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UDINGISWAYO  
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KAJOBE

NGU

B. WALLET VILAKAZI

M.A. (Rand)

*Department of Bantu Studies  
Witwatersrand University*

[THE STORY OF DINGISWAYO—ZULU]

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UDINGISWAYO  
KALOE

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R. WALTER VILKAS  
M.A. (Oxon.)  
Professor of African Studies  
University of Cambridge

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THE SHELDON PRESS  
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TO  
THE YOUNGER GENERATION  
OF WHITE SOUTH AFRICA  
WITH THIS PRAYER FOR AFRICA  
BY ARTHUR S. CRIPPS

"Jesus, 'tis nigh two thousand years ago,  
One would have pour'd as pebbles in Your Hand:  
Gold, gems, slaves, souls—the riches of our land—  
Had you but knelt. Help us to understand  
The Splendour of Your everlasting 'NO!'"

THIS BOOK  
IS MOST HUMBL Y DEDICATED

## ISIAHLUKO I

UMUZI waseBalungwini wawunezindlu eziningi zakhiwe ngoqunga, lwaphithaniswa nekhwane kwasekuthungwa ngegcema nendola yasenkangala, nangogonothi lweziwa. Ufindo lwendlu lwaluphicwa lubophe zonke izintingo kuhle kokuthungwa kwenkehli yeqhikiza liyokwemuliswa. Phakathi kwazo zonke izindlu kwakwakhiwe isibaya sezinkomo, selukwe ngamahlahla aphanjaniswa ezibondeni, phakathi kwesibaya kwakukhona insika yokusenga nokuthena amaduna, kuyilapho futhi inkosi yayilethamela ngakhona ilanga kanye nezinceku zayo ebusika; kwakuhlaliswa ngakhona futhi inkosi uma iphaqulwa izinsila zayo zizofakwa phakathi kwenkatha. Kuyo leyondawo amadoda ayexoxa khona impi, kumaqondana nesigcawu sokugiyela khona izinsizwa zakwaMthethwa uma kuhlatshiwe noma kukhona umkhosi othize onjengokweshwama, nokuqiniswa kwe-mpi noma kugcagca insizwa nentombi yasekhaya.

Yonke inxuluma yaseBalungwini yayizungezwa emphemeni wokuqala utshani somhlonyane basebulandelwa olunye uthango lwezithuma. Phakathi kwezintango kwakukhona um-budu wokuphuma noku-ngeza izimbuzi nezimvu ngoBa zona zazingangeni ngesango elikhulu kanye nezinkomo zazixutshaniswa namathole ziqhutshwe kanye nawo. Kulom-budu yilapho izingane zesizwe sakwaMthethwa zazidlalela khona. Umuzi wawubuswa inkosi uJobe wesizwe sakwaMthethwa okwathi ngonyaka ka 1760 kwayisona sizwe esasinamandla emzansi noPhongolo sesatshwa

impela. Ngazo lezozikhathi abantu okwakuthiwa afohlanga lwakaZulu basebeqalile ukuzwakala ukuthi sebenamandla babuswa nguSenzangakhona. Noma benenkosi yabo yohlanga, uSenzangakhona, babesakhonzile kwaMthethwa beletha njalo izithungu zogwayi enkosini kanye namabeshu neziphuku ezisikwe yizingcweti zakwaZulu.

Umuzi waseBalungwini wanda kakhulu ngozalo lwawo nangabanye abantu ababefika bezokhonza besebephenduka izigqili zokutholwa bahlale bazebabengabantukazana. Kwafumaniseka ukuba umuzi kawuqenjulwe wandiswa, uxhante khona kuzokwanda isizwe zakwaMthethwa. Omunye wabafowabo bakaJobe, uNqola, waphuma wayokwakha umuzi lo omusha, wawufiza ngokuthi kusoYengweni. Zonke izinsiza ezasezivuthiwe zenkosi zazizophuma ziyiqala khona oYengweni amaButho kaJobe amasha, ziganelwe khona. Kanye nazo kwahamba bonke abantukazana okuyibona ababezoba isizwe sikaNqola asibusayo njengomnumzane ongaphansi kukaJobe.

UNqola wanikwa onke amandla obunumzane oYengweni, wethweswa amandla okuba athethe amacala esizwe sasoYengweni ashaye imithetho; ahlawulise njengokubona kwakhe, kuthi izinkomo zehlawulo zibengezakhe zimele ukondla isizwe ngesikhathi sokuhlupheka njengoba phela inkosi ifoshiwe ukondla abantu bayo ngempahla yayo uma abantu behlupheka. Amacala egazi wayewanquma njengokubona kwakhe uNqola. Obulele omunye abulawe naye noma adingiswe emhlabeni kuthi uma eboniwe abulawe njengesilwane. Amacala abantwana benkosi nawo wayewathetha kodwa bona bengathandi babewadlulisela kuyise eBalungwini lapho ayefike anqunywe khona. Kanjalo futhi uma abanumzane bemizi abaphethe izifunda

ezinkulu phansi kukaNqola, uma benganeliswa yisinqumo sikaNqola babedlulela phambili eBalungwini.

UJobe wayibusa imizi emibili oYengweni naseBalungwini wazewaguga engathandi kodwa ukuphucwa ngumuntu isikhundla, nokuzwa nje ukuthi izwe liyahleba lithi usegugile. UJobe wayelikhehla eluqhangasana, elihamba litengezela ngala nangala, likhuluma ngezwi eliyisihosha elihwazayo, linwele zigqayingene, eziqothuke phakathi nekhandla. Wayefaka ungiyane. UJobe wayehloniphekile ehlala kodwa ngokwenqena bonke abasondelene naye sengathi bangamenza kabi. Kwakuthi mehlezi emini abeke eceleni kwakhe impiselo yakhe eduze akhulume ebeke idevu phezu kwayo elokhu eyiphulula ngezandla seyaze yamnyama impi-selo. Nasebusuku yayilala naye impi-selo yakhe ejwayele ukuvuka ebusuku ayayatheke ezula engazi lapho eya khona, kanti njalo uyaphupha. Wayevuka ahambe ebuthongweni, enalesosifo, simhlupha. Abantu babemesaba ngenxa yalokhu, becabanga ukuthi uyise wamgcaaba esemncane ngohlanga lwemvu yamanzi yona evuka echibini layo ebusuku ifuthe amanzi njengemvufo iphume, iyayatheke kuyoyonke indawo encikene nogu lwamanzi kuze kuse, ikakhulu uma izulu lisile liqhakaze izinkanyezi noma inyanga ingekho ehlobo, nomoya ufudumele. Abanye abantu abakhula naye bentanga yakhe babethi uJobe unequngu ngoba eseyinsizwa wabulala abantu abaningi empini, kwathi ngenxa yobuqhawe bakhe wesabeka, waqeda abafowabo bonke kwasala uNqola lo owayebusa oYengweni.

Ubukhosi uJobe wabuthola kanje. Kusuka lapho onke amakhosi kawazange abekwe, onke ayezibeka ngokuzilwela, kwaze kwachuma lesisaga sokuthi: "*Inkosi kayikhethwa ibekwa ngezikhali.*" Kusuka lapho oShaka, noDingane, noMpande, noCetshwayo okuyi-

bona afaButha uMthethwa bawenza uZulu, bazinge-  
nela ebukhosini ngezikhali kaBakhethwanga yisizwe.

Banengi afaBemkhulumela uJobe okuningi. Abanye  
faBemhlanganisa namandiki bethi leliwisa lakhe ali-  
thwala njalo walithola ekwethwaseni uBundiki. ObaKhe  
uBundiki faBumvuka ebusuku azishaye ngewisa esifu-  
beni, abonge njengenkunzi yenkomo akhulume izilimi  
eziningi ikakhulu uma inyanga yakhe imelapha ngo-  
mkhosi wokweshwama lapho esezophuma ekuseni aBe-  
ke phansi leliwisa aPhathe isijula sakhe; embethe isikhu-  
mba sebusesi, aphume akhombe inhlamvu yelanga  
lapho iphuma enzansi emathafeni aseNdondakusuka.  
Athi ma eseyikhombile angene endlini bamuzwe ebonga  
kodwa bengazi ukuthi yini em-bongisayo. Induna  
yakheke yayima phandle kwendlu imbonge ithi :

*“ Ushay’udaka kwavel’izinkomo nabantu,  
Umgangadi wendlovu,  
UPhuhla phansi njengekhowe,  
UMthethwa kabongwa  
Obong’uMthethwa uzon’umlomo.”*

Ithi iqeda imbongi abezwakala amaButho eBubula  
inkondlo yakwaMthethwa ethi :

*“ Wohheyi eyiya Maphuhla,  
Wayibonga, wayibong’indaba yemikhonto,  
Wohheyiya, woyeyiya . . . hhe  
Yek’indaba yemikhonto.”*

Liqale phansi igama, liqubuke njalo likhwela lize  
lihlonge lidume izigodi zonke zaseBalungwini, libuye  
lishone phansi, izinsizwa zilihaye ngomoya ophansi,  
zilicine njalo zikhala “ngendaba yemikhonto.”

Konke afaBekukhuluma abantu kwakufike kukho-  
hlakale uma seBeke bayibona inkosi yaBo isahlahla-

melisa ngezithelo zehloBo elisha ngomkhosi wokweshwa-  
ma. Ngalesisikhathi futhi kwakwaziwa ukuthi inkosi  
iphethe imithi emibi yokuziqinisa, nokuthi kufanele  
njalo ihlale phezu kwenkatha kuze ihlanganise isizwe  
sonke sakwaMthethwa, esikude nesiseduze; kuthi  
futhi laBo abahlubukayo faBuye bez’ekhaya nezibu-  
nguka zingabekisi amehlo azo endle. Akakho owaye-  
yazi imithi yenkosi ngoBa yayiziphathela yona mathu-  
pha isizwa yinyanga yayo, nayo ingavunyelwe ukuyi-  
tshela abanye noma sekunjani. Abantu faBethi futhi  
inkosi iphatha netshe lezulu. Imithi eyayiphathwa  
yinkosi yayidinga ukuhlathelwa njalo, kodwa ngenxa  
yokuBa uJobe akahlabanga njengoba kufanele ngonya-  
ka othize, yikho-nje ikhanda lakhe ebusuku lalimvusa  
limhlanyise, ahambe eyayatheka engazi lapho eya  
khona. Izinkulumo zaBantu zazahlukene, ziphikisana  
ezinye zivumelana, zonke zilinga ukuchaza isizathu  
sokuhlanya kwenkosi ebusuku, kuthi abanye abantu  
belele yona kodwa ivuke ihamba nempiselo yayo.

Langathize uJobe wazumeka uButhongo kwathi  
phakathi kwamaBili wavuka, wazula, wazula, waya,  
wafika emfuleni lapha waphashanyiswa izwi lithi :

“Hawu, wena wohlanga, obodle kwajiyela izilo  
nezingwe zakhweca imisila! Ihlushwa yini inkosi  
phakathi kwamaBili, ingaze iselapha-nje na?”

Wethuka uJobe, ngokwethuka kwakhe wambamba  
umuntu lo ogama lakhe linguMbangayiya wakwa-  
Bodoza, walibeka iwisa wamgingqa phansi, kanti ulele  
njalo waze waqabuka ngoBa esekhuluma umuntu—u  
Mbangayiya eseyalela ethi :

“Hawu wena wohlanga, ngafela uBala, kanti mina  
ngize kuwe-nje ngizokubikela ezasoYengweni izindaba  
zamadodana akho—nezombuso wakho; bengizosindisa  
nekhanda lakho.”



Wathi esho lawamazwi wahhithikela phansi phezu kwesiduli, wathi uyaſambeleva ngesandla imisipha yakhe yashwabana wagingqikela phansi phezu kwengalo owayethi uſambeleva ngayo, wathi ubekisa amehlo phezulu ukuba afuke ufuso benkosi yakhe uJobe kodwa kwathi zibe ifu elimnyama, wagquma, kanti useyagqabuka, engaphumeselanga umnyombo wemfihlo ayeyiqukethele inkosi. Nayo inkosi yaqabuk' ebuthongweni yazibuza yathi :

“ Sengenzeni? Ngiphi khona lapha? Uſani lo? ”  
Yasho imthinta ngesandla ibeka phansi iwisa; yamgugula yencike ngesiduli, yaſona esethambile yamdedela, yasukuma ubuthongo sebuqabukile baphela nya yase ithi;

“ Sengathi uMbangayiya wasoYengweni induna kaNqola umfowethu na? Ngiyaphupha noma ngiyezwa, noma sengifile? ” Wazibuza njengomuntu ovuka ebuthongweni eqabuka, umqondo wakhe wasanguluka, wabaleka sengathi ukhona umuntu ozomchaka abesebulawa ngoba ebulele umuntu. Wabuyela endlini izindlebe zakhe zishaywa amazwi kaMbangayiya okuthi: “ Bengizosindisa nekhanda lakho.”

Kusukela kulelo langa wahlala njalo ethule umoya wakhe ukhathazekile amazwi kaMbangayiya. Akubanga nsukuzatshwala kwafika isigijimi igama laso linguNodunga wakwaGumede sizobika ukuthi uNqola kwathi bephuma inqina beyozingela walimala. Kwathi begwanqa impunzi yaphuma yabeka kuye kanti nakhu uGodongwane indodana kaJobe eyelam'uTana ufeseciba ngonhlekwane, wafike wangena phansi kwesiphanga kuNqola, wathwalwa eseyindiki-nje eya ekhaya lapho wafela khona. Ngenkathi umkhonto uhlala wathi:

“ Mina mfana womnewethu, mina Godongwane, uyangihlaba na? ” Yiwona mazwi akhe owawakhulu-

mayo washwabana ulimi akaſuyanga akhulume, kwakuphela njalo. Okwaleyonkathi isigijimi ſabika nokuthi uGodongwane usezenze indlondlobela wabangaphezu komnewaſo omkhulu uTana phakathi komuzi oYengweni.

UJobe wayal'ukuba isigijimi siphumule basihlabise imbuzi kuthi umswane wayo isigijimi siwuthwale siye nawo oYengweni sifike siwukhombise uGodongwane benoTana, besesiwuchitha. Lomkhuba wabantu wawuqondisa ukuba uGodongwane noTana abanakubusa baze badle izinkomo zikayise benganikwanga nguye; kwaku enye yezindlela zokumyala nokumethusela uGodongwane ingozi engase imehlele noma ngayiphi inkathi. Nempela wathi ukufika lomuntu oyisigijimi wawuyisa kuGodongwane noTana umswane lowo. Wawuthatha maqede uGodongwane wawusakazela ebusweni balomuntu watshela abantu ukuba bambambe uNodunga bambulale ngoba ehambe engabikanga kuye noma kumfowaſo uTana mhla eya kuyise eBalungwini; ngaleso senzo uNodunga uzenza inhloli, nexoki elibuso-bubili, elithi yena wakoGodongwane ebeke ngapha lona beliba isigijimi esibaleka siye siyomhlala uGodongwane. Noma wayeyindlondlobela oYengweni inhliziyoy yakhe yayinengebe ingamhlalisile kahle neze, ikakhulu, isenzo sikayise sokumthumela umswani, samenza wahlalela phezulu. UGodongwane wayengamesabi uTana kangangoba babezwana futhi uTana kungumuntu owayebukeka enganake lutho ngezindaba zemibuso. Into owayeyithanda uTana kwakungukuzingela, nokuzixoxela izindaba zokuntela. Nabantu oYengweni izindaba zombuso babezixoxa kuGodongwane yena owayenamehlo ngazo ezithanda futhi.

Kuthe ngelinye ilanga kuhleliwe kwafika isigijimi

sivela kuJobe ethi kubantwana bakhe uyofika azobeka izandla zobukhosi omunye wabo oYengweni; wabayala ukuBa batshela zonke izindlu zigaye amagobongo otshwala, kusindwe onke amagceke namalawu, bavithe onke amabutho asebangeni lokulwa ngoba yiwona ayosina mini leyo. Amadodana akhe alibika alihlaka kaza izwi likayise kuwownke umuzi wagcwala ukuthokoza.

Lapha oYengweni kwakukhona isangoma esasencikene kakhulu noGodongwane, kuyisona esimtshela konke okuzomehlela okuhle nokubi. Kwathi ukuBa siwuzwe umbiko kaJobe ingani sasihlala sodwa endlini yaso siyimpohlo, sona sangasinda njengabanye. Kwathi ngobusuku uyise kaGodongwane ayezofika ngelanga elilandela bona sona, sahamba isangoma lapho sekuphelele ukuhlwa sayesangqongqoza endlini kaGodongwane. UGodongwane wayehleli yedwa ecabanga ngendaba yokufika kukayise. Uyise wayengashongo ukuthi uza lapha oYengweni -nje uzobeka bani ubukhosi, nokuthi uyise uthanda bani phakathi kwaBo noTana; wayazi kahle ukuthi pho umthumelelani umswani wembuzi; wathi lapho ebona wafumanisa ukuthi uTana yena akanake lutho futhi uzenamele-nje.

Kwezwakala ukungqongqoza emnyango, wasondela ngasemkhontweni wakhe wawuthatha wayesehlelela ngasemsamo, wathi, "ngena wen'osemnyango."

Wangena umfo wesangoma, wangena waguqa ngasemnyango wathi ngezwi elingasabi:

"Wo, kanti uwedwa wena wenkosi, hhayike kulungile, nempela bengikufuna wedwa." Wathi uGodongwane,

"Uwe kanti lo, ongqongqoza manje? Kazi uphethe ndabazini?"

Wazithulela-nje umfo wakhona, lapho uGodongwane wawubeka phansi umkhonto washaya ibeshu lakhe

ngesandla, wenyuka waya ngenhla nendlu wathatha umgqiki wakhe wasondela esangomeni sakhe, kwaphela lelo gazi lobukhosi elesatshwa yisintu sonke, okuyilona elenza abantu phandle bakhale bathi "*Bayede! Bayede uyilanga!*" Wasondela uGodongwane wahlala phansi eduze nesangoma sakhe wasibuka, kodwa sona sahleka sathi: "Wethuswa yini, kade wenzani?"

"Qha, kade ngingenzi lutho kodwa ngimangaliswa uwe ukuBa ufike ngalenkathi."

Isangoma lendaba yokufika kukaJobe oYengweni sayichithela amathambo sachaza izinto ezikhulunywa ngamathambo sathi:

"YeBo wena wenkosi, abafana (sisho amathambo lawa) bathi uyobusa ngelinye ilanga kodwa uyihlo ukuthukuthelele uthi makakudle ngamazinyo."

Sisho maqede simbuke emehlweni sisineke amazinyo amhlophe ingani sona simnyama sigaxe izinyongo ekhanda; lapha emahlombe siphambanise imichayo yezikhumba zezinyamazane, namathambo ezidawane, nemithi efakwe ezigujini ezincane zoselwa. Sasho maqede sahleka sabuye sambuka sabuye saqhubeka sathi:

"Ngifona abafokazana belola—qha, ake ngibukisise futhi—sefeyilolile imikhonto emilalazini bengqabashiya ngoba leyo-mikhonto izogwaza, kodwa kangazi ukuthi izogwazaphi."

Sibuye siwahlolisise futhi amathambo aso, sibuye sibuke lawa ahlale eduze noGodongwane sikhulume sithi:

"Beka nanto lelo-thambo lensimango elisezinyaweni zakho, lilele umongo womnkantsha owawukulo ubeke phezulu. Lelothambo kalilali kanjalo uma lisho impumelelo. Bekake futhi, mntanenkosi, leyonkwindi yembaza yamadwala aluhlaza lawa aqaqele ogwini

lolwandle ngasenzansi noThukela kunqume kubeke le eMbozamo, yahlukene nalo lelithambo—ngifunga uKhubusi kaBaba ekwaMdalose—kusho ukufa.” Sasho isangoma sathula sacabanga. Igama laso kwakungu-Jevuza kaNtonteyana wakwaMthimkhulu. Amehlo akaJevuza ayeluthuthuva njengamagwebu amathe egudu edwetshwe phansi izinsizwa zibema. Wayekhuluma abeke phansi okaNtonteyana angam-beki umuntu ngaphandle kokuba efuna ukuba aqaphele lowomuntu akhuluma naye. Wayehlale ebeke phansi njalo asho lokho akushoyo agcine, abesekhiph'ishungu lakhe abeme njalo ugwayi evumavuma njalo ethi: “Ewe—ihhi—i—i—” njengomuntu omqondo wakhe ungekho entweni ekhulunywayo. UGodongwane wayemthemba kakhulu uJevuza, kunguye owayemphalazisa nalapho uGodongwane eyokweshela khona ezintombini zakwaNxumalo. UGodongwane kwakuyisoka phakathi kwezinsizwa zenkosi, aziwa kakhulu.

KwaNxumalo uGodongwane wayethandwa intokazi egama layo linguNobantwana owaye lamana noZwide inkosana yesizwe sakwaNxumalo. UZwide lo kube naye eshela kudadewabo kaGodongwane uDingiwe owayezazi, futhi enesihe esikhulu, ezwana kakhulu nomfowabo. UDingiwe lo wayengamfuni uZwide lokho kwaBanga ubutha nokungezwani okumangalisayo phakathi kukaGodongwane noZwide, kwasengathi uGodongwane obanga udadewabo ukuba ale uZwide.

UJevuza kaNtonteyana, “*iVondwe lomhlang'elahlul'izitha zililabalabela,*” wameluleka uGodongwane wathi makahambe, azigulise mhla kufika uyise. Kodwa UGodongwane waphubuka wahleka, waphendula wathi:

“Usukhulumile Vondwe lami, nami umzimba wami

ngiyawuzwa uyadunguzela kuthi mangibaleke, kodwa ngifashiye nobani abantu bakababa na?”

“Ubani omkhulu kuwena? Umzimba wakho ofanele uwuphephise noma abantu bakayihlo?” Kusho uJevuza.

“Bathini bona abantu laba? Bathini bona uma bebona kubaleka umholi wabo kuqala? Bangethi ngifashiya emgebini ingozi bengivele ngiyazi kodwa bona ngangabatshele?”

“Bayobe betshelwa ngubani ukuba kawusekho lokhu uyothi uma uyihlo usumbingelele ubusuthi nyelele kungaboni muntu, kube ukwazi kwami ngedwa nawe kuphela,” kuphendula uJevuza kaNtonteyana.

“Yena uNobantwana njengoB'umazi ukuthi ungi-thanda ngihlabana, uyothini uma ezwa ukuthi iqhawe lake libalekel'uyise?”

“UNobantwana kakungane wena njengoBaba umcabanga. Uyothini yani?” Kuphendula iVondwe lomhlanga.

“Qha Vondwe, kasime silindele okuzayo. Usufuna ukungishiya ubaleke yini kanti?”

Waphendula uJevuza kaNtonteyana wathi: “Hhayi mina, wena wenkosi. Ngofa lapho ufa khona, ngivuke nawe uma uvuka, ngilale nawe nasendle ezinkangala; uma ulele uhonqa mina ngiyobe ngiqwashile kuze kuse. Kodwa beka nginokwesaba ngawe,” esho echitha phansi futhi amathambo, ewahlola. Lelo thambo lensimango nenkwindi yalo lehlukana futhi kodwa lawa lathi mbo, wahleka umfo kaNtonteyana, wasukuma wathath'umkhonto wakhe wathi, “woza ngiyokugcaba.”

Washo maqede wathatha isikhumba sempongo esimthika esasilenga odongeni wasithwala waphuma naso ephethe ngakwesinye isandla umgqiki, wehla wangena ngentunja yesibaya wayesendlala isikhumba phansi

wabeka phezu kwaso umgqiki wamhlalisa phansi umntwana wenkosi, wamtshela ukuba enze konke amtshela ukuba akwenze njengokusho kwakhe.

UGodongwane waphuma elawini lakhe embethe isikhumba sakhe, ngasesandleni sokuphonsa wayephe-the umkhonto wakhe wafika wahlala phansi. Kwakumnyama kungekho nyezi wokukhanyisa izithunzi zabo esibayeni. Abantu basebelele bonke sekuthule kuthe cwaka ngaphandle kwamahloko ayechwenywa phansi emmfuleni ebonga ummbila namabele akade eyoweba ezifeni zamakhosikazi akhuthule. Enzansi nesibaya kwakhuphukainja kaGodongwane ayeyithanda kakhulu igama layo kunguMzondwase. Yafika yahlala eceleni kwakhe yathula, wayibamba ngezindlebe uGodongwane wayiphulula, yalala phansi yashaya umsila wayo phansi ngokuthokoza okukhulu.

Sebefikile esibayeni uGodongwane nokaNtonteyana balinda ehleli phansi uGodongwane amehlo abo aze aphela ukuqundeka njengoba phela babekade besendlini kukhanyiswe ngoqunga: kuphele lolu kokhelwe lolu. Lapha esibayeni uJevuza wamshaya uhlanga ekhanda kwathi lapho luqal'ukopha wakhothuluza igazi enxebeni walithaka nensizi ayikhipha ophondweni olwalalenga entanyeni kanye nezigubu zoselwa, wayigaya insizi wayikhuhla lapha ohlangeni wabuye wamguqula walubeka olunye uhlanga elunda enzela ukumqinisa intamo nesijungujungu khona eyokwazi ukubekezela konke okungamehlela asinde nasezitheni zakhe.

Wathi ukunquma izinwele zakhe phezulu nekhanda lakhe; waluthatha olunye unwele walumbela phakathi nesibaya umfo kaJevuza, olunye waluthatha walubopha ezintingweni zesibaya, olunye waphuma nalo walumbela esangweni lomuzi nasesigcawini samadoda lapho enqumela khona izindaba zasoYengweni Wabuya lapho

uJevuza engasakhulumi esejuluka ngoba konke lokhu ukwenza-nje uyashesha uphuthuma ukuba aqede. UGodongwane wayehlezi ethule eqaqanjelwa izinhlanga lezi ezazigcatshiwe emzimbeni wakhe.

Sebekuqedile konke lokhu babuya beza endlini lapho uJevuza wabasa umlilo wabeka udengezi eziko walushisa lwaze lwaaba-bomvu, wathela ikhubalo lokincinda elithakwe ngamafutha ezinyamazane zolwandle, nawomthini, nawesothamlilo. Bancinda bobabili odengezini bephangelana; bephonsa izandla zekohlwa bethi:

"Sigodo wephuka ngacasha," babuya baphonsa ezokudla bathi:

"Ngavundla, ngavuka ngingedwa," basho njalo bayasheshisa baphuthuma udengezi lungawaqedi amanzi okuncinda lawo. UJevuza wabuye wamhogelisa omunye umuthi emgubuzele wajuluka wamanzi uGodongwane, waphuma lapho edwanguzela. Ngalawamakhathi-ke ikhwezi laliphumile enzansi, seliqhakazile empumalanga nomushwa walo selikhuphuka uthe dwi phezu kwamanzi ommfula enzansi lapho kwakukhala khona amahloko namaselesele ebika ihlobo elisondele.

UJevuza wamthatha uGodongwane, waphuma lapho wamhlalisa maqondana nasempumalanga ukubalithi liphuma-nje ilanga liphumele kuye. Wahlala egedezela ephethwe amakhaza okusa, yathi ithi phasha inhlamvu yelanga yashaya kuye, ifudumele, emva kwalo-kho abesengena endlini.

Esengene endlini uGodongwane walala wathi ja, imithi yonke abeyidla kusihlwa yase imngene egazini, eyezinhlanga le kuyiyona emqeda amandla imgulisa ngokushozela kwayo, imfifa igazana elincane elixubene namanzi. Nezikhonzi ukudla zafika zakubeka

emnyango zamangala ukuthi kuyiwephi njengoba kwakuvaliwe emnyango. UJevuza yena walala engalele yena amadlozi ekhuluma naye phezulu ophahleni izwi lehla ngofindo lwendlu. Wayewaphendula amadlozi ngolimi oluzwakala kuye kuphela abanye bengenakuluzwa ngoba wayekhuluma ngomlomo abuye abeke abafana bakhe phansi, kuthi izimpondo ezimbili zidlale olunye luphume ngentunja yomnyango lunyamalale luhambe luye kude lubuye lubuyele kuye okaNtonteyana alubile ngemithi yakhe futhi. Kwathi ilanga selifudumele wamvusa uGodongwane wamnika ukudla emva kokuba amgeze ubuso nomzimba. Wathi lapho edla uGodongwane, okaNtonteyana wayezicobelelela igudu lakhe elifaka insangu yamahlathi aseNkandla eyayithakwa kancane nomsuzwane khona izodaka ingene ekhanda lomuntu; asho elibonga okaNtonteyana athi: "*Mamo!! UMpondonde kaNondliwa, vuka sikothe. Uhlabazihlangane phezulu njengokubenywa kwamagudu. UNTombi zikaNdwandwe zonke zendela kwaMthethwa, uyothini, uMamlambo? Kazi ziqondeni ngokwenza nje?*"

## ISAHLUKO II

ABANEWABO bakaGodongwane oTana nabanye babekhona ekhaya kade bebema amagudu abo lonke ilanga, lapho kuqhamuka uyise uJobe namaButho akhe amnyama ayevika ngamahawu ezinkabi ezimnyama efake amashoba ezinkabi ezimnyama, namasakabula amanqe imithika emnyama ecwebezelayo njengezinsiba zezintengu, neziqhova zezinyoni ezixube igwalagwala. Amhlophe ayevika ngamahawu ezinkabi ezimhlophe anamathonsi amnyama asikwe onke ngokufana emade engangabaniniwo bemi, behubazela ngamabeshu anezintshodo, begqiza ngobusenga obulenga amashoba amathole amhlophe, zonke lezizinsizwa zimpofu zingezekhethelo, ziyikazela ebusweni ngamaqubu amalanda aseziweni zaseNkandla ayelandwa yonke iminyaka ebusika lapho izikhukukazi sezizalela zingenamandla okubaleka namachwane azo phezu komhlanga. Uma sekugiya lezizinsizwa kwakusukuma omame eBalungwini bahole phansi amatshali abo ezinyathi, nawonkonka, nezimabala benqekuza bethi:

"Deda mfokazana, nank'amaland'amhlophe, adilik'Ondini, ehlulwa amakhaza."

Nazo izinsizwa beseziyikazela zisho isaga sazo zithi:

*"Gebuz'izulu  
Gebuz'izulu  
Wo sengiyemuka,  
Ngimukel'Ondini."*

Yaqhamuka kude inkosi namaButho ayo umhlabathi

wanyakaza kwathi lapho ebuka kwaBasengathi utshani bugcwele amalunga ezinkomo zidla zeklabile, kwamnyama kwamhlope. Kwashanelwa ngisho isifi endleleni wabona bephuma bengena omame ngezindlu, nezindlu sebezicwayile, izinhloko zabo bazigcoba nasezinyaweni amafutha kwacwebezela nezitho.

Bathi ukubona lokhu baqonda abantwana bonke batshinga phansi amagudu abo ababekade bewabema ukuhlangabeza uyise, nokumamukela angene kahle esangweni lomuzi. Yangena inkosi oYengweni nama-butho, bayikhombisa esifayeni lapho amabutho athi klebu khona emacansini ayesendlelwe, kwangen'uTana wazobingelel'uyise wahlala naye, uyise wabuza wathi :

"Sengini bone nonke Tana, pho, uphi umnewenu uGodongwane na?"

"Qha baba," kusho uTana, "uGodongwane ubengaphilile kahle lonke ilanga layizolo nathi namuhla kasi-kamboni yonke insasa."

"Akawuzwanga yini umsindo wokungena kwami nama-butho, ngingena egcekeni, khona esegula, pho, angetotobe azongibingelela mntanami na?" Kusho u-Jobe.

"Hhayike kangazi lapho baba ngoba nami ngisho engikwaziyo."

"Hamba uyombiza, Tana umtshele ukuthi sengifikile ngilapha esifayeni." Nempela uTana wahamba waqonda endlini kaGodonwana, noyise wamlandela ngamehlo ebona ukuthi ushonaphi.

Izinsizwa zasoYengweni zabuthana zagcwala, kwathi okaNtonteyana wangena nesijula sakhe sobunyanga elenga izinyongo zezimbuzi owayekade ehlatshiswa zona ekhanda; wangena waqoshama ngasethombeni lamathole wahlala wabeka phansi, wathatha ishingu lakhe likagwayi wabema. Kwangena ngentunja

engenhla izinkehli namaqhikiza azoqung'utshwala ngamagobongo nangezimpiso zekhethelo, ebuthululela ezinkambeni. Izinsizwa zaseBalungwini zachobonyeka zijikijela amazwi ezintshikini zidlula, nazo zizibe sengathi kazizwa ngoba zazingenakukhuluma lutho kukhona inkosi. Kodwa kuyothi zingaphuma ngaphandle kwentunja uzwe ziqhuma phezulu zihleka zithi :

"Ihhi mame, yek'okwani—suka," zibuye zihleke zonke kanye-kanye zikhombisa ukuthi ziyezwelana omunye nomunye "ekuyekeni okwazo."

Kwakukhona ifu elithile kuJobe ebukeya kungeko ukwenama ehleli phezu kwempiselo ebuka sengathi kakukho lutho phambi kwakhe, notshwala ebuphuza engabuphuza olwakhe ukhamba lwalokhu lugcwele ezinye zigcwala ziphela, ziqungwa zibuye zicekeze. Kwathi lapho nenyama isiyabiwa sefeletha izinhloko zezinkabi kwagiya amabutho asoYengweni egiyela izinhloko egiya ekhomba ngezandla engahlome lutho ngoba uma ayegiya ephethe utho ngesandla kwakuyobe ahlokoloza impi acela inselela emabuthweni aseBalungwini, agiya kwaze kwaqubuka amaqubu eziqhoveni, ubuso bawo bagcwala izithukuthuku amanye emfoma kwangehla mjuluko kwaBonakala ukuthi nempela sekugiya amakhethelo enkosi agcwele ulaka, nenzondo namandla okubulala nokufa. Abesifazane ingani babekade bebukela maduzane bahlehla, bancia ngezindlu kwangena ukwesaba ezinhliziyweni zabo kodwa bengazi ukuba kuswa yini lokho-kwesaba. Babazi ngama-butho amanyama namhlophe asoYegweni indaba yawo yayiwuvula umlomo naku-bani.

Phezu kwayoyonke lento babexoxa uJobe namadodana akhe, uyise ehlezi phezu kwempiselo yakhe ephendula ngamafuphi, avume ngekhandla kokuningi wathi esuka waethi: "tsa—a—a" amathe wa-

phendukela kuTana wayibeka impiselo, wathi ndiyandiya wa**fambelela** ngezintingo zesibaya.

Wamemeza uTana wathi: “Ungibulalelani baba na? Ngoneni kangaka na?”

Wathi uyise ekhomba komunye wezinduna zakhe “qedela lokhu wena,” washo ekhomba kuTana ngempiselo, nempela kwafika iqhawe elithize lamlalisa phansi khona lapho ngasezintingweni zesibaya ngomkhonto. Wathi ephenduka ethi ukubiza uGodongwane wayesethe pheshe, nothuli lobulongwe esibayeni lwaqonga kwamnyama njengoba amabutho aseBalungwini ayesegwaza abasoYengweni. Yathi iyamthatha uGodongwane enye insizwa ngasethombeni, wayibeka phansi okaNtonteyana washo wathi:

“Ngadla mina wevondwe lomhlanga, kanti kwakuyodla abanjani?”

Bamlandelisa uGodongwane, wathi uyeqa uthango wahlala umkhonto esiphangeni kodwa wabaleka wangemela khona lapho, wabaleka eseyinkubele wehlisa umuzi enqamula phakathi kwesinyakanyaka sabantu nothuli seluvale indlela. Wabaleka njalo wayewazihloma ehlathini. Onke amabutho asoYengweni abuba ngalelo-langa kwakhalwa kwaze kwasa, kukhala onina bekhalela amaboqo abo ezinsizwa, nezingodosi zikhihlizela izinyembezi ezimathonsi zimi phezu, ezinye ziguqe phezu kwezidumbu zamasoka azo; ezinye zikhihlizela ziphethe ngezandla imitsha yamasoka azo ayezokhonza ngayo kodwa namhla ayeqangqalaze esibayeni amanye egcekeni engenamuntu wokuwalahla. OYengweni ngaleyo-mini kwa**ba** indawo eyesabekayo ngo**ba** kwathi lapho ilanga selishonile nama**butho** kaJobe esegodukile kwaqoqana ukuhlwa kwezwakala amazwi esifazane elila nawamadoda ayelimele ngaphandle ebiza noma ufani encenga ukuba azowa-

qedela okungenani kunokuba ezwe ubuhlungu obungaka. Amanye ayekhala ebiza amanzi, amanye ekhala ngoMasibanibani, ebatha ngamagama awoyisemkhulu. Kuthi amakhosikazi anezibindi ezwa omunye waku**bo** ekhala asondele amqabulise ngamanzi amthwale amlethe endlini, okungenani afele khona kunokuba aphele phandle.

Sebefikile eBalungwini bonke ababekade behlasele oYengweni banganelwa usizi ngoba inkosi yabikwa ukudunguzela njalo. OkaNtonteyana isibaya lesi wayesibilile ngangayizolo lokhu egcaba uGodongwane; lemithi kaJevuza uJobe wayihaqa kwathi ngoba naye uJobe eliqili lemithi, eyakhe yanqotshwa ngekaJevuza yaseyabuyela ngaye yonke wayihaqa maqede ekhanda yambangela izibobo, yambulala uhlangothi, kwathi nalapho esefika ekhaya wayesethwelwe. Okuthe ngenye imini uJobe wabiza ibandla wavalelisa wabeka um-beki wombuso wakwaMthethwa wathi kuyoba uMawewe inkosi, owayezalwa ngomunye wamakhosikazi amancane okuthiwa ama**bibi**. Akakhohlwanga uJobe ukuyaleza ngokuthi uyabona ukuthi uMawewe akanakubusa ngokukhululeka ngoba uGodongwane akafanga, nokuthi kuyodingeka ukuba aqashele angaqambi inhlakanhlaka ngokwahlukanisa isizwe sakwaMthethwa, uma esebuya ekubungukeni, uma eyoze wabuya.

Ababehleli eduze kocansi lwenkosi, baku**bona** okushiwo yiyo, ngoba kwathi noma becinga ezidunjini bangasibona esikaGodongwane, ingani kwakukade kuvele omunye wathi yena ubone uGodongwane egwazwa ngempela, akasindanga-nje nempela. Kwabakhona ukuphikisana okukhulu ngoba babengambonanga uGodongwane ukuthi ngenkathi bemxoshisa ngomkhonto wabaleka wayewangena ehlathini eliseduze naso-

Yengweni ngasemfuleni, umkhonto ewuthwele esiphangeni. Wabaleka wayewazithi shu khona, walenga ukuwumonyula umkhonto kodwa wehluleka. Njengoba amantombazane ayejwayele ukubukela kudana uma impi ilwa, uDingiwe wambona umfowabo ebaleka kodwa akazanga ukuthi kabamlandelanga yini bambulala.

Kwasa ethumela izwi kuNobantwana emtshela ngeshlo somfowabo, yena kodwa wavuka wenza imisebenzi yasekhaya wehla waya emmfuleni ukuyokh'amanzi ehamb'ehlabelela ngosizi lokushiywa umfowabo. Wathi echopha izinyawo emadwaleni asithwe amagatsha emithi, ngenzansi impela kwezifuko okuwela kulo afantu wezwa ukugquma sengathi okwesilwane ngenhla ehlathini; wethuka maqede wacabanga ukuthi inyamazane, wathatha itshe wasondela ehamb'elithwel'ekhanda, enyonyoba ngamazwani. Kodwa wabonani? Nango umfowabo eguqile, ezibonqa, egquma, umkhonto ugxumekeke esiphangeni, nenxeba selichicha amanzi. Watshinga phansi imbokodwe uDingiwe, wakhala wathi:

"Maye Godongwane kabafo! Hawu, ngizokwenzenjani?"

Wamthulisa uGodongwane ngezwi eliqhaqhazelayo, nomoya onqamukayo wathi,

"Thula mtakababa, funa ungi bizele amashwa, nabangizingelayo."

Wasondela uDingiwe wabona ukuthi umfowabo usegqumela okuletha isiyezi, wasondela wazewaqung'isisibindi wawubamb'umkhonto, wawudonsa engawuxukuxi, kwabalukhuni wayeka, eseyekiswa nawukugquma nokubonga komfowabo. Wema wabuka, izinyembezi zehla ezihlathini zakhe kwaba sengathi umkhonto udla yena uqobo lwakhe. Wabuye wabuyela wadonsa ngamandla eguqile eduze nomfowabo,

umkhonto wathi boncu, noGodongwane wawa phansi ngobuso waquleka. Intombazane yayayatheka iya enhla, iya enzansi ikhohlwa ukuthi izokwenzenjani; yaletha amanzi yamthela, yamthela, waze waqabuka wabeka. Izwi lakhe lokuqala wathi: "Ngilambile Dingiwe, ngilambele okokufa."

Udadewabo wagijima waya ekhaya waleth'umbantshi kanye nombondwe wakufihl'engcazini yakhe wakuleth'emmmfuleni.

Khona ekhaya bengezukulola, uDingiwe waba umuntu okhuthela ngalelo langa wathi, "Qha, angifuni ukuba ngivuke ekuseni ngongqoqwane ngiyoland'amanzi emmfuleni. Zonke izimbiza ngizozigcwalisa."

Bathi abanye odadewabo, "hau, wakhuthala-ke khona Dingiwe."

"Ehhe, angifuni ukuvuka," washo esubatha ngejubane ehla eqond'emmmfuleni. Wath'ukufika wangena ehlathini ehamba abamb'esifubeni inhliziyu yakhe iguduzela uvalo sengathi uzofica umfowabo esefile. Wamfica ehlezi egquma, egqunyiswa izinhlungu zenxeba lomkhonto. Wafika waguqa phambi kwakhe wathi,

"Mfowethu Godongwane," washo wasondela wamphatha emahlombe ngezandla ezineminwe ethambile, wabuye wakhuluma ebuza wathi,

"Mfowethu uyangibona nje?" Washo emnika ukudla ekukhipha engcazini. Wakusondeza phambi komfowabo ekhuluma ethi "Yidla, nakhu ukudla, sengikulethile."

Wadl'uGodongwane waqabuka, naye wakhuluma. UDingiwe kwathi esebuya ntambama futhi ezokukha amanzi okwesithathu waleth'ingufo kaGodongwane yokulala nomgqiki wokucamela. UDingiwe wakhuluma kumfowabo wathi,



"Uzokwenzenjani Godongwane njengoba awunakubuyela emzini kababa?"

Waphendula uGodongwane wathi, "Angazi Dingiwe."

"Ngiyakweluleka ukuba usuke uhambe lapha, uqonde kwamalume uMbangambi ozalwa uDlozi wakwaLushozi."

"Kuphi khona lapho Dingiwe?" kubuza uGodongwane.

"Kwamalume kungapha kwalawaya amagquma. Kawusamazi umalume lona ohlale efika ekhaya umame amthungele utshwala. Indoda nje emfushane empunga."

"Wo, sengiyambona. Kanti uyisihlobo sethu njeya?" kusho uGodongwane.

"Sengikade ngikuyena, ngamtshela ukuthi ngikufumanisile lapha, nokuthi ngizokutotobisa ngikuyise kwakhe ulale, uthole nokuthotshwa amanxeba lawa." Ngakhoke sizokutotobisa ngokuhlwa sikuyise kwakhe.

Kwathi lapho selimathunzi uDingiwe wehla futhi esehamba noJevuza kaNtonteyana yena owayehamba sengathi kayikho into eyehlakele oYengweni, ehamba evuma ingoma yebutho lakhe, eyivuma ngomoy'ophansi. Wathi ukufika wahleka okaNtonteyana wathi, "Bayadlala abadlala ngawe Godongwane, wena vuso eliyoba ngumbeduka ingani balidle limnandi. Sukuma woza, sihambe siyolala." Wema uDingiwe, yena wayebeke ukuthi uJevuza uzokhala isililo. Wathi ekhuluma uJevuza wayemfaka isandla phansi kwekhwapha emfukula waze wema etengemuka ngoba amandla wayengenawo. Wasondela noDingiwe wamxasa ngakolunye uhlangothi batotoba bahamba, beqonde kwaMbangambi.

