTomasi noNtombinjani. “Mhla sikhuluma nawe kuthangi ngathinta indaba kamkhwenyana noNtombinjani ngakubona wena ukuthi kawuthathi lutho.”

“Nempela kayingikanyeli kahle lendaaba.”

“Uyacabanga ukuthi mina ngimdala nokuba mdala ngingachitha isikhathi sami ngizoxoxa nawe indaba engelutho?” Kufuza uNontula ngomoya onosi kuwo. NoNomkhosi wathi,

“Kufanele ngingayikholwa into enjalo noma iza ngaluphi uhlobo ngoba ilimaza mina negama lensizwa engizoshada nayo.”

“Shada maushada, akakho onendaba nalokho kodwa thatha lokhu kulomlomo kaMakhwatha ukuthi lolunyawo lwakoNontula ngeke ulubone emgcagcweni onjalo uma uphendula ngamazwi aluswampu.”

“Xola dadewethu uma ngithukuthela kangithukuthelile wena ngithukuthelile uNtombinjani ongenza nje.”

“Ukwenzeni uNtombinjani? Wake wambona eze lapha ezokhulumisa umkhwenyana, wake wezwa khona kanye ukuthi nakwaZulu intombazana le, yake yamsukela umfana yayozidlisa satshanyana ngakubo? Hhayi phela okwasesilungwini angikwazi. Nakhona uma kunjalo, ngixolele ngife nginjengoba nginje, ntombi

kaMakhwatha.” Washo washaya phansi phezu kwe-dwala ngeqhabanga lakhe waesebuka phansi emanzini wazifumanisa njengoba enjalo.

Baphekezelana bayebafika endlini kaNomkhosi bafika kade ekhipha izimpahla zakhe ezibeke nje phezu kom-bede, phakathi kwezimpahla kwakukhona iduku leli lemfihlo. Walibuza uNontula wathi,

“Nomkhosi ngitshele walithathaphi leliduku lemali? Ngitshele, futhi kuhle uvuleke ungafihli lutho kimina njengomunye wabakwenu.”

“Uthandelani ukwazi yonke into esehliziyweni yami na?”

“Kungumthetho ukuba ungitshele, futhi nginawo amandla okukuphikelela ukuba ungitshele uthanda noma ungathandi. Kangifuni ukuba lawo mandla ngiwasebenzise kuwe, kodwa uma uqhuba ngale-ndlela. . . . Beka lapha sisobabili woza nendaaba.”

“Njengoba ushoke ngizokutshela. Leliduku laqhamuka kumuntu wangapha eNkobongo owangithanda ngimncane.”

“Wakuthanda umncane ekubonaphi, wena wazini ngezindaba lezo na?”

“Kangazi mina kwasho yena wathi mangomli-ndela aze angibone sengikhulile.”

“Pho namhla awukakhuli yini?”

“Sengikhulile.”

“Senabonana, wathini kuye?”

“Asikabonani waya ngalapha eThekwini wayosebenza, wabuya, ngizwa kuthiwa ukhona lapha. Kangikabonani ubuso nobuso naye kodwa wake wathi qu lapha kumfundisi ehamba nodadewabo.”

“Ufani igama lalowo muntu wakho?”

“Qhabo akusiye umuntu wami.”

“Ngibuza igama lalowo muntu.”

“Wathi kimina unguNsikana wakwaMbokazi.

“Ngiyezwa ntombi. Pho, walemukela kanjani iduku leli na? Kanti lapha esilungwini izinsizwa ezipha izintombi noma zingakathandi na? Ukweshela okusha lokhu.”

“Kangazi ukuthi insizwa ike iyiphe intombi kodwa ngalemukela nje mina iduku ngejabula kuphela.”

“Yeboke Nomkhosi kaBaba, ngoBa nicaBanga ukuthi ukwazi kwasesilungwini lokhu kuni nika yonke inhlanipho yomhlaba. Mina lendaBa yakho ngiyazi yonke, nokuqala kwayo nisebancane ngiyayazi. Futhi ngazi okukhulu kunalokho, Nomkhosi.”

“Hhawu, okukhulu kuphi na?”

“Thula ngikutshela. Uyakhumbula langathize kufike umfokazi obincayo elala laphaya exhibeni, wathi uya eThekwini?”

“Ngiyakumbula kodwa baningi abafokazi abadlula lapha, kodwa lowo kuthi mangimkhumbule. Omusha nje, owayemude, ehamba yedwa?”

“Usushilo.”

“Qha, ngiyamkhumbula.”

“Yebo wena wawuzikhulumela nje nomfokazi.”

“Kanti kwakungubani na?” Washo wethuka ngoBa usekumbula ukuthi lomfokazi waelokhu ekhwehlela ngesikhathi bekhumela noTomas. Nokuthi lomfokazi wabaBaza ubuhle bakhe ngamazwi amangalisayo awayengazange awezwe ngaphambili.