UGodongwane wahlala kwaMbangambi laze laphola, uNtonteyana kunguyena obopha inxeba, oligeza ngamakhambi nangesihlungu, alilumeke bonke ubovu.

Konke lokhu kwakwenziwa ebusuku abantu bonke sebelele. Kuthe ukuba inxeba seliyophola uJevuza wafika busukuthize sekuzokusa kodwa, ehamba noNobantwana wamletha kuGodongwane wathi:

"Namhla yilanga lakho lokuba ubaleke undinde, uzule emagangeni njengovmvane lwamaganga oluhambe luzula luhlola izimbali zonke zomhlaba. Beka amehlo akho entombini yakho nansi, ebingakholwa ukuthi usekhona ngenxa yezindaba ezizwa ngokufa kwesizwe sakwaMthethwa. Wena uzohamba, mina ngizosala lapha oYengweni ngihlola izindaba zakhona."

Wamnquma ulimi uNobantwana owayesemi eduze noNtonteyana engakabi nasifindi sokusondela kuGodongwane, wathi:

"Hawu kaNtonteyana wena futhi ungakwenza kanjani ukuba usale uma izinyane lenkosi lihamba na?"

Wathi uGodongwane esukuma phansi: "ukusho kanjani lokho Vondwe lomhlanga na?"

"Ake nithule nilalele mina, ngoba yimi engim-dala, ukuhlupheka ngiyakwazi. Kungcono ukugcina ngokugcinwa ngakho (ngisho ukujabula phela) kunokuba siqale ngokugcinwa ngakho sigcine sibe yizinja ezitholwa abafokazana basemaHlutshini lapho ngithi baleka uye khona."

Waphendula uNobantwana wathi:

"Emzini kababa kwaNdwandwe kukhona amaButho okungathi nxa ngiwancenga ngobaba ukuba azokuhlwithela lombuso wasoYengweni nowesizwe sakwaMthethwa avume nawo. Ngakhoke ngivumele ngiye kubaba noma umfowethu uZwide ethini, ubaba uyolivuma elami izwi."

Endlini bathula bonke kwazwakala ubuhashahasha begundane liququda insika yendlu phezulu ofindweni lwendlu nezinja zezwakala zishaya umkhulungwane

kude emagqumeni asoYengweni lapho abaninizo babebulawele khona; zazikhalela amazwi abo bezibizela ukuzingela.

"Iyakhuluma intokazi kaNdwandwe, yebo iyakhuluma, amazwi ayo masiwabuke siwacwenge," kukhuluma okaNtonteyana. UGodongwane wancenga ukuba kebaphume abanye, njengoba kwakukhona endlini noDingiwe. Wabancenga kebaphume isikhashana bona basale noNobantwana.

Sebesele bodwa uGodongwane wamkhombisa ubulukhuni bokuncenga isizwe sakwaNdwandwe ukuba simsize wamncenga uNobantwana ukuba abodle, ngoba bayobuye babonane emva kobusika obubili nentwasahlobo. Wakhala uNobantwana, waphelelwa amandla, uGodongwane wamthatha wamphakamisa ngezingalo zakhe wameyamisa ngodonga. Kwezwakala ukungqongqoza, wangena okaNtonteyana wakhuluma wathi:

"Uma uhamba ngalobu-busuku kuhle uhambe manje. Ngizokuphelezela, ngibuye ngibe umvikeli wentombi yakho bangadlali ngayo abafokazana, ngibuye ngikufikele uma umhlaba usuguqukile."

Wasukuma uGodongwane wagiya, wagiya wahlengazela izinyembezi, bambonga odadewabo noNobantwana noJevuza, bambonga ngamazwi aphansi bethi:

*"Ngqwaba, ngqwaba,  
Yemuka nayo, wo, yemuka,  
Uyiyenga ngani, uyiyenga ngani-na?"*

Wathatha ubuhlalu bakhe nebeshu lakhe lokuhloba wakushiya kuNobantwana noDingiwe ukuba bakulondolozelwe. Waya kuNobantwana waxhawula, wasibamba isandla sakhe esasithuthumela, kwaBalukhuni ukuba

behlukane intombazana yaliqinisa ifindo lezandla ngokuligcoba ngezinyembezi zamehlo ayo. Wazithatha izandla zafo uJevuza wazigcoba ngamafutha athize ezinhlanganisela zezinyamazane washo wathi:

*"Masihambe, Godongwane."*

Bahamba uGodongwane nokaNtonteyana nabafana ababili ababezothwalela uGodongwane. Kwathi ilanga liphuma basebekude izwe lasoYengweni sebelibukela luthuthu kude le. OkaNtonteyana wamnika induku uGodongwane yokuyiphatha okuyiyona eyayizoba udondolo; behlukana begcwele umunyu, ngaphandle kokukhuluma, uGodongwane wakhala izinyembezi njengoNobantwana, kodwa yena akazesulanga waziyeke zomela ezihlathini zakhe zomiswa umoya.

UGodongwane wahamba wawela iMfolozi-emnyama nemhlophe, wahlala kwaMnqobokazi, wadlula wabeka eNtshonalanga. Kwase kuphele izinyanga eziyikhombisa mhla efika kwelakwaHlubi elifuswa uBungane, okunguyena owamgcina ngempela wamkhombisa naye uGodongwane ubuqhawe bakhe ngokuphuma impi, ehlabana egwaza edilizela phansi. Kuthe ngenye imini wayozingela wabuye ethwele ibubesi lensikazi elifulele, laba-bafana bakhe abasebengamabungu, begodle amazinyane alo, amabili. Wonke umuzi wakwaHlubi wamangala kakhulu imbongi yakhona yamhalalisela uGodongwane ngezibongo ezaduma ndawoyonke, nenkosi uBungane yazithanda ngempela. Zazithi:

*"Thatha Ntala! Thata Ntala!  
Igqalashu elimashiyazinja.  
ZikaMashesha;  
UMagwaz'ayiqhub'ayiyis'oNdini;  
UMahlabana ngengculana kaYisemkhulu."*

*UMmina, mmina, mmina !  
 UChakid'ophuph'abelungu  
 Ngob'uphuph'indodana kaMondise,  
 UHlabana ngebosho lakhe ;  
 UMagqayiza bembiza.*

*UHububu—UHububu !  
 UMashay'inja ayiqoph'ibeshu,  
 UBafazi bakwaMthethwa,  
 Phumani nibone nans'inkondloba  
 Idlul'esangweni."*

Ukufika kukaGodongwane kwaletsa umoya omunye ezinsizweni zakwaHlubi ngaseNtshonalanga ngofoza zafona insizwa eyayigiyela lapho sekusuk'iqungu lokugwaza ikakhulu lapho kubenywa esibayeni igudu sekunqatshwa nalo ukufoza libenywe amanina isuke insizwa enenkani ilithathe ilibeme maqede iligxumeke phakathi nenkundla izibonge maqede ithathe izikhwili zayo ime ngalo igudu. Ukulithatha lapho kwasekuyimpi. UGodongwane wayelithatha maqede kumiwe kukhale omame afaabukelayo ngofoza fafazi ukuthi uGodongwane uzobulala omunye. Ngakhoke kwakuthi uma eselifeke phansi igudu, kusuke zonke izinsizwa kuyekiwe ukubema, kuhanjwe.

Kwafa isikhathi esikhulu uGodongwane ehleli lapha kwaBungane abantu abangamazi becabanga ukuthi uyindodana yenkosi. Emva kwalokho kwafika izwi lihanjiswa umfokazana ethi :

"Ngithunye induna yasoYengweni kwaMthethwa ukufoza ngizobikela inkosi yamaHlubi ukuthi uJobe inkosi yakwaMthethwa kasekho, ugodukile." Pho, lapha kwaHlubi abantu bakwaMthethwa babengabashayi lutho, kuyisizwe abasidelelayo.

Kwathi kuhleliwe nje omunye waxoxa wathi :

"Ewu, madoda kuthiwa inkosi yakwaMthethwa igodukile, kade kukhona isithunye sakhona sifikile khona lapha."

"Nithini madoda na?"

"Ehe, uJobe ugodukile."

"Ugoduswa ufani na?" kubuza ishingane elinye ngofozindaba imnandi; kodwa uGodongwane wathula ngofoza lendafoza yokufa kukayise yayimethusile.

"Ufani oBenesikhathi sokufoza lokho, futhi enandabani nezindaba zakwaMthethwa? Othand'ukufoza lokho angaya lapha kuleliya xhifa lapo umfokazi bembalile khona?" kusho omunye.

UGodongwane wathula, wathi ethatha wayephuma kulendlu yendafoza wahamba waqonda endlini lapho umfokazi wayelele khona, wafike wangqongqoza, wathi umfokazi : "Ngena."

"Uwena ophuma kwaMthethwa na?"

"Yebo yimina, fafa," kuphendula umfokazi.

"Kuyiqiniso ukuthi uJobe inkosi yakini kayisekho na?"

"Usushilo, mnumzane."

"Yagoduka nini na?"

"Kayihlalanga sikhathi emva kokufoza ibuye oYengweni ukuyobulala abantafayo. Sengathi babeyifekele."

"Ufani manje okhona ofusayo endaweni kaJobe na?"

"Qha, wangibuza kangaka mnumzane ngezindaba zakwaMthethwa, ungufozani wena? Ngiyakuncenga ngitshele ukuthi ungufozani?"

"Mina ngingu,

*"Magwaz'ayiqhub'ayiyis'oNdingi"*

"UMahlabana ngengculana kayisemkhulu. Yimina lowo."

Nempela wathula umfokazi, wathula embuka emehlweni, ngoba wayesho izibongo owayengazange azizwe selokhu wazalwa.

"Mina ngithunywe uJevuza kaNtonteyana iqhawe elisasele kwamadala. Lithe angofika nalapha kwa-Bungane ngibike lombiko ngingasheshi ngihambe ngilinde kuze kudlule isikhathi. Akashongo into engiyoyilindela."

"OkaNtonteyana lowo omshoyo umnumzane, unomuzi nesigodlo?"

"Qha mnumzane, uJevuza kaNtonteyana akusiye umnumzame ofanelwe yisigodlo; kodwa sewaze waba negama ngoba imithi eyazi. Uye lo owa eyinyanga yabantwana benkosi oYengweni."

"Pho abantwana labo benzenjani na?"

"Mamba! ukhona ongayaziyo indaba yokuba abantwana bagwazwa nguyise bafa? Omunye wabaleka nomkhonto, abamlandelayo bathi wafela ezintabeni."

"Abashiyanga mizi boba bili?"

"Qha, mnumzane abashiyanga mizi. Omdala washiya izingodosi kodwa zonke sezagana; omncane washiya ingodosi okuyiyona eyinqaba, ngifung' uNkosa-zana kaBaba eseMthandeni."

Wahleka uGodongwane, ehlekiswa ukuzwa ukuthi uNobantwana uyinqaba, wamkhumbula ekhala ethi makangahambi ngoba ezomlethela amaButho kayise; kodwa wabuye waxola wamdedela. Wabuza uGodongwane wathi:

"Ubani yona lengodosi na? uthi nensizwa engangami ingeyifohle leyonqaba?"

Wahleka nomfokazi wathi: "Uyadlala mfo wezizwe, um'udlala ngoNobantwana kaNdwandwe. Izinsizwa zithela kwasa-nje. Uthi yena unowakhe akaswele lutho."

"Abantwana laba abashiyanga dadewabo bona na?"

"Yebo ukhona udadewabo igama lakhe uDingwe. Naye selokhu kwafa abafowabo usaqulusele njalo ukwala uZwide inkosi yakwaNdwandwe."

"Yebo na?"

"Oyebo," kusho umfokazi.

"Uzothunywa yimina-ke baba ukuba uze ungikho-nzele kulezontombi zozombili zakini. Uyothi kukhonze "*uNompfongompo weziwa, Ingqwaba-Ngqwaba.*"

"Hawu, uNgqwaba-Ngqwaba kwakuyizibongo zomntwana wenkosi lezo," kusho umfokazi exwayisa amehlo ngoba uGodongwane ekhulume kanje. Waqhubeka wathi,

"Kodwa ngoba phela usho, ngiyokwenza."

UGodongwane waphuma waya elawini lakhe wabuya esepethe isikhumba sebubesi nehawu elincane lokusina elalisikwe abasiki basemaHlutshini, wathi kumfokazi yonke leyompahla aze ayinike uNobantwana, ngezandla zikaJevuza kaNtonteyana.

Wathi umfokazi, "Uma uJevuza eseyithatha lempahla angayidlulisi?"

"Mina ngiyobamba wena noma ungabaleka uyephi ngokufuna ngize ngikuthole. Uma uJevuza eyisiqhwaga naye ngiyokumfuna ngizengimthole. Uyomnika yona lempahla uJevuza umtshele ukuthi ayinike leyontombi ayitshele ngo

"*Nompfongompo weziwa,  
Ungqwaba-Ngqwaba*"

"Uyangisolisa mfo wezizwe, kwenziwa yini inhliziyu

yami ikuthobele sonke isikhathi ngikhuluma nawe? Ngiyakwesaba, ngiyokwenza njengoba ungitshela."

Kwasa umfokazi wabopha wahamba, uGodongwane wambona ehamba inhliziyi yakhe yabaohlungu ngoba ebona ukuthi uya ekhaya phakathi kwa bantu bakubo, kodwa yena usahlezi ezizweni.

Emva kwenyanga lendaba yokushona kukaJobe yezwakala, kwebuye kwezwakala indaba enye futhi engumhlola indaba enkulu kakhulu kuneyokufa kukaJobe. Kwaxoxwa indaba yomuntu omhlophe onwele zimashoba obonakele ngalapha eningizimu.

Lomhlola ungumuntu, ugqoke izingubo ezimboza wonk'umzimba, nokuthi izinyawo zalomuntu ziyamangalisa kazinazinzwani kuthi lapho enyathele khona kusale ingoxi kungabi amabatha abantu, ikakhulu esithendeni. Lomhlola ugibele esilwaneni esimangalisayo, esiyinqudulu. Kasinazinselo ezifana nezenkomo, kodwa ezaso aziklayekile phakathi, zihlangene ziyizingqukuqa. Lesisilwane sigijima njengamalangabi eshisa isona. Nawo lomhlola womuntu uphethe umbo-bo obubisa ushise ngonyazi konke okuphambi kwawo uma uke wabekana nakho. Lomuntu uyena nkosi negosa labo bonke ababulayo, nabangomayo, nabo bonke abathwasayo. Uyena lo owabela bonke ukuhlakanipha nokwazi. Bonke abantu banele ukumbona maqede babaleke bashiye befulele inkomo azofika ayidle. Athi ma eke wangena emzini akhithizele ubuhlalu phansi nethusi. Ngenxa yalesisenzo salomhlola sekuze kwavela lesisaga sokuthi:

"Nanabuke, Nanabuke, phuma kulawamanzi esiziba ungitshela. Ngithunywe ngumnewabo kababa, wathi mangobinca umutsha weNanabuke. Isihlangu seNanabuke kangisiphathi, kangiviki ngaso. Ngihlom'esenka-b'emnyama kababa."

Abanye baze baxoxa inganekwane yeNanabuke, yanda, ngokwanda phakathi, kwamazwe onke.

Abanye abantu abanesibindi baqala ukubona ukuthi iNanabuke lena kayidli muntu uma ingachukuluziwe, basondela sebeyifungaza, kodwa besaba isihlangu sayo, bexolela ukuphatha isihlangu esisikwe ezikhumbeni zezinkabi. Isihlangu seNanabuke sasiphatha unyazi lwezulu.

iNanabuke yayihamba iphelezelwa abantu ababekhuluma ulimi lwasoSuthu okwathi sebefike kwaZulu bazibiza ngokuthi abakwaMahlase bona bengabakwaZifisi. Amagama abo abanye kwaku oNomashila kaMbango, noNsuku kaMagawula noBovungana. Ukufika kwaabo kwaZulu besacwasiwe kwakuthiwa yizimpisi. iNanabuke le ababeyiphelezela yayiqonde ukuba bayisize bayiyalele indlela eya ogwini lolwandle ngoba yayedukelwe ezinye. Nayo yayiqonde eDalagube. UGodongwane ebona ithuba lokudlufulunda abuyele ekhaya wazinikela kuBungane ukuba aphelezele iNanabuke. Waphinda umkhondo wakhe uGodongwane eza ngawo kwaBungane wadabula ezweni lakwaQwabe eqonde ngaseMahlabathini aseNkandla elubekise ogwini. iNanabuke nabantu bayo babehambe belandela uGodongwane. Lapha kwaQwabe indaba yeNanabuke yaseyigcwele ezindlebeni zabantu seyiphendukelwe yaba inganekwane yoqobo. Bafika balala kwaQwabe, kodwa kwathi ebusuku uGodongwane weqa iNanabuke isalele, weqa kanye nesilwane sayo, nesihlangu sayo nokunye kokugqoka wayishiya iNanabuke ilele ubuthongo nabantu bayo. Wabaleka waqonda eMpumalanga kwaMthethwa ezweni likayise.

Kusa ngakusasa abakwaQwabe babona lomhlola, abanye balandela amasondo omkhondo wesilonyane, esinezinselo ezihlangene zingahlukene njengezenkomo.

Bamangala bebona ngamehlo abo iNanabuke. Kwakhethwa amaqhawe anesibindi bayibamba iNanabuke ngoBa bethi inyengelezi yolwandle edavuzwa iziziba zolwandle igubuzelwe amagobolondi antant'emanzini (kushiwo imikhumbi eyayibonwa intanta olwandle, kungeyamaPutukezi namaNgisi eya eNdiya). Basho nokusho bathi iyo lenyengelezi exephula imikhomo ngokungena kuyo iphume igile imihlola ezweni ihambe ishiya ubuhlalu ndawozonke.

Ibandla lahlanguana lanquma ukuba iNanabuke ingavunyelwa idaze ezweni ngokuthanda kwayo. Ubuhlalu lobu ebukhiphayo abantu babethi butholwa phansi ekujuleni kweziziba zolwandle. Kwamenywa kwahlanguana umphakathi, yithathwa inyengelezi yabekwa ebandla yahlolwa yizingcwethi zezinyanga. Kwanqunywa ukuba ife, ibulawe yinyanga eyaziwayo, eyayizogeza iziqhole wonke umzinba. Wonke umuzi wakwaQwabe owawubuswa uKhondlo wamenywa ukubukela inyengelezi ibulawa esibayeni, nokuba onke amabutho achelwe ngegazi lenyengelezi yolwandle. Kwawa izinkabi kubongwa amandla amathongo alethe lesi simangaliso seNanatuke sazofela kwaQwabe.

### ISAHLUKO III

BEHLUKANA-KE uGodongwane noNobantwana, wema uNobantwana ebuka uGodongwane emshiya engazi lapho eyakhona nalapho, eyolala khona ngaleyo mini yokuhlwa. Wema wababuka beshona bekhuphuka izigodi, bevundla imifula beqonda emazibukweni lapho kuwelwa khona, babuye banqume ezinkangala wazekhathala amadololo akhe avevezela wahlala phansi esiqundwini wabuka futhi ebuka uGodongwane emshiya emlahla phansi njengengcuba. Imicabango yakhe yazululeka ngoBa yena ubeshilo kuGodongwane ukuthi kuhle ayomncengela kuyise ukuba avume amabutho akwaNdwandwe azomlwela athathe ubukhosi bakwaMthethwa. Wabuye wabuka futhi wabona manje sebenjengezintuqusi zothuli kude le; sebenjengezinhansi ozibona phezulu ezulwini lapho kundiza izinkonjane ilanga libalele. Wabuka amehlo akhe aqundeka wafikelwa isiyezana sobuthongo, kwathi lapho sithi siyamthatha wezwa izandla zakhe zihhithika nento kuzo, wathi uyabeka wabona umutsha kaGodongwane usuwile phansi nobuhlalu sebugingqizeka. Waqabuka, wavuka, waqalaza amehlo akhe efuna uJevuza kaNtonteyana benoDingiwe; kodwa akababonanga.

Wacoshwa umutsha kaGodongwane wawusonga ngobunono kwathi phakathi kwawo wafihla ubuhlalu bakhe, wahlala futhi walalelisa, wezwa ehlathini eliseduze kuchwabazela. Wase azi ukuthi kukhona umuntu othezayo, ephula izinkuni ezomileyo, wayeseqal'ukuhlabelela igama lentombazana okwathi beyo-

theza namanye amantombazana akwafo ayithatha yona ayifaka emtatsheni webumba ngofo iyinhle. Nayo ngokunjalo yezwa umuntu egawula ehlathini, afo uyathe nge uncelemba intombazane evalelwe emtatsheni iqale ukuhlabelela. Naye uNobantwana washo ngezwi lamagekle walolonga emi ebeke ngakhona lapho kukhona umuntu othezayo wahlabelela wathi:—

*“Wena ogawula leli hlashana,  
Wongitshelala ubaba nomame,  
Ukuthi uBuhlaluzabenkosi  
Wangigqib' emtatsheni webumba.”*

Wathi eqeda kwezwakala izwi futhi ehlathini liphendula nalo njengamagekle ekhala lapho izulu lethwese, nalo lakhala ngoBuhlaluzabenkosi abangqiba emtatsheni webumba. Wahleka lona osehlathini ukufa aqede wathi:

“Eya suka Nobantwana usucabanga ukuthi sesikushiyile?”

Waphendula uNobantwana wathi,

“Usho kahle Dingiwe ngofo. . . .”

“Ngofo yani, yona leyo lokhu phela wena ukhala esikaNodungeni, inhliziyo yakho idungekile idungwa okwayo,” kusho uDingiwe ngezwi lokubinqa ingani futhi uyahleka.

“Iya suka Dingiwe, uzenza iqidlana ngofo sengathi kawudabukile ngokuhamba komfowenu.”

Waphendul'uDingiwe wathi, “kungangisizani ukukhala kwami, njengofo izinto sezinje? Isiwuchithile umuthi inkonyane, masihambe siyothenza sigoduke nami sebeyangifuna komalume.”

“Hawu, okaNtonteyana useshonephi lokhu ubefike kanye nathi lapha?” Kubuza uNobantwana ngokumangala.

“Ubengenakulinda wena ngofo ubonile ukuthi wena usakhala isililo esingenakuphela. Ngakhoke usuke wathi nyelele wagoduka.”

Kanjalo amantombazana angena ehlathini atheza, uNobantwana ethezela ikwafo ngofo kwakungekude kakhulu noDingiwe ethezela kwamalume wakhe. Batheza izinkuni bazibeka amaxha amancane zazezaba ziningi zalingana izinyanda ezimbili zokuthwala izintombi eziphilile nezinamandla. Bawaqoqela ndawonye amaxha lawo sawakhipha ehlathini, sawethulela osebeni lwehlathi. Basebethi ukuphumela ofala sebeyofuna isikhonko sokwaluka izibopho; bafika basisiphula babuya naso baseluka basenza izibopho emumye eluka zibe ntathu. Baqeda lapho bayakofuna utshani bezinkatha ezimbili zokuthwala ekhanda. Ngelikade, umuntu wafona izintombi ezimbili zisikazela zihamba ngendlela ziqonde ngakwaMbangambi, zithwele izinyanda zezinkuni.

Kwathi ekwahlukaneni nendlela lapho ilanga seliqala ukuphumuza umuntu emagejeni, nomfazi oqatha indima eseqala ikukhumbula lapho ebeke khona isigubu sakhe samanzi; kuthi lapho ufuka amahlungu uwabone ethunqa umusi; uzwe amaqhwagi eqeqezela etshanini, nazo lezizintombi ezimbili zafika enhlukanweni yezindlela ngaphansi kweminga, zahlala phansi zethula, zabukana, yathi enye,

“Dingiwe, sesiyehlukana lapha nawe usuqonda kwamalume wakho, nami sengiqonde ekhaya likafofo.”

“Ngiyezwa Nobantwana.”

“Inhliziyo yami ibuhlungu, funa mhlawumbe sibonane, mhlawumbe singabonani ngofo nakhu umfowenu usemukile akasekho umuntu ozongithwalela izindafo zakho angikhonzele kuwena.”

“Nempela nami ukusa kuyokwaziwa yimi ngofo

manje uJevuza usekude eqonde oYengweni. Ngifuna ukufika ngedwa mina nentombazana kamalume abantu bangasoli ukuthi kukhona okukhona ekade sizokuthukusa noJevuza."

"Uyohamba kahle-ke ntomb'endala, uwe ongikhumbuza umfowenu manje."

"Kodwa uthi siyobuye simbone?"

"Musa ukuyiphatha leyo."

"Pho sizokwenzenjani?"

"Nanti isu. Usukhohliwe yini ukuthi umnewethu uZwide uyazigayela kuwe Dingiwe. Usufona ngoaba ngithule sonke lesisikhathi ngifulawa ukuhamba komnewenu?"

"Uyangicasula."

"Qhabo kangikucasuli. Ngikhuluma indaba nge mpela ngoaba nakimina mayikhothe eyikhothayo. Uma uganela kwethu uwena inkosikazi yomuzi, uwena oyosizalela umbusi wesizwe sikaaba lesi engisithanda kangaka."

Ngenxa yokusithanda kwami ngizimisele ukuba ngimkethele uZwide inkosikazi ezoba ngeyakhe, ibe ngudadewethu ngothando nangokuzwana. Musa ukuzenzisa ingani uyazi uZwide uyakukhulumisa."

"Pho, uma engikhulumisa sekufanele ngimvume ngoaba wena usuvume umfowethu na? Kunga njengobulima," kuphendula uDingiwe ehlezi phansi ephethe eyakhe ngesandla kodwa nNobantwana ehlezi phezu kwenyanda yakhe. Bathula babukana engekho ophendula omunye bathi bethatha babehleka kakhulu kanye-kanye:

"Ihhi, mame!"

Uma indaba seyeqe emadolweni izintombi kwaZulu zaziiphetha kanje, angabi bikho oqonda omunye ukuthi indaba igcinephi, nakanjani. Basukuma njalo

bema bafukula izinyanda zaabo zezinkuni nazo zema, bafaka izinkatha emakhanda balungisela ukuba baha mbe. Babuye babukana bahleka, bahleka, bahleka futhi, bathwala. Wathi uNobantwana sekunguye manje oseqinile,

"Wohamba kahle makoti wakwethu, ukhonzele umfowethu enhliziyweni yakho lapho, noma ugxumagxuma, sikhona sibeka kancane thina bakwaNdwandwe, uyosizwa ntombazana siza sisho sithi: "*Wakhulekela izinkomo zakithi zema ubudladlamu.*" Xhawula kangiqonde kukucasula njengoaba ushilo." Washo uNobantwana wabamba ithambo likaDingiwe waxhawula, kwabanguyena manje osethatha isikhundla somfowabo uZwide, wazizwa kuvuka iqungo ekhanda ephehlwa ugqozi lokuba yena uyintombi kangaka, uzalwa umdlunkulu wakwaNdwandwe; njengoaba ekhuluma nje usekhulumela wonke uNdwanndwe namaNxumalo onke, asekhaya kuyise eMhlathuze nawasekhaya kwaNongoma. Lapho namuhla kusabuswa kukhonjwa ngeminwe. Wezwa uNobantwana igazi lakhe lishiywa ubunethe nokuthamba kwesifazane, nemithambo yegazi lakhe wayizwa igcwala igazi likaZwide, kwaaba sengathi kuyena ngabe usengumfowabo useyabuza ezibuzela yena luqobo ukuthi, "ntombi-ndini uthini ngami, kanti amazwi ami uwagwinya nezinkoabe zakwenu—yek'ukuhamba okuzal'induna."

Waxhawula wahamba waqons'intaaba noDingiwe wehla intaba wehlela kwamalume wakhe ngoaba kwasekuseduze. Wahamba uNobantwana waqinisa, wase wayibona imizi yakuabo emathafeni isebuqamamana, wahamba waqinisa enzela ukuba afike esejulukile khona eyoba namandla okuba afikele ngakumfowabo bathi lapho abanye bembuza ukuthi uze wathi evuka ekuseni ehamba nje eya kotheza kude kangaka izinkuni



ezishiya khona eduze lapha, kwakusuke ngaphi: aphenkulwe ngumfowabo athi, "Ninenda bani?"

Nempela wafika ekhaya uNobantwana esethi phici wonke umzimba umjuluko, wafika wayithi khahla laphaya inyanda yezinkuni, wazesula ngebayi lakhe wangena endlini kanina wathi "mame sengilambe sekuthi mangife."

"Uze ulambe nje lapho ubuthunywe ngu bani ukuyothenza ekuseni kangaka ungaze ngaya-nje kothenza?" Kusho unina ehlezi phansi eshisa inhlabathi yokugay'ugwayi. Wayesethi kuNobantwana,

"Thatha nantya itshe lami likagwayi ulithe lapha, kanye nembokodwe yalo nansiya emsamo." Washo maqede wathi locu uNobantwana wakulanda, wathi efulathela wayemufuka unina ngoba wayemthanda umntanakhe wafuye washo wathi:

"Lapho ubuthunywe ngu bani uzufuye usujulukile nje wabamnyama? Inani lapha ekhaya kukhona izigqili zokuthenza izinkuni. Izinkuni zihlale ziyizindondela namafulaha. Wena uphuma ngokulanda izinkuni ubase, nokudla kakufanele uziphakele kukhona izigqili lapha kwenu. Usukhohliwe yini ukuthi wena uzalwa ebukhosini nokuthi unezigqili ngisho nezokukugeza izinyawo?" Washo unina kaNobantwana walemukela itshe lokugaya nembokodwe yalo, wathi uyahlala phansi uNobantwana unina wamkhombisa futhi enhla nendlu emsamo imbenge imboziwe wathi makayithathe kukhona kuyo imbumba. Wafuye waphindela uNobantwana njengengane encane wafuya nembenge yembumba wadla waneliswa. Wathi ukuaba aqede lapho wayesephendula unina ethi:

"Mhla sengiyoshada, kanti nasemgagcweni ngiyohamba nezigqili zikababa yinina? Uma kanti ngigagcela kubantu abaphansi ngenzenjani mame na?"

Elokufa kalitsheni, ngoba funa ngigane nakuyo inkosi leyo kuthi mhlawumbe uma inkosi leyo ihlaselwa yehlulwa iba ngumuntukazana mina ngizisize ngani uma ngingakwazi nokuzenwala na? " Washo wahleka uNobantwana ngoba wayebona ukuthi unina lona wayengaboni ukuthi yena usekhulile, ziningi izinto ezazimkhombisa ukuthi usekhulile ngoba wayesengene ebuntombini, nabo bonke owaabo azalwe kanye nabo wakhula kanye nabo basebenzelwe amadili abo babelethiswa amathunga. Ukubelethiswa ithunga kwentombazana kwakusho izinto ezimbili ezinkulu, noNobantwana wayekwazi lokhu. Okokuqala kwakusho ukuthi intombazama yakhe iweqile umgomo wobuntwana, manje isingumuntu, isibalwa emshungwini wamtombazana athiwa yizintombi. Okwesibili kwakusho ukuthi uyise wentombi usebikela izwe lonke ukuthi umntanakhe noma eseqoma usesebangeni lokuqoma nokulotsholwa, naye aphekezele ezinye izintombi uma ziyobonda noma sezibuthwa zijutshwa naye wayengase enze njengabanye. Lezizinto zisho into enkulu emantombazaneni kwaZulu kusuka emandulweni kuze kube namuhlanje.

Unina kaNobantwana wala uma inkosi ithi makezelwe ithunga lakhe wathi yena funa umntwana abese-shesha ukuqoma, aqale ngabantukazana ngoba kakukhonsizwa eyayiqavile ngisho nomnumzane owayenesithunzi sokuaba engase aganele kuye uNobantwana. Unina wayemcafangela njalo umntanakhe ethi useyingane akakafaneli ukwazi izinto zemigcagco. Lapho abanye bebelethiswa ithunga naye wayeya; bonke owaabo eba bona inhliziyok yakhe ayizwe ishona phansi sengathi naye ngafe usebelethisiwe ithunga wadedelwa phansi kwesandla sikanina.

Wahlala phansi uNobantwana wathula eca banga

ngonina emangala uma unina engase ezwe ukuthi namhla uvuke ekuseni-nje ubevukela ukuyovalelisa esokeni lakhe. Wathula washaywa uvalo, kwathi ngenxa yesazelo wadla ngokushesha wathuntutha imbenge waqoqa izinkamba ekade zidla abanewabo wazigeza waziqoqa, waphumula. Kwathi ntambama wabona abafana bebuyisa izinkomo sebezosenga wangena futhi endlini wakhipha amathunga okusenga wawathela amanzi, wawabeka phandle. Kwathi kunjalo zasho izimazi ziqhamuka zigudla uthango, zasho zabonsa kwaphuma izinsizwa zagiya, zagiya, zigiyela ukukhalima kwezimazi ngofo zazi bakumbuza izindaba zokulwa namanxeba okuhlafana kwayo mhlazane lezozimazi zidliwayo ezizweni ngezizwe. Kwaphuma imbongi yakwabo yayayatheka emagcekeni iphethe isinqindi senhlekwane yamemeza yathi.—

“Yo—o—o—o!  
Uyezwa nje muntukazana na?”

Yasho insizwa, yema, izwi laphela, yalalela. Yathi ikhalima futhi imazi yakwabo Nobantwana yabuye imbongi yathathela, yathi thathatha, igijima nomuzi wonke yaphinda yathi:—

“Yo—o—o!  
Ngakhala ngedwa  
Ngingeziwa muntu?”

Yabuye yema yathula ilinde inkomazi iza ekhaya, nayo kwaba sengathi ibangiwe, yavuma, yakhalima yase yalidonsa izwi, nembongi yesukwa ugqozi ekhanda yaluleka yenafa nazo izibongo zemazi leyo, nabo bonke baphuma falalela phandle. Yasho yathi,

“Yo—o—o!  
Ngakhala ngezwa ngifa,  
Zonk'izizwe ziyongizwa ukulila,  
Ngililela amakhanda  
Angilanda ngengxenywe,  
Ngakhula ngaba umthantashiya.  
Zwanini zizwe zomhlaba  
Thulani nilalele nans'inkondloba!”

Yathi ifika lapha imbongi yagiya, yagiya, yagiya kwaphuma unina kaNobantwana washanela igceke phansi ngesiphuku sakhe, wabuye wangen'endlini. Yagiya imbongi ithi, iphinda,

“Nans'inkondloba  
Nans'inkondloba!  
Yebuya Nxumalo,  
Yebuya maNdwandwe!”

Wath'eqeda lapho zazingena esibayeni abafana begijima belanda amathunga ngezindlu, ngezindlu, kwabuye kwathi cwaka umsindo enxulumeni lonke, kwathula kwaduma amathunga izinkomazi ziwakhuza phezulu.

Wehla uNobantwana wayokukha amanzi emmfuleni wathi ebuya wafumanisa unfowabo uZwide endlini eseqedile ukubukela ukusenga nokusina kwezinsizwa. Wayebuzwa ukuthi uNobantwana:

“Uyoyaphi kusasa ekuseni?”

Waphendula uZwide wathi, “ubuzelani?”

“Qha ngiyabuzwa nje, ikhona into engibuzela yona.”

“Kobe ngingenzi lutho,” kusho uZwide kudawabo.

“Kuthe ehlathini ngitheza ekuseni kanti ngitheza lapho kukhona khona amajeke akwaMbangambi,”

“NakwaMbangambi, akhona amajeke okungaxoxwa

ngawo? Authule, bengithi uza nendaba," kusho uZwide, ephulula ibeshu lakhe esefuna ukusukuma ahambe.

Wathi uNobantwana, "ushaye phansi, mfowethu, ukuze ubimbe namhla."

"Qha angifuni ukuxoxa imibedo namantombazana ngoba ayaphuphisa. Nawe usuqala khona ukungiphuphisa wakhe isidleke semibedo phezu kwekhanda lami."

Wahleka uNobantwana wayesethi, "ehlathini lapho, bekukhona noDingiwe." Wanela washo lelozwi nje uZwide waqinisa amehlo wathi, "suka, uyahlanya, uqinisile usho uDingiwe lo engimaziyo na?"

Wath'uNobantwana, "yen'omaziyo, ngisho yen'okuhlanyisayo nohlanyisa mina."

"Woza nazo."

"Ngiza nazo," kusho uNobantwana. "Ekuseni kusasa uyahamba uyagoduka, uyob'ehamba nentombazana yakwamalume wakhe uMbangambi. Kodwa kuthe lapho sesehlukana naye ngaphonsa amazwana kuye ngikuphonsela ngaze ngathi, 'Sikhona sibeka kancane thina bakwaNdwandwe, uyosizwa ntombazana siza sisho sithi: *Wakhulekela izinkomo zakithi zema ubudladlamu.*"

"Suka lapha, wena bani ongakhuluma kanjalo Nobantwana, ubuthathaphi ubuciko obuphethwe yilawa-mazwi?" Washo wahleka uZwide walalela amazwi kadadewabo uNobantwana emqunga isibindi kwaBa sengathi sekungowakhe usemahlule, sekuyintombi yakhe, eyakhe yedwa benodadewabo uNobantwana.

Waphendula uNobantwana ephethe esandleni sakhe utshani bomtshiki ebaluka ebenza ubusenga, wathi, "konje wena ubaba wamfuza ngakho konke. Ungi-

buka ungiBuke ubusucabanga ukuthi ngisengumntwana okhasayo. Konke engikwenzayo nilokhu nithi kungenxa yobuntwana obukimina. Niyangahlula mfowethu. Ukhulile umuntu lo!" Washo lawa mazwi okugcina wahleka.

Wabuye waphinda uZwide wathi,

"Woza nazo, ntombazana."

"Ngiza nazo, mnewethu. UyaBonake, mina lo osangicabanga uthi ngiyingane, ngikuyalela lokhu. Ekuseni uDingiwe uyachitheka uyagoduka. Liyothi liphuma ilanga lithi phasha, aBe ekhwela kuleziyantaBa ngoba uzohamba ngaleyaya-ndlela engenawo amazolo njenga lena engenzansi."

"Pho mina ngingenze njani lokhu uDingiwe uthi ma engibona athi makangidle mgamazinyo?" KuBuza uZwide.

Athi uNobantwana kumfowabo,

"Wena ungamvukela ekuseni kakhulu; akothi lapho liphumayo wena uthathe izinyawo umlandele ngoba funa kuBe sengathi utshelwe yimina.

"Uyobona noma kanjani ukuBa ungitshelile uma ngingaqhamuka ngimlandela ngoba uyocabanga nokuthi mina ngizunywe ubuthongo ngephuza ukuvuka waze wangishiya," kusho uZwide ephikisa udadewabo.

"Pho uzokwenze njani? Usuyesaba ngoba uDingiwe uyakudle ngamazinyo uma ekuBona? Uyigwala mnewethu."

"Uyashesha ukunquma ngiseza nendaba. Mina ngiqonde ukuBa ngimvukele ekuseni kakhulu khona kuyothi lapho ilanga liqala ukufudumala mina besengiluphinda emuve ngibuya. Yena uDingiwe uyathi ethuka esehlangana nami, mina ngibe ngumuntu ovela ezindaweni zakhe, osebuyela ekhaya."

"Nalo lelo isu elihle, yenza sibone ngoba kayihla-

tshwa ngamkhonto munye," kusho intombazana, uNobantwana.

"Lungisake dadewethu, ulungise umphakwana nje wokubamba amathe funa ngithi ngiyakhuluma kome umphimbo."

Bathe bengakaqedi konke kwangena unina, engena nezinkuni ngoba kwasekuhwelele. Behlukana njalo, wathi uZwide kuNobantwana, "uyokwenza njalo phela."

Wathi uNobantwana, "kulungile."

Ekusukeni kwakhe uZwide waya elawini lakhe watsihela abafana bakhe bocansi ukuthi balalele phezulu ngalobo-busuku ngoba bayovuka kusemnyamana bahambe. Nempela balala kwathi lapho kuphuma ikhwezi enzansi wabavusa uZwide bahamba.

Akabatshelanga abafana lapho kuyiwa khona, kodwa bahamba-nje babeka phambili bangabuza kumntwana ukuthi kubangwephi. Seliphumile ilanga basebesondele esifundeni sasoYengweni kodwa umuzi wona ungakabonakali. Bahamba baqonda egqumeni elibekene nasoYengweni okwakuyilona mboniso lapho umuntu engabona umuntu noma eqhamuka kude. Bahlala phansi uZwide wabatshela abafana ukuaba baphehle uzwathi babase umlilo. Bakwenza lokho abafana. Sewukhihlikile baqala ukosa ummbila bosela umntwana, kuthi lapho usuvuthiwe bawusonge ngamakhasi bawulethe kuye uZwide, kuthi lomfana owosile ummbila uZwide athi kuye :

"Qala indlela mfana eya ekhaya konyoko." Nempela umfana ayiqale ayixhoze aye ayiphume phezulu nehleza abesethi kumntwana,

"Sengiyiqedile."

Awuthathe uZwide ummbila awudle angawuxhozi izinhla zonke aziqede, kodwa ashiyele njalo lomfana

okade ewosa, khona eyowosa kahle nolandelayo. Emva kokuba adle zibentathu izingqatho zombila uZwide wacela ilahle lokuba acobebele igudu lakhe abeme. Kwabe akalibemanga wezwa amazwana ekhuluma ethi :—

"Uyabona Ntombazi nakhuya ekhaya sesifikile."

Elinye izwi lathi : "Kuphi ekhaya kuyoyonke leya mizi engiyibonayo na?"

"Yonke leyamizi kusekhaya emzini wakithi oYengweni. Ingani phela ngabemkhulu umuzi kuna-lokhuya, mzala, ukuaba kawubulawanga ubaba mhla ebulala abafowethu."

"Washo ke, mzala, kanti yikhona laphaya lapho umalume, inkosi, wabulalela khona zonke izinsizwa? Sengiqala ukufikelwa ukwesaba manje."

Wanela ukuwezwa maqede amazwi abantu besifazane uZwide wabeka kubafana laba ababehleli emlilweni bezosela ummbila, wabeka umunwe wakhe emlonyeni, ngalokho eqondisa ukuthi mabathule bathi cwaka. Pho, lokhu abafana bayazazi izindlela zezinsizwa, nabo bathula bathi du balalelisa, nempela bawezwa amazwi amantombazana amabili ekhuluma eza ngendlela ezodlula ngakubo. Kwakusekuseni kwase-mini lapho ilanga selifudumele lixosha abantu abahlakulayo. Lapha ngenzansi kwakukhona isiwa esifi, esenile ngenxa yamahlathi nesikhotha. Izinyoni zazichwakazela zikhala, zikhuza izinyoka ezidlekeni zazo, nezinye zazihlabelela ngamaphimbo emizwilili, izingila zazo zibeke phezulu. Abafana ngalesi-sikhathi balalela emahlathini, bakuzwa lokhu-kukhala nokuhlabelele, izinhliziyi zabo zagcwala umoya wokucupha izife, nemigibe.

UZwide yedwa ongezwanga lokhu. Yena wabeka igudu phansi wasula umlomo wathula; wasukuma

kancane wathuntutha ibeshu lakhe uthuli, walunguza, kodwa akaBonanga lutho nempela. Wayesithwe izihlahlana ezaziphambi kwakhe, kodwa ezwa konke okukhulunywa abantu, laba besifazane, ngoBa umoya wawuqonde kuye. Wezwa omunye ethi:

“Uyezwa nje mzala, sengathi bakhona abantu abalapha.”

“Uzwa ngani?”

“Ngizwa kusephuzela izinwele zami ekhanda, nomzimba wami uyangisinda.”

“Akukhulunywa kanjalo uma kuhamjwa endaweni enengozi. Kuyathulwanje kuthi lapho sekudlulwe lapho kuBe yikhani umuntu ethi, uBonile-nje laphaya sengathi ikhona into ekhona.”

BaBuye bathula bahamba, intombazana le isiqala ukuqalaza ngemuva, manje uZwide eseBaBona kahle beza bewuka sebezojika ngalapho ehlezi khona. Wasukuma umntwana wensizwa waphulula izintshodo zakhe, wathatha ihawu nezinduku wema, wehla wangena endleleni ezodlula amantombazana; wema wawafu-lathela wawanika umhlane wakhe. Yasho enye into-mbazana yathi:

“Uyambona mzala, nangu umuntu phambi kwethu umi, usilindile.”

“YeBo ngiyambona, kodwa umuntu wasekhaya, lowaya. Awuboni ukuma kwakhe, umi uqholoshile, uncondile ngoBa esebone izintombi. Kawuzwa negudu linuka kade ebema mhlawumbe naBanye. Kakusiyo inswelaBoya nesigcwelegcwele lesi.” Ngenkathi bekhum-luma baBehleBa amazwi abo ekhulumela phansi. Basondela baze bafika eduze, kwathi lapho seBefuna ukuqheluka endleleni baqwegwese, wasuka uZwide wema ecaleni wathi:

“Sanibonani bantanethu.”

Bathi bona, “yeBo, sibona wena.”

“Hawu, niqhamuka-phi ekuseni-nje kanti seniya-thakatha yini?”

Ahleka amantombazana, waphendula uDingiwe wathi, “sizothakatha kanti thina, sizalwa emaNdwandweni yini lokhu sizalwa koMthethwa nje?”

“Kanti kuyathakathwa yini kwelakithi, lokhu phela mina ngiyibuka nje leya mizi yakini elaphaya phesheya, ngiyibuke ngibone imhlophe amagecke sengathi kwa-dlula abathakathi bashanela.”

Bayakhuluma njalo kaBemile amantombazana ayahamba abeke phambili uZwide lo uBeke kancane ecaleni nawo. UseBuye ekhuluma uZwide ethi,

“Mina mtakaMthethwa usuyoze ungiBekephi kade ngangikulandela?”

UDingiwe athule angamphenduli.

ABuye akhulume uZwide athi,

“Sengizinyawo zenja, uyabona nawe lapho nginjalo, sengifana nomfokazana ngihamba nginethwa amazolo ngiyofunana nawe.”

“Uzungifune-nje sekuthiwa ngilahlekile yini, lokhu kade ngivakashile?” Kufuza uDingiwe.

“Kodwa namhla uthini ngami? Awukadeli uku-ngihlola, ungiphendula lokhu mina sengazinquma ngawe, ngazishadisa ngodwendwe lolimi namathe,” kusho uZwide, lapho wagxuma wema ngaphambili kukaDingiwe, wavimba indlela, wathi umbamba ehlo-mbe njengokwenza kwezinsizwa ezinye ezintombini, wamthatha uDingiwe wamchiliza isandla waqonda kuye, wamshaya ngehlo-mbe, kodwa kwaBonakala ukuthi ushaye insizwa, kwezwele kuyena, wayesethi,

“Uyabona ungilimaza?”

Waphendula uZwide wathi, “lapho wena uBuwe-nzani?” Wayesezenza umuntu osethukuthele uDi-

ngiwe, washikisha amahlombe wamthatha wamphonsa laphaya uZwide waqonda phambili.

"Kahle ukulwa mtanethu, kangilwi mina nawe, lona izwe liyothini uma ngilwa nawe, umuhle unje, umhlophe njengezihlabathi zolwandle. Ngikubeka ngikhophoze ngizwe inhliziyi yami icima, ishaya esifubeni sami, ithi ngephe, ngephe."

Wabuya wahamba, wathula, wabuya uZwide wayithinta intokazi ngesandla, yadlukumeza ihlombe futhi, yathatha isiphuku sayo yasiphonsa emagxalabeni, sayesashaya ngemuva yathula intokazi.

Wabuye waphinda uZwide wathi,

"Umuhle Dingiwe, hawu umuhle."

"Pho, mangimuhle, uthi mangenzi?"

"Sengizwile." Waphendula uZwide ngomoya wokuncenga wathi,

"Nginike bona lofo buhle, bube ngobami, ngiyabufuna, ngifuna bona bodwa. Angifuni wena, ngifuna ubuhle bakho kanye nenhliziyi yakho, lokhu kokubili ngiphe khona, kobe nganelile."

Wathula uDingiwe inhliziyi yakhe yahlabeka ezwa uZwide, indodana yenkosi ikhuluma ngomoya ophansi, ebonga ubuhle bobuso bakhe, ebufisa ukuba kube ngobakhe.

Wambuka wamuthi jeqe ngamehlo ngenkathi uZwide esabeke ecaleni, wambuka wamfanisa noNobantwana, wezwa inhliziyi yakhe imzwela, ngoba uNobantwana wayemkhumbuza uGodongwane isithandwa sakhe. Wacabanga wabona ukuthi ngelinye ilanga uyoba inkosikazi kaZwide abizwe ngokuthi owakwaNxumalo esizweni esikhulu kangaka, inhliziyi yakhe yathi, cosololo. Wabuye wabuya wabona uyise uJobe oyinkosi ebulala abafowabo ngolunya nangamandla obukosi owayenawo. Wamthatha uyise wamfanisa no-

Zwide uma eseyinkosi; lapho uZwide eyoba namandla abuse njengoyise ebusa izizwe eziningi. Mhlawumbe ngelinye ilanga amzalele abantwana abahle uZwide, kuthi mhla ediniwe ngoba eyinkosi-nje kuphela abathathe abantwana bebele lakhe abachome emikhontweni ababulale.

Wezwa ewazonda onke amakhosi omhlabha ngoba yena ngamhla lokho wayengafani nomntwana ozalwa yinkosi; umuzi wakwabo wawusunjengamanxiwa ngenxa yenkosi; wayekhathele evela kude ukunyenya umfowabo ngoba ebalekela inkosi; nakhu ecaleni kwakhe kuhamba inkosi, nayo iyofana namanye uma isikhathi sayo sesifikile. Wafika lapha nemicabango yakhe uDingiwe wabuye wambuka phezu uZwide, amehlo abo ahlangani, wethuka uDingiwe, wathi uZwide,

"Ngisakulindle, ngitshele, uyongioma nini? Sengiyabuya lapha kulelizibuko, kufanele ngiphindele emuva."

"Kangazi kuyozehlakalela. Uthando kalubizwa lusabele. Uma ngihlola kuleyo nhliziyi othi uyayifuna ngibona kungekho lutho, kucwebile."

"Uyangethembisa uthi mangilinde isikhashana na?" kubuza uZwide.

"Qha, angikwenzi lokho insizwa kangizange ngiyithembise; uma selungafiki?"

"Kawuthandwa yimina ngedwa mtanethu, ngilapha-nje ngimele isizwe sikababa. Sona uma sizwa ukuthi ngiyakweshela siyokuthanda ngaphezu kwami, sikukhothamele, ntokazi kaMthethwa, wena engibe ngisalale ngiphuphe wena, ngizwe ungidlukumeza; kodwa kube wena ungazi."

Wathi esho lawamazwi, babefika emmfuleni, wafika uDingiwe wachopha izinyawo zakhe, wema laphaya

uZwide. Babuye babukane, ahleke uDingiwe nje-  
ngazo zonke izintombi zakwaZulu ezithi mazeshelwa  
zihleke njalo. Wathi eqeda wathi uDingiwe kuZwide  
ebusweni.

“Ngiyezwa Ndwandwe, kodwa kangizwa ndawo.  
Mina ngizalwa isizwe samaqhawe aphuma kusuke  
usinga ekhanda. Ngafunga kowethu ngathi mina  
ngeke ngiyithande insizwa engelona iqhawe, engazange  
ihlabane ndawo empini, okuyothi lapho ikhuluma  
nami ingikhombise inxeba ithi lapha ngahlabana eku-  
thini, kosobaniyani, esizweni samathinithini. Wenake  
njengoba umi lapha nje sewahlabana-phi?”

Washo ekhothama eqhubekela phambili nokuchopha  
izinyawo zakhe, uZwide washwaqeka wazihlola, waku-  
zwela ukuthi intombazana iyamhlaba ngamazwi, ikhu-  
luma iqiniso. Waphendula wathi,

“Angikahlabani ndawo. Kodwa impi ngiyayiphu-  
ma nezinsizwa, ngayiphuma ngimncane ngithwele  
ucansi.”

“Ehhe uqinisile ngoba wawubaleka kuqala bangaku-  
tholi owenu uma befuna ukukushaya nawe. Iphi  
ingozi?” Kufuza intombazana isibuye yaphakamisa  
ikhanda futhi. Wayikhomba uZwide wathi,

“Nansi eqakaleni,” washo eluphakamisa unyawo.

Wahleka uDingiwe, ehleka uhleko lwakhe wathi,  
“ngivele ngasho ngathi wawubaleka. Ngifuna ingozi  
engake ngayibona kubafowethu: omunye isekhanda  
lapho wagwazwa khona umkhonto bemcifaba. Komu-  
nye yayisehlombe naye futhi bemcifabile. Kuhlala  
kuhlale, izingozi zibagulise. Uyakwazi ukuguliswa  
ingozi?”

“Uyangehlula lapho. Beka, ngisuka lapha kuwe  
manje ngiyiqala phansi futhi obami ubuqhawe, ngilwe  
ngokunye, ngibe iqhawe eliyodla amanye. Esami

isiphapha siyogingqa ezinye ngokugwaza ngoba siyo-  
benyeza igazi ezinye zibenyeza imisebe yelanga. Ngi-  
yobuya ngize kuwe.”

“Nalapho mhlawumbe ngiyobe ngingakadeli uma  
omunye wabafowethu esahlabene kunawe. Ngiyogana  
ohlabana njengabafowethu, noma odlula bona ngoku-  
hlabana—nanko amazw’ami.” Washo ephakamisa  
ikhanda, ephuma emanzini esehamba ekhuphukela  
ekhaya.

Wema uZwide wayibuka lentokazi efuna ukuba  
ahlabane kuqala phambi kokuba imqome; wayibuka  
kwathi makayeyise kodwa inhliziyi yakhe yamtshela  
ukuthi intombi enje, esukile phansi, engagcwele ngo-  
kulingeneyo, kayinakweyiseka nasemzini kayise noma  
efika nayo eyilobolile.

Wema wayibuka, itshobela, isithwa yizihlahla inga-  
zange im-beke, wafona ukuthi iqinisile naye wafula-  
thela, wahamba. Wathi ukuhambahamba ihawu nezi-  
nduku ekuyekethisile, wabuye waphenduka wema  
wayibuka intombazana, wayibona iqonsa intaba nge-  
ndlela yabantu ekhanya isihlabashana esimhlophe,  
icwila, ivela, ngenxa yotshani; isonga isobela nga-  
laphaya kweziduli ezigcwele nakalokhu kwaZulu; wa-  
yesefisa uZwide sengathi ngabe leyondlela inguyena  
izinyawo zikaDingiwe zinyathela phezu kwakhe.

Wathi ephenduka wafona unogwaja endleleni, wawu-  
sukela ngenduku ewujikijela kodwa induku yaphasa-  
laza yawela kude, wagijima wayoyicosha, wathi  
engena futhi endleleni wayesekhohliwe ngoDingiwe,  
wathi ukuthi yathayatha, esuluza esikaza ngezinduku,  
ebula ihawu lakhe njengoba izinsizwa zenza uma ziyo-  
kweshela, wazewafika lapho eshiye khona abafana  
bakhe wabamemeza wathi,

“Masigoduke, selihambile ilanga.”

Baqoqa izimpahlana aBabefike nazo aBafana bazisonga balandela.

Wathi kuBo uZwide,

"Qondani ekhaya nina ningangilindi ngoBa kukhona lapho ngisayakhona."

Baphendula aBafana bathi,

"Sizwile," bahamba begijima belandelana boBabili, bemshiya emuva uZwide.

Ngenxa yokudumala yinkulumo kaDingiwe uZwide wayeqonde ukuba ake adlule emzini yakoMdlalose lapho kwakukhona izintombi ezazizihle, ake abeke amazwi kuzona, abuyeke aye ekhaya.

UZwide wayecabanga ukuthi ukuzalwa ebukhosini kuqeda yonke into, kakudingeki umuntu abeliqhawe ngokuhlaba, kuphela kuhle ahlabanelwe yizinsizwa zakhe. Wayesezwile ngenkosi yesizwe sakwaZulu eyayidume ngoBuqhawe fazeBayitha izibongo bathi:

*"Inyath'ehamb'isengam'amazibuko  
Umzingeli, owadl'uSukuzwayo nendodana  
Amadod'aphenduk'um-bejezana  
Obeye bamsole,  
Uyabuya bamzek'izibongo."*

Wayesezwile nokuthi lesisizwe sinolaka, siyalwa siyayivika induku, nomkhonto siyawuhlaba uhambe. Wayazi ukuthi lesisizwe sakwaZulu noma sisincane-nje kunesakwaNxumalo kodwa siyalwa, futhi sisondelene nesakwaMthethwa okwakuyisona esesabekayo okwaleyo-nkathi, nokuthi lesisizwe siyaganiselana nabakwaMthethwa. Ngamanye amazwi, uZwide wayazi ukuthi uma leziziwe, esakwaZulu nesakwaMthethwa ziganiselana, kukhona ukuzwana kwemimoya. Naye-ke wazimisela ukungena emshungwini wezinsizwa zikayise, alwe

kanye nazo, zimazi ukuphonsa kwakhe ngenduku khona isizwe sizomutha izibongo ahlabana ngazo.

Wahamba wazewafika eduze nomuzi waseMdlaloseni, wabona umfana wakhona wamqhweba wathi kuye,

"Ikhona intombi yalaphaya mfana?"

Wathi umfana "Yakumuphi umuzi?"

"Ngisho uNtandose."

"Ehhe ukhona kade ngimbona khona manje echitha umlotha," kuphendula umfana.

Wathi uZwide, "Hamba uyongibizela yena."

"Ngiyothi ubizwa ngubani?"

"Hamba wena uyothi ukhona umuntu ofuna ukukhuluma naye."

Wenqaba umfana wathi, "ngeke aphume uNtandose ngiyamazi owakwethu. Kuhle ungitshele ukuthi ngubani wena khona ngizokubika kahle."

"Uyothi kuyena uZwide kaNdwandwe."

Wamangala umfana wathi, "Hhayi, lesosibongo kangisazi mina kulomhlaba, uqhamukaphi wena?" Umfana wahlehla wathatha isandla sakhe wasula amehlo wabuya wasula amakhala, wasihlikihla isandla sakhe wambuka uZwide, wathi futhi umfana, "Hhayi kangikwazi," washo umfana wakhona wahlala phansi.

Wambuka lomfana uZwide; lomfana oweyisayo othi lapho emthuma yena alibale ukuthinzisana naye. Kwathi enhliziyweni yakhe makamthathe ngenduku ambeke phansi, kodwa wabuye wambuka, inhliziyoyakhe yathi,

"Yini-ke yona lena ekhuluma kanje kimina?"

Wancenga futhi uZwide wathi,

"Hamba mfana wami, yena uNtandose uyangazi, sabonana komunye umgcagco ngalaphaya kwaleziya zintaba. Hamba usho njalo kuyena kuphela. Yena uyokwazi ukuthi uZwide kaNdwandwe ngubani lowo."



Wasukuma umfana, wacifa amehlo, nebeshwana lakhe lesikhumba sembuzi selaqothuka umlilo, isinene lesi senziwe ngobuhlalu obulukwe kahle kuBonakala ukuthi umfana wabunikwa yizintombi ezithanda khona lapha eMdlaloseni.

Wasukuma umfana wahamba etwanguzela nomzi-njana osengathi uhuqwe ngomlotha, izinwele ekhanda zingamagqayingana okommbila kaHlezana ungamilile kahle. Wahamba waye wangena kwaBo endlini. Wahlahlala kuthe nya kucwebe yonke into wabuya wathi thushu umfanyana lowo wathi uyahamba walandelwainja empofu, wayixosha. Wahamba wafike wema ngesibaya, wathula.

Wayesethi ukucasha ngesihlahla uZwide khona engezobonwa muntu ophumayo. Umfana wema njalo encike ngesibaya, waze uZwide wafikelwa ukukhathala emadolweni wayesethi ukuhlala phansi wabeka isihlangu sakhe ezinyaweni ngoBa nelanga laselisemini yantambama selishisa. Wahlala elindile isikhathi, wathi eguquka washaywa yisithunzi somuntu emi nge-muva kwakhe, wethuka maqede wakhuphula amehlo, kanti sekuyintombi yakhe iphethe igobongo lamanzi; iyachobonyeka ngenxa yamahloni.

Wasukuma uZwide waqina umzimba, wathi lapho ebeka ngasekhaya wambona lomfanyana esahleli ngesibaya encike kuso. Yathi intombazane,

“Umfowethu lowaya, ngingeke ngilinyazwe lutho ekhona, nawe angakushaya-nje.” Yasho intombazane yahleka. Waxhawula uZwide, wezwa efikelwa ubuqhawe bomoya. Wayesafunani enye into lokhu nansi intokazi imi phambi kwakhe imbona eliqhawe, washo wathi uZwide, “Sawubona Ntandose, mtakababa.”

Wachobonyeka uNtandose, wahleka njalo.

#### ISAHLUKO IV

SEKUZOPHELA iminyaka emihlanu uGodongwane wanyamalala, izwe lakwaMthethwa nalo lonke elincikene nalo, nelakhelene nalo lafikelwa izinsuku ezinzima. KwaBa-khona iminyaka yendlala enkulu eyabizwa ngokuthi uMadlantule. Lelizwi lona uqobo lwalo-nje liyazichaza. Lisho ukuthi umuntu wayedla kodwa abuye afune okunye, anganeliswa yilokho kudla abekudlile.

Lendlala yaqala ngoBa izwe lithole imvula ngesikhati sikaNcwaba, bonke abantu baphuma namageja bayoshaya izife. Ummbila wathi lapho ukhahlelayo laphuma ilanga elingenqeni, labalela lathi hho—o. Ummbila waqala ukushintsha imibala, ingani ubuluhlaza umnyama, waguquka waBa mpofana, kwathi umnyani lo ingani ubuqhilika ubiza izinyosi, waqala ukubona sengathi owekhaBa eselivuthwa. Waya kanje ummbila, wathi usuka lapho wadondobala, wabasha washona phansi, woma.

Amakhosi athumela izinyanga kuwo wonke amacala omhlabane ikakhulu eluSuthu ukuBa lezizinyanga zifike zizolapha izulu khona lizona. Kwezwakala ukuthi izinyanga zaseluSuthu izulu kazisalikhwifi zithi maliqonde olwandle, kodwa seziligcina khona ekhaya lingayindawo. Abanye bazikhomba eSwazini izinyanga zezulu, bathi lezo kazehluleki ngoBa ziyaliphatha, zinamatshe alo, okuthi uma ziwabeka phansi, ziwa lumbe ngemithi (ezingenakuyithengisa kumuntu noma eseshaya izinkomo-nkomo) izulu line noma belingasabonakali nefu lodwa leli.

UJobe wayesefile eBalungwini sekuBusa uMawewe umfowabo kaGodongwane wakwenye indlu. Uyena owayalwa umphakhathi ukuba athumele nxazonke zomhlaba ukuba kuyofunwa izinyanga zezulu. Izigijimi zahamba, ziwa zivuka, bekake lokhu zihamba ezweni linendlala. Inqwaba yafela endleleni, kodwa isigcino baze babuya nenyanga yomSuthu eyafika kwagcwala wonke uwonke ozobona umhlola, izulu lizoniswa kungazange kubonwe lokhu nanini. Kwagcwala nabavela oYengweni. Inyanga yalinga ngawo wonke amasu, kwathi nempela ntambama balibona izulu ligcwala amafu, lihloma ngoba umSuthu wayebethele izikhonkwane zezulu kuwo onke amacala omuzi, esokugcina wasibethela esibayeni phakathi. Sekusebusuku wagumula umfo wakhona wababunqunu wabinca umsufelwana wahamba umuzi wonke ekhuluma ulimi olungaziwayo ngaphandle kwalabo abake bahlala oKhahlamba. Wazula nomuzi wonke, wagwaza laphaya, nalaphaya ngomkhonto, nabantu bamangala ngalobobusuku kwaze kwasa bebuka lomhlola. Abanye baphuma phandle kwaZulu kwaMthethwa balibona izulu linyazima kude phezu kwezintaba zasoKhahlamba, basho bathi nempela umSuthu uyalibiza, liyeza. Phakathi kwamabili balizwa lindindizela eduzane, kwaseSandlwane nasemahlathini aseNkandla, basobela bonke abantu bangena ngezindlu zaBo, lanyazima ngempela izulu, kwabamnyama kwathi buqe, bezwa kuqathaka amathonsi amakhulu, landindizela; kodwa labuye lathula ladlula, labonakala lisa likhombisa izinkanyezi; baphuma abanesibindi ababengakalali, balunguza phandle bambona umSuthu emi ngasesangweni ekhomba phezu ngesinqindi sakhe somkhonto ebusula amazwi angaziwayo. Abawalalelisa kahle bathi ayethi:—

*“ O, holane le 'na ka nkeloa leholimong!  
Ke hloka lipheo ke'ng, nka be ke ikela teng! ”*

Banyonyoba abanye babuzana bodwa ukuthi uthini umSuthu uma esesho njalo na? Kwafumaniseka ukuthi abazi, babukana bodwa, babuka phezu, babona izinkanyezi, nezulu selindindizela ngasempumalanga lihamba liya olwandle namathonsi lawo abawezwe eshaya phansi nawo ayesenyamalele. Banikina amakhanda abanumzane bangena ezindlini.

Kwasakusasa izulu libalele njengayizolo kodwa kukhona amazwana phezu eziqundwini zotshani. UmSuthu wabizwa wangeniswa ebandla umphakathi uhlangene, wabuzwa inkosi uqobo lwayo ukuthi izulu ulenze njani, kodwa waphendula umSuthu esegedezela amadolo, ilanga lishisa emini kwaba sengathi limakhaza, waphendula wathi naye akazi ukuthi lidlule kanjani loku ulilethile. Mhlawumbe ikhona inyanga enamandla kunaye ekhaya eluSuthu eliqhuba yaliyisa phambili. UMthethwa akakhohlwanga yilokho, ngakhoke umSuthu wagoduswa.

Isikhathi saqhubeka izinyanga zifika zidedelana, bezigodusa; beziyekisa amabele, abantu sebehlupheke kangangoba baqala ukumba izikhwali, nezimpande zomthente bazidla. Ubukhwebezane, umvuthwamini, nesundu lasendle lalikhwiwa lingakavuthwa liluhlaza, liyobekwa emakhaya lidliwe seliqala ukuklwela. Amagulukunqa, neziphofu, nezinhlamvu zezigude kwakudliwa kuluhlaza. Izilwane zazidliwa ikakhulu injinja, namakati, kodwa amakati engasabizwa ngokuthi amakati sekuthiwa izimbodla. Inkomo lena yayihlatshwa emzini idliwe inyanga yonke, noma isigcwele izimphephu, yayidliwa kuthiwe inobomi. Uma isiphelile inyama kwakuthathwa isikhumba lesi ebesingane-

kwanga soma, kuthathwe sona-ke manje nofoya baso siphekwe sidliwe.

Izigebengu zanda kakhulu namasela agcwala izwe lonke. Umuntu imbuzi ubengayishiyi ikhulekiwe phandle, ubeyibopha phezu kwekhanda lakhe ilale naye exhibeni kuze kuse. Amathole ezinkomo abeboshwa endlini kanye nezimbuzi kuze kuse.

Ngenxa yobubi obabukhona kwavela izinto eziningi, nezilwane zasendle zaqala ukugasela ngasemizini yabantu zifuna okokwesula amathe. Kwathi ngelinye ilanga kuhleziwe kwabonakala ngenzansi komuzi izichwe zihamba zilandelana zifuna osebeni lwamahlanga ziphumputha ezingakuthola. Umphakathi wamangala kakhulu.

Omunye wakhuluma wathi: "impela amadlozi awobaba asifulathele uma sekuqhamuka lezizinto ezinje."

"Kuvele kwabonakala umSuthu simbizele ukunisa izulu, kodwa asimze anqune phakathi komuzi wamakhozi, nezulu labona umhlola ingani belisazokuna, lafulathela labaleka."

Wathi omunye, "makumenywe umphakathi ubone lokhu." Washo maqede wasukuma nabanye basukuma balunguza, nempela bazibona izichwe ziphumputha okwazo emahlangeni. Babiza izinja abanye bazikhombisa bezisasazela zathathela kodwa zabuye zakhweca imisila zabuyela nyovane zinswininiza ngokwesaba. UMawewe naye wabizwa ukubona lokhu, kodwa yena wathi,

"Qha bandleliphakathi, umhlola, masiyeke, singangcolisi imikhonto yethu sigwaze okungagwazwayo ngoba funa sife ngoBethu ubuthi."

Ibandla ladamba lahlala phansi. Kwakukhona ifu ebusweni benkosi ngenkathi iyala ibandla ukuaba lingenzi lutho. Nokho bazibukisisa lezichwe zi-

phumputha okwazo zidlula zibange phambili, zaye zashona kude, kuyoyonke indawo kuphuma izishomo zabantu zifuka, zikhombisana lomhlola eziwubonayo.

Kwathi sekudlule konke, nokwethuka sekuohlile ibandla lahlala phansi, inkosi yathi,

"Mina kangimangali uma ngibonna lokhu ngoba sengike ngezwa lukhulu ebusuku, kukhala isilwane esishiso umhlola ngempela."

"Awu, uthini uNdahezitha na?"

"Ngiqinisile," kuphendula inkosi, iphendula ibandla. Onke amadoda aqala ukubukana ngamehlo, aqhwebana kwabasengathi enye kwenye ithi:

"Ngitheni? Kawuzwa-ke?"

Yaqhubeka inkosi yathi: "Sekungamalanga amabili lento ngiyizwa ikhala, ngivuke, ngilalele exhibeni lami; ngithi ngiyizwa ikhala laphaya kuleliya gquma." Athula onke amadoda alalela lenganekwane.

"Khuluma Siqongo ukuthi wena wabonani ekuseni, mhla kade kukhala leso silwane."

Yakhuluma indoda yakwabo ekhanda liluphumpu, yathi:

"Mina bandl'elikhulu ngavuka ekuseni ngaqhwe-tshwa yinkosi yathi make ngiyobeka laphaya ezibukweni. Ngaya njengomyalo wenkosi, ngafica amasondo ezinselo zesilonyane engingazange ngiwabone seloku ngazalwa ubaba nomame."

"Chaza, lawo masondo ayenjani Siqongo na?" Sekusho induna.

"Kuthi lapho enyathele khona kusale imihhlo, engafani neyezinselo, kodwa eyizingqukuqa njenge-sagila." Washo uSiqongo, lapho wonke uwonke usubuka, usucife namehlo ulalele imihlola eyenzeka emzini wenkosi.

Kwasukuma enye indoda yathi,

"Mina nkosi lendaba sengike ngayinuka ngayizwa. Idumile phakathi kwa bantu lapha eBalungwini. Nawo lawa madoda akhona lapha, lendaba ayayazi, kufi abukeke sengathi kawazi lutho." Washo lokho wahlala phansi.

Inkosi yawafuka onke amadoda yawaqala phansi nohla yayeyawaphonsa phezulu, yabuye yawahlelemba phakathi ngamehlo, amadoda anyakaza, enye yathi,

"Ingani lapha ekhaya sinezangoma nezanusi ezaziwayo. Kukhona oJevuza kaNtonteyana abake baphatha abantwana benkosi. Kanti bona benzani? Ingani ngikhuluma-nje okaNtonteyana ulapha phakathi kwethu, yini amandla akhe angabonakali manjena ngoba abantwana sebafa? Ngibuza lokho mina."

Waphendukisa amehlo wonke umphakathi ngalapho kukhona khona okaNtonteyana; abuya amehlo abo bonke abeka phansi futhi. OkaNtonteyana wathula kwafasengathi akazwanga lutho.

"Ehhe, ukhuluma kahle wena kaSobanibani, iza ngoma zalapha ekhaya sezayaphi?" kusho abanye.

"Sukani lapha, esikhundleni soku ba nikhulume enikwaziyo, nenikufonile, senisizakele uku ba kuphume izangoma na? Uthe omunye wethu niyayazi lendaba madoda nonke. Ngaphambi koku ba kukhulunywe indaba yezangoma, khulumani enikwaziyo." Kusho induna. Ibandla lonke labuye lathula, nalabo ebesebeqinise amehlo baqala ukubeka phansi.

Kwasukuma indoda endala, eyayifake isicoco, umhlane wayo usugobile, namadolo asaqothuka izinyama zawo zabanemixhili ba, yakhuluma yathi:

"Mina nkosi ngazi uyihlo, ngabuthwa uye ngiyibungu, yena wayeyingane kimina. Ukuthinzisana kwa bantwana lokhu thina kasikwazi. Lapha ekhaya ikhona into ekhona." Wathi lapho esho njalo ama-

doda ahlabisa ikhefu aphakamisa amakhanda ngoba nangu umuntu owayezokhuluma awakhulule eku boshweni imilomo. Yakhuluma indoda yakhona yathi. "Kuzo lezizindawo ezishiwo inkosi noSiqongo lo, impela kuyezwakala isilwane sikhala. Mina sengike ngezwa nezwi limemeza lithi."

*"Ngqwaba, Ngqwaba  
Yemuka nayo, wo, yemuka,  
Uyiyenga ngani, uyiyenga ngani-na?"*

Amadoda onke ashwaqeka abukana sengathi wona akayazi ngaloluhlobo. Nayo insizwa endala eyayixoxa lendaba yathula yalalelisa, yabuye yaqhubeka yathi:

"Mina ngokwami ngithi makuhlonywe kuzingelwe kuwo wonke amahlathi alapha eduze kufunwe lomhlola wesilwane nalo muntu ohamba naso uku ba baphi, bafunani lapha, baluhlobo luni?"

Kwasukuma yena uSiqongo uqobo lwakhe, yona inkosi isathule ithe nya ingakhulumi wathi:

"Selokhu kwa bulawa abantwana benkosi, kwanyamalala noGodongwane ongaziwayo noma wafa noma wabaleka waduka nezwe, izinto zisimele ngazibelu zonke. Indlala ithe be—e phezu kwethu, njengoba nani ni bona; kuqhamuka imihlola nxazonke zezwe, impela kasazi ukuthi lemihlola ishoukuthini. Nezintombi zezwe lonke ziphelelwe uthando kazivumi ukuthanda izinsizwa. Ngikhuluma nje inkosi nansi ilwa nentombi yakwaNdwandwe nani nonke eniyaziyo, uNobantwana igama layo. Iyala, iyanqathuza ngekhandu kayifuni nokuzwa ngenkosi; kuthi noma sibuzwa ukuthi ithandaphi, bathi bonke kayazelwa muntu. Nomfowabo walentombi, okunguyena nkosana yakwaNdwanndwe naye futhi waliwa inkosazana lapha ekhaya, udade-

wabo kaGodongwane, uyala naye, unqathuza ngekhandla akafuni nokuzwa."

Waphendula omunye phakathi kwebandla wathi:

"Sivele sasho sathi kanti lapha kwaMthethwa izinyanga kazisekho yini?"

Manje kwaphendula uMawewe uqobo wathi "Uqinile Siqongo ukuthi uDingiwe uyamala uZwide na? Uneqiniso lokuthi uZwide ufuna ukugcagca naye na?"

Waphendula uSiqongo wathi:

"Ngiqinile wena weLanga, ngiqinile, ngifunge ngamakhosi akaMthethwa elele ekhaya."

Wathatha uMawewe inkosi wathi: "Izinto ezinjengalezi kazinakuvunywa ukuaba zehlakale. Kufanele kwenziwe okungase kwenziwe, amathongo athokoziswe ngokudlukumeza okuthile kwenziwe ngenkani. UDingiwe lo, uzogcagciswa ngenkani kuZwide; athwalwe ephekezelwe ngamantombazana amabili aye aphonswa kwaNdwandwe. Okwaphi khona lokho ukuaba amantombazane alalelwe uma esho into yawo?" Washo uMawewe wahwaqabala, kwaBonakala ukuthi unengiwe.

Kwabuzwa omunye wathi:

"Kambe, wena-wakomkhulu, kosekulunge intombazana ingathandi umuntu lowo kodwa iganiswe kuye ngendluzula?"

Waphendula uSiqongo wathi:

"Thula! thula! wezwa ngoBani ukuthi inkosi iyaphendulwa na?"

Kwahlokoma ibandla engxenyelathi, "Qhabo, uyabuzwa, ukuabuzwa kakoni lutho." Kwase kugcwala ukuvungama okukhulu, khona phakathi kwalokho kwasukuma omunye owayenesibindi wema wathi:

"Ehhe nkosi, nami ngiyabuzwa njengalowaya obuze

kuqala. Ngithi, kwake kwenzeka yini ukuaba intombi, noma sekungumfazi, aboshwe ngenkani aganiselwe kumuntu yena engamthandi na? Ingani ngisho kusabusa amakhosi anesandla sendluzula umuntu wesifazane akaphathwanga ngaloluhlobo na?" Washo maqede umfo wakhona wahlala phansi wesul'izithuku-thuku zomjuluko sengathi libalele ilanga kanti noma libalele ibandla lihlezi phansi komthunzi. Bonke bathula, kwathi ingani amehlo amadoda ahlafe phansi, kodwa iziqu zawo zabamhlophe zibeke uSiqongo yena ophendula kusuka.

Wathatha futhi uMawewe, inkosi, wathi: "Kanginandaba nokwakwenziwa ngamanye amakhosi amadala akuqala. Lawo asadlula kanye nezikhathi zawo. Mina elami izwi lithi, uDingiwe uzoganiselwa ngenkani uZwide. Hamba Siqongo uyolungisa abokumthwala uDingiwe bamyise kuZwide, ubuye uze lapha kimina ngaphambi kokuba ngilale."

Ibandla lachitheka. Umuntu wabona amadoda ethwele izagila ehla ngemimfula, amany'ewusa izigodi ethwele emahlombe izimboko, sengathi akhathele. Indaba yokubiza izanusi nezangoma yashaBalala khona lapho akakho owabuywa wayikhuluma kanye namanye amadoda. Inkosi nayo yaphuma yayongena esigodlweni yalinda ukuzwa kuSiqongo ukuthi amafutho azohambisa uDingiwe aselungile yini.

Naye uSiqongo waphuma ebandla waqonda ngasendlunkulu wayobikela uDingiwe amazwi enkosi uMawewe. Wathi ukufika wangena endlunkulu emva kokuba angqongqoze bamvulele, wabiza uDingiwe wathi:

"Ngizofuna uDingiwe, makeze lapha ngimtshela umyalezo wenkosi, umfowaBo." Nempela uDingiwe wayazi ukuthi uMawewe akamnamele, wasuka wathi

locu, wamlandela uSiqongo. UDingyiwe elandelwa amantombazana amabili ayemthanda kakhulu endlunkulu. Wathi ukufika phandle uSiqongo wathi kuDingyiwe,

“Lalela lapha.”

Wathi uDingyiwe, “Ngilalele.”

“Kuthiwa wena ngafo lobubusuku, uzohamba uye kwaNdwandwe uyoganiwa khona kuZwide. Amabutho ngiphuma lapha nje sengiyowakhetha azokuyisa khona.”

Wathi uDingyiwe, “ngingaganiswa kanjani kuZwide ngingamthandi na? Kuqale nini lokho ukuba nathi thina esizalwa inkosi uJobe siphathwe kaludedengu nje?”

Wathukuthela uSiqongo wathi: “leyo nkosi eyakuzalayo seyafa, kubusa abanye manje, nabo beza nemithetho yabo. Ngikutshela lokho kuphela. Lungela ukuhamba. Bopha imithwalo yakho ukhethe amantombazana okukuphekezela yilowo umthetho wenkosi nowami.”

“Wena bani ongakhuluma kanjalo kimina Siqongo? Konjeinja isutha bese iluma umniniyo? Akuwena yini owakhuliswa kwethu uyisigqili sikaBaba asinika indlu yakwethu, umame ekuthuma lapho ethanda khona? Uthi ngoBa namhla sekwafiwa usukhushulwe uMawewe bese ubiyoza phezu kwekhanda lami ngoBa sengasala ngedwana?” Kukhuluma uDingyiwe izinyembezi sezihlengezela emehlweni.

Waphendula uSiqongo wathi; “kawazi izwi labadala ukuthi kusinwa kudedelwana, abaphandle bangene endlini, nabasendlini baphumele phandle emakhazeni? Ungikhumbuza okudala ingani unyoko wayengenza isidwedwe sakhe engiphonsa laphaya nalaphaya ngekhandu; engibeletisa izingane zakhe njengomza-

nyana ngiyindoda ngingaka? Ukhuluma kanjalo kimina wena, osunjengenja namhla kimina? Ngizokufundisa izolo, ngifunge abakhwekazi impela.” Wathi esho njalo wafulathela, wabuye wathi shingili ebeka emuva, wabona uDingyiwe esamile embuka. Izintombi zomdlunkulu zikaMawewe nazo zizwa ukuthi uDingyiwe uyahanjiswa ngenkani, ezinye ezazingamthandi zema zancimfa, zabeke izandla eqolo ngenxa yokujabula. UDingyiwe yena wema wambuka uSiqongo wathi kuye:

“Siqongo-ndini, mhlawumbe wena osusina namhla ngoBa uthi sengasala ngedwa uyozisola emva kwesikhathi. Ungathini uma ngalumbo lithize kuvela inkosi ngelinye ilanga inqobe wena noMawewe wakho lona osumkhonze njengedlozi; kuthi kunjalo inganyule ezandleni zenu, ingigane na?”

Wahleka uSiqongo wathi: “IzindaBa ezinjalo zazivela ngezikhathi zezingane kwane, namhla ezinye izikhathi. Kasisezwa ngoChakijane kaMgcololo umphephethi wezinduku zaBaba; sizwa kuphela ngeNanaBuke nayo kimina iyingane kwane njengoChakijane.” Washo wahleka uSiqongo, wahlekela phakathi, okomuntu, ebema igudu limkhwingca emphinjeni. Wahamba waqonda ngasemadlangaleni lapho kwakuhlala khona izinsizwa zamaButho asekhaya.

Kwasekukusihlwa izulu limnyama impela sengathi lifuna ukukhemezela, izindlu umuntu wayezibona-nje kuphela ngemililo elokoza phakathi njengenhansi eSomvu, kuthi nabantu abaphakathi uma uBaba bafesengathi bakhathwe ngesibuda esiSomvu, besabeke sengathi bayizilonyanakazana. Izinsizwa zazibema amagudu azo, izihlangu zigaxwe ezimpahleni zezindlu. Ukulwa nezinye izizwe kwakungeyinto eyayisachumile ngoBa amakhosi ayengazondani. UMawewe wayengazondani noZwide namanye amakhosi aseduze. Kuthe

esengene uSiqongo wayifika indaba yakhe ezinsizweni, kwaBonakala ukuthi zikhona ezithanda ukumhambisa uDingiwe, hhayi ngoba zifuna ukugcina umyalezo wenkosi kanti ngoba zifuna ukuhamba-nje zishaywe umoya zifike zeshele nasezintombini kwaNdwandwe.

Besaxoxa bebema amagudu abo, kwangena omunye esethuke kabi ethwele amehlo wangena wathi phulukundlu wathi,

“Hawu madoda, niyezwa-nje phandle lomhlola okhala lapha phansi emmfuleni na?”

Baphendula abanye bathi, “qha, kasikezwa lutho.” Bathi besho njalo babephuma abanye belalela phandle, nempela bezwa isilonyane sikhala kodwa singakhonyisi okwenkabi noma inkunzi yenkomo. Khona ngalapho futhi bezwa sengathi ukhona umuntu ozi bongayo uthi :

“*Ngqwaba, ngqwaba,  
Yemuka nayo, wo, yemuka,  
Uyiyenga ngani, uyiyenga ngani na?*”

Bonke bafakana imilomo omunye wathi komunye, “uyezwa nje na?” Waphuma uSiqongo walalela naye wezwa lendaba. Omunye wathi, “Ehhe, kade sikhuluma ngayo lendaba khona namhlanje ntambama sithi miningi imihlola elapha ekhaya, nakho phela sekuvelile.” Wema uSiqongo ubuso bakhe baphaphatheka sengathi buthelwe ngomlotha, wathi umi, kwawa umkhonto owayewuphethe.

Omunye kwaBelalelele wathi,

“Izibongo zeqhawe lezo mngane, kawuzwa yini sengathi kukhona abagiyayo manje, lapho sebethi “Yemuka, Yemuka?” Iona owayekhuluma manje yena wayengethukile njengabanye, kuyena kwakumnandi ukulalela izinsizwa sengathi zibonga enye.

Omunye wabuye wathi,

“Lalelani futhi, indaba inkulu lapho niyezwa sengathi kukhona amadlanzi athi :

“*Babaleka. . . . Ngcindezi . . . zi . . . zi !!*

“*Bayemuwa. . . . Bathi . . . mbe . . . mbe . . . mbe !*

Lalelani madoda leyondaba inkulu, kakudlalwa lapho, futhi kabakho abantu abahaya esinye isizwe. Baye-bathuke abantu ngoba sekuvinjanisiwe nje, seku-bulawa abantu.”

Nempela zonke izinsizwa namadoda baphuma phandle bezwisisa ngezindlebe ukuthi lowomsindo owani, nokuba uphumaphi. Kwaba sengathi bayeza laba-fantu beza neno bazohlenganisa lapha eBalungwini. Waphuthuma uSiqongo ukuyofikela uMawewe inkosi, kanti nayo inkosi isiphumele phandle ilalele lomhlola owehlakalayo ufe ungaqali ngoba miningi iqala, idlula. Bathe bebuka lokhu kwafika umlindi wesango lase-Balungwini ehamba ekhefuzela, wazobika ukuthi, nempela lesisilwane okukhulunywa ngaso ukuthi si-hamba nendawo yonke abathi siyinanabuke, nasi sesimi sijame esangweni, siyathimula. Kasisodwa, phezu kwaso kumi umuntu sengathi ugibele. Waba-mema ukuba banyonyobe bazocinga ngawabo amehlo. Njengoba kwakumnyama bagaqa phansi ngamadolo belinga ukubonisisa lesisilwane; Belunguza bewa ngapha nangapha besisinga, nempela basibona ukuthi ziyona nanabuke lena, kodwa igitshelwe ngumuntu, uthule uthe nya.

Inkosi yayala ukuba kuyobizwa uJevuza kaNto-nteyana ukuba enze angase akwenze inana-buke inganeni ngesango, okungenani ime khona lapho ikhona inganyakazi. Kwathi beya endlini kaJevuza bafumanisa ithe gembeqe kungekho muntu, nezinto zicakazekile sengathi kuhanjiwe kwemukwa. Njengoba

uJevuza kwakuyimphohlo kwaBalukhuni ukuba kungathiwa ubaleke nobani, lokhu kwakuzobuzwa kubafazi bakhe uma wayenabo.

USiqongo waphuthuma endlini yamantombazana endlunkulu ukubona ukuthi uDingiwe usebophe wagcinaphi. Nakhona wafumanisa indlu ivulekile kungeko muntu ngisho nezincansi, sekwemukiwe. Wacabanga sengathi mhlawumbe izinsizwa kanye noJevuza zihambile; wehla waya ngenzansi ezinsizweni wazifumanisa njengoba ezishiyile ziphelele. Wamangala nabo bambuza bathi,

“ Yini nduna na? ”

Wathi, “ Kanimbonanga uJevuza noma uDingiwe na? ” Baphendula bathi: “ Qhabo.”

Omunye wathi: “ Yini na? ”

Akabuyanga esezwa uSiqongo wayesehambile wenyuka waya ngenhla. Edlula esangweni, wabona lesisilwane sesingene senyuka kugibele umuntu phezulu, futhi kukhona ohamba phansi eceleni, wema. Wezwa lo ohamba phansi ekhuluma ethi, “ uMawewe nezinduna zakhe ulala laphaya; leyondlu nje eyakhe.” Walalela uSiqongo izwi walizwa kungelika Jevuza uqobo lwakhe.

Wabuza lona ogibele wathi:

“ uDadewethu uDingiwe pho yena ngingambona kanjani lokhu nguyena engifuna ukumbona kuqala? ” Bakhuluma njalo bayahamba bayenyuka nomuzi, abantu bemizi sebevale iminyango, amadoda ayaqhaq hazela ebona inana buke ingena emzini wakwaMthethwa.