Nokuthi amehlo akhe ayengasuki kuye sonke isikhathi ngenkathi edla.

Waphendula uNontula wathi, “Qha, kwakunguye uNsikana lo, ebaleka evela eNonoti lapho abafowabo babemenzela uzungulu befuna ukumenzela phansi. Umusa wakho kawukhohlwa nempela.”

“Wayekwenzelani ukuzifihla okungaka na?”

“Konke ukuzifihla lokhu aze abince wayefuna indlela yokukubona uwedwa, futhi efuna ukubona inqubo yakho noTomas. Nempela wanibona ngoBa wanibona nimi nikhuluma wabona ukuthi nempela niyewana.”

“Ngalimala-ke lapho.”

“Ingani phela konke engikutshela khona ucaBanga ukuthi kulize lamaze. Akuwena yini othe kimi khona kuthangi lokhu, kawukholwa indaba kaNtombinani noTomas wakho, lo wena omkhothamela sengathi uQwabe evuka eyoshaya inkondlo koNodwengu. Kuphele izinsizwa yini? Thina singayibopha siyiqhuba nesisinga sayo, kungabi ndaba zalutho, kuvuke uMphahleni ke khona?”

Wathula uNomkhosi ngoBa waesamangaliswe ukuthi uNontula zonke lezizindaba zakhe uzithathephi, njengoba ezichaza ngeminyombo yazo zonke wabuza wathi,

“Ingani wena kawuzange ube lindiki pho, lokukwazi ukuthathephi na?”

“Ngiyilona ke namuhla, uma ngihluleka kweyakho indaba kobe kangilona. Yebo uhlakaniphile wena mfo wasemaMbokazini eNkobongo! Ubusi-

zwa bakhe lomfana sengibuhlolile ngabuthola: uzimele, uyazondla, indoda isibili.”

“Ahau waze wangidlala isiphukuphuku engigumba lonke ingaphakathi lami, ngasala ngiligobolondi.”

“Ungabozenza ohlakaniphile lapha emhlabeni ngoba uyowa ungacoshwa muntu.”

“Sengidelile.”

“Nasi isiluleko sami: Hamba uyokwaluka ubuhlalu obuluhlaza nobubomvu, ubenze indola kuleliqhabanga engilifihle laphaya.” Washo ephuma naye beya ngasesiqundwini esingaphandle, wafike wakhothama wahosha iqhabanga elisha elenziwe ngenqayi elimnyama laphalwa. “Kangiz’ukusho ukuthi mthande uNsikane nokuthi male noma qhubeka noTomasi, kodwa njengegoso lezintombi zikababa zonke; mina sengicelwe inkosi uMkhwethu waseMzwangedwa, uyazi nawe; ngiyakululeka ngikukhumbuza isithembiso sakho kuNsikana, nokuzwana (engiqinisile ngakho ukuthi sekuluthando) phakathi kukaTomasi noNtombinjani kababa.”

“Thatha leliqhabanga, sengofika lapha ngesonto elizayo ngizobona induku yakho. Uyongihlangabeza ngolwesithathu laphaya, phansi kwaleya misinsi engakwaWombe, ekukhuphukeni ngesikhathi santambama. Bavalelisana behlukana wagoduka uNontula emshiya uNomkhosi egcekeni kwamfundisi emi ngeqhabanga lelo. UNomkhosi akazange awuthi vu umlomo ephendula udadewabo uNontula, wamuzwa emsinda ngesithunzi nangakho konke.

Sekulalwa waliphupha futhi iphupho lakhe uNomkhosi, ebona uNontula eqhamuka ashintshe

abenezimpiko ezinhle phansi kwazo kuphume lensizwa ize njalo ungunaphakade kuye imgqolozele emehlweni, abe yathe uyangala nangala ayifumanise lensizwa amehlo aye eyidla njengomlilo udla isikhotha. Noma leliphupho liqhamuke kanjani laligcina njalo ngokumvusa esejuluke esemanzi, akhohlwe ukuthi lokhu kuqondisa ukuthini. Wabuye walala lafika ngolunye uhlobo manje lensizwa yaqhamuka ingomunye umuntu, wangasabeka ngoba lomuntu waphe nduka waba uTomasi, wajafula uNomkhosi wathi kuye ephusheni, “ungethuselani kangaka?”

Wathi uTomasi, “Bengifuna ukukubamba ngoba ngibone ungishiya.”

Wathi uNomkhosi, “Ngikushiye kanjani lokhu ngiznikele kuwe na?”

Wathi uTomasi, “ngibone ungishiya nje, ngalandela.” Wavuka uNomkhosi, waeseqala ukuqabanga ngezinto ebebezikhuluma noNontula, wabona ukuthi uNontula lo, waekade wahlangana noNsikana waze wamtshela konke ukuhlupheka kwakhe ngodadewabo uNomkhosi. Nangolwesithathu lolo uNontula wamtshela uNsikana ukuthi uNomkhosi uyomhlangabeza, naye akofika alandele ezinyaweni zakhe azidlise satshanyana.