Waphendula lo ohamba phansi wathi:

“ Lowo, zinyane lesilo ngiphume naye, uphakathi kwama butho lawa akake umuzi manje. Ngimshiye esandleni somzala wakho uVukani ozalwa uMbangambi. Umbangambi, usamkhumbula, umalume wakho.”

“ Qha umshiye ezandleni ezilungile. Yima sime, simemeze induna ibize uMawewe eze lapha.” Nempela bama, uJevuza wamemeza wathi:

“ Nangu uSiqongo bo! Nangu uSiqongo bo!” Kwathula kwathi nya kwaBasengathi kakukho muntu. Wabuye waphinda uJevuza wamemeza, kwezwakala izinsizwa zithi,

“ Ingani izwi lika Jevuza nje lelo, ememeza uSiqongo? ”

Baphendula abanye bathi: “ Ehhe, okaNtonteyana lowo.”

“ Pho kwathi nya, ushonesthi uSiqongo lokho kade elapha nje? ” Basho njalo bayasondela ngale kwesibaya lapho uJevuza ememezela ngakhona. Bathi bethi gaga, bazithela phezu kwenanabuke, bethuka bakhandana, abanye bamemeza bathi:

“ Hlomani nanguJevuza engenisa inana buke ekhaya! ” Kwahlokoma wonke umuzi, kwathi lafa abethuke kunjalo umuntu lo wenanabuke wavulela unyazi olunokuduma kwezulu, kwafa bababili, omunye wathi esevalelisa khona lapho,

“ Hhawu ngiyafa naba, ngifulawa amalumbo ngingawazi, lapho bengiyaphi lokhu akusaphunywa lapha ebusuku.”

Ngenxa yokwethuka uSiqongo ebona lento iduma phambi kwakhe wamemeza wathi,

“ Hlomani zinsizwa, yimpi lena! ” Wathi ethi uyawaqeda lawo mazwi, uyabaleka, uJevuza wamuthi hile ngebeshu wambeka phansi kwathi lapho kuthi makamqedele, wakhuza ogibele inana buke wathi,

“ Musa, ungambulali makahambe ayobiza uMawewe amlethe lapha.”

Wazikhalela uSiqongo wathi, “ Ngiyeke Jevuza, nakhu ungincintsha umoya ngiyeke ngiyobiza inkosi.”



Nempela wahamba uSiqongo wabuya nayo inkosi uMawewe. Esefikile uMawewe umuntu ogibele wathi kuye :

“Wena Mawewe ngaphambi kokuba ngikhulume nawe, kuhle uyohlola ngaphandle kothango lomuzi kaaba uJobe ukuthi kukhonani. Uma usubonile ubuye uzotshela mina. Wena Siqongo tshela amaButho akho lawo ukuthi akabeke phansi izikhali aqoqane lapha manje azozwa imiyalo yami.” Nempela uMawewe walunguza ngaphandle kothango waBona izinhla ngezinhla zamaButho ayeklelile ngaphandle elungele ukubizwa agwaze. Wema uMawewe wabamba umlomo ongaphansi, ikhanda lakhe lamsinda wabuya wazobika. Wabuza ogibele inanaBuke kuMawewe wathi :

“Uboneni?”

Wath’uMawewe, “ngibone lukhulu.”

“Thulake uzwe ma sekufike onke amaButho akho.”

Afika amaxuku amadoda, manje sekuphakathi nobusuku, amafu ayekade efukuka sengathi lizokuna ayesecewebile. Inyanga yayiselwa iphuma ebusuku impela. Phezulu emkhathini wamaquma namahlathi waBona sekukhanya inyanga bayibona iphuma, iyisibadu esimhlophe njengeqa leqhwa. Ngokukhanya kwenyanga baBona kahle manje ukuthi inanaBuke lena isilwane esingenazimpondo, futhi sinomhlwenga njengamadufe. Ngenkathi bebuka phandle komuzi baBona amathunzi amanyama sengathi yizinkomo zilele phezu kwensinde, kanti abantu bemi bencike emahawini aBo. Lapho imikhonto inyakaza iguquka umuntu wayebona ukuthi benye, benye.

Wakhuluma lona ogibele wathi : “NgiyaniBingelela nina bomuzi kaaba eBalungwini. Namhla ngifikile minaGodongwane engagwazwa kulomuzi. Ngaphandle laphaya kukhona amaButho ami engiwaqoqe emaso-

ntweni amaBili ngikuleli. Abantu baKaaba Bonke. Ngifike ngesikhathi esihle lapho nina besenithengisa ngomtakabaBa wobambo lwakwethu, senithi makayogana kuZwide. Lokho wena Mawewe kanye nenduna yakho uSiqongo kwenza ngoBa ufuna ukuba uZwide akuthande besekuthi nodadewabo uNobantwana akugome. Ukwenzelani Mawewe lokho, ukuba ufune ukugqilaza udadewethu ngokungendlela; futhi weshela intombi lena uNobantwana ingani uyazi ukuthi intombi lena ithanda mina, yangithanda ngingaka gwazwanguBaBa ngabaleka, nanamuhla isangithanda?”

Ngenkathi ekhuluma kanje uGodongwane wagcwala ulaka lokuBulala, nemibuzo yakhe yahleba njengezinaliti. Wabuye waqhubeka wathi,

“Bonke abalandeli baKho abalapha eBalungwini maBalindele ukuhlangabezana nami namaButho ami enkundleni kusasa. Lomuzi uzolala ukakiwe kungaphumi muntu kuwona kuze kuse. Abanemiqondo eguqukela kimina befuna ukukhonza kimi, basenesikhathi sokucaBanga kuze kuse.”

Washo njalo waguquka wahamba, noJevuza waphenduka wahamba elandela inkosi yakhe.

EBalungwini ngalelo langa kakulalwanga, amadoda ezilungisela ukulwa nempi eyayibakakile; amanye ayehlangana akhuluma elinga ukulanda umnyombo wendlu yakwaBokaGodongwane eyiqhathanisa neyaboMawewe afumanisa ukuthi indlu yaBoGodongwane iyona-yona.

Nasekufeni kukaJobe wayeshilo ukuthi uyesaba sengathi uGodongwane akafanga. Pho namhla lokhu usefikile kuzokwenziwa njani?

Bakhuluma bekhombisa ukuthi enkulumeni kaGodongwane utshengise ulwazi olukhulu ngezindaba zakwaMthethwa. Nomhlangano wokuganisela uDi-

ngiwe kuZwide useyawazi, nokuthi uMawewe weshela intombi yakhe konke lokho useyakwazi.

Abanye babuza ngoJevuza ukuthi umtholephi uGodongwane. Umuzwe ngobani ukuthi ukhona waze wanyenyisa uDingiwe na? Inanabuke lena, kwaseku-bonakala ukuthi uJevuza ubevele azi konke ngayo. Pho, uGodongwane uJevuza wayemvusa phi lokhu uJevuza bekungesiye umuntu obejwayele ukuhamba na? Kubuza abanye. Kwaze kwasa behlayiya indaba kaGodongwane noJevuza, kodwa behluleka.

Kwasa ngomuso, kwaBayikhani bewabuka kahle amafutho kaGodongwane; esikhundleni soku-ba bawabuke bafikelwe inhliziyi yokulwa, ikakhulu amakhehla awabuka afikelwa ukumangala okunjengokomuntu ebuka into enhle imvelela yaqhamuka ebengayibekile.

## ISAHLUKO V

NJENGOBA nasezikhathini zanamuhla sazi ukuthi, umuntu wakwaZulu noma esebunzimeni nasekuthokozeni akaphiwanga amandla okuba ukwazi ukumahlukanisa ukuthi namuhla-ke uphethwe usizi nokuthi izolo ubethokozile, uyohlangana naye njalo ezihubela amahubo akubo, esina, kanti inhliziyi yakhe ilwa nabo bonke ufunzima obumphethe. Uma mhlawumbe wawungase ufike eBalungwini mhla uGodongwane eziveza obala, wawungeke ubone ukuthi okuyibona balandeli bakaMawewe yilaba nokuthi abakaGodongwane yilaba. Nxazombili, njengoba kwakusebusuku, kwakuzwakala imvunge yengoma izinsizwa zihlabelela zilinde ukuthi kuyosa nini.

Umuntu wayezwa kuphela ngokuqaphelisa izinhlamvu zamazwi ahlathshelelwayo ukuthi babeshaya amagama okunqoba odwa nawo kukhalela abangaphakathi komuzi eBalungwini. Likhona elinye igama ababelithanda belihlabelela okuthi nanamuhla umuntu athuke elizwa kwaZulu. Leloke lalithi :

*" Mlamu wami, kawungilamuleli ngani ? "*

Kumnandi ukuhlala phandle kweqhugwane uzwe izinsizwa zikhala ngabalamu bazo ukuthi kabezingani ukuzobalamulela. Zisho njalo ziyabema zidonsa amagudu, ezinye zibase umlilo ziyotha, izihlangu zisabekwe laphaya eceleni indaba yokulwa isakhohlakele.

Khona kunjalo, kulowomnyama owawucime izinkanyezi wazewabanga ukuba kubaswe imililo, wangena uJevuza phakathi kwamafutho wathungatha umkho-

ndo waze wafika lapho kukhona uVukani umfo ka-Mbangambi nalapho emshiye khona, wamemeza ngezwi eliphansi wathi.

“Vukani! Vukani, nipi na?” kwathula kwathi nya. Wabuye wamemeza, kanti nansi inhloli ka-Godongwane, yambamba uJevuza yathi:

“Uyilipi?” Yathi iyagadla wathi okaNtonteyana,

“Ngqwaba, Ngqwaba!”, yathi, inhloli kuye:

“Dlula, kanti ungowasekhaya.” Wadlula uJevuza wehla ngesihlahla lapho emshiye khona uDingiwe noVukani, wabuye wamemeza, laphendula izwi lathi,

“Silapha, ubani lowo?”

Wathi uJevuza, “Yimina.”

Bathi bona, “Sekunguwena lowo kaNtonteyana?”

Wathi uJevuza, “Shesha Dingiwe uze lapha umnewenu useyakufuna.”

Nempela intombazana yaphuthuma yafika kuJevuza. Bahamba bayebangena endlwaneni eyayingasesangweni eyase ikakwe idlanzi lamaButho khona izitha zingezukuzuma uGodongwane. Bafika khona intombazana yaziphonsa endlini yathi,

“Okunguyena mfowethu lapha yimuphi njengoba kuhleliwe nje?” UJevuza yamshiya ngemuva okunguyena owayezoshesha ayikhombise. Ngenxa yokufuna ukuthokozisa umntwana wenkosi, bonke ababesendlini baphuma kwasala owayezigubuzele ngesiphuku, hhayi lesisezinkabi kodwa sona sasinoboya obumthika bufuze obezimvu; phezulu ekhanda wayechome uphapse lwentshe emnyama. Wasondela uDingiwe, waziwisa phansi phambi kwakhe wathi,

“Mfowethu, Godongwane, nguwe lona na? Ngeqiniso, Godongwane?”

UGodongwane, akakhulumanga wathula, wasukuma

wamthatha wamsukumisa, wathula. Intombazana yabuye yabuza, isiqala, ukuqhelela kude sengathi iphosi-sile ukuzilahla phansi kumfokazi engesuye umfowabo. Yathi lapho isihlehla welula isandla uGodongwane wayibamba wahleka, kodwa izwi laba elomuntu osekhulile, nokho intombazana kulelozwi nakulokho kwalula ingalo yafumanisa okuyikhona ibikufuna, nayo yabuye yangenwa ngumunyu wabantu besifazane esebekwazi ukuhlupheka, abazinyembezi zabo zigcwele ezinkopheni zamehlo. Yasondela isengathi iyanyonyofa kanti idonswa isandla somfowabo yafika futhi yazilahla kuye yakhala njengomntwana omncane. Izwi lokuqala uGodongwane alikhulumayo wathi:

“Njengoba usuyogana kwaNdwandwe nje uyokhalela bani?”

UDingiwe wavusa amehlo akhe wabuka umfowabo sengathi uyazikhalela kuyena ukuaba angamlahli, amchilizele ezitheni kubantu angabathandi. Wabuye uGodongwane wamthatha wamsukumisa udadewabo wambeka phezu komgqiki wambuza wathi,

“Ngitshela uNobantwana usamazi-nje? Konje abantu basebecabanga ukuthi sengifile, yikho-nje uMawewe eseshela intombi yami, nawe esekuganisela kwaNdwandwe?”

Intombazana yaqala yasula izinyembezi, yahleka, kwaaba yikhani ikhulumayo, yathi.

“UNobantwana usekhona, usenjengoba wamshiya, sengathi ulitshitshi nakalokhu. Umuntu owayethunywe uJevuza ukuaba ahambe ekufuna wabuya naso isikhumba sebusesi wafika naso lapha, thina sasilulisele kuyena.

“Uma engitshela yena sewasiyisa kubashuki ukuaba bamenzele isiphuku sokulala. Angikezwa ukuthi sona sesagcinaphi-nje.”

“Kodwa ubeyathini lapho uMawewe emthumela izigijimi, noma kuye yena uqobo lwakhe ukuyoshela?” Kubuza uGodongwane.

“Kasazi ngoba uNobantwana uqobo lwakhe akafuni ukuyixoxa lendaba, kuthi noma ngimbuza angenwe isicanuko, anengwe sengathi ngimphathela amanyala, ngakhoke sengiyazithulela nami.”

Inkulumo yabo yayigxanxula ezintweni eziningi befuzana lokhu nalokhuya, ngaphandle kuzwakala njalo izaga, nokuvungama kwa bantu bengalele belinde ilanga langomuso uku ba liphume babone okwehlakalayo. Kwakuzwakala njalo ukuhutshwa kwehubo lika

“*Mlamu wami kawungilamuleli ngani?*”

Wabuza uDingiwe wathi, “uqonde ukwenzani njengoba umbuso usuphethwe nguMawewe na?”

Waphendula uGodongwane wathi, “Kangazi kuyokhanya kusasa. Into engiyaziyo kodwa eyokuthi uMawewe uzokufa nokufa ngenxa yezenzo azenze kuwena nakuNobantwana. Uma yena njengoba engumfowethu enesibindi sokweshela intombi yami, nokuba wena ungudadewabo abenesibindi sokukuchilizela kumuntu ungamthandi ukugcagca naye, lokho kusho ukuthi, uma ngihambile angathengisa ngomuzi wami nangabantabami. Umfazi wami angamenza isidwedwe sakhe nesigqili sabafazi bakhe. Ngingamthemba kanjani umuntu onjengalowo ngihlala naye?”

Kwathi uku ba aqede lokho wathi uDingiwe, “Mnethu zinqunywa amakhanda ziyekwe. Sengiphethe ubuthongo. Inhliziyo yami yanelisiwe, kodwa ngaphambi kokuba ngilale angizigculise ngokuthi unguGodongwane ngempela ngokuba ngikuthinte inxeba lelo engalibophayo laze laphola.”

Nempela wasondela, welul'isandla waliphatha inxe-

ba, waneliswa, waphindela endaweni yakhe, basha ubuthongo. Wahhlala uGodongwane waze wezwa udadewabo esehonqa, naye wazelula phansi walala. Njalo kude, macala onke omuzi waseBalungwini kwaku buka njalo ingoma yokuthi:

“*Mlamu wami, wo, awungilamuleli ngani?*”

Kuthunqa amaklobo emililo ezigodini nasemagqumeni kugiywa, kodwa uGodongwane wayelele endlini ebekwe izinsizwa zekhethelo.

OkaNtonteyana wayengekho wayesahambile eyokumba imithi eminye anayo, eyithaka, elungiselela ukuqinisa uGodongwane ngaphambi kokuba aphumele eshashalazini abonwe izwe lonke ngakusasa. Kanjalo ke, kungakasi ukuthi nwi, wangena endlini lapho zilele khona izelamani, wangqongqoza kwathi lapho engezwa muntu ngaphakathi wakhapheza umpheme osemnyango wangena. Wathi thala-thala, walibona itshe lokugxoba imithi namakhambi, walizibukula, wathi ukulesula ngesandla maqede walanda imbokodwe, wagxoba imithi yakhe. Bathi bevuka kwaseku khala imbokodwe neziko selibomvu udengesi lokunci nda selungephuzela umlilo. Wasondela uJevuza kuGodongwane kwa basengathi akasondele nakumntwana wenkosi, uzisondelela endodaneni yakhe, wamtatamisa wamguqisa ngaseziko wathela amanzi odengezini lwathi ukufuquka intuthu, wayesevuvuzela impushana ethize phakathi, wathi kuGodongwane,

“Ncinda.” Akabuzanga uGodongwane wenza njengoba wayetshelwa, wathi eqeda lapho wamhlalisa esigqikini, wamphelela ukhamba lwazelwa ngwefumhlophe, wathi kuye akageze ubuso bakhe kulona. Wenza kanjalo uGodongwane, udadewabo ebukela, ezembathise ngengu bo yesikhumba esinikizela uboya.

Kwathi kuqedwa lapho kwaabasekusa, nemisindo yokuhlabelela kwamaButho yaphela yayangokuya iphela. Nemililo aBabeyifase uBusuku bonke nayo yaya ngokuya icisha eminye yalalelwa ungwengwezi lomlotha lumhlophe olwayigubuzela lwafihla amalahle abomvu akade eqhakaze amalangabi kusihlwa.

Wabona izinsizwa zehla ngazimbili, nangazintathu ziya emmfuleni ziyogeza, ilanga lingakafudumali. Lelilanga kwaBasengathi kumuntu obukelayo, liyilanga lomgcagco noma yilanga lomgido othize ngoBa zonke izinsizwa zaziphume ngemvunulo yazo ephambili zivunule ziconsa ngamashoba nangeziqhova. Inye into eyayethusa umuntu athuke esefuza ukuthi umshado onjani lona ohlotshelwe yizinsizwa zodwa izintombi zingabonakali.

Kwathi lapho lifudumalayo ilanga ibandla labuthana esigcawini ngaphansi komthombe omkhulu lapho uJobe uqobo lwakhe wayethethela khona amacala. Kwakukhona amakhehla azinwele ezimhlophe ezilumpumpu, ahlala aqoshame phezu kwezithende, anqumise izagila zawo ngaphambili, athule athi nya. Uwabone njalo elokhu ethinta enqulwini enyakazisa amashoba ekhipe ithongwane, athi ukuchathaza ugwayi awufake entshenguleni ende ekhanya amanzi phakathi. Abeme njalo engakhulumi, amehlo elokhu njalo ephakama ebuza ethi:

“Umtanenkosi kakaqhamuki?” kuphendule omunye athi,

“Qha, wena kaSobaniBani, kodwa akusekude.”

Abuye abuyele kuyo intshengula yakhe ayibeke emakhaleni, ayihogele umntwana wekhehla, ayidonse ngamakhala uze ubone izihlathi ziba imiminqo zishona phakathi; amehlo egcwala izinyembezi sengathi liyakhala ikhehla uthi lapho ulibuka kodwa ungaBoni

lusizi ebusweni olubanga lokhukukhala. Kuyiqiniso ukuthi usizi nenjabulo yokwaneliswa kuyefana ngoBa kokubili kuletha izinyembezi emehlweni asebone amalanga nezinyanga eziningi ziphuma, sihlephuka, zigcwala, zishona phansi entshonalanga. Kanjalo umntwana wekhehla wayebuya athathe intshengula yakhe esule izinyembezi ezehlayo, ahlale phansi athule.

Kwakukhona khonalapho, izalukazi ezingasaboni kahle emehlweni, zidondolozela ngezimboko zazo, nazo zizolalela ukuthi kuthiwani ebandla ngokufika kukaGodongwane nenkosi ebusayo uMawewe na? Njengoba zona zazikhona mhla uGodongwane noTana bebulawayo. Zazinqakula ezinye zithi:

“Nanso phela imihlola evela nezindlala zawoMadlantule”, esinye sithi,

“Wena ntombi kaSobaniBani wake wezwa ukuthi umuntu ugawazwa ngejozi aphile? Ijozi leli nami ngilazi? Sengoke ngibone.”

“Qha! hhayi ijozi leli elisuke licitshwe insizwa kulezi engangizazi zakwaMthethwa kusaBusa uJobe. Asazi phela kulezi zanamuhla ezimcimbi ngezitho njengodade-nje.”

Kuthe indaba isahamba imnandi, namakhehla ehleli ebema, kwezwakala ngenhla kukhwuzwa kuthiwa:

“Bayede, bayede!”

Kwasukuma nabahlezi phansi kwaduma umuzi wonke kwayekwezwakala eziweni kude, kwaBuye kwathulwa kwathiwa cwaka.

Wehla uGodongwane ekakwe izinsizwa zekhethelo ezazigqoke imithika efanayo yezinyamazane zasenhla okuthiwa izinanaBahule, zehla zihamba zithule zingakhulumi, kuphela zizwiba imikhonto yazo, zihamba ngezigi kuzwakala phansi ukuzamazama kuphela. Lapha ebandla kwakukhona isicheme sezinsizwa esasesi-

lungise isihlalo sikaGodongwane phakathi nesigcawu, kwathi phambi kwaso kwaBakhona ibala elikhulu elingahlezi muntu.

Wehla uGodongwane ehamba kancane njengabo bonke abasuke bezizwa isikhundla safo ukuthi siphakeme, wahamba ebeke phambili engabeki nakancane eceleni, wayewahlala phansi. Esehlezi, wonke umphakathi wahlala nawo wathula wathi nya. Kuthe kusenjalo isicheme sezinsizwa lesi esifike kuqala, kanye nalezi ezifika nenkosi, zema zathi klele phambi kuka-Godongwane, (phela owayesebukeka njengenkosi) zashaya inkondlo yakwaMthethwa entsha eyayingaziwa, zayisinela ngendlamu eyayingazange ibonwe ngumuntu ngaphambili zisho zithi.

*“ Singaze sishe ngezala-nje ngani ?*

*Wo—iya, wo iya hhe !!*

*Mlamu wami, wo, awungilamuleli ngani ?*

*WeNoyiya, weNoyiya hhe !!! ”*

AbaBekhona, abayixoxayo bathi, zasho kwazamazama umhlabathi, kwathi lafo ababemise uMawewe bathi sekunguyena nkosi yafo kwaMthethwa, baphathwa itwetwe bathi shelele sengathi bayozikhulula kanti sekungukunyamalala kwafo. Izalukazi namakhela ezazingazange zikubone lokhu zahunguleka zacikica amehlo zabukisisa ezinye zabuzana zithi :

“ Nithi kusekwaMthethwa bantu benkosi, asekuhike mathongothize nje ? ” Ezinye zathi,

“ Qha, kasiphuphi, ngempela kusekhona kwaMthethwa, kuguquka izithebe ziyasibekelana, wena ntombi kaSobaniBani.”

Zinake bani izinsizwa, lokhu zagiya, zagiya zaye zathi mba phansi ngezisu zimemeza uNoyiya, zesaba ukuthi zizozе zishe ngezala uma abalamu bazo benga-

zilamuleli. Zathi zithula kwaphuma imbongi eyayingaziwa lapha phakathi komuzi, kodwa kwathi lapho beyibukisisa bayifona ukuthi iphuma kubantu abangaphansi kukaMbangambi. Yaphuma yathi qekelele eshashalazini. Bayibuka yabukeka imbana nje, kuluzwambuzwambana lwendojeyana engathi isindwa nayizihlangu zayo. Yaphuma indoda yathi, qekelele maqede, yathi bububu ihawu layo, yadlala yadlaliselа yama yathi qikilili yakhipha ngomlomo yathi :

“ Namhla kusa enzansi ngoba sibuthenenje kungenxa yaleli izinyane lesilo elibuye ekuzuleni salithuka livuka imbedumehlwana okwesona, esithe thina esilibone salemukela sanquma ukumiswa nokuvela kwalo phakathi kwomkhandlu kayise uJobe. Ubani ongelamukele uma selifika liphahlwe uninalume uMbangambi obelazi lincela, nalapho niligwazile ngemikhonto nina bakwaMthethwa bobambo lwakhe kanti owakwaMbangambi walithola, waliyenga elibopha amanxeba emikhonto yenu na ? ”

Laphendula ibandla lonke lathi :—

“ Bayede, bayede, akakho noyedwa ! ”

Wema umfo wakhona kusengathi akabaBoni bonke abantu abahleli phambi kwakhe wabahula ngamehlo bonke ebaBuka eBacifela, kanti usengenwa ifundululo lezimbongi ezithi zihleli beziqubuka okwemithombo yeziziba ephuma ekujuleni komhlabha okungaziwa muntu, kuthi lawo manzi aphume kuzo siwaphuze thina sintu esihlalele ukwenzelwa, sizwa kuphela ubumnandi bawo. Waqhuma umfo wakoMbangambi wabuye wathi ingani ubemude waphenduka umatindane, kwathi ingani ubemuBi ebusweni waphenduka wahloba ngabo lofo buBi bakhe ngenxa yamazwi omlomo wakhe, wathi,

“ Siyamusho thina esingamfeli mona sithi :—

*Fik'ekhaya wen'oth'uluGodo,  
 Bathi bayakugoga wangagoqongana.  
 Vul'amasango wen'oDingisiwe  
 Wafa wavuka njengedwangubane  
 Wab'uSombangeya kaNdaba.  
 Oth'etshelw'izindaba, angalaleli,  
 Uyasuk'ugijimel'ehawini.  
 Impunz'evuke nomkhont'emaWunzi,  
 Inyawoth'emnyama, inguNofukuthwayo,  
 Khon'ungembon'ezula phezulu.  
 UNongqwash'obomvu, wawoHhawuyana,  
 Omabal'azizinge sengath'abekiwe.*

*IZulu likaPhiko libaneka kanjani ?*

*Usahlul'amakhos'asohlangeni,  
 Ngob'uye wavunula kwaMahlaba,  
 Ezinkumbini zamanzi,  
 AbaThembu bakhweza  
 Bayabasithela ngoJama kaMnisi  
 Kand'ukuba : NguJam'ezibayeni zabathakathi.*

*Vunguza ngomoya wasemaMpondweni.  
 Ngathi ngisadl'ezinye ngadl'ezinye  
 Ngabuye ngadl'ezinye, ngadl'ezinye."*

KwaBe akamthintile uMthethwa lapha ngoBa umfo-  
 kazi-ndini wasuke wagiya, wasusa uthuli, wagiya kwaBa  
 sengathi useyahlanya manje, noMthethwa wamvumela  
 washo wathi,

"Wadl'ezinye, wadl'ezinye."

Wagiya umfokazi, bonke abantu bema bamangala,  
 bengazi abangakwenza ngoBa amanzi ayesefike emlo-  
 nyeni. Wabuye wema umfokazi, noMthethwa wonke

wathula wonke wathula ukumbonga, wabuye wathatha  
 wathi :—

*" Izinkomo zabantu, zinenkelenkele.  
 Zikhungel'ingobe ngasemashobeni,  
 Ilanga likaMadladla limdondoza,  
 Liphume amakhwez'abikelana,  
 Acif'amehlo, acima,  
 NawakwaMtombase nakwaLanga,"*

Washo maqede umfokazi wayewahlala phansi wa-  
 thula. Umkhandlu wonke wathula wathi cwaka,  
 noGodongwane wathi ukuthinta isiphuku sesilo aye-  
 sembethe, wasimama ngenduku (isagilana esasibazwe  
 kahle) ngesinye isandla ephethe ihawu elincane wasu-  
 kuma wakhuluma wathi :—

"Nina bendlu kaBaBa uJobe, nani besibaya esikhulu  
 saseBalungwini, ngiyakhuleka, nginibingelela." Wath-  
 ula umphakathi wathi cwaka kwangakhwehlela namu-  
 ntu oyedwa ezixukwini ezazihleli phansi phambi kuka-  
 Godongwane. Naye wabuye wathatha izinyathelo  
 eya phambili sengathi ucaBanga ukuthi abantu baka-  
 yise abamuzwa, wabuye wakhuluma.

"YeBo nina bomuzi kaBaBa uJobe, uyakhuleka  
 uGodongwane enamdingisayo, osebuya namhla esenge-  
 siye uGodongwane kodwa eseguquke waBa uDingi-  
 swayo kaJobe. Ngifikile ngizothatha umbuso kaBaBa,  
 ngiwuvuse, ngiwakhe." Wabuye wathula uGodo-  
 ngwane wathatha ezinye izinyathelo zaBambili zaBa-  
 ntathu, eyaphakathi nomphakathi, sengathi ufuna  
 ukuziwa.

Kuthe kunjalo kwasukuma omunye phakathi kwe-  
 sixuku, umnumzane ohloniphekileyo wakhuluma wathi,

"YeBo wena wohlanga siyezwa, futhi sesibonile  
 ngempela ukuthi uzothatha umbuso wesizwe sika-

Yihlo. Sizokwazi ngani ukuthi ngempela unguGodongwane kaJobe osebuya namhla esezitha igama lokuthi uDingiswayo?"

Kwavela mveli-thize yathi,

"Hhayi wena hlala phansi, umtanenkosi aqede akhulume." Abanye bavusa ukuxokozela, uGodongwane wema, wababuka bonke abantu, waphenduka wahamba kancane eqonde kwelinye icala, kwabuye kwavela omunye wathi,

"Uqinisile wena, sizokwazi kanjani ukuthi ngempela yizinyane lenkosi?" Kwavungama umphakathi wonke uthi,

"Nempela, nempela kunjalo."

Wabona uGodongwane ukuthi izwi lamadoda liyiqiniso, wathi kuBo,

"Mhla ningigwaza laphaya esibayeni sikababa, nangibeka inxeba lapha emagxalabeni ngawa ngivuka nalo ngaze ngatholwa yintombazana yakwethu uDingwiwe yangitotobisa yaze yangibeka kwamalume uMbangambi—uphi yena"? Washo lokho waqalaza ezixukwini, uMbangambi wasabela wathi,

"Bayede!"

UkuB'asho njalo wasigumula isiphuku emahlombe akhe wasibinca, nebala inxeba labonakala liyisigqaboloji esicwebezelayo likhanyiswa yilanga. Wema waphenduka nomkhandlu wonke bazefalibona lelonxeba, wayesekhuluma ethi,

"Ongaboni makeze azidelise ngokuliphatha."

Kwabuye kwasukuma omunye wamakhehla wathi:

"Siyabona, wena wesilo. Pho, umfowenu lona, uMawewe uzokwenzenjani na? Lokhu phela thina kwathi sibona uyihlo egqabuka sabeka yena, uMawewe lona. KuBe kodwa phela uyihlo eliphumesele elokuthi uGodongwane akafanga."

Lahlala phansi ikhehla, noGodongwane owayelalele naye wabuye kwaba sengathi uyahamba iyasondela ngasekhehleni, wayesekhuluma ethi:

"Muletheni lapha uMawewe kanye nezinduna zakhe, ngikhulume naye."

Kwabuye kwathula kwathi cwaka; omunye wezinduna zasoYengweni wasukuma khona manjalo waya esigodlweni esasihlonyelwe amaButho abelokhu ebekwe ngayizolo kusihlwa.

Kwathi emva komzuzu waqhamuka uMawewe ehamba nezinduna ezimbili elandelwa ngamakhosikazi akhe; wafika wema phambi kukaGodongwane. Waphenduka uGodongwane wakhuluma naye wathi:

"Wena Mawewe, ngingendaba nawe mhlawumbe umphakathi lo, ongayaziyo. Okokuqala wena unyoko ulotsholwe ngezinkomo zendlu yakwethu. Akunjalo na?"

Waphendula uMawewe wathi; "Kunjalo."

"Sengihambile ngibulewe nguBaba, ngashiya lapha ekhaya udadewethu uDingwiwe, inkosazana yakwethu eyodwa. Wena ubuwazi kahle ukuthi uDingwiwe weshelwa uZwide wakwaNdwandwe nokuthi uDingwiwe akamfuni lomuntu wakwaNdwandwe."

Waphendula uMawewe wathi:

"Qha mfowethu, uZwide akuyena umuntu, yinkosi yakwaNdwandwe."

"Noma eyinkosi, engenkosi, uDingwiwe ubengamfuni. Pho, ungakwenza kanjani ukuba wena phakathi komkhandlu ufophezele udadewethu ngenkani ukuB'ayogana uZwide na?"

"Ngabona ngoBaba engekho umuntu angase agcagce kuye amfanele njengoBaba eyinkosazana yenkosi," kuphendula uMawewe.

"Enye indaba yile," kusho uDingiswayo. "Wena



njengomfowethu, okunye unjengesichaka sakwethu ngoba unyoko ulotsholwe ngezinkomo zikamame. Unyoko ubekhonze kwethu, nawe-ke ukhonze kimi. Pho, ungakwenza kanjani ukuba usuke uyokweshela intombi yami, uNobantwana udadewabo kaZwide, lona osumganisela udadewethu ngenkani? Intombi uyazi kahle ukuthi ithanda mina, kodwa wena ubenesibindi, sokuyeshela na?

“Ngangingazi ukuthi ithanda wena, mina ngabona intombi-nje ngayeshela njalo ngoba ingezoshada namuntu.”

“Usukhulumile, Mawewe,” kusho uDingiswayo. “Kawazi yini ukuthi kulomhlaba wawodade kukhona izintombi ezingathandi ukushada, ezize zife zingazange zishade na? Ingani singabafana khona lapha kwakukhona oDanisile, noQobekile nabanye, ababengazange bashade ngisho nokuqoma kodwa lokhu? Pho, bekuzoqala ngalawamantombazana ukuthi makaboshelwe emgcagweni engathandi? Ukhona, khona lapha kobaba abahleli phambi kwami owazi umthetho woku-bophezela intombi emgcagweni?” Washo ephenduka ebeka amadoda ayehleli phambi kwakhe, kodwa akuphendulanga namunye. Kwathula wonke umkhandlu wathi nya.

“Wenake Mawewe uzoba isifundo sabo bonke abaveza imithetho yobutha esizweni sikababa. Kanye nezinduna zakho, yifa nokufa.”

Waphenduka uMawewe umqondo wakhe usangana waqalaza sengathi ufuna abokumlamulela wamemeza wathi,

“Uphi uSiqongo, naye usengishiyile?” Wathi esho njalo wahlusula umkhonto kumuntu owayeseduze wanikela kuDingiswayo owayengazelele, wathi uyawuphisela, kanti enye insizwa kulezi ezazimphahlile,

kade iwuphebezile. Enye yamthatha yambeka phansi, akabuyanga wadikiza uMawewe khona lapho ebandla. Wafa kanjalo uMawewe okwathi ingani izinto sezimemele ngezinyawo ndawozonke kodwa wangalahla isibindi sikayise, wawa naye enikela egwaza oyisitha kuye, owayesefike wazomemunca udiwo ayesepha-kelwe kulo. Bamthatha uMawewe bamphonsa ngaphandle komuzi kanye nezinduna zakhe abazi-bulala khona manjalo, kwasala abesifazane bodwa.

Kwasondela umphakathi nezinduna zonke ebesezi-khulile kuMawewe zazoxhawula isandla sikaGodongwane zikhombisa ngalokho ukuthi nempela ziyamvuma ukuthi uyinkosi yazo nalo lonke izwe lakwaMthethwa. Kwabuthana umhlaba wonke ukuba kwenziwe umkhosi, kwamenywa nasezindaweni ezikude ukuba mhla kufinyanga izwe liyolungisela ukukhuphuka lize eBalungwini.

Nempela abantu bahlokoma macala onke bevungama ngendaba eyenzekile nangesimanga sezinto ezifika noGodongwane, ngoba, ngaphandle kwenjomane lena eyayethusa abantu bengazange bayibone ngaphambili, wayephethe um-bobo wonyazi lwezulu. Lom-bobo wawuthi bani, besekuduma umhlaba wonke, kuthi lokho obekuqondaniswe nawo kuhhithike phansi kufe. UGodongwane wabakhombisa kusa ngakusasa indlela yokubulala inkomo ngaphandle koku-ba kuphathwe umkhonto. Inkomo yayikhishwa ibekwe eshashalazini, yena aphume nom-bobo wezulu, ayikhombe kudume, inkomo iwe, ife. Ngalezizimangaliso uDingiswayo waba ngumuntu owesabekayo, kwathi nabo bonke abancikene naye, ikakhulu uJevuza noMbangambi kanye nendodana yakhe uVukani, nabanye engingena kubabala, nabo bangenwa yisithunzi esithize. Esabo isithunzi kakubanga esokuxobisana na-

bantu, babaphathe ngolunya nokuziphakamisa phezu kwesizwe sonke sakwaMthethwa; kodwa bagcina isikhundla sabo ngokwalusa abantu abangaphansi kwaabo bangabavumeli bazenzele ngokuthanda.

Ekulungiseleleni umkhosi wokuBingelela uDingiswayo, kwamenywa zonke izinduna ukuBa iyinye induna ilethe izinkabi ezikhuluphele ziBe ngashumi, ngashumi. Yonke intsha yezigodi ngezigodi iButhane, kodwa kungahlonywa zikhali ngoBa embuthanweni onjengalona abantu baBengasebachukuluzane bagwazane nge-mikhonto lapho utshwala sebungene emakhanda aBo.

Kwaxhiwa umuzi omusha wagudlulwa kancane kulowaya waseBalungwini owawakhiwe nguyise uJobe. Nawo futhi lona wanikezwa igama lokuthi kuseBalungwini, kwaBuyiswa uMbangambi emzini wakhe walethwa lapha ekhaya ukuBa azoBa ngumluleki, namehlo nezindlebe zenkosi, kwathi uVukani indodana yahanjiswa yona ukuBa iyovusa umuzi omdala oYengweni, kungabi kodwa ngumuzi wamaButho njengoBa kwakunjalo kuJobe, kodwa kuBe yisidlavela somuzi omkhulu onesifazane nezingane ezikhula khona.

Lapha eBalungwini uJevuza kaNtonteyana wanikezwa indlu yakhe ngaseSangweni ngoBa wayeyinyanga yomuzi neyenkosi; kodwa enalo ilawu lakhe lokuhlala phakathi kwesigodlo eduze nezindlu zenkosi.

ABanumzane baphuma bahlwayela kufunwa izintokazi zekhethelo ukuBa zizohlobiza uyengo olusha lukaDingiswayo, nempela emva kwamasono amabili kwa-hlokoma esigodlweni senkosi, kuhlokoma izintokazi ezinzimakazi, nezintokazi ezimpofu ezikhehlele phezulu zibince imitsha; ezinye zibince amatete noyaca olunezinsephe ezidiye wonke umzimba kwesiphansi, kwasekuhlotshiswa ngobuhlalu obubomvu nobumhlophe. Izitho zazihloba ngamaxube enziwe ngotshani bensinde

baphothwa kanye nobuhlalu ikakhulu obumhlophe. ABuye afakwe nasezingalweni abekelane phezu kwamanye. Ezinye izintombi zazingeluki lapha ekhanda kodwa zazingunywa izinwele zidiywe isihluthwana nje ngenhla kwendlebe, khona zizokwelukwa zenziwe isiluba besezithi, yethe, zivala indlebe, nazo futhi zifakwe amathonsana obuhlalu obubomvu nobumhlophe. Entanyeni zazifaka izibeba nezibende eziluhlaza nezimhlophe.

Kwakunje-ke uma wawungase uthuke ubona eBalungwini ngemihla kaDingiswayo. Wakhetha omakoti bakhe abathathayo kodwa wenqaba ukuBa omunye walezintombi aBe yinkosikazi yomuzi ngoBa umphefumulo wakhe wawunamathela kuNobantwana udadewabo kaZwide inkosi yamaNdwandwe. Wayelibeke kakhulu ukulungisa izindaba zombuso kayise isikhathi engenaso sokubekisa amehlo ezintweni zenjabulo nezobusha, kodwa amehlo enhliziyi yakhe ayengaboni lutho ngaphandle kukaNobantwana.

Ngakhoke wathi ukuBa athole isithuba wabiza udadewabo uDingiwe wazokhuluma naye ethi:

“Dadewethu, Dingiwe, manje izindaba ekade zidingisa umphefumulo wami sengiziqedile, nokwenaba sengingasengikwenze.”

“Ngijabula uma izitha zakho ungasazesabi, nami sengiqala ukukhululeka.”

“Pho, ungaya wena kwaNdwandwe uvakashele uNobantwana, uyongikhonzela khona?”

Waphendula uDingiwe wathi, “uyashesha ukukhohlwa, mfowethu, ngoBa khona manjena nje kade uMawewe engiqhukuluzela kuZwide ngenkani sengathi ngizomthanda uma sengimganile.”

“Usucabang'ukuthi uma ekuBona uqhamuka, useyokubopha ngenkani athi mgane?”

"Qha wena wakwethu, angesafi Zwide yena luqobo lwakhe, kodwa kukhona umuntu engimesaba nge mpela osemzini wakhe manje."

Wamangala uDingiswayo ezwa intombazaza yakwa bo ikhuluma kanje, wayibuza futhi wathi,

"Ngasekufe ngubani yena lowo?"

"UMawewe, ubenenduna yakhe lapha, okuthe lapho esebulawa yona yasala kwathiwa iyafunwa, kuze kufe namuhla kayibonakali nempela. Ayikho enye indawo engabalekela kuyo ngaphandle kwakwaZwide, ngo ba ziyona e'ihlangene noMawewe ukungichilizela ku-Zwide."

"Kungase kufe yiyo lena uMawewe akhale ngayo wathi kanti nayo isimshiyile na?" kufuza uDingiswayo.

"Yebo, ukhale ngoSiqongo. USiqongo igama lenduna leyo."

"Pho ingakwenzani-nje nempela?"

Intombazana yaxwayisa amehlo yathi, "kawumazi uSiqongo. USiqongo unenhliziyi embi, emnyama, ezodayo, engathetheleli. Mina nawe kuyena ngeke sithethelele. Lapho ekhona uyolinga ngamasu onke ukuba asizingele ngazo zonke izindlela angazithola."

"Ngiyezwa, dadewethu, impela kuyangena ezindlebeni," kusho uDingiswayo.

"NoNobantwana uqobo lwakhe usengozini. Mina-ke uma ngiyakhona angangibulala nokungibulala; ngokungidlisa noma angilalele endleleni mhla ngithi ngiyabuya, angijuqajuqe ngomkhonto."

"Kusobala, ntombazana, ngiyezwa." Washo uDingiswayo umqondo wakhe washona phansi wayocabanga izindlela ezinye zokuhambisa kwakhe umbuso uma ezoba inkosi egameni ngempela lobukhosi.

## ISAHLUKO VI

Izinsizwa zazibema amagudu azo esigcakini sase-Dlovunga, umuzi omkhulu kaZwide, namaNdwandwe. ULanga uyise kaZwide wayesand'ukufa nawowonke umsebenzi wokumbuyisa wasewenziwe, izinto sezi-hamba ngesandla sikaZwide.

ULanga lona okunguyena yise kaZwide wayezalwa nguLudonga kaMavuso okwathi ngesikhathi sokubuza kwakhe, kwavela izinhlangothi zazimbili phakathi kwamaNdwandwe. Lezizinhlangothi zavela kanje. UMavuso wayengumfowabo kaManukuza, kwenye indlu, kodwa kuyise munye. UMavuso noManukuza abakhula babanga ubuduna kuyise uMkhatshwa lokhukubanga kwa bo kwagcina ngokuchitheka kukaManukuza nabalandeli bakhe. Sekuyisikathi eside kwehlu-kanwa inzalo yalezizelami yaqala ukubungazana ngokuvusa ubuhlobo obudala. Langa-thize amantombazana akaManukuza athwala amagobongo otshwala awayisa koMavuso enkosini. Phakathi kwalaw'ama-ntombazana kwabakhona eyakhiwa inkosi uMavuso, wayeshela yaze yamvuma. Ngenxa yokwesaba ihlazo lokuthi umkhaya waganiselana na? Kwavunywa ukuthi abakwaManukuza abaguqule igama noma isibongo sabo kufe ngabakwaNxumalo. Nempela kwenziwa lokho, laguqulwa igama, kwavela amaNxumalo lawa anamuhla.

Noma kusenje inkaba yona yayikhuluma ngo ba ezikhathini zempi amaqambi omabili abesizana angayekelelani nezitha. Yingakho nje abakwaNxumalo

banesithakazelo sakwaNdwandwe; uthi noma uthatha owakwaNdwandwe naye abeke kwaNxumalo ngesithakazelo, lokhu kusuka kudaladala kusaBusa amakhosi abo ohlanga, oManukuza noMavuso.

Sithe, izinsizwa zazihleli esigcakini zibema amagudu azo, zitshuma amagwebu ampofo enhlabathini okuthi lapho eqhuma ubone kuphafuka intuthu kuwona. Kwakuxoxwa ukuma kwezizwe phakathi kwenhlabathi yakwaNdwandwe njengoba ngalesosikhathi wayengaziwa omunye okungabizwa ngaye umhlabathi lona osuwaziwa ngokuthi owakwaZulu namuhla.

Kwaxoxwa, izinduna zezinsizwa zibeka izikhonkwane zamaNdwandwe zizisusa eMfolozi emnyama ngaseNingizimu kudabule kuqonde oPhongolo ngaseNyakatho.

Empumalanga zazisuka olwandle phansi ezihlabathini zalo, izikhonkwane zibeke eNtshonalanga, bangazi kodwa ukuthi bangazinqanda-phi ngoba njengoba uMalusi umfowabo kaZwide kwenye indlu wakhomba wathi:

“Niyabona-nje ukuthi abakwaKhumalo nezinduna zaBo sebekhulile naBo sebenamandla, namaButho abo avivekile?”

Wasuka omunye wathi:

“Akulutho lokho, sifika sinyathele phezu kwaBo balale phansi njengotshani.”

“Usho njalo kambe wethu?” kuBuza omunye owayelalele.

“Sengishilo. Kusho thina bawobani kanti?” Yasho insizwa yathinta ihawu layo eceleni, intuthu yensangu ephuma ophondweni lwenkabi yaphuma yafuquka njalo, namanzi phakathi kwegudu wawezwa ekhala phakathi, ekhala phakathi ethi, Qhoqhoqhoqho.

Phakathi kwazo isinsizwa kwakukhona uZwide

uqobo lwakhe encike eduze komfowabo. Wabuza uZwide kuMalusi wathi:

“Mfowethu uthini ngabantu bakwaMthethwa? Lemihlola okukhulunywa ngayo wonk’umhlaba kuthiwa Godongwane ufike nayo, namandla okudumisa izulu libulale noma yimuphi umuntu, uthini wena ngalokho? Ingani kulo lonke izwe, lisuka phansi elwandle liye lishaye eMaNgwaneni nasemaHlutshini kwaziwa thina na?”, kukhuluma uZwide kuMalusi.

“Yebo uqinisele nfowethu,” uyaphendula uMalusi. Esebuya eqhubeka ethi:

“Pho, ucaBanga ukuthi singenzenjani?”

“Mina ngiBona linye icebo mfowethu. Noma umuntu esenamandla anjani kuhle umthumele inyoka iyombulala, imbulelele endlini lapho engabeke ngozi khona,” kusho uMalusi.

“Angizwa Ndwandwe ukuthi uqondisa ukuthini ngalokho,” kusho uMalusi.

“Kanti usengumntwana yini?”

“Usho ngani?” kuBuza uMalusi.

“Kawuyazi inyoka ebulalele umuntu endlini engazi yena ukuthi udliwa yini?” washo wahleka uZwide wambuka umfowabo uMalusi. Zonke izinsizwa zazibema, kuthunqa intuthu nakho konke ukujabula nokubina kwentsha kwakulapha phezulu. UZwide nomfowabo babeseceleni indaba yaBo ingezwiwa muntu.

“Qhabo, leyo nyoka kangiyiboni,” kusho uMalusi.

“Kawazi ukuthi lentombazana yakwethu uNobantwana ithanda khona komkhulu uGodongwane uqobo lwakhe na?”

“Qha, Ndwandwe, ngiyakuqabuka ezindlebeni zami lokho,” kusho uMalusi.

“Bekake, ngizothi kuyona mayihambe iyogana kwaMthethwa ilindenini lapha na? Ngokwenza kwami

kanjalo ngifuna intombazana iyogana, iveze ubungane phakathi kwami noGodongwane kuze angangithathi ngezimpi zakhe ngingazelele.”

“Ngiyabona, Ndwandwe. Yebo ngiyabona,” sekusho uMalusi. “Uyabona nje ukuthi abakwaMthethwa laba bemi kahle? Bahlangene noQwabe, ngokusho njalo ngisho uZulu obuswa nguSenzangakhona. Noma phela amaZulu lawa engelutho phakathi kwalezizizwe ezigudle uMfolozi, uyabona-nje ukuthi banesibindi sobuthakathi ngoba bagwaza bafele khona, kabafulatheli?” Kusho uMalusi kuZwide.

“Phela yingakho ngingathandi ukuba ngiqale ngokuxabana nabakwaMthethwa ngoba ngesaba isidleke seminyovu, funa sibuye ngami kabi.”

“Ngalelicebo lokuganisela uGodongwane ngodadewethu ngiqonde ukuba kuthi noma yena esefa ngibenamandla okuba ifa lakwaMthethwa ngilithathe ngenxa yokuthi ngiphathele umtakadadewethu.”

“Kangiboni lapho ngoba uGodongwane ngasekufe useganiwe nakalokhu,” kusho uMalusi.

“Ngineqiniso lokuthi akakaganwa ngoba indaba yakhe yaziwa intombazana lena.” Kuthe kunjalo kwezwakala inceku ingqongqoza ifuna inkosi. Bayivumela ukuba ingene.

“Bayede!” Yasho yaguqa phansi ngamadolo ombili. Bayibuza bathi, “Yini?”

“O! nina bohlanga! ngithunywa amakhosikazi enkosi ukuba ngibike ukuba uMaguduza uyagcwaneka, kade kulingwa ukuba abanjwe kodwa akabambeki esifubeni sakhe kukhuluma izilimi. Izanusi ezaziyo zithi ungenwe ngamandiki.” Yasho yaphela umoya inceku, sengathi kayizange iphefumule ngaphambili.

Ukuphela kwayo umoya kwakuhlangene nephika kusengathi lomuntu kade egijima efuna ukuzobika

lendaba. Sekuhlangene futhi novalo lokwesaba inkosi ngoba ezovela phambi kwayo, wabukeka sengathi uyaqaleka, bashesha babiza enye yezinsizwa ukuba imthathe lomuntu imphezise amanzi.

Lomhlo wokuba kubikwe indodakazi yenkosi ukuba iyagcwaneka nokuba nakhu umuntu efela phambi kwenkosi, kwaveza ukunyakaza kuwo bonke ababehlezi esigcakeni kubenywa, kwabonakala ukuthi kaku-sekho kujabula phakathi komuzi waseDlovunga.

Wasukuma uZwide nomfowabo uMalusi beqonde ngasesigoldweni sabantwana benkosi, bathi bengakafiki khona bahlangana nesinye isigijimi sathi:

“Bayede, Qha, ngithunywe kuwe wohlanga ukuba ngikutshela ungethuki kangako ngoba izanusi zithi uMaguduza ungenwa idlozi elifuna ukuba kubulawe inkabi emnyama yikhona ezosanguluka aqale nokuphiwa imithi.”

Inkosi kayinakanga yaphikelela phambili ukuyozibonela ngamehlo umhlola owenzeka ekhaya layo. UMaguduza kwakungunontandwase kaZwide, kubona bonke abantwana bakhe.

Wafika maqede wambona elele phansi ethe ja. Wambuka ephefumulela phezulu okwenkabi igwazwe ngomkhonto yawa phansi, kuthi ma iphefumula kuphume igazi ngenxeba, uyizwe ibubula njalo ilele. NoMaguduza wayephefumulela phezulu ngomlomo kuphuma amagwebu esifubeni sakhe kubekhona njalo izinto esengathi ziyagqigqizela zibanga umsindo.

Nempela isibonakaliso sokungena kwamandiki kumuntu kuzwakala kuqala imisindo esifubeni somuntu kuthi uma izangoma nezanusi zisho ukuthi lowo muntu ungenwa ngamandiki, sekukuphela njalo, sekusho ukuthi lowo muntu seziziyamthatha abengomunye wazo akhulume nazo kuphela, aphathwe yizo. Lowo muntu

useyingozi ezihlotsheni zakhe akusafanele nokuḡa zibe-  
zisamuthintha. Ziyabuka-nje, aze elashwe yilaḡo  
ababekene namandiki.

Kwabakukhulu ukudaḡuka komuzi waseDlovunga  
ngoMaguduza owayethandwa yiḡo bonke. Izanusi  
zamthatha zahamba naye, zafuna inyongo yaleyo  
nkaḡi emnyama eziyifizile, yikhona zizoqala ukubila  
imithi yokwelapha uMaguduza.

Kakuthanga zinyanga ngaki kwaqala ukuzwakala  
ukuthi uMaguduza kuthe nalapho izangoma zimfaka  
phansi ezizibeni ezingakhali selesele ukuḡa ayofuna  
imamba ehlala phansi ekujuleni kwamanzi, wangena  
uMaguduza wayewabuya nayo eyiphethe ngesandla,  
ithambile, ingenamandla okumluma.

Uvalo olwaqala lwashaqa abantu bonke ngokunge-  
nwa amandiki kukaMaguduza lwaphenduka lwaḡa  
ukuthokoza okukhulu kwakhula lapho izindaḡa zoku-  
gila kwakhe imilingo nokulutha izinto eziningi, zanda  
nomhlaḡa wonke. Wabula phakathi kwesidlangala  
ngelinye ilanga ebiziwe ukuḡa azokhombisa ukwazi  
kwakhe, wathi :

“ Hi, hi ! ngiyezwa ” lasho ihlomḡe lathi,

“ Yizwa mngoma kungawe, yizwa sithole seDlo-  
vunga.”

Waqhubeka wathi, “ ngiyezwa, futhi ngibona kuza  
kude indoda.”

Lasho ihlombe lathi, qhaka, qhaka, nezixuku zathi ;

“ Yizwa mngoma.”

Wangenwa ngumoya wamandiki wamhlanyisa, wa-  
sina wakhala ezinikiza, wabuye wakhuluma wathi,

“ Lendoda eyezizwe, iza iyagijima, iqonde lapha,  
izothwasisa nami. Ha ! ” Washo lelizwi maqede,  
wema wahleka, nabantu baḡona ukuthi lentombazana  
kayiyodwa, inabaphansi ngoḡa ikhuluma naḡo kuthi

noma ḡona ḡakoNdwandwe bekhona beyizixuku kodwa  
kayibaḡoni kayibashayi mkhuba.

Yahleka intombazana yathi,

“ Ha ! ngibona ihlakaza izizwe zomhlaḡa, ichela  
amabutho kabaḡamkhulu ngezintelezi eziyokwenza  
izimbemba zemikhonto noma ibenyezela kodwa kazi-  
nakungena enyameni yalawo mabutho.”

Wathi lapho esho njalo ihlombe lakhala ngamandla  
kwasuka amashinga phakathi kwezinsizwa agiya ena-  
nela lesosikathi sokufika kwalendoda, nalapho ama-  
Ndwandwe eyohlasela ahlule izizwe zonke.

Wathi esho lawamazwi kwezwakala izinsizwa zishaya  
amahawu, lapho abanye beshaya ihlombe beqala uku-  
zwa kubulwa izinto ezinje kunokuḡa kubulwa abatha-  
kathi.

UZwide wahlala phansi wezwa inhliziyi yakhe  
igcwala umoya wobuqhawe nokunqoba, waḡona iMfo-  
lozi emnyama neMfolozi emhlophe igcwala amakhanda  
ezinsizwa zezizwe ezazingathandi ukukhonza kwa-  
Ndwandwe zibeke yena njengenkosi yazo. Waphonsa  
amehlo buqamama eNingizumu waḡona amaZulu nezi-  
cocwana zawo, nabakwaMthethwa neZulu lawo lika-  
Godongwane, waḡona abakwaMpanza nabakwaMa-  
hlaḡa nabasemaMbatheni beguqa phansi kwakhe be-  
khothama bethi,

“ Bayede ! ”

Waphenduka wabuka ezintuthwini zaseNtshona-  
langa lapho wayengazange ayekhona oKhahlamba  
ezintabeni ezihlala izichwe namambuka ezizwe zaḡa-  
Shunto abakhuluma ulimi olushwabene, wazibona  
ekhula ngamandla endodakazi yakhe uMaguduza.  
Pho, uGodongwane wayengubani lapho wayengase  
amesaḡe na ? Uma imizimba yamaḡutho kaZwide  
ingenakungenwa yimikhonto ngenxa yamakhubalo ne-

zintelezi zikaMaguduza naleyo ndoda ayibona uma eshaya amathambo akhe phansi, pho yini engenza angabi inkosi yomhlaba na? Wahleka uZwide wathatha iwisa lakhe wasukuma, walandelwa yizinduna zakhe wayewangena endlini.

Esengene endlini waqala ukucabanga ukuthi ngaibe lendoda ngubani, nokuthi iyofika nini eDlovunga.

Wabiza udadewabo uNobantwana wathi makalethwe kuye, nempela bamletha. Wafika kuye wathi:

“Nobantwana, hamba uyogana lapho uthanda khona. Ngiyazi ukuthi uqonde ukugana kwaMthethwa njengoba sengizwile. Angithandi nokuba uze weqe bakubuyise sebekuqhuba ngezinkomo zelobolo. Thatha amantombazana owathandayo ezindlini zakwethu ungathatha uZenzile wakwabo mfowethu uMalusi. Akunjalo mfowethu?” Washo ebeka kuMalusi, waphendula uMalusi wathi,

“Kunjalo.”

UZenzile lona, naye wayenobuhle bakwabo ethatha, noNobantwana engenzi lutho.

Nempela intombazana ibona indlela elula yokuyoziganela, kayiphendulanga lutho yaphindela esigodlweni yayobopha yakhetha izinceku ezazizoyophelekezela kanye noZenzile. Baphelekezela yizinsizwa zaye zaBalunguzisa ngasezintabeni ezibekene naseBalungwini, zabuya zaqonda ekhaya. Indlela yayiyinde ngempela ithatha amalanga amabili, nokho amantombazana aye afika lapho eya khona.

Ngemuva kwalokho uZwide esengenwe iqunga loku-nqoba izizwe wahlasela abakwaKhumalo, wathumela ibutho lakhe amaNkayiya ukuba ayobubisa amaNgwane namaHlubi kude eNtshonalanga.

Nempela kwaba njengoba efisa ngoba amaNkayiya abuya eqhuba imihlambi yezimkomo nesifazane esasi-

thunjiwe ukuba sizonikwa inkosi. UZwide wazizwa ekhula efa ngumuntu ongelinganiswe ngisho nomfo-wabo uMalusi.

Kwenzenjani ngoNobantwana noZenzile namanye amantombazana na?

Yebo kwafikwa eBalungwini lokhu nakhu zonke izitha ezaziyingozi enkosini sezasuswa zagoduswa, umuzi usumkhulu usumangalisa.

UMawewe kwathi langathize kwamenywa umkhandlu uMawewe wabekwa amacala amabili: elokuqala ukuba wacinga ukudingisa umtanenkosi ukuba aganele kuZwide ngenkani, nokuba wahlala esihlalweni sobukhosi singamfanele. Ngalawo macala wafanelwa ukufa, nokufa. Sebefika-nje oNobantwana laba izindaba zemibango kade zadlula. UGodongwane selubuya uthando lwakhe ikakhulu ebona isikhumba lesi sesilo asibulala kudala wasithumela kuNobantwana. Phezu kwalokhu wathatheka kuZenzile owathi ngokuzithoba kwakhe nangendlela yokubuka kwamehlo akhe, nokubinca kwakhe, wahluka kwabanye. UGodongwane kwaba sengathi uphonsiwe ngoZenzile waduma naye njalo. Kwabasobala ukuthi kuzoba nguyena uNtandose nanjengoba lapho izinkomo sezishaywa ziqhutshwa yizinceku ziyiswa kwaNdwandwe, kwabekwa nezinye eziyakuMalusi zikaZenzile, kanye nalawa mazwi:

“Nazo ezelobolo likadadewenu engimbabile ukuba aBe ngumkami kanye noNobantwana. Wangehlula nami ngamehlula.” Nangemuva kwalokho uGodongwane wayelokhu ethumela izipho zezinto eziningi kuMalusi, ngalendlela kwavela ukungezwani okukhulu phakathi kukaMalusi noZwide.

Njengoba uMalusi ethandwa, etuswa nguGodongwane wodumo, pho, kwakungaya kanjani uZwide ongemdala

kuye, noyinkosana kunina, naye uMalusi eyinkosana kunina; kwakungaya kanjani kuBe nguyena udumo lwakwaNdwandwe oluphumela kuye kuphela na? LendaBa yamsebenza uMalusi kakhulu, enhliziyweni yakhe kwavela uButha obukhulu, wazonda uZwide ngenzondo esobala ngoBa waqala ukuba neqembu laba-landeli bakhe abakhuluma into ecatshangwa nguye kangangoBa umuzi waze wehlukana phakathi kwafanela ukuba uMalusi aphume eDlovunga ayokwakha owakhe umuzi.

UZwide kakumphathanga kahle naye, ukuba ezwe imimoya yokuthi udadewabo uNobantwana uncintelwa nguZenzile kwaMthethwa, sekunguyena Zenzile osengu-Nontandwase kwathi uNobantwana wabuntsha.

UZwide waqala ukuchaka uMalusi ukuthi nguyena ongene phakathi kukaGodongwane noNobantwana, wathi uNobantwana lo ukugana kwakhe kwaMthethwa kumumethe uBubi ngoBa, ngaye-nje kuphela umfowabo uZwide unamandla okuphengula wonke umbuso ka-Mthethwa awuguqulele kuyena. Nempela naye uZwide wakhumbula ukuthi lendaBa yokuba udadewabo ayogana kwaMthethwa into ayeyisophile wayibumba ngaBomu, futhi wayikhuluma kuMalusi.

Pho, kuzokwenziwa njani na?

UZwide waBona ukuthi uMalusi uyingozi, wathumela amaNkayiya akhe ukuba ayoqeda umsindo ngabusuku futhize, nempela kwathi kusa umhlaba waBona amazala namaziko lapho ngangayizolo bekukhona inxulumela elikhulu. Akakho owabuza omunye ukuthi umuzi kaMalusi ushonephi na? Amadoda abamba imilomo, amanye wawaBona etshatha izagila emhlane efulathela ngoBa ayeseWazi umsindo phakathi kukaMalusi noZwide.

UGodongwane wayezokwenzenjani na?

LaBo ababalekayo baluqondisa enzansi eNingizimu ukuyophephela ezandleni zikaGodongwane. IzindaBa zagijima ngamandla zafinyelela ezindlebeni zikaGodongwane owamangala kakhulu. UZenzile kuthiwa wakhala lonke isonto ezivalele kwakhe engafuni ukuBonana namuntu ngisho inkosi uqobo lwayo. Mhla ifika ingena ngenkani uZenzile wazilahla phambi kwayo wathi,

“Hhawu, ngomtakaBaBa ukufela uBala, mina nginjengoBa nginje, ngingenzenjani?” Washo ephakamisa izingalwana zakhe ezazimbozwe yisikhumba esihle esihlotshiswe ngoBuhlalu obumhlophe noBumvuvu, kwavela phansi kwesikhumba izingalo ezithambile ezingenamandla okulwa kodwa ezinamandla okususa enhliziyweni yesilwi lelo thuku elenza wonke umuntu wesilisa ahlikihle izinduku athule izinhangu, aphume ayokulwa angafulatheli isitha, kunokuba abekane nalezoringalo. Uthi ebuya ukuzobekana nalezo zingalo aBe enqobile, kuBe yizo ezimamukelayo, zimphathe amanxeba esitha zivasule ngisho abese-xhixha etshutshumba, konke kuphele, kushaBalale ngenxa yalezo zandla.

“Pho, ngizokwenzenjani ngomtakaBaBa?”

WaBuza uZenzile wakhala izinyembezi zakhe zawela ezandleni zikaGodongwane wathi uyamduduzisa ngokumphatha, wakhala ngamandla amakhulu, izinyembezi zawela nasezinyaweni zenkosi, nayo yaBona ukuthi kakusizi lutho kufanele ithule.

uGodongwane wamshiya khona lapho uZenzile waphuma, wathi esemnyango wema, wahlangatsheza nguNobantwana wathi kuye,

“Ngingakwenzelani? Yini laphaya kwadadewethu?”

“Kanti kawukezwa, noma uyazibuzisa ngoBa ufuna ukungigcona?” Washo uGodongwane wadlula wa-



mshiya khona lapho uNobantwana waqonda elawini lakhe. Wafika khona wahlala phansi wacabanga into angase ayenze. Kuthe kunjalo kwafika uVukani wangena wathi:

“ Bayede ! ”

Wathula uDingiswayo, wambuka nje, wabuye wathi uVukani,

“ Bayede ! ” wahlala phansi.

“ Kwenzenjani Vukani, mtaka-malume ? ” Waбуza uDingiswayo.

“ Qhабо, nkosi ngisuswa isililo sikaZenzile, inkosikazi, nayindaба lena engiyizwayo yokubulawa komnewabo uMalusi.”

“ Wena osondelene nabantu abake баbonana amehlo namehlo nalabaбantu abavela kwaNdwandwe kuthiwa yini isizathu ? ”

“ Kangizwa kahle nami ngoба abantu basethukile abakukhulumayo kusahlukene,” kusho uVukani.

“ Kodwa izinhlamvu zokwenza kukaZwide zithini ? ”

“ Besekukhona ukuбanga nokungezwani phakathi komuzi eDlovunga, njengokusho kwalaba bantu,” kuphendula uVukani.

“ Isizathu yini ? ”

“ Isizathu nguwana, Nkosi.”

“ Yimi ngani, lokhu kangikaze ngiyekwaNdwandwe mina ? ”

“ Kuthiwa nguwana ngoба kuthe kuzogana lapha ekhaya uNobantwana ephelezelwa ngudadewabo lona uZenzile, wena wafika wenza intandokazi yaba nguZenzile.”

“ Pho, lokho kuhlangene kanjani nokubulawa kukaMalusi ? ”

“ Kawuboni yini nkosi, ukuthi wena uthanda uZenzile, uZenzile ngowaбоMalusi; ukuthi Malusi

kuthiZenzile. Ngenxa yalokhu kuvele ukungezwani sengathi uZenzile ukudlise ngomuthi; umuthi lona ewuthatha kuMalusi,” kusho uVukani.

“ Sengiyabona,” kusho uGodongwane sengathi akalalele, wabuye waphinda wathi,

“ Ngiyabona, ehhe, kuyangikhanyela manje.”

Waphendula uVukani wathi,

“ Indaba siyizwa injalo, ngalaba bantu abafikile besinda ekubulaweni.”

Wathi uDingiswayo:

“ Biza omunye wabo, umlethe lapha.” Waphuma uVukani washesha, wasala yedwa uDingiswayo ecabanga ngezinto azizwayo. Amehlo akhe abeka emnyango wendlu yakhe wabona kude enzansi ilanga lithi: totototo selikhanyisa izintaba ezikude, iSandlwana. Kwakungathi ekhanda layo lentaba (noma ngamanye amazwi, esiqongweni seSandlwana), kukhona isicoco esimhlophe kanti inkungwana ewele phezulu. Ngenzansana uDingiswayo wabona umhlambi wezinkomo udla utshani bentaба. Izinkomo zazidla zigudla amahlathi.

Amehlo akhe abuya azobeka endlini lapho wayehleli khona, wabona ufunono bokubekwa kwezinto endlini. Emsano kwakukhona amacansi akhe esongwe izithungu ngezithungu njengobuhle bazo, kwathi phezu kwawo kwabekwa iziphuku zakhe zokulala, zishukwe ezikhumbeni zezinkabi nezezinyathi. Ecaleni kwakukhona imigqiki yokucamela ibazwe ngomuthi yenziwa imilenzana emine ema ngayo.

Wabona nofunono bokuhamba kwegcema elalithunga indlu leyo nokubekelana kwezithungu, esinye phezu kwesinye, wathi umcabango wakhe usaqhubeka lapho, kwezwakala izigi ngaphandle, zasondela kwaze kwangqongqozwa emnyango, kanti sekunguVukani.

Kwathi ukuba bahlale phansi uDingiswayo wabuza wathi kuVukani.

“ U bani Vukani owakha lendlu na? ”

Wathi uVukani,

“ Kangazi ngoba ngithe ngifika lapha ngivela oYe-  
ngweni, ngayifika lendlu iyintsha ingakalali muntu.”  
Kwabuye kwathulwa kwathiwa nye.

“ Nguwena mnumzane ofike uqhamuka eDlovunga  
kwaZwide? ”

“ Nkosi, yimi, wena wohlanga.”

“ Uzofunani lapha? ”

“ Wo, baba, ngifelwe izwe, ngizozilahla kuwena  
ngicela indawo ngikhonze.”

“ Uzwe kuthiwa abantu bami bayehluleka yini uku-  
ngikhonza? ”

Yaphendula indoda isithithifele sengathi iphethwe  
amakhaza.

“ Qhobo, baba, wen'owakhula silifele ezweni laba-  
khomba ngeminwe phakathi, thina sidl'izinkobe; ngi-  
khulekela ibala lokugxumeka ikokosana, ngishumek'i-  
khanda, mina nedlanzana engifika nalo kuwe.”

“ Kant'ufika nabantu, uzohlal'uhlale ungivusele  
umbango, ufune ukungisusa esihlalweni sami, kanti  
mina ngisabusa? Wena uzongena lapha kwaMthe-  
thwa ukungibumbel'umnyama ngithi ngiyathuka se-  
ngibona ngengumbeqe? Ninjalo nina bantu boku-  
tholwa.”

“ Hhawu, kahle, wena wohlanga, ungibona ngiyi-  
mpunga nginje. Ngosithathaphike lesosikhathi soku-  
ginqa abantu umoya onjalo? Ngiyakhuleka kuwe :—

“ ‘ Zulu lika Phiko, libaneka kanjani?  
Lenzani elikaSombangeya kaPhiko?  
LikaSombangeya kaJobe? ’ ”

Ngifelwe ngumhlaba, abafazi bami nabantabami,  
nemfuyo yami yonke isel'emuva, ngifika nginje, ngiya-  
thazela ngaphandle kwesihlangu sami nemikhonto.  
Ngithole wena :—

“ ‘ Sombangeya kasoz'atshelwa-ndaba  
Uyatshelw'izindaba ugijimel'ehawini.' ”

“ Ngithole wena :—

‘ Mpunz'evuke nomkhont'emaWunzi,  
Nyawothemnyama, uNofukuthwayo! ’ ”

“ Ngabe baba, ngiyakukha ngokwakithi kwaNdwa-  
ndwe, pho, ngihlaba izihloko engizicaphume emilo-  
nyeni yezinceku njengoba ungibizile nje.”

“ Uyangahlula uma ungimemeza ngezibongo ezinje,  
ungikhumbuza umkhonto owangena lapha,”

Washo ekhothama ethinta emhlane wakhe uDingi-  
swayo.

“ Nami ngaxoshwa emzini ka baba ngeqa ngithwele  
umkhonto emahlombe, ngazuliswa umhlaba wonke  
ningumhamb'uma kant'ekhaya kukhal'izinkomo ku-  
yadliwa, kuyabuswa, kukhona izintombi ezinhle ezi-  
savuka ekuseni namago bongo zokukha amanz'emmfu-  
leni zibuye zinik'amanzi abanewabo bageze, badle  
besuthe. Hhawu khehla, wen'ongikhumbuza ubaba  
ozala mina, ungihlab'enhliziyweni, xoxa isisusa sakho  
konke okukuletha lapha. Wena Vukani, biza bonke  
abezinsizwa zamaNkayiya beze lapha, bazofunda oku-  
yikhona kuqondwe ngokoko uma bethi :

“ Ukuhamba kuzal'induna.”

Nempela wathi nyelele uVukani lasala ibandla la-  
thula, nenkosi yathula. Bonke fashaqeka. Lasuka  
ikhehla njengoba beliguqile, laqoshama lahlala phansi.

Zangena izinsizwa ngazinye, ngazinye zifike zikhuleke zidlule zihlale laphaya nalaphaya, zonke zazingaphethe nduku, ziza-nje zivathazela.

“Qha, khehla, namp’abafana ozobaxoxela ukuhamba kwakho.”

Nempela indoda endala yaqala yathi :

“E, mphakathi kaJobe, nani sizwe sabakwaMthethwa. Ngilapha-nje, ngibekwa ukuhlupheka. Ngiqhamuka le, eNyakatho kwaNdwandwe, ngifelwe mina, nabantu laba engifika nabo.” Lasho ikhehla lathula kwasengathi liyaca Banga kanti lisathatha ikhefu.

“Kwakungolwesine oludlule lapho ubuthongo buzunge umuntu wonke emzini omkhulu kaMalusi umfowabo kaZwide. Sezwa kukhonkotha izinja ngokwelelesela, esikhundleni sokuBa ziqonde phambili zazibalekela emuva sengathi lukhulu ziyalwesaba. Njengamadoda saphuma sonke ukulunguza. Sabonani? Sabona izidlodlo zikhephuzeliswa ngumoya wokusa lona oshaya uma sekuthath’ukusa; sathi ukukhothama sigema ngamehlo ukuthi ngabe yini, kanti abantu, yimpi ihlome iphelele.

“Kwathi kunjalo kwakhala umlozi ngakweny’inxa yomuzi, kwasekumemeza omunye walababantu wathi :

‘Luhlangene.’

“Nonke njengamabutho amadala, nezinsizwa ezihlabanayo niyazi ukuthi lokho kusuke sekusho amathambo amhlophe noma kufani.

“Nathi sathathela phezulu izihlangu sagwaza, sagwaza, kwangagwazeka. Sahlehla impi yasicindezela ezindongeni zezindlu zethu njengoba yayisifohlile othangweni. Laphoke wezwa sekukhala isifazane sonke ngamazwi engisawezwa ezindlebeni zami nanamuhla

lokhu sengathi abafazi bami bayangilandela bekhala, bethi :

“Maye, maye, ngafel’ubala weyise kaSobaniBani.

“Pho, sasisekhona yini isikhathi sokwenzani? Sagwaza sehluleka, bazebasikaka gembeqe, lapho umuntu akasaboni nowakubo. Uthuli lwase luqonge phezulu, abanye sefeshisa izindlu zethu nakho konke esinakho. Nathi sathi sethuka sasiBona isikhala sokuputshuka, saputshuka sabaleka sacasha emahlathini angaseduze nasemakhaya.

“Lapho ke, nina bakwaMthethwa, mina ngangingedwa ngilunguze ngekhandu, ngoBa enzansi kwasekuntwelile ilanga selizophuma. Izigi namazwi abantu ayegcwele ezindlebeni zami, kuthi lapho ngicashekhona ngethuke sekuthi mangibaleke sengathi bakhona abangixoshayo; kodwa ngiqunge isibindi ngihlale.”

Bonke ababelalele babethule sengathi kabekho enkundleni; kodwa phezu kwabo bonke kwakuthule inkosi uDingiswayo kaJobe, yena lendaba owayeyithatha ngezinhlangothi eziningi njengoba ukuhlupheka kwaloluhlobo wayekwazi, futhi eqonda okungaphezulu kwalokhu okwakuxoxwa yikhehla leli.

“Bantabami, ngezwa ukugquma kwaBaningi begqunyiswa amanxeba abawathole kuliwa, abanye beqangqalazile sekade bafa kodwa amehlo abo uwabone evulekile ebeke phezulu nemilomo selokhu ikhamisile ngenxa yokuxega kwemihlathi yangaphansi. A, yikho ukufa lokhu!”, lasho ikhehla lakhohlwa ukuthi likhuluma phambi komphakathi, nakulomphakathi kukhona inkosi. Bonke kulona baphenduka abantabalo, kwaBanandi khona lokho nakuBo, ababelalele.

“Ngacasha lapho, laphuma ilanga, ngawabona amabutho eklaya ithafa eya eDlovunga ethwele ikhanda likaMalusi ngoBa uZwide lo, wayefuna ukuBa azidlise

yena ukuḅa uMalusi ufile, kusale yena yedwa. Ngangilele ngithule ngithe nya, ngathuka sengikwesika-Badakazi.

“ Ngangingazange ngilale ngenxa yokulwa nokuḅaleka. Kwabekangishilo ukuthi hlwathi ngezwa sengathi ukhona umuntu ongiḅamba engigamfula isisu ngavuka kancane, okokuqala ngavusa ikhanda, ngavula amehlo, hhau, ngaḅonani? Uḅaḅ’angibone wemamba yehlathi emnyama yayihamba phezu kwami. Masinya ngezwa umzimba ugedezela uthi, dluku, nemamba yema, yathula, yashaya ikhweli. Lokhu kwangiqaphelisa ukuthi uma ngike ngathi nyaka, izogadla. Ngathula ngaqinisa umzimba, lapho amakhala ami asegcwele uswela lwayo imamba njengoba thina bazingeli imamba siyizwa ngoswela lwayo siyiḅalekele. Ngathula ngaqinisa imihlathi nayo imamba yema khona lapho kayanyakaza sengathi iyaḅona ukuthi kangisilo ugodo yona eḅithi iyalweqa. Emva kwesikhathi ngaḅona izinhleḅa zayo ziqoqana ziḅophana, ngacimeza, ngezwa ihululeka inyiba, izinkathankatha zayo ezicwebezelayo. Ngalala, ngathula. Yikho-nje, ḅantaḅami ningiḅona ngimakhekheḅa nomzimba wami webuza, yisihlungu saleyo nyoka.”

“ Ngavuka ngaqaphelisa amakhambi ayengase angisize, nganqampunqampuna ngadla. Emve kwalokho ngaḅona laḅaḅantu engifike naḅo lapha ekhaya, naḅo bengitshela ezaḅo izinhlupheko zokubujiswa kwemizi yaḅo, kwaḅa imfanayo. Savumelana ukuḅa size lapha, nempela nakhu sesifikile. Sikhuleka kuwe wena thole lesilo, eḅesingathi thina ḅakwaNdwandwe :

*‘ UGedlebana wezimonqo,  
UNkom’ekhal’ihlahlelwa kaJobe,  
Inkonjan’egwaz’abelungu,  
uHhiya kobanani ?’*

Siyakhuleka thina zilahlwa, mihamb’ima, engenandawo neyokucasha.”

Lasho ikhehla lathula lalokhu libeke phansi, selokhu liqalile ukulandela indaḅa leyo. Kwathula nasesigcawini kwathi cwaka, uDingiswayo wavusa ikhanda waḅiza omunye wezinduna zakhe uMlangeni wathi kuye :

“ Mlangeni,” waphendula wathi,

“ Bayede !”

“ Thatha laḅaḅantu, ḅakhathele, uḅagcine kahle, mhla seḅeqinile namanxeḅa aḅo esephophile, uḅanike indawo phakathi kozalo lwakho; aḅaḅizwe ngawe ḅakhonze kimina ngawe, uḅavusele imizi yaḅo ḅande, njengani nonke. Lapha kwaMthethwa yilona khaya lawoLahliwe. Kanjalo umuzi wakho Mlangeni igama lawo lizoḅa kwa . . . “ Ngatholwa.”

Baphuma ḅahamba ḅonke ḅelandela uMlangeni kwasala inkosi nezinduna. Waḅuza uDingiswayo wathi :

“ Nithini mphakathi na ?”

UMphakathi wathi,

“ Asazi nkosi.”

“ UMalusi lona, uḅulawela mina ngoba ngimthanda engumlamu wami, nangoba udadewaḅo eḅusa lapha eḅalungwini. Akunjalo mphakathi ?” kubaḅuza uDingiswayo.

“ Yeḅo kunjalo wena weLanga.”

“ Ngakhoke ngizothuma izigijimi ezimbili, ziye eDlovunga nalomyalezo :

“ Uthi uDingiswayo kaJobe kuwena Zwide kaLanga umḅekephi uMalusi? Kufuneka umkhiphe umḅeke emehlweni aḅantu ḅaḅbone ehamba ngezinyawo zozimbili, uma kungenjalo ukhuni oluthezile lunenkume. Nanko umyalezo wami. Nithini nina ḅakwethu nani mkhandlu wonke.”

Kwathulwa kwathiwa cwaka ngoba bonke babazi ukuthi lawamazwi amumethe igazi eseligcwele okufanele lichitheke liphinyiselwe ngaphandle. Kuphela into owawungabona beyenza, wabona amadoda ekhwica imilenze, enyakama, ethatha amashungu ogwayi echathaza ebema sengathi akalalele kanti ezwa yonke into.

“Wena Vukani, khetha izinsizwa ezimbili ezikwazi ukugijima nezinesibindi zihambe ziyothula lombiko kuZwide khona manje,” kusho inkosi kuVukani.

Kanjalo uVukani wafika wakhetha izelamani zikaSavela wakwaMahlase amagama azo nanka: Omdala kwakunguQedizwe, omncane kunguZwelafo. Zaqhamuka zema pambi kwenkosi, zakhuleka, zanikwa umbiko lowo, zatshelwa ukuba ziwuphinde kaningana ngezinhlamvu zawo zonke, zenza njengoba zitshelwa, zakhuleka, zahamba.

Ingani abantu bahamba ekuseni uma behamba izwe elikude ikakhulu uma indawo ikude, kodwa lezizelamani zaphuma zahamba lapho ilanga libantu bahle. Uyise waphuma waziphelekezela ephethe isagila, nesalukazi esingunina naso sagaxa isiphuku saso emhlane saphuma sayoxhawula. Lapho uZwelafo embona unina esondela kuye kwehla izinyembezi zawa phansi njengoba amanzi ewa econsa esigujini esivuzayo.

Wakhala kodwa izinyembezi akazisulanga emehlweni, zehla, zawela ezihlathini zakhe waxhawula kunina, wafulathela wahamba elandelwa umfowafo omkhulu. Bahamba kodwa ilanga lashona ngaphambi kokuba basithele ezintabeni. Lapho balala khona kasazi, nalapho babethola khona ukudla kasazi, kodwa bahamba nomyalezo lowo wenkosi.

## ISAHLUKO VII

“PHUMA siphume mfo kaMalume, Vukani. Phuma uyongikhombisa amaButho aseviviwe enziwa izigaba ngezigaba,” kusho inkosi ikhuluma noVukani okwakunguyena nduna yakhe kwezombuso. Eceleni nabo kwakuhamba umfo kaNtonteyana uJevuza. Wayehamba njengomuntu ohluphekayo ongenasikhundla phakathi komuzi wenkosi, kanti nguyena du owayephethe impilo yenkosi ezandleni zakhe.

“Uthini mfo kaNtonteyana ngalezizindaba ezizwakala macala onke? Athini amakhubalo akho Vondwe lomhlanga?”

“Zinyane lesilo lawamakhubalo akasho luthi, ayangicashela. Kodwa kwengikubone kusihlwa ngamaphupho nangamathambo, ngibone uSiqongo ebaleka engishiya ngejubane wayewangena kwaZwide. Mtanenkosi nawe uyazi ukuthi uZwide ngimzondela okokufa. Kanjalo noSiqongo, ngangimcifela amehlo elapha phakathi komuzi ngoba nguyena ongomunye walafo ababefuna ukususa ikhanda lakho khona mandulo,” kusho okaNtonteyana.

Bahamba bekhuluma baze bafika lapho kwakuvivinywa khona amaButho, eseklele ngezigaba zawo, ukufika kwakhe uDingiswayo wabona indlela yokulwa kwesizwe sakwaMthethwa, silwa, kuthi wonke umuntu athathwe yisibindi sakhe alwe aziphonse empini yezitha ngoba efuna udumo kube ngolwake. Zazikhona izigaba zokukhula kwaBantu kodwa kuthi lapho sebekhulile kungabi bikho ukuhlanganiswa kwalezizigaba

ziBe ngamaButho okuButhwa. IzigaBa zokuzalwa izinsizwa zazizahlukanisa ngokuBa zikhumbule ukuthi, "Mina ngelusa nosibanibani," nezinye izinto ezinjalo. Emva kokwalusa kayikho into eyayihlanganisa izinsizwa zesifunda senkosi, zibumbeke ziBe muntu munye, ziBe nozwelano lobuzwe. Izigodi ngezigodi nazo zazi-hlangana ngoBa ikhona into ezizoyenza nanjengoBa ikhona intombi egcagcela endaweni ethize. Uma kunjalo izinsizwa nezintombi zazihlangana zikhethe oligagu phakathi kwazo, owazi ukuba asine ingoma, akwazi nokuziqambela amagama okusina namahuBo azohaywa uma sekuqhudelwana aBakomtwana nabakomyeni. Nanso kuphela into eyayihlanganisa abantu ngezikhathi zikaDingiswayo.

Ekufikeni kwakhe wakuBona lokho wangakuthanda. Ikakhulu lapho ethuma izinhlozi ezinxeni zonke zomhlaBa oseduze waBona ukuthi yena njengomncane noyingane emakhosini ezizwe ezazimkakile kwakufanele aqine aqambe ukulwa okuhle nokusha okungathi ngakho ahlule izizwe eziseceleni kwakhe. Yena wayephakathi kwesidleke semivi engatinyelwa afe noma ngayiphi inkathi.

Wayeseyalile ukuba kuButhwe zonke izizwe ezingaphansi kwakhe zilethwe zonke izinsizwa namabungu ayengase akwazi ukubamba umkhonto alwe. Kwathi yilesi nayilesi sigaba waBeka phezu kwaso induna noma igosa laso. Yilesi nayilesi sigaba sasivunula ngokufana kusuka phansi kuye kushaye phezulu. Amahawu ayefana onke ngemiBala nangokusikwa.

Indlela yokulwa yaguqulwa. Uma impi ihlasela yayimisa isizinge esinezimpondo ezimbili. Izimpondo lezi kwakuBa amaqhawe angahlehli uma sekukubi, nawo aphaswe yilabo aBangahlehli njengoBo. Phakathi nohla esifubeni sohla kwakufakwa futhi aBaziwayo

besekuthi kwezinye izindawo kubekwe aBangesiBo amaqhawe kodwa nabo aBalwayo noma Bengakahlabani kangako. Igosa laliphahlwa ngamaqhawe aPhakathi noma lona lingaphandle lihola kodwa laliBaphakathi lapho lingabonwa noma nguBani, kuthi nento eliyimemezayo izwakale kulo lonke uhla. Nakhona lapha, igosa laliBa ngumuntu oligagu likwazi ukuhaya ingoma kuthi lapho sekuzoliwa igosa liqale ihuBo okuliwa ngalo, zilithathe izinsizwa lapho imikhonto uyibone ibenyezela phezulu elangeni kukhonjwa phansi nasemaceleni, nasesibakabakeni njengoBa ihuBo liquBuka izinsizwa zila mukela zilimungunya zizezilihayele okokuBa zithukuthele nawe ongahlomile uzwe uthatha isihlangu kanti qha, uphethwe usinga lwehuBo lezinsizwa.

Sezilingene ihuBo igosa seliqala ukuphuma lisho isaga seButho lalo zonke izinsizwa zisamukele isaga zisisho, zisisho, besekuphuma amaqhawe kuphela agiyele isaga lesi. Laphoke zonke izinsizwa sezijuluka, kuBe yilapho zithathela phansi zihamba ukuyohlangaBezana nesitha. Kwakunjalo ngezikhathi zikaDingiswayo Kodwa yonke lento akayiQedanga ngelanga. Kwathatha isikhathi eside, neminyaka. Izinsizwa ukuba zahlukaniswe kwaseBufaneni kuthi lapho zingena ubunsizwa zahlukaniswe namakhaya azo zihlale ubumpholo, kazikuthandanga lokho. Kukhona ezabalekayo zashiya zayoqala enye inhlalo kwamanye amakhosi, nezinye zaBaleka njengoSiqongo.