UNomkhosi wayisebenza induku leyo engayazi nokuthi uyisebenzelani. Kuyena kwakungathi induku yenkosi uMkhwethu, eyisipho sikadadewabo uNontula. Weza nayo kudadewabo, ehamb’ehleka, wahlala phansi ngaphansi kwemisinsi elindele udadewabo. Wabuka kude wabona imihlambi yezinkomo idla yeklabile ingabekwe muntu; wabona phambi kwakhe

uhlaza lotshani lwendlalekile, bubuyazela nangalapha nangalapha bushaywa umoya wehlobo ovela olwandle, obunye bushay'ikhweli njengamahlamvu wona athintwa ngumoya uwezwe ehlabelela; nanjengophahla lwendlu oluhwaza kuze kuse lukhuluma nomoya. Naye uNomkhosi wakubuka konke lokhu wajafula ukuba naye usemusha uluhlaza njengotshani. Wabuyisa amehlo akhe wabuka induku wabuye wahleka.

Waqhamuka uNontula egqishazela edondolozela ngenduku yakhe sengathi ukhathele, wasukuma uNomkhosi emhlangabeza kodwa wamemeza uNontula wathi:

“Hlala khona lapho ngiyeza, kuwo lowomthunzi.” Kabuyanga esahlala phansi, wasal'esema ephethe iqhabanga lelo selihlotshiswe linguhani! Wathi lapho emnika lona udadewabo wala wathi:

“Qha, Nomkhosi, kakusilo elami lingelakho ngoba ngikuhlomisile ngalo wena wazihlofisela.” Wahleka uNomkhosi, ngoba waefana nomtwana umqondo wakhe.

Besakhuluma kwaqhamuka uTomasi eqonde kwamfundisi ethi uyoziwonela utho lwakhe, wathuka ethi nqamanqa noNomkhosi emi noNontula, owayemazi ukuthi uma eke wayizwa nje indaba kaNtombinjani ngabe uyisitha sakhe okokugcina. Ngakho ke waemesaba enesazelo ngaye, ngoba lentombi kaMakhwatha yayingazi nanyaka nokuthi lukhona yini nje utho oluyinsizwa. Wathi ukwethuka uTomasi, wama, wababingelela,

“Sanibona nina bomuzi omkhulu.”

“Yebo sakubona mkhwenyana,” kusho uNontula, waesebuza ethi,

“Uzosivakashela nje namuhla ngaphesheya koMvoti?”

Wathi uTomasi, “Qha manje kangise naso isikhathi!” Wathi uNonthula:

“Sokwenzani isikhathi?” Wathi uTomasi,

“Sokuwela ngizengaphesheya.”

“Yebo usho kahle mkwenyana ngoba uhamba labo ohamba kuwo usishiye thina. Ofuna ukuba babona malanga onke?”

“Uyangicashela ekukhulumeni kwakho kangikuzwa kahle.”

“Uyezwa nje, ngoba ungafuni ukuqonda mhla-wumbe wesaba lona engihamba naye, uNomkhosi hhayi nami ngiyamesaba bekungaba kuhle sisobabili mkhwenyana,” washo embuka emehlweni wangaqwawiza.

Kusenjalo kwaqhamuka uNsikana engumuntu ozihambelayo nje. Loku kuhlanguka kwezimbangi okunjengalokhu waengakubekile uNontula ngoba kwathatha kwazenzakalela. Wasondela uNsikane naye wabingelela, wamamatheka wabuza impilo kuwo bonke. Wasebuza ukuthi umshumayeli uTomasi uyofika nini ngakuwo ayovuselela na? Hhayi uTomasi waphendula nje waqed'icala.

Sonke lesikhathi uNontula waefuka udadewabo owaeseshaywa luvalo, nalezinsizwa ezimbili, wahleka wathi kuNomkhosi:

“Ehhe sekwenzekile lokho. Lenduku kade uyipha mina kodwa manje sengizothi yinike omunye walezimbangi zakho njengesipho esivela kuwe. Thina kwaZulu senza njalo, amasiko akithi lawo; ngakhoke yinike mina, ungitshela ofuna ibe ngeyakhe, ngizomnika yona.”

UNomkhosi wafikelwa ukwesaba okumangalisayo, wagedezela ngofo waengakubekile ukwenza kwesifindi esinje; wesaba ukukhuluma, waphonsa amehlo akhe phansi, wabeka ngakuNsikana. Udade-wabo wayithatha induku wayibeka ezandleni zikaNsikana, waphenduka, wahamba, wagoduka emva kokuthi: “Mbokazi nansi induku yakho, ithathe, uyiphathe ibe isikhumbuziso sikaNomkhosi, uziqhenye ngayo, “NOMA NINI.”

Umsebenzi wakhe waesewuqedile uNontula.

Isiphetho.