ABafana baBebuthwa Bengamabungu baxoshwe emakhaya mhlawumbe izinyanga ezintathu, ezine, nezizithupha, kuthiwe maBasuke emakhaya bayohlala endle lapho bezozicingela khona ukudla; bazakhele amadlangala; bafunde ukuzingela nokukhanda ngisho nemikhonto. Iningi lalifunda ukwakha nokuBaza iza-

gila nokugawula izinduku zidiywe. Amagama emithi yezinduku abafana babeyifunda lapha ukuthi lomuthi, umsimbithi, ithambo, umnweba; lonake inqayi, umnu-ngumabele, isiphampatho; lowayake idlebelendlovu, umazwenda, uqhume. Lesisikathi kwakuyisikhathi sokufunda nokufundisana ngoba phakathi kwalabafafana kwakubakhona njalo izingcweti ezikhethwa yinkosi ukuba zibeke abafana laba kukho konke abakwezayo zibafundise kanzima, zibadinda ngenduku. Uma umfana eyigawule kabi induku wayefundiswa ngokudindwa, noma engakwazi ukuchopha izinyawo wayeyiswa ingqwele emmfuleni imfake phakathi emanzini, ithathe itshe noma limahhadlahhadla ingqwele imkhuhle ngalo. Ukuphuma kwegazi kwakungashaywa mkhuba. Kanjalo nokufunda ukuhlamba emanzini abafana babefakwa ngenkani ominzayo aminze akhishwe ngoba esequmbile amanzi angena ngamakhala nangomlomo. Ukukhishwa kwakhe, abekwe ngaphandle esihlabathini ashaywe kuso isisu lesi ngehlabathi amanzi aze aphume onke, uyavuka lapho uyaphuphutheka ubuhlungu.

Akakho umuntu okwakukhalwa kuye kukhaleke, ngoba kwakunganakwa muntu. Ukulamba lonke ilanga kwakuyize, kwakungumdlalo. Kwakudla labo ababeyizinkombi, namaphisi. Uma umngane wakho eshaye ungeda nanahlukaniselana naye, nawe mhla ubambe ibuzi umkhumbule. Izingubo noma iziphuku zokulala zazingekho; kwakusizakala labo ababegwaze inyamazane bayihlinza bathole isikhumba, sokulala. Ngakhoke wonk'umfana wayeqikelela ngokwamandla akhe ukugwaza noma unkonka khona kothiwa mhla kubuywa ekhaya abe nesiphuku sakhe asikhombisa abakufo.

Ukudla okunye ikakhulu kwasemasimini babeku-

thola kanzima. Izikhathi zokubuthwa kwabafana bezijwayele ukuqondana nokukhihliza kwehlobo khona kothi lapho ummbila uvuthiwe kube bona besaxoshiwe njalo. Ngakhoke bekuthi ebusuku abafana basakazeke behamba begaqa phansi, becasha ngezihlahla, besondela emasimini asevuthiwe agcwele ummbila nemfe. Ukufika kwabo khona babezifulela njengokubona kwabo bagawule imfe abangase bayithole. Khona ebusuku lapho bakhukhuse ngezamahufo baqonde lapho bakhe khona amadlangala abo. Ingomane yomlilo yayivutha kuze kuse kosiwa ummbila ngoba amaviyo lawa ayelambile. Ngesikhathi umlilo usakhihliza abafana babeklenyeza imfe abanye izandla sezibomvu zigxiza igazi besikwa amakhasi amazele emfe. Akakho owayenaka igazi kuphela okwakungena emlonyeni.

Uma kwenzeka ukuba omunye abeyivaka kangangoba abanjwe esathi uyeba, wayebanjwa ngisho insimu kungeyakwabo, abanjwe adindinywe ngezinduku noma eshiywa enabalele khona lapho kwakungabi ndaba zalutho. Lababafana babephathwa njengezilonyana befundiswa bonke ubunzima abangase bahlangane nabo uma sebefuthiwe sebelwela inkosi. Nokulwa babekufunda okokuqala ngokutshelwa ukuba bakhe amahlamvu emithi bawabophe besebhelukaniswa izigaba ezimbili batshelwe ukuba balwe. Babeshayana aze amahlamvu aphundleke abe izinswaba, beshayana ngawo; ziphele izinswaba kusale izinduku ibe isaphathene. Ngemuva kwalababafana abalwa ngamahlamvu kwakubakhona abanye abakhehiwe ngenxa yokwaziwa isibindi sabo ukuba bapathe izinduku babeke abahlehlayo babamele babashaye baqonde phambili. Zinhlangothizombili babeshaywa. Ukuhlelwa kwabo lapho bezokulwa babebekwa njengo-

kuma kwempi yoqobo, kubekhona izimpondo ezimbili eziholwa abakwaziyo ukushaya induku kuthi lapha phakathi esifubeni sayo impi kubekwe abaziwayo futhi. Balwa njalo abafana laba ababince lutho ngaphandle kwezinyana zotshani abanye kabagqoke lutho nge mpela. Kwakuthi impi isiyekiwe ngoaba abanye sebe phelelwe izinto zokugadla ufone laba abangazi ukuvika sebeluphumpu ubuso bonke ngenxa yamahlamvu, nezinduku zibadlile. Abanye bayebegcwele amaphuphusi emakanda, abanye bevaleke amehlo, nabanye bopha amanxeba. Akakho owayekhala nowayezwaka kalisa ukuzwela ubuhlungu, bonke babehleka amagqubu engavunyelwe.

Kukho lokhu kuphuma kwabafana kwakuyisifundo esikhulu. Njalo ngakusihlwa abafana babehlanganiswa emlilweni bafundiswe izaga zebutho labo njengalesi :

*“ Shibe dabe, hha ! Sabanikwa ;  
Babaleka, ba . . . zi . . . zi . . . !  
Emva, ngcindezi . . . zi . . . zi . . . zi.”*

Izaga zebutho zaziqalwa emlilweni abafana bazifunde, kuthi lapho bezisho kusihlwa kunyakaze amahlathi, neziwa. Izaga lezi kwakuba enye yezinto okugcinwa ngazo. Khona lapho belu umfana oligagu lokukhuluma ubemiswa isibindi sokuaba akwazi ukubongela amafutho ; nalaaba abangamagagu engoma babenikwa ithuba khona emlilweni ukuaba baqambe amagama okungasinwa ngawo. Bekuthike lapho sekufundwa izinyathelo zengadla, lowo oqambe ingoma okuzosinwa ngayo, kuze nguyena oligosa. Ukusina lokhu bekuqalwa ntambama ngenkathi lapho abasemakhaya sebebuyisa izinkomo, abafana bashikishe loze lishone gqwambi. Kothi sefeshukeke sefeyimvuthu, bagu-

nyulwe bayozifunela izinkuni zokubasa, nokudla emasimini aseduze.

Kusihlwa kwakuhlalwa emlilweni kuxoxwe izindaba. Kwakuqalwa ezinganekwaneni umfana owayezizwa elele egibise ikhanda kuninakhulu, kuyekufike ezinganekwaneni umfana azithola kwabanye abafana. Kayikho inganekwane eyayaziwa yiyo bonke abafana nje ngekaNcazane. Wayengayiqala omunye umfana athi :

“ Kwesukela,” besekuduma wonke uwonke emlilweni athi “ Hhm.”

“ Intombazana yayeluse izinyoni ihwibiza amahobe adla amahele, ibeke nezinkawu ezidla ummbila. Lentombazana yahlala, yahlala, kwathi ngelinye ilanga yezwa izwi elincane sengathi elomntwana kanti kakusiye. Lelozwi lalithi, “ We Ncajane, weNcajane, woj’ujongibeyetha.” UNcazane amangale ngoaba lelizwi wayengalazi. Nempela asondesondele ngasesihlahleni leso. Athi ukuqalaza abone amadletshana athe yethe, nezingalwane ezinde engathi zedlula imilenze ; lesisilwane sisondele kuye, abeyathe thathatha, uyabaleka, isilwane sime simemeze sithi : ”

“ We Ncajane, weNcajane, woj’ujongibeyetha.”

“ No-Ncazane abone ukuthi akukho ukwenza ngokunye, asondele akhothame, isilokazana leso sithi, khwaxa emhlane, agqigqizele naso sisinda, aye asigqinsile exhibeni lakhe ame, naso sithi khimilili, silalele phandle ukuthi akakho yini ozayo, sithi singabona ukuthi akukho muntu siphonse amehlo ndawozonke, senyuke nexhifa sithungatha, size sifike lapho uNcazane wayemboze khona udiywana lwakhe lwamasi, sime isilwane sikhothe izindevu, sibuke phansi odiyweni lwamasi lugcwele izangqonda nomcaba uhlezi eceleni, sibuye sibeke phezulu kuNcazane, sithi ukumamatheka kancane.”



Umfana lo oxoxayo uyixoxa ngobungcweti ngofoa ufuna ukuba athandwe kuqala induna ebabekile kwaziwe ukuthi uma kufuneka indaba kaNcazane ingaxoxwa kuphela nguSobanibani abanye qha. Kothi lapho esephatha amasi nezingqonda afune okokuba bonke abafana baconse amathe bakhumbule unandi lwasekhaya lapho kuqhilika khona izindiwo zigcwele amasi nalapho odadewabo begaya khona izinkobe zokuvuba amasi. Imicabango yawowabo ayithathe ayibekise ekhaya, bazebakohlwe ukuthi umlilo uyacima izinkuni mazifakwe. Lapho umlilo usulokoza phakathi kwesimboza somlotha esifihla ilahle elivuthayo lingavuthi libe bomvu. Ubuso babafana abalalele lapho sebunjengobalesiya silwane esabonwa nguNcazane, buvele ebumnyameni ngamakhala amakhulu namehlo amhlophe abanye sebeze basineka namazinyo umfana omunye ebaphethe ngenganekwane eyinandisa. Kothi apho sekungathi bonke sebelele abasalalele nomlilo usuzewathi ukucima usuvuthela ngaphansi, kuzwakale omunye athi,

“Woza nazo, wethu,”

Abanye bamvumele bathi,

“Yebo woza nazo, silwane.”

Lapho lowo oxoxayo aphiwe amanye amandla okuxoxa ayiqhuba phambili indaba yakhe kaNcazane.

“Kothi lapho isilokazane sesimamathekile uNcazane abone kujuza amathe emlonyeni waso, sibuze sithi,

“Ncajane,” simbuke futhi, siphinde sithi, “Ncajane, akabani lawamashi? athi uNcazane, “ngawami,” sisondele kuye simuthi ncaka ngembebe, sithi “mush’ukuthi ngawakho, thana ngawami,” sisho sizikhomba sona esifubeni. Lapho uNcazane usethuthumela ukwesaba, sibuye sibuze isilokazane sithi, “Ncajane, Ncajane,

akabani lawamashi?” aphenjule uNcazane athi, “Ngawakho.”

“Kube akashilo uNcazane sisuke isilokazane siqoshame phansi siphelelwe icala, sithathe udiwo nomcaba sikubeke phakathi kwemilenzana yaso sivube, sizikhohise. Sidle sidle, sidle, sibek’ethala size zikhothe nokhamba besesimbuka uNcazane sithi.

“Kumnandi Ncajane.” UNcazane athule aphelelwe amandla akohlwe ukuthi uzothini. Ulimi lwakhe ngenxa yokulamba lunamathele phezulu emankankeni. Siyasuka lapho isilwane sithi,

“Ncajane ngibeyethe sengiyahamba,” nempela uNcazane asibelethe ahambe naso esibekisa ehlathini. Lapho esasithwele enqamula utshani obabuphakathi nensimu ayilindayo nehlathi, umsila wesilwane wawusuke uhushe phansi, sisuke simncakaze futhi sithi,

“Ncajane, thath’umshiya wami, nank’ucwiya imvojane.” Nempela akhothame uNcazane awucoshe umsila wesilwane asisumbise size sifike ehlathini. Uyothi esigqinsila phansi, besithi ngqabashi sikhwela emagatsheni omuthi sinyamalale angabuye asifone uNcazane nangalukhalo. Uyoobuyela exhifeni lakhe acinge futhi okhambeni ukuthi kumbe kukhona okusalile, kodwa alubone ukhamba lomile luthe nkwe.

“Lothi lishona ilanga uNcazane abuye agoduke elambile sekuthi akafe. Lendaba yalesisilwane yaqhubeka kwazekwaba isikathi, noNcazane wonda waba uthi, isilwane sifika njalo sithi:

“WeNcajane, weNcajane, woj’ujongibeyetha.” Waze uyise kaNcazane wambuza umtanakhe wathi “Yini Ncazane na? Wonda kangaka, uyagula yini na?” Wathi uNcazane “qhabo kangiguli nempela, ngiphilile,” pho yini na? Emva kwesikade into mbazana yaze yachaza indaba yesilwane leso.”

Kwathi lapho futhi umfana esexoxe isikathi esidana kubuye kukhulume omunye athi, "Yayinesibindi lentombazana, wethu." Abanye sebethola nekhefu lokunyakaza, abanye baguqule nezinhlangothi, omunye achwabaze umlilo.

"Pho, yagcina kanjani intombazana wethu?" Sekubuza omunye, abesethatha umfana lona oxoxayo, esequnge isibindi ngoba ebona ukuthi imicabango yawowafo kayakude; uma ikude izidwebela imifane-kiso ebangwa ubumnandi benganekwane leyo. Ngoba phela nangaphandle kwalabo ababeconsiswa amathe ukuzwa ngamasi ayeyizangqonda okhambeni luka-Ncazane, kwakukhona abanye ababekhumbula emakhaya abangane babo, abanye oNcazane okuthi mabeqhamuka bamonyozele bodwa; omunye athuke ezithintitha ibeshu lakhe, eqhwisha, agqwegqwe endleleni sengathi indlela iyamnukela kanti uxoshwa inhliziyo yakhe emcobayo. Kanjalo nalababafana bazulazula ngendaba kaNcazane, izinhliziyi zafo zikude zindinda emagangeni, zibuka phambili nasemuva ezinsukwini bengakalethwa lapha ehlane ukufo bazohlushwa bancintshwe ukudla, baziphekele, bashaywe, benziswe ubunzima obuningi ababungaswelekile. Babecabanga kanje lababafama; kodwa lapho sebedweba omunye umfanekiso walelologa sebelandiwe ukufo babuye beze emakhaya, izinhliziyi zafo zazigcuala intokozo ezwiwa umnini-nhliziyo kuphela engenakubongelwa ngisho nayizimbongi ezingamaciko. Nansi into eyayithokozisa lababafana. Ngakhoke babekhala bonke kanye-kanye lapho umlilo sebewuchwabazile basho bathi:

"Woza nazo, wethu."

Aqhufuke umxoxi wenganekwane athi:

"Yasho yathi, intombazana, ngihlushwa yisilwane,

sinamadletshana nje, sihamba njengomunutu ontengazelayo; sizingalo zinde zedlula imilenze sengathi ziyalenga sihamba sibeke phansi. Siphuma ehlatini singibize sithi, "We Ncajane, we Ncajane, woj'ujongibeyetha." Nempela ngiye sifike sithi khwaxe emhlane besengisusumba naso ngoba sifuna ukuya exhibeni lami. Sithi ukufika khona sidle amasi ami siwashaye siwaqothule. Yingakho-nje sengonda ngaba njena, kangidli lutho." Nempela uyise kaNcazane amtshele ukuthi kuhle ayolinda nakusasa apha the ukhamba lwakhe lolo lwamasi, yena uyocasha efukwini ngasexhibeni. Khona isilwane singeke simbone yena uyofika kuqala ekuseni kusemnyamana. Nempela uyise kaNcazane wavuka waya ensimini wacasha.

Abafana abanye kubadide lokhu ngoba khona lapho endle induna yafo yayikade ifatshelile ukuthi izilwane zinamakhala anuka ingozi ikude, besebubuza bethi,

"Isilwane singamuzwa yini?"

Abanye babang'umsindo bathi, "Eya thulani, kuphele indaba uma ningathuli koze kuse. Kuphendule omunye athi,

"Ingani natshelwa kwathiwa isilwane sizwa lowo kuphela omi ngasemoyeni. Noma silele siyamuzwa, kodwa uma emi kuyisona singasemoyeni, angaze asibambe sona silele singamuzwa. Qhubeka wethu bayabeda laba."

"Kubeda obani?" Sekubuza omunye osengenwa umoya wokulwa, kuthi engakaliqedi ahlalwe induku, athi uyabeka kanti ushaywa induna ebabekile ngoba nakhu eqamba uchuku ebanga umsindo wokulwa kanti kabavunyelwe ukuxabana bodwa nxa bebuthiwe. Nempela aqhubeke umfana.

"Kwathi ilanga liphuma wafika uNcazane, waqala

wayobeka ukudla kwakhe kuqala exhibeni wanyenzeza kuyise wamfumanisa ukuthi ukhona. Wayesephuma njengemihla yonke wayohwibiza izinyoni emabeleni. Lafudumala ilanga, kwathi naye esekhohliwe uNcazane lezwakala izwi lathi, 'We Ncajane, we Ncajane, woj'u-jongibeyetha, woja we Ncajane.' Wethuka uNcazane inhliziyo yakhe yaduduzela wakhohlwa nokuthi uyise ukhona umbekile, wema, wasibona isilwane siphuma ehlathini noyise wathi ukulunguza wasibona, waamba ongaphansi umlomo ukumangala. UNcazane naye wabeka ngakuyise, uyise wamtshela ngesandla ukuba ahambe ayosithwala asilethe exhibeni. Kanjalo wahamba uNcazane wasithwala isilwane wasiletha exhibeni.

Safika sema isilwane uNcazane naye wema kwaabasengathi ngumngane waso, wasihawukela ngoba izwi laso lalimkhumbuza njalo amazwi abantwana abaqala ukukhuluma. Kodwa wabuye wafikelwa ukusizonda ngoba sesimondise waaba uthi, sidla ukudla kwakhe. Sabuza isilwane sathi:

"We Ncajane okukabani yokhu kudla?" Sasho sambuza sisondele ngakukho. UNcazane waphubuka wahleka wangaphendula. Lokhu kwasicasula isilwane, saguquka samshaya ngembebe sathi,

"Uthembathembeyeni namhla Ncajane? Okukabani yokhu kudla?" Wathi uNcazane "okwami." Sabuya sathi siyaphenduka wahlehla uNcazane sehlu-leka ukumshaya. Sasho futhi sathi "uthembathembeyeni Ncajane? okukubani yokhu kudla Ncajane?"

"Laphoke uyise kaNcazane useveva ukuthukuthela, iwisa lakhe nokusinda kwalo akasakuzwa. Uvele ngembofo encane ulunguzile ngeso. Kwathi lapho isilwane sibuza sigcizelela sesithukuthele sithi, "Oku-

kabani yokhukudla Ncajane? Thana okwami," wayeseqhamukile uyise kaNcazane. KwaBalithunzi emnyango lapho engena, noNcazane wahlangana noyise emnyango ebaleka, waye wema phandle. Wezwa ukuduma kwewisa likhala ezimbanjeni zesilwane lapho uyise kaNcazane eboqoza izimbajana, wezwa nezwi laso sikhala sincenga kodwa uyise kaNcazane akanakanga lutho. Okokugcina wezwa sesizidela sona isilwane sithi:

"Wo akunacaya ngiwadliy'anezangqondo." Wasithatha isilwane wasihudulela ngaphandle, wasiphonsa ehlathini. Iyaphela lapho."

Kothi ingaphela indaba nomlilo nawo ubusuphela sekuvutha izigodo kuphela, abanye abanobuthongo sebelele nabanye ubabone sebenyakaza bengena emafukwini abo belala.

Ebusuku kwakuyisona kuphela isikhathi sokuxoxa izingane kwanti kwakuxoxwa nezindaba zempi ezake zaliwa ngaphambili. Izindaba ezinjalo zazixoxwa izinduna esezingamadoda aqinile. Phezu kwalokhu abafana bebefundiswa zonke izindlela zokuziphatha ikakhulu zonke izindlela eziqondene nokuganwa. Umfana ubetshelwa indlela yokuziphantha lapho esathandwa, atshelwe futhi nendlela yokuphatha umfazi wakhe esemlobolile nokuba asihloniphe sonke esinye isifazane sawowafo asivikele ebunzimeni. Umfana ubekhonjiswa ubufi bokushela izintombi ezishelwa ngabangane bakhe kodwa kube iqholo lelo uma ethatha izintombi zabanye abangebangane kuye. Umfana ubengaqonywa izintombi azithandayo, kuthi zona azifundise ukuzwana ngoba kothi mhla kuthiwa angase athunge, uma enezinkomo azigcagece zonke njengokuthanda kwakhe. Umfana ubeyalwa induna ukuba uma ebuthiwe uphuma ngezikhathi ezithile

ntambama abuye azodla ekhaya alale kanye nabanye abafana. Oweqa lowo mthetho uyabulawa ngoba uthena amandla abanye abafana. Amabutho ayenamandla ehlala wodwana.

Zonke izifundo zokuhamba komhlaba ngezindlela zonke, ububi nobuhle, abafana befekuthola lapha ngenkanti befuthiwe. Kwakungafani njengezinsuku zanamuhla lapho abafana befundisana bodwa endle befundiswa izinto ezimbi ngabanye abafana abangalungile abangenamqondo wakulunga nempela. Ezikhathini zikaDingiswayo into ibifundiswa yilowo okhethe yisizwe lesi ukuba ayinike enzalweni entsha ekhulayo, ayinike ngendlela ezothile ezokwenza nabafana uqobo lwafo besafe. Nenkolo yabo kuNkulunkulu, oChibi linomnqwazi, uDumakude, nayo ibifundiswa ngendlela. Umahluko phakathi kukaNkulunkulu nethongo nedlozi, induna ekhethelwe lokho ibikubeka obala kubafana kubeyibona abazibonelayo ukuthi bona bangaphi kulezizigaba njengoba ngelinye ilanga nabo idlozi labo liyowushiya umzimba liphindele kwamanye amadlozi, kuphela kuyosala isithunzi emzimbeni, besebewubopha, bawusondezele izikhali, nezindiwo, nezevatho zawo, bawuqoshamise bawulondolozela kwaMhlaba. Zonke lezizinto, amasiko nemikhuba yabantu abafana befefundiswa khona, kuthi mhla kubuywayo bazizwe bengabanye abantu abaguquliwe.

Kanjalo uDingiswayo ubethumela izwi ukuba babuyiswe beze emakhaya uma isikhathi sabo sokuvivinya sesiphelile. Kwakungelinye lalaw'amalanga mhla uDingiswayo ephuma nomzala wakhe uVukani ethi kuyena akaphume ayomkhombisa amabutho aseviwiwe. Nempela wawabona emi eklelile phambi kwakhe evunule njengoba wonk'umfana wayesikelwe nguyise

umutsha nebeshu elisha, waphiwa ihawu elisha nezinjongo ezintsha. Wonke umuzi wakwaMthethwa waphuma wazobona isimangaliso esifika noDingiswayo ukuba abuthe izinsizwa azenze izigaba ezinje. Kwaduma izigodi nemizi yonke lapho uDingiswayo eseqhamuka ehamba no Vukani nomfo kaNtonteyana nezinye izikhulu, kwaduma:

“ Ubayedede.”

Nalabo ababengamthandi ngokubulala uMawewe bezwa uDingiswayo, ebasinda babona kuyena ukuthi inhliziyi yakhe kayigxilile esigodlweni njengoMawewe namanye amakhosi, kodwa inhliziyi yakhe ithanda isizwe sonke sikayise. Nakhu esakha ngezindlela ezintsha. Kwalethwa kuye injomane yakhe wayikhwela wazula phakathi kwezintambo nezigidi zamabutho ayemi phambi kwakhe. Njalo ezigabeni ngezigaba kwaduma u “ BAYEDEDE.”

Wawahlola wawahlola amabutho wayesehlala phansi esewatha amagama wabeka nezinduna zawo. Okokuqala wabeka phambili ibutho likaYise uYengondlovu kanye neNyelezi kwathi wawabuka wawabuka kwafika enhliziyweni yakhe ukuba ngase kube phakathi kwayo bakhona abaphakamisa umkhonto bathi mabamhlabe kodwa wasinda. Wabatshela ukuba mabasuduke babuyele eceleni ngoaba kuzosina abancane abasavela kovivinywa. Nempela izinsizwa ezindala zasuka zabuyela eceleni, zema zabukela. Kwaphuma eshashalazini amabutho amasha aqala ukugiyela inkosi. Elokuqala laphunyelwa imbongi yalo yaqandula ngezwi yathi:

“ *UMafavuke njenge dwangubane,  
Bamhlaba ngejoz'uSabangwa,  
Bambangel'amanxeba ukuwaphala,*

*UMadlekezela woYengo, uSongobese wamakhanda,  
Uye kwaMahlamba ngamazwi enhlamba :  
Ugodo alushi ngokubaselwa.*

*Umsindo olapha ngowani?  
Bahlabab indlovu yakwaDelwase,  
Emanxeba- nduna yakoXaba,  
UGodongwane woYengo,  
Izulu lidume futhi, Gwabi kaNdaba*

*Izidlukula zamaNtungwa zimukile,  
Lidum'eNhlanguwini kubaThembu,  
Bakhweza bayangoJama kaMnisi.*

*Ingqambi eyahlul'amakhos'amanye."*

Ngenkathi imbongi iqandula iya enhla iya enzansi, uDingiswayo wayehleli ebuka. Imbongi yasho, yasho, yagiya, yagiya, yathatha ihubo lokusina kwebutho layo. Yasho ngezwi elincane yathi :

*" Hhiya mama, Hhiya ngokwami "*

Zathatha emva kwayo zonke ezinye izinsizwa kwaBasengathi kusimbuka phansi umhlabaathi ezinye zisho ngamaphimbo amancane ezincwincwi, ezinye zisho ngaphakathi, ezinye ziqubuka ngamazwi adumayo amadoda. Zisho njalo zikhomba phezulu ngenkakhonto, amahawu alenga emacaleni. Ibuye ithathe imbongi ithi,

*" Hhiya nomama, hhiya ngokwami,  
Ngawuthath'umhlaba ngay'entshonalanga  
Ngawuphind'umhlaba ngayempumalanga,  
Ngathi ngihlala lapha  
Ngasuka ngalapha  
Kwenzenjani na ? "*

Zibuye zixhume ezwini layo ezinye izinsizwa zihube zilandele ziye zishaye lapho igcine khona. Abuye umntwana wakwaBo ahlelembe ahambe phambi kwaBo bonke azixinge akhohlwe yiBo bonke abambukayo nokuthi inkosi nayo ikhona. Okwaleso sikhathi kwa-kunguye inkosi abanye babesakhohlwe.

Wathi ethatha lapho waqala ihubo lempela wathi :

*" Siza ngebej'ekhaya  
Wemnumzane  
Siza ngebej'ekhaya*

*Vimba ngomkhont'ekhaya  
We mnumzane  
Vimba ngomkhont'ekhaya.  
Hhi—wohhe—Hhawuyala—a—a !! "*

Zasho kwaBasengathi kazikho ezinye ezingase zibuye zivele zahlule zona. Kwakusina izigaba ngezigaba, kudedelwana. Induna yalelibutho elaselisinile kwaBa nguTayiza. Kwasinwa kanjalo kweza iNhlangu eyayiphethwe nguNgomane kaMqomboyi wase Mdletsheni, naye nebutho lakhe wasina washanela kwa-hamba kwahamba kusinwa kwayekwangena iNyakatho ibutho lamabungu elaliviviwe ngonyaka ophelile sekuze kwahlaselwa nangalo labukhombisa ubudoda. Induna yaleli butho kwaku nguMASUKA ka NTELANA waseMzizini owayengumngane omkhulu kaNtonteyana. Ngakhoke kwathi lapho sekusondela yena, ebaqoqa abafana bakhe besondela behamba begijima, bathi lapho beklela wakhuluma uJevuza wathi :

*" Nkosi, kumanje lapho uzoBona into yamehlo."*

*" Usho njalo Vondwe lomhlanga ? " kuBuza inkosi.*

*" YeBo wena wohlanga."*

Yahleka inkosi yathi, " aḥafana ḥake ḥakwazi uku-  
bonis'umuntu into yamehlo? Beyifundephi leyonto  
lokhu ngithi laḥaḥafana yilaḥa aḥakade ḥeḥuthwa  
nonyaka na? "

" Qha, nkosi, laḥa ḥaḥuthwe ngonyaka odlule, ḥeḥe-  
nonyaka ḥeḥuthiwe."

" Nokho, into yamehlo ḥangayithathaphi, Vondwe  
lomhlanga? Usuyaguga, ngiyabona ukuthi nemithi  
yami uzothi unginika lona, ungiphuzise lowaya. Awu-  
caḥangi ukuthi sekuyisikhathi ngifune enye inyanga."?

" Angazi nkosi, kusekuḥoneni kwakho, inceku ila-  
ndela lokho okushiwo yinkosi yayo." Ḥaḥuye ḥahleka  
ḥoḥabili ngoḥa uDingiswayo wayezizwa njalo engumfa-  
na phambi kukaJevuza. Wayemthanda kuthi lapho  
embona akhumbule njalo izinsuku ezindala lapho  
aḥantu ḥakayise ḥacishe ukumḥulala yena nodadewa-  
ḥo wamphaphisa wamshushumbisa wayewafika kwa-  
Qwaḥe nakwaBungane. Njalo uma emḥuka uJevuza  
wayekhumbula uNobantwana kusenguyena engaka-  
fiphazwa nguZenzile. Nokho inhliziyi yenkosi yayi-  
nevuso ngoNobantwana ngoḥa igama lakhe lodwa  
lalimlethela izinyembezi nxa eyedwa, ezwe sengathi  
ngaḥe akazange amḥone kunokuḥa athi esefikile ezo-  
mgana ḥuphele ubuhle ḥakhe kungene esivalweni  
senhliziyi yakhe omunye wesifazane ongazange amhlu-  
phekele. Wathi ukuthi qaḥu kuleyo micabango  
wathi jeqe, kanti nampaya aḥomuzi wakhe ḥehleli  
iqoqwana naḥo ḥayaḥuka izimanga zokuhlenganiswa  
kwamaḥutho.

Umuntu wokuqala amḥonayo kwaḥa ngudadewaḥo  
uDingiwe, kwathi eceleni kwakhe waḥona uNobantwana  
ehleli encelisa umtanakhe womfana omncane. Wathi  
ukubeka uDingiswayo waḥona ukuthi uNobantwana  
umembese ngesikhumba seḥeḥesi lelo alihulalayo

wathumela isikhumba seḥeḥesi lelo ngesigijimi esafika  
saḥika uJobe ukuthi akasekho. Wamḥuka ngeziqo  
zamehlo enamahloni wamḥona emuhle ngokunye,  
kumfanela nalapho edlalisa umtanakhe, ekhuluma  
ngalolo lulimi olwaziwa kuphela ngawonina ḥaḥantwana  
naḥazanyane kuphela. Ngisho lolo lulimi olwenza  
umntwana omncane amamatheke kuze kuthambe  
ngisho inhliziyi yesidlwangudlwangu njengalesiya  
okwathi siyinkosi salahla umuntu oliqhawe ngecala  
sathi makabulawe. Kuthe esezoḥulawa wathi lomuntu  
oliqhawe,

" Nkosi ngicela into inye,"

Yathi inkosi, " Yisho "

" Nginomfazi ekhaya uyancelisa."

Yathi inkosi, " Pho? "

" Ngicela ukubona umntanami ngimbone emama-  
theke engihleka, sengiyofa inhliziyi yami idelile. Ngifisa  
ukumamatheka komntwana omncane ozelwe—Nkosi."

Yathula inkosi, yathula. Yathi ithatha yathi  
" Goduka unghlule, icala lakho liphelile."

NoDingiswayo wathi ehleli phansi wezwa lowomnju-  
nju ongenayo kumuntu ebona umntanake, wezwa  
inhliziyi yakhe ibuyela kuNobantwana, kuthe kuse-  
njalo, yathatha imbongi, yeḥutho leNyakatho, wathi  
uJevuza, " Uyezwa njalo NKOSI? "

Yathi inkosi, yethuka, " Ngilalele."

Wasuka umfana omehlo ayisimbulunga wadaḥula  
ezinhleni wathi, thathatha, wabula ihawu, wagiya,  
wagiya, ḥathi owaḥo ḥeḥutho leNyakatho :

" *Sigidi, Sigidi, Sigidi,*

*Walahleka nje,*

*Wawuyaphi? "*

Kwasekuvuma lonke ibandla elali senkundleni lathi,

*“ Walahleka nje,  
Wawuyaphi ? ”*

Kwabuye kwathula kwathi cwaka, wathatha umfana esebonga uDingiswayo wathi,

*“ UBubulandaba,  
Namhla kungendaba,*

*Ngezithw'ekhanda  
Umthobelabantu,  
Uzibula ngendod'enkulw'engangoyis'u Jobe.*

*Umqali wangwazi kwaNoyenge  
uBantu baphakathi, uNjavuzakaBece  
uMashing'abuye nenjomane.”*

Wathi egcina, umfana wakhona wagiya, wagiya, wakhala ngezwi lakhe elalinjengelengwe ikhala eziweni ngoBa ilambile, washo wathi :

*“ Ngalahleka-nje,  
Ngangiyaphi ? ”*

Laphendula ifandla limi sengathi liphelelwe icala libona umfana edlalisela kanje, laphendula lathi :

*“ Walahleka-nje,  
Wawuyaphi ? ”*

Washo maqede wathela umzimba phansi, wahamba wayewafika ohleni lwakhe wangena wama kwasengathi akenzanga lutho, nempela wonke umuntu owayekhona wamzwela nomfana ukuthi wathi elahleka nje yena wayeyaphi.

Yaqala ingoma zasina izinsizwa ezincane zasina

kwazamazama umhlabathi kwaqonga phezulu uthuli, kwazekwangena omame nomakothi bashanela ibala ngeziphuku zaBo zezingwe, nezezinkonkoni, nezezi-nyathi, kwangena usinga emakhanda abantu, zisho izinsizwa ngamaphimbo sezize zavunyelwa nawoda-dewaBo aBaBebukela emaceleni bepethe ubusenga noBuhlalu ngezandla zaBo bekwaluka. Nawowonke umuzi waseBalungwini, waqubuka ngezindlela zonke wafumanisa abafanyana abancane bengagqoke lutho besina naBo ngemuva kwamaqhugwane awonina bonke bekhala ngazwi linye :

*“ Walahleka nje,  
Wawuyaphi ? ”*

Kwakungengoma lena kwakungumhlanyisabantu.

Lathi liphela ihubo uDingiswayo wathi makabizelwe lowaya mfana ombonge wezwa inhliziyi yakhe igcwala ; lomfana onamandla okunyakazisa wonke umuzi kayise ngehubo elincane kodwa libe liphethe kulo izimanga ; lomfana onogqozi lokwenza izinto. Nempela wabizwa umfana lowo, weza amehlo akhe ehlaBa eyizimbulunga kodwa wonke umzimba wakhe unokuthobeka, nesihlangu sakhe wayesiphethe eceleni ngakwesokhohlo kwathi ngakwesokunene waphatha iwisa lakhe okwakuBonakala ukuthi yiwisa elidala eselake lalwa nezimpi.

Wafika umfana wakhothama ngedolo wakhuleka wathi,

*“ Bayede ”*

*“ Mfana ungokaBani ? ”*

*“ NgingokaSenzangakhona, inkosi yamaZulu.”*

*“ Pho ubekwa yini lapha, uze uzokhonza kwaMthethwa, ubuthwe khona ? ”*

“ Ngibekwa ukuhamba, nkosi, ngoBa ngafika lapha ngonyaka ophelile ngemuva kokuba ngizule ngingatholwa muntu, ngisho ekhaya komame.”

“ Unguban'igama lakho? ”

“ Igama lami, Nkosi, nginguShaka.”

“ Wo, sengiyaBona mfana ukuthi kanti leli-hubo ohubisa ngalo lilandela into oyiyona. Ulahlekile, kodwa kawazi ukuthi walahlaka nje ngani. Lapha kwaMthethwa usuthole isidleke sakho sokuchamisela ugazi lwakho lakwa Zulu? ”

UDingiswayo wawubuzo lomBuzo ngoBa efuna ukuba uShaka akhombise ukwesaba nokuthumela. Kodwa uShaka wathula wambuka phakathi kwamehlo, hhayi ngendlela yokweyisa kodwa ngokumangala. Kwakuthi lomfana uma emangela amehlo akhe aphume aBe yizimbulunga ukwesaba konke kungakhombisi. Ngakhoke waphendula wathi,

“ Nkosi ngiyezwa kodwa kangiqondi ukuthi uthini? ”

UDingiswayo naye lomfana wambona ukuthi unohlonzi lobukhosi kuyena, nokuba uma efika ezokhonza kuyena kusho into enkulu lokho. Ngakhoke wagcina wathi,

“ Mfana, ungijabulisile, lapha kwaMthethwa kakucwaswa muntu, khula wenabe, mhlaumbe ngelinye ilanga uzozibona umkhulu kwaZulu. Hamba mfana.”

Nempela wahamba umfana lowo wanyamalala esixukwini sabanye abafana. Waphenduka uDingiswayo wabuka uJevuza kodwa uJevuza wayengabekile lapho, wayebuka lomfana ehamba ethanda isakhiwo sakhe, izinyama zakhe nezihluzi zakhe zimkhanga lapho enyathela phansi.

“ KaNtonteyana, yiyo le into yamehlo obuyisho Vondwe lomhlanga? ”

“ YeBo Nkosi bengisho khona lokhu. Bengiqondise

yena lomfana neButho lakhe eliphethwe nguMasuka kaNtelana ngoBa sengike ngalibona lidlala enkundleni. UMasuka lona akaBancengi abafana uyabadlukumeza bayaqamba bayeza phambi kwaBantu sebevuthiwe.”

“ Ngitshele wena kaNtonteyana, nawe mfowethu, Vukani, lomfana wangena kanjani lapha emzini kaBaBa ngingamazi, ngoBa kangikhumbuli nizomBika kimina? ”

“ Lomfana wafika nonina, zinyane lenkosi.”

“ Pho, um'efike nonina akaBikwa kimina ngimazi? ”

Sekuphendula uVukani uthi,

“ Ngenkathi efika lomfana lapha, ikhanda lakho nkosi beligcwele izindaba eziningi ezinzima, usalinga ukuhlanganisa umbuso kaMthethwa.”

“ Pho? ” sekusho inkosi.

“ NjengoBa kwakungumfana, futhi ehamba nonina kungesiye umkakhe, thina noJevuza nangu, sanquma ukuba umfana lona simgcine nonina simgcine kwaNtonteyana, kuze kuthi mhla wena usunesikhathi simlethe umfana lona nonina.

Angene naye uJevuza aPhendule athi,

“ Nami Nkosi, nganginalowomqondo. Namhla ngibona ukuthi ilanga elihle ngempela ukuba ubone isiphosiso sethu, nempela ususifonile wena wohlanga.”

Wahleka uDingiswayo ngoBa uJevuza njalo wayephendula ngeyakhe indlela eyayifika imahlule uDingiswayo noma sekunjani.

“ Lezizibongo umfana lona uzithathaphi zokuthi, “USigidi? ” Useke wahlabanaphi na? ”

“ Kangazi ndaba, ngoBa bayamusho nalapho kungcwekwa ukuthi lomfana uyababa ubabanqa beBaningi, akafulatheli. Nalapho kungingqwa insemu yena uma emathuku agwaze njalo aze afike emnqoka,” kusho uVukani.



“Pho, sithole iqhawe,” kusho uDingiswayo ngenhli-ziyo eyaneliswayo.

“Qhabo nkosi, akuqhawe lodwa, lomfana akayedwa, ungumloyi,” kusho uJevuza.

“Usuthinike wena Jevuza?” kuBuza inkosi.

“Ngiqinisile.”

“Qhubeka, kukhulu uza nakho, uza nambuBe,” kusho uDingiswayo.

“Lo mfana imithi uyibamba kalula, cishe wonke umuthi engiwuthakayo uyawubona awulandele ngamehlo. Nalapho nginqampuma amakhambi endle amehlo akhe ngiyawabona ayaqaphela kakhulu, kangabona onke amakhanjana lawa emikhuhlane useyawazi. Ngenxa yenhliziyo yakhe enhle kimina, kangimesafi, nangothando analo kunina, ungikhombisa ubudoda ngempela. Ukuba akanasibindi ngabe ngithi ungunqolo,” kusho umfo kaJevuza.

Esengena naye uVukani uthi,

“Lomfana ngikengimbuke edlala ngisho enkundleni. Into anayo akanasihe nxa esethukuthele. Uma elwa nomunye udela ngoba amshaye aze amlahle phansi khona ngomuso engenakuphinda futhi.”

“Yikhona kulwa nami engikuthandayo lokho,” kusho uDingiswayo, evuma ngekhandu. Nakhu lapho imiqondo yezilo ezinkulu ezake zabusa emhlabeni wakwaZulu, yayihlangene khona. UDingiswayo noShaka babengakholwa ukuthi uma ulwa nomuntu mshaye uze umyeke, ngoba esezikhalela ethi, “Maye babo! sal’usungiyeka, ngilamuleleni, nangiyeka ngibulawa ngumuntu?” Babekholwa ukuthi umuntu oyekwa kanjalo, useyingozi nangomuso ngoba uyovuka ahambe aye kwabakuBo ayoziBonga ngawe asho ukuthi uyokubona ngelinye ilanga wamzuma engazelele. Umuntu omshaya umshiye ulimi ngeke ngomuso akuvukele,

esikhundleni salokho uyokuba umngane wakho athande ukuhamba nawe angabuye azixabanise nawe nempela.

Yaqhubeka futhi indaba phakathi kwenkosi noVukani noJevuza.

“Ngithe nkosi lomfana kaSenzangakhona ungumloyi. Nempela kunjalo ngoba ngelinye ilanga uvuke wathi kimina, ‘baba, nakhu ngiphupha indab’ enkulu;” ngabuza kuye ngathi mina, “bondabani yona leyo na?” Wathi yena, vuka uhlale ungizwe.” Nempela ngavuka ngazisonga ngesiphuku sami naye waphenduka ocansini walala ngesisu. Ngangiwabona amehlo akhe ngelahle elalisavutha kancane eziko. Njengoba thina zinyanga umuntu simbona ngamehlo ubuyena ngathanda ukuba kukhanye endlini, ngakhoke ngachwabaza umlilo wavutha ilangabana elincane elilingene ukuba ngingamBona lomfana ongivusa kwamabili.

“Nempela wayithatha indaba yephupho lakhe. Wathi ‘baba kade ngiphupha sengibekwe phezulu entabeni lapho sengathi kakuzange kukhwele muntu khona. Amehlo ami bekungathi aphume izinsansa zemililo obaswe kuwo. Esandleni sami sokudla ngiphethe iklwa ebengikhomba ngalo noma kuyiphi indawo kusale kuleyo ndayo kugoboza igazi labantu nelezilwane. Ngithe kunjalo ngazethuka ngiseduze koThukela kodwa kulukhuni ukuba ngiluwele ngabona kuvela amakhanda amadoda, angakhela umcabeko wokuwela ngawela nginyathela phezu kwawo amadoda kodwa akukho neyodwa indoda ethe ‘mfana kaSenzangakhona wenzani?’” Ngethukile ngahamba ngayengafika emzini omkhulu lapho kuphithiza khona abantu ngabantu; kodwa nganele ukufika kwaduma, “Bayede.” Ngenkathi kuduma lesisibingilelo ngibone

umfowethu wakwenye indlu nabanye besuka, hhayi ngoba bengihlonipha, kanti basuswa ukunengwa. Kusenjalo ngakubona uqhamuka wena kaNtonteyana wangipha inyanga yokungelapha, nakhu sengivuka."

"Uyabona baba, (kusho yena belu lomfana kaSenzangakhona) kangiyiphuphi into yemfeketho, kodwa ngiphupha amaqiniso njalo. Lento engiyiphuphile iyokwehlakala ngenye imini kodwa angazi ukuthi kanjani. Kuwenake baba, wena kaNtonteyana ngiyothola inyanga yami." Ngiyothatha inyanga eyolethwa nguwana angiyikuthatha engiyoyizwa ngabanye."

"Lomfanake Nkosi wakhuluma kanjalo kimina, kodwa phela izinto zabafana, ezabafana nemiqondo yabo iyadinga izula umunhla nomzansi, bayaqamba sebeyolala baphuphe yonke imininingwane lena. Nakulomfana into efanayo, akafani yini nabo bonke abafana? Yena angahluka kanjani lokhu waxoshwa ekhaya likayise?"

Usebuza uDingiswayo ethi,

"Waxoshelwani?"

Waphendula uJevuza wathi,

"Nami nkosi lendaba ngiyibuzile kulomfana, wangu ngitshela iqiniso. Uthi kimina, njengoba umbona nje enza lezizinto ozibonayo, kwakunjalo nakwaZulu lezizinto ubezenza ngempela. Ngenxa yokuba uyise embona ukuthi uyisiqhwaga usefuna ukuba nodumo phakathi kwa bantu bakhe, wangenwa ngumona wayesefisa ukumgodusa. Umfana wakuzwa lokhu ngoSizwile abafemthanda wayesebalekela kuMacingwane kanye nonina owayengenakuhlukana naye. UMacingwane lona kwakuyisitha esidala sikaSenzangakhona behlala behluthulana. Ukuba abone lokhu uSenzangakhona wayeseqala ukuzidlisa satshanyana ngakoMacingwane nokuba eheha uMacingwane uku-

bulala uShaka. Kanjalo waqala ukwesaba uMacingwane ukuthi umfana funa ethuke ezunywa ngabalandeli bakayise, wayesehluleka ukuba ahambe abalekele phambili. Nempela umfana kanye nonina wavuka ngesokusa washay'utshani waze wafika lapha kwaMthethwa."

"Pho, uqhuba kanjani lapho?" kusho inkosi.

Waphendula umalusi wathi,

"Nkosi ubukeka eyisilomo sazo zonke izinsizwa, zifunda kuye okuningi ngoba akaqali muntu."

Yaphendula inkosi yathi,

"Kuhle lokho ngoba lomfana ufana nami. Nami ngaxoshwa ngaye ngafika kini Vukani, komalume. Nakhona kwaBonakala ukuthi kayikho indawo yami ubaba uzongifuna angithole angibulale. Ngadlulela phambili ngayengatholwa abantu abangeyini nami; pho mina ngingemthole ngani lomfana ohlupheke kangaka? Mgcineni."

Washo uDingiswayo basukuma bonke ngoba ilanga laselishonile, izinkomo sezisengwa esifayeni, izimazi zibonsa zikhalela amathole azo. Izinkunzi ezimalunda ezinezimpondo eziziqhenqe wawuzobona zivela phakathi emhlambini, izintaba zamalunda emahlombe zimi njengezimpondo.

Inkosi yakhuphuka ihamba igudla isibaya yaze yafika enhla nomuzi, yachusha othangweni yangena elawini yanyamalala. Kwaba mnandi kuyona ukuzwa ukukhala kwa bantwana phakathi komuzi wayo, kodwa yayikwazi njalo ukwahlukanisa ukukhala komtwana kaNobantwana kubo bonke abanye ngoba kwakuyinyama yenyama yakhe.

Kuyena wayekwazi ukukhumbula isikhumba sebubesi alibulala esekuzuleni exoshwe nguyise uJobe owayefuna ukumbulala.

Izinceku zaletha ukudla kuvela ezindlini ezimbili, zagaqa ngamadolo izinceku zayihlambisa inkosi, yahlala, yadla. Yaqeda maqede yabuye yalalelisa phandle yezwa amagama abazanyana becula beshishizela izingane zawomakoti ukuba zithule zilale, wezwa nomzanyane kaNobantwana ecula amagama akaNdwandwe ethulisa umntwana wakhe. Inhliziyo yakhe yababuhlungu wangen'endlini, ingani wayekade ephandle ethi make ashaywe ngumoya.

### ISAHLUKO VIII

“NGIBONISELE mfowethu, kuphi eDlovunga, emzini omkhulu wenkosi yakwaNdwandwe na?”

“Hhawu! uqhamukaphi lo muntu ongakwazi eDlovunga? Ungumfokazi waphi wena?”

“Hhiya, mfowethu ngiqhamuka le, ezweni lakwa-Mthethwa ngiqonde khona komkhulu, ake ungiyalele indlela.”

Yama indoda eyayifake ungiyane yambuka lomuntu othi ingani ubukeka ehlakaniphile kodwa akhulumise okwesiphukuphuku. Esandleni sayo yayiphethe ikhambi lomkhuhlane ivela ukolikha ngasezihlanjeni zemimfula. Yathatha isagila sayo yasitshatha emhlane yathi ukuthimula yakhuluma yathi:

“Kodwa wena kawuboni ukuthi ususondele emzini wenkosi ngoba nakhu nezindlela zezinkomo sezibudulekile, njengoba ubona nje laphaya uthi leziya zinkomo kungaba ezomuntu? Ahlalephi enezinkomo ezingakaya we—e—eh!! Ngifung'uGxovoza kababa.” Lasho ikhehla nempela umfokazi lona owayefika waphendula amehlo akhe wabeka emihosheni, wabona imihlambi ngemihlambi idla utshani wazibonela ukuthi akasekude nempela nasemzini wenkosi.

Yabuye yakhuluma indoda ibona ukuthi nempela umfokazi lona usethukile.

“Hamba ukhuphukele laphaya, uyothi uphezulu, uyowubona umuzi omkhulu, uqonde khona ufike ukhuleke esangweni, isikhonzi sesango siyohamba sikuBike.”

Nempela behlukana umfokazi owayevela kwaMthethwa wahamba wakhuphuka igqunyana lelo, wathi ukudundubala maqede wawubona umuzi esigcakini phansi. Kwaqina nesibindi kuye; kodwa lapho ecikica amehlo ebuka, wafumanisa kuthunqa izintuli ezinkulu kwabasengathi kuyasinwa. Wathi ukubeka ecaleni lomgwaqo wabona isivivane—inqwaba yamatshe enqwatshelwe ndawonye. Wasondela ngakhona uSiqongo naye waphonsa elakhe itshe njengoba phela wayesebaleke kwaMthethwa ngoba ezobulawa kanye noMawewe. Wayengasabeke lutho emuva, umqondo wakhe wonke wayesewuthele ohanjeni lwakhe oluqonde kwaNdwandwe. Ngokwenza njalo uSoqongo wazihlanganisa, elakhe idlozi walithela phakathi kwamadlozi akwaNdwandwe; walahla ngalokho ubuzwe bakwaMthethwa wazingenisa ebuzweni bakwaNdwandwe. Wayenzela futhi ukuba izindaba zakhe phambili zifike zimlungele.

Emva kwalokho wahlala phansi wabema ugwayi wabuye wabekisisa ukuthi kwenziwani laphaya emzini wenkosi. Wabona abantu abaningi bephethuza, beyaluza. Leyonto yamkhumbuza ingomboco eyenziwa kwaMthethwa uma izwe lhlushwa abathakathi. Wasondela ngokwesaba, ngakhoke wangathanda ukungenza ngesango labantu bonke wangena ecaleni nomuzi, wachusha ngentuba ehamba enyathuzela sengathi uyeseba. Walunguza, wafumanisa ukuthi abantu abamnakile balalele isanusi sigila imihlola. Kodwa wathi lapho ebukisisa wabona ukuthi lesisanusi kasi-fani nezinye yena owayezazi zakwaMthethwa. Esifubeni saso kwakubonga izinto ezesebekayo, sengathi izilwane zilinga ukukhuluma ngezilimi zabantu kodwa ziyehluleka. Naye uSiqongo walalelisa kwaBalukhuni nokuba anyakaze ngoba kwabasengathi uzozibona-

kalisa obala. Kodwa emva kwesikhathi wabona ukuthi laba bantu imiqondo yabo kayinamathele kwezinye izinto, inamathele kulesisanusi. Wathuka naye esechushile wahamba wayewangena phakathi emshungwini wabantu, wema wabuka. Wabona intombazana ihuqwe ngebovu, bonke ubuso, izinwele zayo ezigcwele izinyongo zezilwane, zazihlakazeke phansi sezinindwe umhlabathi. Nasemilenzeni intombazane yayihuqwe ngebovu, emaqakaleni nasemadolweni kulenga ubusenga obuphothwe kahle, bahlanganiswa ngezinqotho ezincane zezinyamazane. Entanyeni kwakhukhona izimpondo ezincane zodwa ezixushwe imithi namakhubalo aziwa isanusi lesi. Njengoba yayilele phansi lentombazana bonke begcwele beyibuka ngokumangala ezandleni zayo yayiphethe amawisa amabili ingawayekelele.

USiqongo wabuka, wabuka kwafika enhliziyweni yakhe uvalo olukhulu lokuba ulahlekile, nokuba wenze isiphosiso ngokuba abaleke eBalungwini aze azofika lapha eDlovunga. Waqala ukuzisola inhliziyo yakhe yafikelwa ingebe yokwesaba kwathi lapho ebuka abantu ecaleni kwakhe wababona bengamnakile amehlo abo ebeke kulentombazane ekade yayibagilela imihlola eDlovunga. uZwide uqobo lwakhe wayekhona ehlezi. USiqongo wabona ngoba wayehleli esihlalweni esiphakeme, phezu kwakhe kukhona ophethe ihawu livimbele imisebe yelanga elishonayo ukuba lingamshisi.

Wabuka uSiqongo, ebuka uZwide inhliziyo yakhe yena, wema wabuka lentombazane eyisanusi. Akalifalanga ukukhumbula izinsuku ezindala zakwaMthethwa lapho yena izwe lisabusa eyinyanga eyaziwayo kwabakhona isikhathi esinzima sokomisa kwezulu eBalungwini lapho kwafunwa izinyanga zezulu kwaze

kwalandwa enye eyayaziwa oSuthu. Wayekhumbula kahle ukuthi lenyanga yagila imihlola eminingi, iziwisa phansi ikweqa amehlo ikhuluma ngolimi olwalumangalisa abantu. Noma yehluleka ukunisa izulu kodwa yabula okuningi okwakuliqiniso.

Kuthe umqondo wakhe usaqhatha lokhu nalokhu-ya kwaMthethwa, yeluleka intombazana yaqala ukuvuka sengathi ivuka ebuthongweni, yavuka maqede yashayelwa ihlombe, ezwakala amazwi abantu besifazane ehlabelela, nehloombe beliwokloza bethi :

*“ Yizwa ntombi yaphansi  
Ndik'elikhulu likababa,  
Wo, eyiya, ha.”*

Yasukuma intombazana yasina, kwaduma ihlombe ndawozonke. Yasina intombazana iy'enhla, iy'enza-nsi, yaze yasondela ngalapho kukhona uSiqongo, yathi ukuma, yashaya phansi ngonyawo, lapho izandla zaduma ngamandla, zezwakala izixuku zithi :

*“ Yizwa ntombi yaphansi,  
Yizwa, Yizwa !”*

Yabuye yadlula intombazana, yathi iphakathi nesizinge, yahleka kakhulu, ukuhleka kwayo kwaaba sengathi kuhleka abantu bahlezi emgodini omkhulu, kanti qha, kuhleka yona yodwa. Yabuye yahleka yathi :

“ Yizwani nina bakababa, nginuk'umthakath'omkhulu ekade ngamnuka ” bememeza bethi

*“ Yizwa ntombi yaphansi,  
Yizwa, Yizwa !”*

Yabuye yathatha intombazane yathi :

“ Ha ha ha ! Ngibula umthakath'omdala. Owabaleka kwelakubo, wafika kuleli.” Yasho intombazana igxuma iya phezulu sengathi iyahlanya.

“ Kwezwakala ihlombe elikhulu lishaywa ngamandla, nengoma leyo babuye bayiqala bayihaya ngamaphimbo amakhulu abantu bakwaNdwandwe. uSiqongo wabukela esesondele kakhulu manje eseseduze nalapho kwakubulelwa khona. Wabona kakhulu naye, wazewashaya izandla.

Wabona abanye abantu sebeshaya -nje ngoaba beqeda icala; abanye basebexega amadolo besaba sengathi intombazana lena eyindiki izokhomba bona. Yaqhubeka intombazane yathi :

“ Kade ngamnuka, ngambona ekude,”

“ Yizwa ntombi yaphansi,

“ Yizwa, Yizwa,” kwasho isixuku. Nempela intombazane yagxuma, yagxuma, yathi ithatha yaqonda phakathi kwesixuku esasingenzansi sibekene nenkosi, kwathi uSiqongo engazelele naye esabeke okwenziwa yilintombazana wezwa ishoba lenkonkoni lihlala ebusweni bakhe. Umzimba wakhe waphelwa ngamandla, wezwa ewa phansi, konke kwaBamnyama, izwe lazula, lazula, lagcwala izinkanyezi, kwahlwa emini.

Ibandla lathi, qikilili ngoaba uMaguduza, indodakazi kaZwide yamshaya maqede uSiqongo yangenza njengoba yenza kwaBanye ukuaba imshaye umuntu imshiye khona lapho. Yamshaya yema phezu kwakhe esewile, yaphinda futhi yamshaya; wavuka uSiqongo wambamba ngengalo yamdonsa. USiqongo walandela ehamba evathazela, isihlangu nemikhonto yakhe kwasala khona lapho wayewele khona. Intombazana yamhola ngesandla yayeyamshiya phakathi nesigcawu,

yahamba. Kwathi lapho izinsizwa ezikhethelwe ukugcina umsebenzi wazo zibahulule bonke abanukiwe, sezithi ziyameqa uSiqongo, waphakamisa isandla sakhe uMaguduza wathi:

“Akenikahle!”

Izinsizwa nesixuku sonke sabantu sathi dlengelele. Kwamemeza abanye ezixukwini bathi:

“Yena uyekwa ngoBa enjani?”

Abanye baqala ukumsinga bembekisisa ukuthi yena lo mthakathi onukwa lapha ungowaphi. Bonke abantu babemqabuka lo muntu, ngakhoke abanye baklabalasa bathi:

“Umthakathi wezizwe, akaziwa muntu, mbambeni, nimbulale.”

Nempela kwasondela iningi, abesilisa sebethakamisa amawisa, nabesifazane abanye bephethe amaphini abanye baphethe izikhuni zithunqa intuthu ezinye zisavutha ilahle ngempela. Ukuba abone uZwide ukuthi nempela abantu sebeqonde ukumbulala lomuntu wezizwe, wamemeza ngezwi elikhulu wathi:

“Nenzani? Niyagcwaneka yini?” Wathi esho njalo wayesukuma phansi ehla eqonde esixukwini esasesixokozela, nempela sesingenwe ngumoya wokubulala. Wehla washeshisa, wengena phakathi kwesixuku, sathi damu okwamanzi uwaphonsa imbokodwe, wafika uZwide wambamba ngengalo lomfokazi, wambuka phansi wambuka phezulu, wambuza wathi:

“Uze unukwe lapha nje ungowaphi?”

Waqhaqhazela uSiqongo waswela amazwi okuwa-khuluma, wathi kuphela;

“Nkosi yami!”

“Ngiyabuza ngithi, ungowaphi mfokazi? Kawazi yini ukuthi ngingakhomba ngomunwe khona manje laba-bantu bakababa bakuqedaqede khona manje?”

“Hhawu silo-sengwe ngoBa ngenzeni?” Lawo mazwi angena enhliziyweni kaZwide naye waqalaza, wabona bonke abantu sebembuka bebeke izwi eliqhamuka kuye. Umuntu onukiwe wayengakhulunyiswa, kuphela wayethathwa ayiswe ngaphandle komuzi abulawe. Wayazi ukuthi yena uqobo lwakhe waphula umthetho womdabu. Kodwa wathi lapho eguqula amehlo akhe ahlanguana nawendodakazi yakhe uMaguduza, imi ibukela Yasondela ihamba iphetha amawisa ayo amabili, neshoba lenkonkoni ngakwesinye isandla. Yafika yathi:

“Uye lo muntu engambona evela kude ngimboniswa amadlozi akwethu; uye, lomuntu akakho omunye.”

“Ungubani wena?” kubuza inkosi.

Wathi umfokazi,

“NginguSiqongo, kaNgulazane wakwaMbatha.”

“Pho uqhamukaphi lapha?”

“Wo, nkosi,” kusho uSiqongo, “ngiyafika-nje, ngiqhamuka le kwelakwaMthethwa elibuswa ngu-Dingiswayo, okade kunguGodongwane, kaJobe.

“Ufunani lapha?”

“Wo, wena wohlanga, ukuhamba kuzal’induna. Bengiyinceku kaMawewe umfowaBo kaDingiswayo obekade ebusa uDingiswayo lo ebungukile. Wathi ukufika uDingiswayo wambulala umfowaBo uMawewe, nami njengoba bengiyinsila kaMawewe kwafaneleka ngibulawe kodwa ngeqa ngasinda, ngabaleka ngaze ngafika lapha. Ukufika-nje lokhu, wena waphezulu, ngiyafika-nje. Ngingene ngentunja laphaya ngenxa yokuba ngesaba ngibona emzini omkhulu kangaka kuphethuzela. Ngangena ngacasha laphaya.” Washo wakhomba uSiqongo. Ukukhuluma kwakhe kwafana njengokomfana elinga ukuzihlanguza lapho abanye bemnamba ngecala.

Yabuza yabuza inkosi yathi :

“ Uqond'ukwenzani lapha. ” ?

“ Nkosi ngizokhonza ngakho konke enginakho. Kwelakithi kwaMthethwa ngangiphatha, imithi namakhubalo, namakhambi asendle nawo ngiyawabona ngiwalukanise. Bengiphatha inkosi ngeyami imithi ngoaba engekho ongahlulayo kwelakithi. ”

“ Pho, ucaabanga ukuthi ngoaba kwelakini engekho okwahlulayo, nalapha kwaNdwandwe abakho abakwehlulayo? Ukhuluma kanjani lomuntu? ” kusho inkosi ngokumangala.

“ Qhabo kangisho njalo, wena wohlanga. Ngichaza umsebenzi wami njengoba bengiwenza. Phela izinyanga ziyeqana ngoaba kayimbiwa ndawonye. ”

Kwezwakala omunye ethi :

“ Umthakathi uqobo lwakhe. ”

Omunye wathi :

“ Usayekelwani? ”

UZwide wangabanaka labo kodwa wabuza wathi :

“ Uthini ngalowaya? ” Esho ekhomba indodakazi yakhe uMaguduza. USiqongqo waphenduka wayibuka intombazana leyo wayifumana nayo imbuka, kodwa wathula, wabuye wabeka enkosini. Wabuza uZwide wathi,

“ Uthini ngalowaya? ”

Waphendula uSiqongqo wathi :

“ Lowaya unamandla uwathatha emadlozini. UBona ngamehlo amadlozi, mina engingenawo. Mina ngelapha ngezandla zamadlozi amehlo amadlozi anginawo, NdaBezitha. Yena eyedwa akanamandla amakhulu kakhulu, nami noma ngiyiphatha imithi kanginamandla kwakuyaphi ngoaba kufanele ngisazi, ngisibone isifo kuqala. ”

“ Maguduza, ” sekumemeza uZwide. Nempela uMaguduza asondele.

“ Wenziwa njani lo-muntu wakho? ”

“ Ngambona ekude, ngimboniswa ngamadlozi. Ulusizo kimina ngoaba nonke niyangesaba uma amadlozi ekhuluma nami. Ngaye ngizosebenza imisebenzi nibone. Uma ningaboni lutho uyobulawa. Ngimbonile eza kude nalapha echusha laphaya; kodwa nonke animbonanga. ”

Washo njalo uMaguduza wahamba wayewangena endlini yakhe yedwa wavala. Wema phambi kwabantu uSiqongqo wapheliswa amandla, kwaze kwakhuluma inkosi yathi,

“ Nyongoyotshani !

Kwasabela indoda endala eyayigaxe imigodla emhlaneyathi :

“ NdaBezitha ! ”

“ Thatha nang'uSiqongqo uhambe naye umlungiselele indlu kanye nawe ngasesigodlweni ngoaba uzodingwa uMaguduza. ”

Wasondela uNyongoyotshani wamthatha uSiqongqo, wahamba naye wayewangena endlini. Abantu bonke abanye bahlakazeka ngezindlu zaabo banyamalala ngamunye ngamunye.

Ekufikeni kwaabo endlini uNyongoyotshani noSiqongqo bahlala phansi, uNyongoyotshani wabasa umlilo, kwakhanya endlini. uSiqongqo wabuza wathi :

“ Ngingazilanda kanjani izimpahla zami laphaya ngaphandle lapho ngizishiye khona? ”

Wathi uNyongoyotshani :

“ Lapha eDlonvunga umuntukazana akayingakulelo cala wena ochushe ngalo; futhi nami uqobo lwami kanginamandla okuya ngakhona ngoaba uma izinsila zenkosi zikezangibona ngingafa nginukwe njengo-

muntu onemikhuba." Usho njalo-ke uNyongoyotshani uyawukhwezela umlilo wezinkuni zomthombothi nomnyamathi, usufambelele, uyavutha kodwa kawukabi namalahle. Babuye bathula endlini bathi nya. uSiqongo waphuma phandle wanyonyoba wachusha futhi ngenye imbofo wehla encike umuzi wayewafika lapho izimpahla zakhe zibekwe ngakhona wazithatha wanyonyoba. Wathi lapho edlula ngakwenye yezindlu kwabekukhona indoda ingaphandle yambuza yathi :

" Ubani lowaya ohamba lapha ngalesisikhathi? "

Kodwa kakuzwakalanga mpendulo uSiqongo wahamba wenyuka washuma lapho ephume khona wangena nezimpahla zakhe wazibeka emsamo. Wamjeqeza uNyongoyotshani wathula wabeka phansi kwathi naye uSiqongo eshlezi otha umlilo wathi uNyongoyotshani :

" Ubukeka ungumuntu wenkani. Lapha kwelakithi uma uzoba nenkani uzolimala."

" Usho ngoba sengiye ngathatha imithwalo yami? kubuza uSiqongo. Kodwa wena usuthi bengizokwenzenjani njengoba lapha emthwalweni yami kukhona isiphuku sami sokulala, negudu lami lokubema, lokhu thina bakwaMthethwa lezizinto zithi wena, uma uxoshwa kwelakini ushiya konke ngisho nabafazi nabantabakho kodwa, igudu lakho nesiphuku akusali."

Wathula uNyongoyotshani ngoba wayengamthandi uSiqongo, nokulaliswa naye lokhu kuyena kwaba yisilonda esikhulu.

Wayesethi :

" Mina ngiyephuza ukulala, uma sewozela unge-dlala nomaphi uzilalele."

Wabuza uSiqongo wathi :

" Hhawu mnumzane, ngilambile, sekuthi mangife nokufa. Ngingethole into yokufamba ithumbu? "

Waphendula uNyongoyotshani wathi :

" Zibukula leya mbenge laphaya, uzisize, mina besengidlile."

Nempela uSiqongo wasukuma waye wayibona imbenge wayifumanisa igcwele izindlufo ziphekwe kahle. Wadla, beka umuntu sekungamasonto ahamba ekhaya ukudla okugcwalisa isisu engazange akuthole. Wathi eqeda walala wathi ja, wazembesa ngesiphuku sakhe. Ngenxa yokufudumala komlilo wezwa esekwesika-Badakazi kuthi noma eqabuka ebeka afumanise uNyongoyotshani ehlezi ngasemlilweni elungisa umuthi noma ephethe intshengula yakhe ebema njengomuntu ophelwe yisineke. Kwaqhubeka kanjalo izinsukwana uSiqongo ehlalisiwe kwaNyongoyotshani engazi isigcino sakhe kwazekwathi ngelinye ilanga wezwa kumenyezwa kuthiwa :

" Nang'uNyongoyotshani bo! "

" Nang'uNyongoyotshani bo! " Kwaklabalasa wonke umuzi, kwazise ukuthi uNyongoyotshani ufunwa inkosi, uZwide uqobo lwakhe. Amazwi ahamba umuzi wonke kwaze kwezakala yen'uqobo lwakhe uNyongoyotshani wathi :

" Ndaba! "

Amazwi abantu ayesehela njengoba wayesesabele uNyongoyotshani. Wasukela phezulu wayewangena esigodlweni, wakhothama, wagaqa ngamadolo phansi, yath'inkosi :

" Uphi lowaya muntu engithe mgcine? "

Wath'uNyongoyotshani,

" Ukhona nkosi."

" Ungumunt'onjani ngokumbona kwakho? "



“Nkosi angimqondi mina ngoba ebusuku esikhundleni sokuba aqwashe njengami lapho ngibila imithi namakhubalo, yena uyalala ahuqe ubuthongo,” kusho uNyongoyotshani.”

Yaphenduka inkosi yabeka eceleni yathi kwenye yezinduna, “Bizani lezozigijimi eziphuma eBalungwini kuDingiswayo zize lapha nombiko, wazo.” Yaphuma induna yayobiza amadodana kaMavela wakwaMahlase, oQedizwe noZwelafo. Kwathi nya isikhashana, zangena izinsizwa ezimbili zakhuleka.

Yathi enye induna, “ningenelani esigodlweni namahawu, nemikhonto na?”

Izinsizwa kaziphendulanga.

“Kanizwa yini ukuthi esigodlweni senkosi kakunge- nwa namahawu nemikhonto na?”

Waphendula uZwelafo wathi,

“Yebo siyezwa.”

“Pho kaniphumi ngani ningene ngezandla?” Kubuza enye induna. Ngesikhathi zibuzwa izinsizwa uZwide wayethule ezibuka phansi eziqaphelisa isimi sazo. Kwathi emva kwesikhathi yaphendula enye insizwa, uQedizwe wathi:

“Ngokwakithi, thina uma sithunyiwe kasahlukani nezikhali zethu ngoba asikwazi okuphambili. Amasiko akwaMthethwa ahlukile kwawenu. Izikhali zethu kazenzi lutho uma singachukuluziwe. Zingumzimba, zifana nebeshu kithina. Uma, ndunayenkosi, uthi masishiye phandle izikhali zethu, uthi ngeny’indlela masize phambi kwenkosi yakwaNdwandwe njengezilima ezingayazi inkosi yazo.”

“Ukhuluma khale mfana,” kusho uZwide. “Pho ningabakabani?”

Waphendula omncane uZwelafo wathi:

“Singabaka Mavela wakwaMahlase eBalungwini.

Lona ngumnewethu omkhulu uQedizwe, mina ngingu- Zwelafo ngelama yena emhlane.”

“Nithunywe uDingiswayo kimina?”

“Ndafo,” kusho izinsizwa.

“Uthini?”

“Inkosi ithi,” kuphendula uQedizwe, “Wena ubulele umlamu wayo uMalusi, ngaphandle kwesizathu. Ngakhoke masilande ikhanda likaMalusi, sibuye naye ehamba ngezinyawo zozimbili.”

Wanele ukuqeda maqede kwachwaza wonke umkhandlu, wahleka, kuhleka amadoda ayelalele.

Kwathi lapho bonke behleka, uZwide akazange ahleke wathula nje wabukana nalezinsizwa wayesefiza enye yezinduna zakhe ukufo zilande uSiqongo eze lapha ebandla. Nempela wanyamalala isikhashana lowo othunyiwe wabuya naye uSiqongo equalisa ukufizelwa enkundleni yamadoda. Wafika wathiyazela ebona kubuthene amadoda ayeyiziphakanyiswa, wamangala ingabe kwenzenjani.

Yambuza inkosi yathi kuye:

“Siqongo ake ubekisise lababafana abemi laphaya.”

Nempela wababekisisa uSiqongo: wafikelwa ukwesaba kwaqhaq hazela amadolo. Wayecabanga ukuthi abafana bakaMavela sebethunywe ukufo bamlande abuyele kwaMthethwa. Ngakhoke wema ephelwe ngamandla engazi into angase ayenze. Wababuka abafana laba wayesehendula ethi:

“Sengathi ngiyabazi, Ndabezitha.”

“Ucabanga ukuthi ngabakabani?”

Waphendula uSiqongo wathi:

“Ndabezitha ngithi lababafana ngamadodana ka- Mavela wakwaMahlase uyisemkhulu walababafana nguye owayazi indaba yeNanabuke, mhlawumbe nani kulomhlaba senake nayizwa. Lababafana bazalwa

liqhawe kwelakithi kwaMthethwa lapho ngavela khona—Ndabezitha.”

Yathula inkosi, yababuka lababafana yathi :

“ Ngiyezwa, Siqongo.”

Yabuye yabuza ezinsizweni ezimbili yathi :

“ Bafana bakaSiqongo, niyamazi lomuntu onichazayo na? ”

Izinsizwa zaphendula kanyekanye zathi :

“ Yebo, Ndabezitha.”

“ Ungubani lomuntu? Nazini ngaye? ”

“ Ndabezitha lomuntu siyamazi. Igama lakhe uSiqongo, obekunguyena nyanga kaMawewe umfowabo wenkosi yethu uDingiswayo. USiqongo lona bekufanele abulawe kanye noMawewe kodwa kasazi ukuthi yena wasinda kanjani. Ngenxa yokubaleka kwakhe esaba ukufa aze abe lapha, siyamangala. Siyofika sisho nasekhaya.”

“ Qha, kaninakugoduka nobabili,” sekusho inkosi. Kuzohamba abemunye, omunye asale lapha njengesiboshwa kuze kubonakale amandla enkosi yakini ukuthi akhawulaphi. Wena omdala, igama lakho ungubani? ”

Waphendula omdala wathi :

“ NginguQedizwe, Ndaaba.”

“ Wena uyasala lapha, kuthi lona omncane agoduke aye uyobika kuDingiswayo ukuthi umlamu wakhe lowo uMalusi, eke amthola kovuka onke amaNdwandwe ahambe ngezinyawo, ngifunge uNobantwana kababa ekwaMthethwa kuyena uDingiswayo.”

Yasho maqede inkosi, yatsaka amathe aye ahlala kude. Yasukuma yathi :

“ Hamba mfana omncane uyobika lokho enkosini yakho. Nyongoyotshani, nango omunye wakwaMthethwa mthathe uhlale naye njengalowo omunye.”

Wathi ukuba asho lokho wabuyewazikhuza wathi :

“ Qha, futhi lomfana akayekwabanye abafana bambeke angabaleki kuze kubuye impendulo evela kwaMthethwa, kesibone.”

Washo uZwide wafulathela.

Esehambile abafana bobabili babukana, omncane wakhilizela izinyembezi, kodwa omkhulu wathula. Wathi omncane.

“ Qha, mfowethu, kuhle kusale mina, wena uhambe uyobika lomhlola ekhaya ngoaba wena unemisipha eqinile, nokugijima uyakwazi, uyangedlula.”

“ Uzwise ukuthi inkosi ithini? Ingikhombile yangikhetha ukuba kuhambe wena mina ngisale. Akulutho lokho, noma wena ungangahamba kancane njengomncane, uma uyofika ekhaya kulungile. Uma senza okunye funa mhlawumbe siyazonela, kuthi lowo osalayo basale bambulale noma bamenze umhlola othize. Uyabona lo muntu uSiqongo uyingozi, ngakhoke masingakhombisi umoya wokulwa. Masithambe sithi voshu.”

“ Noma kunjalo mina ngifuna ukusala kuhambe wena. Ngiyabona uSiqongo lona, nginokumqaphela. Imithi ayiphathayo mifi,” kusho omncane.

Kwathi besakhuluma kunjalo bengakaqedi uQedizwe wabanjwa yisandla lapha emhlane, kwasekukhuluma izwi lithi :

“ Sengikulandile, masihambe,” washo lomuntu wamkhapsheza.

Wamangala uQedizwe ukuba aphathwe kanjena wabuza wathi :

“ Hhawu wethu ungiyabamba sengathi ubamba umfana nje? ” Washo edlulubulunda egqabula umshiza wagadla. Kwabe akagadlile yavika lensizwa yakwaNdwandwe yamchapha ngesithuko yathi,

"Washa—kuthi, kuthi."

Wathi uQedizwe,

"Washo ngingakakushayi. Ivume!" Wathi eli-geda lelo, zazimthela owakwaNdwandwe.

"Hhawu wethu, uyangishaya?"

Wathi engakaligwinyi yayihlala enye induku, yangenena kabi ngasenhlafunweni, wakhithika phansi owakwaNdwandwe akabuyanga avuke. Ngenkathi ethi uthatha ikhefu uQedizwe zamthelekela izinsizwa ezintathu ziza zikhokhe izinduku enye isiphakamise ikhwa ithi:

"Mlahle phansi, mgwaze!"

Kwabakhona isiyaluyalu, kwangaBonakala okunguyena-yena. Kwezwakala izaga zempi nezokulwa enkundleni kwaze kwaqhamuka inkosi uqobo lwayo futhi yameza yathi:

"Yini lapho? Kwenziwani Mlangeni na?"

Umlangeni okwakunguyena obeka amaButho, engundunankulu wangena phakathi kwesinyakanyaka wagadla, wagadla, kwahlukana phakathi. Kwathi kuthi damu, kwezwakala omunye ngelokugcina wathi:

"Ji! Ji!"

Phakathi kwaBonakala uQedizwe eseqethukile egcwele izingozi, namanxeba yonke indawo. Wayengasanyakazi, engasadikizi.

"Yini le, Mlangeni?" kufuza inkosi, ngokumangala.

"Kangazi NdaBezitha nami ngiyafika." Kuphendula uMlangeni.

"Ngiyafuza ngithi, yini le? Uma ningaphenduli nonke enilapha nizoba njengalaba ngomzuzwana omncane nje. Ubani othi ninamandla okufulala umuntuwezizwe emzini kaBaba."

Kwaphendula enye insizwa yathi:

"NdaBezitha! Lomfokazi sibone eqeda induna

yethu eyifulalela ngaphambi kwethu ngoBa imqhubile yamahlukanisa nomfowabo."

"Nonke ningaka, nimhlanganyelena?" kufuza inkosi.

"Kusuke kwamnyama amehlo, NdaBezitha, sathuka sesenze njena," kuphendula insizwa.

"Kanizwanga yini ngenkathi uSiqongo ebachaza labaBafana ukuthi bazalwa iqhawe uyise nguMavela wakwaMahlase owahamba neNanaBuke? NicaBanga ukuthi ningabekana naba? Yebo yalala insizwa yeneka izandla. Niyalibona elayo igazi liphuma nje-ngamanzi, liyampompoza. Uphi omunye?"

"Nanguya Nkosi, ngimenyulile ngamkhaphezela laphaya ngenkathi eziphonsa, ezilahla ngoBa ebona kubulawa umfowabo," kusho uMlangeni.

Nempela wayemi uZwelaBo eqhaqhazela wonke umzimba ngenxa yokuthukuthela engazange abenamandla okuziphindiselela.

Ngalelo langa uZwelaBo wahamba wayewayolala kude emizini yezinduna ezikhonze kwaMthethwa. Akabanga namandla okulala ngokuthula ngoBa umqondo wakhe wawugcwele izinto azibone zenziwa kwaNdwandwe. Wathi elele waBona futhi ngephupho, sengathi usenkundleni yakwaNdwandwe, izinsizwa zakhona ziyeza, ziyeza, ziyammemeza zithi:

"Mlahle phansi, Mgwaze!"

Noma zizakanjalo kodwa zazingafinyeleli eduze kakhulu ukuba zimgwaze zimbulale. Kothi kusenjalo kuvuleke igebe elide elishaya umoya omakhaza osikayo kwamancane, sengathi umuntu angafa kunokuba amiswe phezu kwegeba elinjalo.

Kwakuthi noma leliphupho lakhe limqale kanjani, kodwa laligcina ngandlela yinye. Kothi lapho esefisa sengathi angafa, kuzwakale njalo amazwi ezinsizwa zakwaNdwandwe zithi:

“ Mlahle phansi, Mgwaze ! ”

Athi usalalele, ezwe izwi lomnewabo uQedizwe likhala ngokudabukisayo ngaphansi kwalelo gebe lithi :

“ Ungiyekela ngibulawa izitha mfowethu na ? ”

Lapha esecabanga ukuziphonsa phansi egebeni angalazi umkhawulo walo, njalo wayethuka, avuke, ahlale phansi ocansini esekhefuzela njengomuntu ophethwe yiphika.

Wahamba naleli phupho wayewafinyelela ekhaya wabika indaba yokuhamba kwakhe ebandleni lakwa-Mthethwa lathula lalalela labamba imilomo kuphela. Ukuba khona kukaSiqongo kwaNdwandwe kwabaphatha kabi ngoba umfana wathi :

“ Ngahlala ngaze ngafona noSiqongo induna ka-Mawewe. USiqongo unegama kwaNdwandwe. Futhi lapha kwaNdwandwe inkosi yakhona inendodakazi elindiki egila imikhuba ngemithi. Abasiki-bebunda kwaNdwandwe bathi uSiqongo usebenzisana nayo lentombazana. Amakhubalo namalumbo abawagilayo bayamangalisa. Bayakwazi ukuphuphuthekisa umuntu bamenze into abayithandayo. Banezintelezi zempi ezimangalisayo. Impi echelwe yibona, bayincindisa, kayifulatheli, futhi kayingenwa yimikhonto kalula.”

“ Uthini mfana kaMavela na ? ” kubuza elinye ikhehla.

“ Yebo ngisho njalo nina bantu benkosi. Intombazana leyo eyindiki mina nomufi (umfowethu) kangiyibonanga kodwa izindaba zayo besezigcwele ezindlebeni zethu.”

Kwasukuma elinye ekhehla lathi :

“ Mtanami, umnewenu wamshiya khona lapho enkuleni, awazi ukuthi wenziwa njani ? ”

“ Kangazi baba,” kusho uZwelafo. “ Kabanginikanga thuba lokuaba ngibuye ngimbone. Kuphela into

engayibonayo isidumbu sakhe silele phansi sebembulele; sasopha igazi. Yilokhu kuphela engakubonayo bantu benkosi.”

Kwathula kwathi cwaka futhi ebandla balalela amazwi omfana esancencetha ezindlebeni zafo njengensimbi yethusi. Inkosi yahlala phansi yathula, yasuka lapho yayongena elawini layo ngasesigodlweni. Yafumanisa ngasemnyango kukhona umfanyana omncane ebince ubuhlalu buyisigegana, esimhlophe esinemibadlana ebomvu. Wema uDingiswayo, wambuka lomntwana, kuyilapho eqala ukuhamba ebadazela. Wanele ukumbona umntwana waguquka wabeka kuye engathi uyakhasa, wabuye wayibuka phezulu inkosi wasukuma umntwana wabadazela wayewathi falakahlala ezinyaweni zenkosi. Inkosi yahleka yamthatha ngesandla yambuka umntwana, yahleka.

Yathi isakhuluma naye umntwana kwaqhamuka umzanyana wakhe wasondela wafike wathi enkosini :

“ Kuthiwa mangimlande, umntwana ayoncela.”

Yathi inkosi :

“ Kusho bani ? ”

“ Kusho unina uMaNxumalo.”

“ Yena akamlandi ngani ? ”

Yathula intombazane yadla iminwe ngoba ingazi ukuthi izothini isigcino yaze yawathola amazwi okuwasho, yathi :

“ Unina ubesabambekile elungisa ukudla.”

Wahleka uDingiswayo wathula, intombazana yamthatha umntwana yahamba naye yamyisa kunina endlunkulu.

“ Umfumanisephi umntwana ? ” kubuza uNobantwana (umaNxumalo).

“ Ngimfumanise ngasendlini yenkosi uqobo lwayo. Ngathi ngithi gaga, ngayifumanisa inkosi idlala naye

umntwana. Ngayitshela ngathi ngithunywe nguwe ukuba ngimlande umntwana. Yona yabuza yathi, wena ubungamlandi ngani.

Lawo mazwi amcofa uNobantwana angena enhliziyweni yakhe wathula. Wamthatha umntwana wamncelisa emmboze ngesikhumba sesilo esathunyelwa kuyena nguDingiswayo esenguGodongwane. Wasiphulula uboya baso obude, efaka iminwe phakathi kwabo, abuye asiphulule uboya bulale buthi mba, fucwebezela.

Ngesikhathi enza konke lokhu imicabango yakhe yayingekho phezu kwalomntwana. Kuyena umntwana lo kwakunjengesixha samalungu enyama aboshwe ndawonye ayesebekwa emathangeni akhe. Nalapho umntwana ekhahlela imilenzana emnyamana kuvela amaphaba ezinyawo amhloshana; lapho imilenzana ibeke phezulu emunca ibele eligwele ubisi, imicabango yakhe yayikude isezikhathini zobuntombi bakhe mhla uGodongwane emphekezela ebaleka ngenxa kayise, nalapho uJevuza emgcafa emfaka insizi ethize abuye ayithathe ayifake kuGodongwane sengathi uyabahlanganisa khona bengeke bahlukane ungunaphakade. Walibona lelolanga mhla ezinikela kuGodongwane efunga ngamathambo awoyisemkhulu ukuthi akanakuthanda omunye ngaphandle kwakhe. Wabuye wabona ngesikhathi uGodongwane enyamalele kungezwakali lutho ngaye kufika izinsizwa zakubo kwaNdwandwe ezazizalwa ngabamnumzane, zifika zifuna ukumthatha zonke zizihle zimthembisa okukhulu. Inhliziyo yakhe yadangala kwabakhona ukuzisola sengathi ngabe avuma enye yazo wagcagcela ekhaya ezweni lakubo. Lapho wayengase ahlale phakathi komhlane nembeleko eduze nomfowabo owayelungele noma ngasiphi isikathi ukumvikela.

HHa! imicabango yakhe yamzulazulisa yamyisa

enhla nasenzansi waze waphendukisa amehlo akhe ngasemnyango lapho wabona ithunzi kwaba sengathi ukhona ongenayo. Nempela kwangena omunye wesifazane kwathi lapho embukisisa wafumanisa ukuthi nguDingiwe uqobo lwakhe. Wema isikhashana uDingiwe engakhulumi, wasondela eduze kukaNobantwana wahlala phansi wathi thekence wambuka emehlweni.

Wathuka esekhulumile uNobantwana wathi:

“Hhawu, nawe dadewethu, Dingiwe, ungangiphatha kanje? Ungishiyise izwe lakithi nakho konke engikuthandayo ungihehele kumfowenu khona uzongishiya ngibe njengezichaka ezilapha esigodlweni?”

Akaphendulanga uDingiwe wathula, wasondela wathatha umntwana ezandleni zikaNobantwana wathi:

“Muhle dadewethu, amehlo akhe afana nawakho, kodwa hhawu isisu sinjengesesinana.” Uthe lapho esekhuluma wayesebekise kumntwana wathi:

“Suka wena lendojeyana, udlelani kakhulu? Phuma uyokwalusa abanye abafana basesibayeni.” Njengoba esho njalo umfanyana kaNobantwana wahleka wamatheka efake umunwe emlonyeni, engagqoke lutho emzimbeni, kuphela umucu wobuhlalu owayewuthunyelwe nguninakhulu mhla emutha igama, wathi unguSomveli. UNobantwana esikhundleni sokuaba akhulume naye, wazifumanisa engowezizwe endaweni yezizwe. Wafikelwa ukuthukuthela kwenhliziyo kodwa wabuye wazikhuza wathula, wahlala-nje nesikhumba sesilo siphezu kwamathanga akhe sendlalekile, kungahleli lutho kuso.

Owakhuluma kuqala uDingiwe.

“Ngikuvakashele namhla, Nobantwana. Kade ngagcina ngenxa yamatwayitwayi alapha. Ngizohlanganisa amehlo.”

Wathula uNobantwana wambuka-nje. Kodwa kwathi lapho embuka njalo, wafikelwa ifu emehlweni, kanti izinyembezi, zehla, njengamanz'embvula lina izulu. Kodwa uDingiwe akabukekanga sengathi inhliziyi yakhe iyathinteka, namehlo akhe abeka phansi njalo waqhubeka wakhuluma edlalisa umntwana wathi:

"Umfowethu inhliziyi yakhe ibuhlungu selokhu ebone umntwana lo. Lonke ilanga kad'ekhuluma ngaye, nangawe. Nami sekuyisikhathi eside ngagcinana noDingiswayo kodwa namhla ungiqizile wathi ufuna ukungibona. Ngaya kuyena wafika wathi kimina:—

"Dingiwe kade ngibona igazi lami inyama yamathambo ami izolo. Umntwana omncane womfana ngimfice lapha edlala, ngathi lapho ngimdlalisayo kwafika umzanyana wamthatha. Lomntwana okaNobantwana. Hambake uye kuNobantwana umtshele ukuthi nasi isigijimi sithi kuza uSenzangakhona inkosi yamaZulu.

"Kufuneka uNobantwana atshele onke amakhosikazi agaye utshwala benkosi yamaZulu. Nguyena ozokwaba ukudla akhethe sonke abazokupha abesifazane. Hambake Dingiwe, utshele uNobantwana kanjalo, nawe umsize ekutsheleni sonke isifazane kungasali namunye."

"Nankoke umyalo kaDingiswayo kuwena." Wathula uNobantwana waphelwa isineke walalela izinto ezikhulunywa ngudadewafo uDingiwe, akazanga anyakaze, wathula wakhexa umlomo, wamangala.

Wathi esuka wathi:

"Kangizwa kahle dadewethu, Dingiwe, kangizwa. Uthini uDingiswayo? Ithini inkosi? ngiwatshela kanjani onke lawamakhosikazi okunamuhla engangazi ukuthi ngingubani? Ingani phela uyazi ukuthi inkosi ithumele kumfowethu uZwide ukuba abeke lapha uMalusi, owambulalayo? Hhawu, uthini Dingiwe? Ingani lawo mazwi aqondisa ukulolwa kwemikhonto

nokuthintithwa kwezihlangu? Uthini Dingiwe? Kangizwa."

UDingiwe kwabasengathi akezwa lutho nje nempela walifala ukudlala nomntwana, amphakamise, ambeke emhlane abuye ammise phansi kodwa kufumaniseke ukuthi umntwana yena akathandi ukumiswa phansi ufuna ukuphathwa. Sonke lesisikhathi uDingiwe uyashalaza namehlo akhe, uyamncisha wona uNobantwana. Wathi efika umzanyana womntwana ezomthatha waphakamisa ikhanda uDingiwe wathi:

"Kodwa Nobantwana khona sekuyini, usucabanga ukuthi uDingiswayo usengakhohlwa nguwe? Pho khona sekunjalo usuthi nami pho? Uyashesha ukuphelelwa yithemba."

"Umuntu angenze njani uma izinto zimbele nje ngami nje?" kubuza uNobantwana.

"Uqinisile kodwa noma izinto zikumele kanje kawuwedwa lapha emzini kababa, ngikhona nami. Ngizazi ukuthi wesaba udadewenu lona uZenzile. Ehhe, uZenzile uliqhalaqhala uyimbongi yokwakhe, uzikhoth'emhlane, sonke akasazi ukuba singobani. Akazi ukuthi umuntu wesilisa unjengencwincwi yona enomlomo omude. Iphuza ezimbalini eziningi uju olifakwa phakathi yizinyosi lezi ozibona zibunganyela amaqabunga asendle. Kodwa incwincwi kayikhohlwa imbali yentebe emfuleni ngoaba unina wayibonisa yona, kuqala. Incwincwi iyogcina lapho yaqala khona. Futhi isigcino sibe sikhulu, kunesiqalo."

Lawamazwi angena enhliziyweni kaNobantwana agxila athi tshi. UDingiwe selokhu umfowafo wamthatha uNobantwana wayengajwayele ukuba alokhu emvakashela ngoaba lokhukuvakasha kwakhe kwakuzoveza umona kwamanye amakhosikazi enkosi. Noma uZenzile wakwafo Malusi yena wayesephenduke

intandokazi uDingiwe wayengamvakasheli, kwakuba nguZenzile ohambela kuDingiwe elawini lezintombi. UNobantwana wayesengene ebufazini izinto esezibuka ngamanye amehlo. Kubo wayengakhumbuli lutho; ikubo lalikwaMthethwa manjena. NoDingiswayo kwa-sekungeyena lowaya owayengumfana ngelinye ilanga ecaBanga kuphela ngezinto ezidlulayo. Ukuhlanguka kwakhe neNanaBuke nokuyaphuca kwakhe injomane nesibamu sayo, kwamguqula umqondo kwamenza omunye umuntu. Ukuthatha kwakhe, ethatha amakhosikazi wayesekwenzela ukugcina isiko lakuBo, hhayi njengoba kungenye yezinto ezimBophile. Kanjalo ikhanda lakhe laseligcwele izinto zokubusa umhlaBa, nokunyakaza kwezizwe zihlaselana kwakumthatha isikhathi ekucaBanga ezibuza ukuthi yena ngaba umiphi.

UNobantwana naye engemntwana ezalwa endlini yombuso, wayeneliswa ukuhlala endlini, alime amasimu akhe ngoBa wayenezichaka zakwakhe; aneliswe ukukhulisa umfanyana wakhe. NezindaBa zakuBo zazingamjabulisi. Kwakwanele ukuba azihlalele kwaMthethwa, njengenkosikazi yomuzi.

## ISAHLUKO IX

KWAKUYINYANGA kaNhlaBa lapho amakhosikazi emizi yawo ayephumile ukukhukhula emasimini awo nasezifeni zawo, amanye esetshala ummbila wesifili woku-dliwa ebusika. NoNobantwana naye wayephumile njengabafazi bonke bomhlaBa kaMthethwa, ukuyotshala eyakhe insimu. Wavuka ekuseni lapho kuntshala enzansi, wetshatha ilembe lakhe wehla evuthuza amazolo ayelele ngendlela eya ensimini yakhe. Emqondweni wakhe kwakungekho lutho kuyena kwakumnandi ukuvuka ekuseni lapho inkanga-kusa inwebeka phansi olwandle nalapho izinkanyezi zentatha-kusa ziwa ziwela phansi emhlabathini.

“Mana, wena wakomkhulu,” kwasho izinceku zenkosi zihlangana naye.

Waphenduka wathi :

“Ngibona nina.” Washo edlula. NaBo abahlangana naye badlula, bathi belaphaya, baphenduka bamfuka. Indodakazi yenkosi yakwaNdwandwe, iganele enkosini yakwaMthethwa, ukuvuka ngalesisikathi iyolima ! Kwakumangalisa.

Wadlula uNobantwana engazi okusemiqondweni yabantu bakhe. Ukufika kwakhe kwaMthethwa uNobantwana watshelwa inkosi ukuba angasebenzi njengabantu ngoBa funa lokhu kumsuse isithunzi.

“Njengoba usuyinkosikazi yomuzi, MaNdwandwe, njengomthetho wakithi thina awufanele ukusebenza,” kusho inkosi.

“Ngiyezwa; kodwa njengoba mina ngakhuliswa

ngomzebenzi ngizokwenza njani?" KuBuza uNo-bantwana.

"Kulula ukuBa uhlale phansi ubeke indlu yakho, nokuphuma uyohlola amasimu alinywe izigqili zakho," kusho uDingiswayo.

"Beka izandla zakho zimhlophe," washo ezithatha ezicubungala ezifaka phakathi kwezakhe.

"UcaBanga ukuthi izandla ezinjena ziyoliphatha igeja, elinjengamalembelawa aphathwa lapha kwaMthethwa?"

Waphendula uNoBantwana wathi:

"Lawamakhosikazi owaBona ezandla zawo zihlala zimnyama, uthi lapho uwaBuza athi yingoba siyalima, yiwona du amavila awakwazi ukulima, ayenqena ukuzeza izandla zawo, ngiyesaba, Mthethwa, nokusho ukuthi lawo-makhosikazi ayenqena nokugeza imizimba yawo ngoba ethi ayalima."

"Kambe usho njalo, MaNdwandwe?"

"YeBo, baBa, ngisho njalo."

Leligama lokuthi, "baBa" laBamnandi enhliziyeni kaDingiswayo ngoba esizweni sakuBo, nasezizweni zikaQwaBe, nakwaBungane emaHlutshini, lelozwi lishiwo kuphela kumuntu ohloniphekayo, nothandwayo. Leli-zwi lalimkhombisa ukuthi uhlezi emsamo wenhli-ziyo kaMaNdwandwe nokuthi ukumkhonza kwakhe kwedlula uthando analo ngisho lwaBakuBo.

Waqhubeka uDingiswayo wathi:

"Ngingakholwa kanjani yilento oyishoyo?"

"Kanganzi, Mthethwa, kodwa ngizokubekela lokhu lapha ekhaya ngafika nomntwana ongiphelekelayo. Siphuma naye siyolima, sibuye naye singene endlini; siphuma kanye kanye siyothenza izinkuni zokuba swa sihlofoza emahlathini, siklaya izindaka; kodwa phezu kwakho konke lokho yena uhlanzekile kunaBaningi phakathi esigodlweni somndlunkulu."

"Ngokusho njalo, baBa, kangisho phela ukuthi umndlunkulu kawuhlanzekile, qha. Lokho kungangixabanisa naBo bonke abantu. Kodwa ungazifonela lapha phandle."

Kuthe esasho njalo nempela yaqhamuka intombazanyana leyo ibince isigege sayo, yathi ukugaxa isikhunjana esihle emahlombe. Yayisiqala ukuhlosa. Ngokungena kwayo endlini, yathi ukuBona inkosi maqede yasidonsa isiphukwana sayo, yasibuyisela esifubeni nasemahlombeni omafili, kwahlala umhlane obala. Ngalokho yayihlonipha inkosi.

Nempela uDingiswayo wayibuka lentombazanyana; waBona izinyawo ingqakala yazo imhlophe emacaleni nasesithendeni. Wakhuphuka ngezitho zayo, nazo zazicwebezela zibonakala ukuthi ngaphambi kokuba zigcotshwe ngamafutha zaziqale zagezwa. Wabekisisa isigege sayo, naso sasihleli kahle singenalo lolu qwembe lwamafutha amnyama ahlala ezigege, nasemitsheni yaBantu abageza nkanti. Ekhanda intombazana izinwele zayo izishaye impithi zasezigcotshwa futhi ngamafutha. Lapho idlula ngasenkosini kade ithatha umcengelezi wokupheka yayinephunga lamakha, namanzi ommfula.

Yathi ukuphuma intombazana inkosi yaBuza yathi:

"Nenza kanjani ukuthi lapho nisebenza kangaka kodwa nihlale nihlanzeke kanje?"

"Kulula lokho Mthethwa."

"Kulula kanjani?" kuBuza inkosi ngoba ithanda ukwazi.

"Uma usebenza emasimini uyajuluka. Ngakhoke thina kuthi lapho sesibuya siza emakhaya emva kokulima noma ukuhlakula, sidlule emmfuleni sigeze wonke umzimba ngisho nensila emagejeni ethu. Sithi



sikhuphukela emakhaya besesingabanye abantu. Kodwa phela uma sivela kotheza enye into."

Washo maqede wahleka, wabuka enkosini yakhe wayifumanisa imqolozele ngamehlo sengathi umfanyana omncane olalele inganekwane ixoxwa isalukazi. Wajabula uNobantwana waqhubeka.

"Uma uthwele inyanda yezinkuni, iyasinda, iyakujulukisa, kungesize lutho uma uthi ungakafiki ekhaya ungakayethuli ubusugeza umzimba. Ngakhoke ufika ekhaya uyethule ub'us'uthatha isigubu samanzi uya emmfuleni uyokukha amanzi khona uzofika ugeze ukhuphuke usumuhle. Senza njalo thina kwaNdwandwe."

Walalela uDingiswayo, nempela wakholwa, wafuye wathi:

"Kodwa ngendaba yokulima, kangithandi uyolima njengabantu bonke ngoaba bazokweyisa bacabange ukuthi unjengabo."

"Yebo, baaba uqinisile lapho. Kodwa abantu abazange bameyise umuntu ngoaba enza okuhle. Inyani khona kuthangi lokhu ngikubonile, Mthethwa, ungena igwija lezinsizwa usina kanye nazo, ngezwa inhliziyi yami ithi cosololo, ngabona bonke abantu bekujabulela ukungena kwakho egwijeni. Wawungaqali, Mthethwa, ngoaba njalo uyasina uma kusinwa. Pho, thina besifazane singephume ngani siyolima kanye nesinye isifazane, lokhu phela yiwona msebenzi lowo esiphilela wona?"

Wathula uDingiswayo wambuka uNobantwana ngoaba wayekhuluma izinto ezisobala kodwa yena angazange azicabange nakanye. Wathula walalela. Wabona ukuthi kanti ekwakheni isizwe sikayise akayedwa unkosikazi yakhe okuthi noma ethi uyasina, ibe ibukana naye imqophela laphaya nalaphaya. Yebo kwakufa-

nele imbuke ngoaba wayeyikhethile eningini washiya eziningi izintombi kwaMthethwa waphuma wayokhetha inkosikazi yakhe yokumzalela indlalifa yakhe, nokubusa isizwe sikayise; waphuma wayoyikhetha ezizweni wafuya nayo. Kanti izwi labadala lalingeyilo yini iqiniso lapho bethi:

*"Induku enhle egawulwa ezizweni?"*

Ngalelilanga mhla bekhuluma kanje, uDingiswayo wayevakashele kwaMaNdwandwe, ngakhoke uNobantwana esethubeni lokuba akhulume naye kahle afuna ukumqondisa khona. Wahamba uDingiswayo enomqondo omunye ngendaba yamakhosikazi kodwa wayengenakwahlulwa nguNobantwana enkulumeni yakhe ukuba uNobantwana akamkhombisanga futhi lokhu wathi:

"Ukuba ngikubonise umqondo wami, bengingathanda, Mthethwa ukuba ungiqondise ukuthi lawamakhosikazi amakhosi enze njani uma eshiywa ngamadoda awo? Amafutho alimela inkosi alimela inkosi entsha nezigqili ebezisebenza wonke umsebenzi onzima wamasimu ziyathathwa zisebenzele amakhosikazi amasha. Benzenjani bona? Phela mina angesabi, baaba, ngoaba isikhundla sami simi njalo noma ngiguga ngiyinkosikazi yomuzi, ngaphandle kokuba ungi-lahle wena ungisuse ebukhosikazini bami. Kodwa leyonto kayinakwenzeka ngoaba yimi ngedwa emakhosikazini akho engakubona ugxiza igazi lomkhonto kaaba uYose (uJobe) mhla kuthiwa uyabulawa. Ngiyazi, Mthethwa, ukuthi wazula, wazula njengove-mvane emagangeni, kodwa kweyakho inhliziyi ngangikhona. Uma kungenjalo, wawungangithumela kanjani lesiya sikhumba sesilo?"

Washo maqede wakhomba emsamo, wasukuma waya

ngasemaguleni, wasondeza ukhamba lwamasi agcwele izangqonda ezimhlophe, walubeka phambi kwenkosi. Wabuyela emuva wathatha imbenge enesisifekelo wayivula kwaphuma umcafa, wayibeka phambi kwenkosi; wathatha olunye ezinkezweni ezabazwa kufo kwaNdwandwe, walubeka phambi kwenkosi. Wathi: "Sekulungile, Mthethwa, yidla."

Akalindanga impendulo, wathatha umcafa, wavuba, wadla uDingiswayo. Wathi ebuya uNobantwana wayepethe isicathulwana sizitshelwe, wasibeka phambi kwenkosi, phezu kwaso kukhona isikhetho esasalukwe ngabaluki bakwaNdwandwe. Wayeshlala phansi esicephini, wayilinda inkosi yakhe idla, ingakhulumi.

Nombusi uyabuswa emzini wakhe, lapho inkosikazi nabantwana bakhe beza kuye bengagaqi ngamadolo njengabantu bonke. Lapho kungashiwo kuye ukuthi: "Bayede."

Kodwa lapho inkosi ibingelelwa ngesihlonipho sayo, njengoba uNobantwana wayethi kuyo:

"Baba," noma athi "Mthethwa."

Waphuma uDingiswayo esuthi, ephulula amadevu akhe emva kokuba aminye isicathulo kungasali lutho ngotha phela wayengekho umuntu wokushiyelwa aqede, wayephiwa ukudla yinkosikazi yakhe uqobo.

Emva kwalenkulumo kaDingiswayo noNobantwana wabanegunya uNobantwana lokuza aphume aye emsimini akhe ayozilimela engaphazanyiswa yizinkulumo zabantu ababengathandi ukuhona inkosikazi yenza nje.

Kanjaloke ngalelolangi mhla evuka ekuseni ngenyanga kaNhlabha eyotshala ensimini yakhe, wahamba enegunya lokuyolima engaphazanyiswa lutho. Lathi liphuma ilanga wayesula imijuluko yakhe ehlala phansi,

amabele akhe aqala ukuhlola waluzwa ubisi lwehla ngemithambo, wawakhama amabele akhe, elukhamela phansi ubisi. Waqeda lapho, wayingenela insimu yakhe, wayilima eyitshala, bekake ilanga seliqala ukushisa. Wathi ephakamisa amehlo wayibona intombazana engumzanyana womfanyana wakhe ingena ensimini ibelethe umntwana isimlethele ukuza azoncela. Walibeka phansi igeja wayangaphansi komkhulu umuthi owawuletha umthunzi. Wafika wahlala phansi phezu kotshani obomileyo. Intombazana yamgumula umntwana embelekweni yamletha kunina, wamthatha unina wamncelisa yathi:

"Ake ngizwe leligeja lakho."

Yasho intombazana iphimisela amathe ezandleni zozimbili, yaliphakamisa igeja, yayiklebula insimu. Wathi ukuhona lokhu uNobantwana wathi:

"Kanti usukhulile, ngizonce ngithole izinkomo, lapha kwaMthethwa." Yahleka intombazana, yakhephuza, yalima njengodadewabo yathi:

"Liyasinda leligeja lakho, sengijuluka, yasho ilahla laphaya isiphukwana sayo esilenga emahlombe, kwasala isigege. Nempela emhlanje kwasekumfoma amanzi okujuluka. Ebusweni kwakwehla amaqatha omjuluko, intombazana yayiwusula ngesandla sayo esincane, esineminwe emide njengekaNobantwana. Wathi uNobantwana,

"Boqaphela ugqibe imbewu leyo, ingashiswa yilanga noma iphandwe ngamathendele."

Kayiphendulanga intombazana yaphekuza isebenza noNobantwana wathola ithuba lokuphefumula, wahlala phansi komthunzi opholile wazewoma. Akubangasikhathi eside ngenxa yokuthula ensimini, kukhuluma igeja kuphela esandleni somzanyana, kwezwakala enzansi emhosheni inyani ihlabelela.

Walalela uNobantwana inyoni ihlabelela ithi :

“ *Khamthokwe, Khamthokwe •  
Amabele, avuthiwe.*”

Walalela waze wahleka sengathi inyoni ibinqa yena ngoba nempela amabele ayesevuthiwe, ummbila lona ababewutshala nomzanyana wakhe wawuhlwanyelwa phakathi kwawo amabele esevuthiwe amanye. Lommbila wawuzodliwa ebusika. Kwafika emqondweni kaNobantwana inganekwane owayizwa ixoxwa esengumntwana, inganekwane ethi, kwakukhona umfazi owa-thi elima kwaphuma inyoni ehlathini yamhleka yathi :

“ *Tshilo, tshilo ! umhlabathi kababa lo  
Engibe ngiyakhuze kwangakhuzeka.  
Zidinjana, mbe—mbe—mbe,  
Gejane, phoqo—phoqo—phoqo.*”

Nempela kwenzeka njengoba inyoni isho, kwahluma yonke insimu eyayikade itshaliwe, namageja aphuka phoqo. Wahleka uNobantwana wabuka umzanyana wamfumanisa ekhephuza, manje esemnyama wonke umzimba ngenxa yomjuluko.

Wethuka uNobantwana naye esekhumbule igama aliqamba kuho ngenkathi uDingiswayo ebalekile nalapho kufika isikhumba sesilo, sifika nesigijimi esafika uDingiswayo ekwaBungane. Walivungama phansi kuqala, elivungamela imicabango yakhe, nomntwana wakhe washo kancane ethi :

{	Yek - 'o-	kwami naba-	ki - - -	thi
	s :- ,s	fe .s, :f .m	d :-	t, .s, :
	:	:	m :- ,m	r .l, :d .t,
	Yek - 'o-	kwami naba-		

{	Ngikhumbul'ok	wam'ok-wen-zi-	we - - - yo
	m .m :f .f	m .s, :d .l,	s, :- ,s
	s, :-	fe, .d, :	s :- ,f
	ki - - -	thi	Wen - - o

{	fe .s, :f .m	d :-	t, .s, :
	m .s, :d .l,	s, :-	d, :
	Kha-la nga-ba-	ki - - -	thi.

Wathi lapho elivuma, ingani uyalivungama yalizwa intokazi encane iphekuza ngegeja, nayo imi khona isishisa, yalamukela yalivuma. Ladlanga ngobumnandi laze labacoba enhliziyweni, waphuma ngengila uNobantwana wezwakala esephumesela nencane intokazi yahida ngenzansi, yona ikhumbula ngempela ekhaya lapho yashiya khona abazali nawontangayayo yaphelezela udadewabo wayogana. Balisho, balisho igama limnandi, bekake lokhu amazwi abo ehla nemihosha abuye adlulele phambili ethwelwe unhloyile.

Inyoni eyayikade ihlabelela ngokwayo isika amabele avuthiwe yandiza yahamba ngoba yezwa amazwi abantu ekhuluma imizwelo yenhliziyu, imicabango yengqondo, nokuphefumula komphefumulo udonswa inkumbulo yezinto ezidlule, okuzayo kungenamkhuba.

Yilo leligama phela okwathi mhla kusina izintombi zakwaNdwandwe lapha eBalungwini zadlala ngazo izintombi zakwaMthethwa. Lalingathandeki lapha kwaMthethwa, noNobantwana ukuze alikhumbule naye wayengazi ukuthi wenziwa yini. Mhlawumbe kwakuyikho ukucula kwenyoni ithi :

“ *Khamthokwe, khamthokwe,  
Amabele, avuthiwe.*”

Sekusemini enkulu uNobantwana wayibiza intombazana wathi make ifambe umntwana ngoba yena wayesazocokosha izinkunyana, besebegoduka beya ekhaya. Nempela intombazana yayeka ukulima yeza ngaphansi komthunzi, yamthatha umntwana kaNobantwana, owayesezumekile ubuthongo. UNobantwana wahamba wangena ehlathini wacokosha izinkunyana waphuma, wetshatha igeja lakhe, intombazana yamlandela.

Sebesendleleni bathi nqamanqa noZenzile ehamba namantombazane omndlunkulu ayeyizichaka zendlu yake.

"Bengithi ngiza kuwe nakhu sengihlangana nawe lapha Nobantwana," kusho uZenzile.

"Bewuzothini?"

"Qhabo bengizobuza ngezindaba engizizwa sezihlakazeke nekhaya lonke mina ngingazazi, ingani kufanele kuba yimi engizizwa kuqala."

"Ndabazini zona lezo lokhu nami angazi lutho na?" kufuza uNobantwana.

"Kungenzeka kanjani ukuba wena ungazazi lokhu kuthiwa nguwena ozikhulumayo na? Kanti lapha kulomuzi ubani ofanele ukushayela imithetho isifazane sonke silalele yena? Kusho ubani ukuthi kuzofika inkosi yakwaZulu uSenzangakhona mina ngingazi? Akuwona amanga lawo?" Wabuza uZenzile ngenhliziyi yokufutheka, washo wabeka izandla eqolo, wasuluza phambi kukaNobantwana. UNobantwana wama nje wapheliswa ngamandla. Wathi ethatha wathi:

"Nempela kuyiqiniso ukuthi inkosi yamaZulu izofika. Okwenkosikazi enkulu lapha eBalungwini, mina wakoNdwandwe angikwazi ngoba angizanga lapha ukugana, ngazohlalela ukubukana nobukhulu. Ngezela ukugana kuphela."

"Usho ukuthini ngalawo-mazwi akho aluswaca?" kusho uZenzile.

"Kangisho lutho ngawo, uma ufuna ngiwaphinde, ngingakuphindela wona uwezwe kahle."

"Waphinde! kusho ubani ukuthi ngingabuswa nguwe lapha ekhaya? Ingani ngathi ngifike nawe ngiyimpeleki yakho kwafike kwakhiwa mina?"

"Hau, kanti usakwazi lokhu ukuthi wawuyimpeleki yami na? Konje emihleni yayiph'inkosi lapho impeleki yake yathwala umhlwenga phezu kukamakoti lokhu ngisho imahlula umakoti ngokusina nangobuhle, ihlala njalo kuyimpeleki?" Washo wambuka njalo manje ingani ubekade ekhuluma engambeki.

"Ududwa ngoba umfowenu uZwide ebulele umfowethu uMalusi? hhi?"

"Angikho lapho mina. Ngikubuza into ozoyibuzwa noma ngubani onomqondo. Endabeni kaZwide noMalusi, nalapho mina ngeke ngiwuthi vu lona wami wakoNdwandwe umlomo. Ngiwuhlab'inhlali."

Washo lawo-mazwi wathi ukuthatha izinyathelo wahamba. Wabuye wathi khimilili wambuka uZenzile owayesegqunqe esemnyama njengonwabu. Wakhuluma wathi:

"Kangiyazi into ongithukuthelele yona ngoba mina anginanxa nawe. Wena ubukeka ufumbethe okukhulu ngami. Yini ungaphumi nakho obala?"

"Yeka kusekuqala ngaba ngikubuklubukluza-njehkhona manje." Wathi ukuba asho lelo amantombazana ayemlandela ahleka usulu athi:

"Ge—ge—ge—ge—ge—ge, ihhi mame, yek'okwami!" Aqheluka ahlukana phakathi ngoba phela wona ayesebona ukuthi ukuba yiwona asesikhundleni sikaNobantwana ngabe aseyazikhwelela azehele. Bona zintombi zawobani, ingeke enye intokazi ikhulume

izifunele kuBona, ngabe sekungongaphansi nongaphezulu. Zahleka enye yagcina ngokuthi.

“Angasho yini njalo kimi umuntu? Ngizalwa nguye yini?”

Wabuye wathatha uZenzile wathi:

“Kawazi yini ukuthi inkosi ithumele kumnewenu ukuba amkhiphe uMalusi ambeke lapha. Uma kungenjalo yigazi lodwa” washo eshaya phansi unyawo ngenxa yokuthukuthela.

Waphendula uNobantwana wathi:

“Yebo uqinisile. Kawukezwa yini ukuthi izigijimi lezo sezabuya nempemdule evela ekhaya?”

“Zathini?” kubuza uNobantwana esalokhu ebeke izandla eqolo, kodwa manje kunokuba ampheshulele umlomo, wakhipha amehlo okumangala ngoBa wayengazi yena ukuthi kanti sezabuya izithunywa. WakuBona lokhu uNobantwana wahleka wathi ngomoya ophansi:

“Phela mina bengithi uwena owaziyo ngoBa nguweni ongitshele ukuthi kukhona izithunywa ezaya eDlovunga.” Wathula, wathula, uNobantwana, inhliziyi yakhe yamphendukela kwagcwala izinyembezi emehlweni akhe eBona uZenzile enza kanje kuyena wasuka wayithi fuqa phansi inyandana yezinkuni, kwathi intombazanyana lena ephethe umntwana wakhe yagijima yaya kuye yafike yamBamba yathi.

“Awukahle dadewethu, musa ukuzidela ngendlela enje. Umntwana uzokhalla.” Nayo yathi isho lawamazwi yayiqhumuka yakhala izinyembezi ezingumgobozi wamanzi. Waqulusela uNobantwana ethi uya phambili lapho kukhona khona uZenzile eBonakala ukuthi yena akaqonde kulwa naye kodwa ukufika kuye, waqhuma ngezwi elihlabayo wathi.

“Uthi ngingaphathwa nguwe kanje mina Zenzile na?”

Uthi ungashiya indlu yakho uzongihlasela lapha endle ngoBa ngingedwa? Ucabanga ukuthi wena lo, ngingakwazi sikhule kanye-kanye ungathi ngoBa usathathwe okukuthathile uB’us’ungithela ngezintuli? Yeka ukugana, ngifunge uZwide kaBaba ekwaNdandwe. Abanjengawe-nje, yiBo abayolahla inkosi bayiqhuqhuzele ukuba yenze izinto zobulima khona koba sengathi iyabathanda.”

Washo lawa-mazwi maqede waguquka, intombazana yamyeka ukumBamba, wathatha inyanda yezinkuni uNobantwana wahamba elandelwa yintombazane engumzanyane womntwana wakhe.

UZenzile wasala naye wamangala eBona uNobantwana owayemazi njengesithuli ekhaya, kodwa namhla ekhombisa inhliziyi yokufutheka okungaka. Ngaphambi kokuba amantombazana ayemphelekezela amBona ukuthi kukhona okumphazamisile waguqukela kuwona wathi:

“Ngimyekela abangomuso, ngabe ngimhlafuna ngamazinyo.”

Uthe engakahambi aqhubekele phambili wabuye waguquka ebekise ngakuNobantwana wathi:

“Hamb’ugoduke sisebenzi-ndini, thina sikhomba ngophakathi.”

Washo waguquka wahamba ehlanaza ngoBa emehlisile uNobantwana namantombazana lawa ahamba naye athula angakuluma lutho. UNobantwana wahamba wangabeka ngemuva kwaBasengathi akezwanga lutho. Enhliziyweni yakhe wayethokoza ngoBa eBenesibindi sokukhuluma aphumesele konke okusenhliziyweni yakhe ngoZenzile, noma ebimbile, wayengenandaBa. Enhliziyweni kaZenzile yena owayehamba eqonde phambili emfuleni eyogeza kwana-mathela kuyena ukuthi nempela into ayenzayo kuNoba-

ntwana ayiyinhle ngoBa wayesemephuce bonke ubuhle bakhe enkosini, namuhla wayesemehlisele phansi kuso sonke isigodlo. Yena wakoZenzile-nje wayengenakuphuma ayosebenza zikhona izichaka, wayengenakuhamba aye emmfuleni ayozibucunga insila zikhona izisebenzi; wayengenakuhamba ayothenza izinkuni, kungendaba yakhe leyo. Izenzo zikaNoBantwana zazimehlisa. Esacabanga ngalezizinto behamba beya ngasemmfuleni enye intombazana yaBuza yathi:

“Usho ukuthini uma efunga uZwide?”

“Mina ngezwa kuthiwa uNoBantwana lo ngudade-wabo kaZwide endlini. Yena Zwide lo oyinkosi,” kusho enye intombazana.

“Pho kuya kanjani asebenze sengathi akazalwa komkhulu?” KuBuza enye.

Eyesithathu intombazane yathi.

“Mina ngiyazi. UbaBa ujwayelene namadoda afika lapha acela indawo yokwakha evela khona ngalapha koNdwandwe. Kuthiwa nonina wenkosikazi le, uNoBantwana, naye wayenje. Wayezilimela amasimu akhe, ezithobile njengaso sonke isifazane. Ngalokhu wahlonishwa yisizwe sonke ngoBa wayengaziqhenyi.”

“Suka lapha wena, ukhuluma njengesilima?” kusho intombazane yokuqala. “Ucabanga ukuthi kun-gathi ngicagce komkhulu ngibe ngilokhu ngiphathana negeja, ngiyisiphukuphuku yini? Ngingephume phandle ngifake into yakwethu yesidwaba senkonkoni, ngisuluze, ngithamel’ilanga ngiguquka namathunzi onke; ngilambe ngiqhweba lowaya afike, ngifize engikubizayo kufike lapha ngidle? Suka lapha mtanomuntu!”

“Ehhe, uqinisile,” kusho intombazane yesithathu.

Yaqhubeke yathi: “Kwabanye umbuso lona uyazizela ngoBa benceliswe ngawo. Wena noBani, noBani ongawazi ubuka lukhulu kuwona.”

Yaphinda intombazane yathi:

“Ngingabe ngisaphume ngithi ukuqhoholoholsha ngesidwaba sakwethu kekuBuke abanye abafazi?”

“Usho ngoBa ungazi,” Sekusho owesine okade ethule elalele. Kawukaze umbone yini uMaNdwandwe ephuma embethe isikhumba sesilo, ikakhulu uma kukhona umkhosi. Awuze ngayibona yini nayo inkosi kuthi lapho esephumile uMaNdwandwe nayo iphume ingene igwija isine njengebungu. Thula uz’ufe uma ungakaboni.”

Akhuluma amantombazane aqhubeke kanje aze afika emmfulen lapho ezogezela khona.

Lapho ekhaya eBalungwini zonke izindlu zazithunqa intuthu kuphekwe utshwala bokufika kukaSenzangakhona. Abanye basebesebuhluzwe nokubuhluzwa, sebucwizwizwa emagobongweni enhla nomsamo.

Inkundla yokusina izinsizwa yayisishanelwe ngaphandle komuzi lapho kuzodlalelwa khona, amaButho kaMthethwa edlalela uSenzangakhona. UNoBantwana wayesewatshelile onke amakhosikazi into yokwenziwa, wawakhethe ngezigaBa zawo onke amakhosikazi azophatha ukudla kwamakhosikazi kaSenzangakhona. Izindlu lapho amakhosikazi ezolala khona zasezilungisiwe zasinwa, nemigidla yazo yesulwa; kwathi lapha eziko kwagandaywa ngesiduli esivuthiwe, kwasilwa ngoqhumuqhumu namafutha ukuBa kushelile.

Kwakungemakhosikazi odwa ayexhuxhuma. Izintombi zesula izevatho zazo; izigege ezalukwe ngoBuhlalu, nezibamba ezibopha esiswini. Ezinye zaziqhola izinwele zazo, zizenza ngezinhlobohlobo zemvunulo. Babodwa ababegunda bashiye umphoma ecaleni nenhlabano khona kuzophothelwa kulezozinwele ubuhlalu behle emacaleni.

Izinsizwa zazisula amahawu azo ziwathuntutha uthuli lonke khona kuzoqhama imibala ngemibala.

Ezinye zazineka phandle amabeshu azo nezinene. Phandle othangweni kwakukhona izinto zokuhlofa eziningi lonke ilanga kwazekwaya ilanga lalengela enzansi phezu kwezintaba. Nazo zaqala ukuthifa.

Waphuma uNobantwana, waphuma ehamba engena exoxa namakhosikazi omuzi, edonsa ngengalo umfanyana wakhe.

"Kunjani MaMdlalose, ake ngizwe phela ishontshosi lakho." Washo wahleka engena endlini kaMaMdlalose owayemudekazi empofu enogazi lwakwaQwabe.

"Ngena nkosikazi wena owakhula silibele. Obami utshwala bufi ungalizwa nje neshontshosi labo. Washo emcakulela ngendefo wamphuzisa. Wathi nkantsha uNobantwana wathi:

"Iya suka, uhleka thina, thina esithe siyapheka, nalapho sifudumezayo, sasuke sabeda-nje."

"Siyodlulwa phela nguMaNdwandwe omncane yena oseqedile, ngimbone ehla ebek'enzansi ehambisana nezichaka zakwakhe. O, nanguya esebuya, akaphethe lutho ngesandla."

"Ubezophathani?" kufuza uNobantwana.

"Angazi; abanye bezelani?" kufuza uNobantwana ethanda ukuqonda imicabango yawozakwa bo ngodawabo uZenzile.

"Uthini kodwa?" Wahleka uMaMdlalose. "Abanye bezela umbuso lapha. Sikhalelwa abantwana nje bona abakhalelwa lutho, bayasuluzwa, bazizwa ufu bona. Thina esingonina wabantu asilutho."

Wathula uNobantwana, wajafula enhliziyweni uku-bona ukuthi kuligunya elingakanani esifazaneni ukukhalelwa umntwana, uncelise, ukhulise, uthethe, upheke, konke lokho ukwenzela abantwana bakho. Waphuma lapho ikhanda eselithwele ngofo uMaMdlalose kwakungesikhulumi, kodwa wayemjwayele nezeluleko

belulekana ezintweni zobufazi. Baphelekezelana bedlula izindlu ezimbalwa wabuya uMaMdlalose.

Lashona ilanga uMaNdwandwe (uNobantwana) ezungeza wonke umuzi eqoqa lokhu nalokhuya. Inkosi akayibonanga ngalelo langa kodwa kwafika okaNtonteyana kuyena lapho kuthi swelele. Wangena wakhuleka wathi:

"Mame!"

"Hawu uwena lowo, kaNtonteyana? Wo, kukhulu okukuletha lapha. Yikho kuza nenkosi yakwaZulu-nje."

Wahleka uJevuza wangakushaya mkhuba okushiwo uNobantwana ngofo kuyena ngisho noDingiswayo kwakungumfana kaJobe uma behlezi bofabili. NoNobantwana kwakuyintombazana nje. Wafika wadlala nomfanyana kaNobantwana wathi:

"Wethu, kanti usukhulile. Weu!"

Wasondele uNobantwana waxhawula kuJevuza, wathi:

"Simehlo madala wena kaNtonteyana. Akusho, kodwa uqhamuka-phi, ulubekisephi?"

"Ngiphuma khona lapha. Ake wenze utshwala mntanami, phuthuma ngofo nginomsebenzi onzima namuhla bonke ubusuku. Ngizoqinisa inkosi ngofo funa yenganywe uSenzangakhona ngesithunzi. Futhi ngaphandle kwayo ngizoqinisa nawe ngofo ngu wena ozofe uphethe ukudla kwayo namakhosikazi ayo lenkosi yakwaZulu. Asibazi abathakathi bakoMalandela, asizilungiselele konke, okuhle, nokufi."

Nempela uNobantwana wathatha ukhamba emsamo walusondeza sengathi ulusondezele uyise, walwesula ngezandla zakhe. Wasondeza noqwembe olunenyama walubeka phambi kwakhe wadla uJevuza, waqeda.

Eseqedile wehlisa isikhwama sakhe emhlane waso-

mbulula imigodlana yakhe emincane, okokuqala athi lapho esombulula athinte okhakhayini lomfanyana ka-Nobantwana khona engezuhaka ashone phakathi ukhakhayi. Wayesethi :

“Sondeza amanzi ashisayo lapha ngikuphalazise, uβ'us'ufun'udengezi lapho uzoncindela khona.”

Nembala wakusondeza konke lokho. Wayeseqhubeka ethi :

“Lawamanzi owaphalazayo akaphumele esitsheni ngofa ngifuna agcinwe. Azochithwa ngaphambi komnyango lapho kuzolala khona amakhosikazi enkosi yakwaZulu, athi umuntu owachithayo ambe kancane khona kungenakubonakala.”

Nempela wamphalazisela odengezini, lwathathwa lwagcinwa. Kanti lapha eziko olunye udengezi selubomvu. Wamncindisa uNobantwana, wancindisa nentombazanyana yakhe wathi kuNobantwana :

“Ithamo lokugcina ungaligwinyi. Ngifuna ulukhwise unyenyenze amagama amakhosikazi akumise kabi phakathi kwalomuzi. Lokhu ngikwenzela khona ezoshabalala angabonwa kulomgido, kuqhame wena wedwa nalaβo abakulandelayo.”

Akabuzanga uNobantwana, ingani umuthi okuncidwa ngawo wawubaba, wathatha ithamo elikhulu kunamanye wakhwifa kancane esho igama eliphumisela, uJevuza ewalalele onke amagama, engekuza ngekhanda. Kodwa kwathi lapho ekugcineni esephatha elikaZenzile, uJevuza wathi :

“Kwanele mtanami, kwanele,” Wavuma ngekhanda njalo, wathi :

“Ehhe, hm ; ewe impela, ehhe.”

Kusenjalo kwasekuzwakala phandle uβubudubudu, sengathi kukhona abantu abangena esangweni. Kwaba sengathi impi iyahlasela, wakhala omunye wathi :

“Shibedabe !”

Baphendula abanye bathi ngamazwi amakhulu.

“Sabani kwa !”

Kwamemeza abanye phakathi komuzi eBalungwini bathi :

“Ingene muziwakwethu, niyezwa nje na ?”

Nempela kwabakhona isiyaluyalu impi isihlanganisile wonke umuntu, kwathi lapho sezihloma zonke izinsizwa lapha eBalungwini kwabuye kwathi nya, sengathi laba bantu sebenyamalele babaleka. Bathi abakwa-Mthethwa becaphuma izihlangu, bakhandana ngezintuba zonke zomuzi bebuza abanye bethi :

“Baphi, bashonaphi ?” Kwezwakala ngenzansi izwi limemeza libongela lithi :

“UMenzi kaNdaba !

UBid'elimathetha ngezinyembezi,

Linjeng'elikaPhiko eBulawini ;

Inyath'ehamb'iseng'amazibuko,

Enjengomzingeli kwaMamfekana.

Uzitheβ'ezinhl'uMjokwane

Kwanga zidlel'amanxasa.”

“Od'umfazi kaSukuzwayo

Wadla noSukuzwayo nendodana ;

Oye ngomnyama koMazolo

Wabuya ngonyezi,

Amadod'aphenduk'umbejakazana ;

Uyabuya bamzek'izobongo ;

Obesiyaka singamanz'endlela ;

Ibiqongo elimzimba buthaka,

UMqangabodwe wawoMnkabayi.”

“Uqabi kwezameva, eNtendemuzi

Ungezwa bethi : Valela njalo Sonjalose :



*" Abasho kuwe, babul' unyoko, uMbulazikazi,  
Yen' evalel' ingonyam' endlini.  
UNombanga-kubuya, wawo Phalo,  
Ilang' eliphume linsizwa  
Lithe liphezulu, lansasa  
Lifun' ukothiwa mizimb' azimba."*

*" UMashwabada kaMaqanda noNsele,  
Oshwabadel' izindlumbu zakomfowabo  
Washwabadel' izundlumbu zikaMudli, namakhasi.  
Umlunguzi wezingoje,  
Owalunguz' ingoje yomfowabo,  
Walunguz' ingoje kaZivalele.  
Umthombo wamatshe, wakoNobamba  
Engiphuze kuwo ngagangatheka  
Ngaphons' ukudliwa nayizimamba  
Ebezilalel' umuntw' ehlozini, nasephungweni."*

*" Amanz' aseMpembeni, Ndwandwe kaNdaba,  
Amanz' aseMpembeni, inguqunguqu,  
Angiwaqedi nalaph' eya khona,  
Amany' ayewuka, amany' ayaqonsa,  
AnjengoQonsa waseSigezeni,  
Ebuya! aMenzi kaNdaba!"*

Wathi ukuḅ' aqede lomuntu obongayo seḅemi bonke  
abaseḅehlomile beḅukana, wayesethi omunye :

" Iyiphi yona lenkosi eḅongelwa lapha enkundleni  
yakithi? "

Yathula imbongi yathi nya. Kayiphendulanga lu-  
tho. Kwaphuma kwenye indlu uMlangeni ehamba  
noVukani wayewaqonda kuyo imbongi wayiḅuza  
wathi :

" Uḅika ḅani mnumzane? "

" Ngibika uSenzangakhona, inkosi yakwaZulu."

" Uphi yena? "

" Uyeza kanye nomuzi wakhe."

" Pho, lomsindo wokuhlasela ongena ngawo niqo-  
ndeni ngawo? "

" Qha, wena wenkosi usiko lwakithi kwaZulu lolo  
ukuḅa inkosi ifikwe yizinsizwa zekhethelo, ingangeni  
emzini wenye inkosi sengathi kungena umfokazana  
nje."

Hhayike wathula uMlangeni, waphindela emuva  
wayobika enkosini. Uthe eḅuya nempela isango lase-  
limnyama sekugqwayiza izimpaphe zezinhloḅonhloḅo  
ziyaluziswa ngumoya ovela enyakatho uxubene no-  
mzansi wolwandle. Phakathi kwalawaqubu nemiḅa-  
labala yezihlangu umuntu wayeḅona kulokoza amehlo  
amphlophe ephonseka emaceleni; aḅanye ḅemi nemi-  
khonto yaḅo, aḅanye ḅemi ngezagila nangamawisa  
kwaḅasengathi inkulu into ekhona.

Wafika uMlangeni ehamba naye uVukani wathi :

" E nina BakwaZulu! "

Kwathula kwathi nya.

" Ngithunywa inkosi yomuzi ukuḅa nginingenise  
phakathi. Kuthiwa inkosi namakhosikazi mayila-  
ndeḅe mina, kanye nomndlunkulu. Izinsizwa zilandeḅe  
nansi enye insizwa zikhonjiswe emalawini.

Nempela kwathi qembu, kwaphuma ikhehla eline-  
sicoco esicwaliwe, elide linamehlo amakhulu nezitho  
eziqhanso imithambo; lalandelwa ngamakhosikazi ayi-  
sihlano nekhethelo lezintokazi ezimzimba igcwele, eza-  
zihamba zixegezela sengathi zinqamuke amanyonga  
kanti zenziwa umbuso nokukhombisa ukuthi kazina-  
ndaba noḅani, zikhathazwe yindlela, sezicabanga ubu-  
thongo kuphela.

Zathi zehlukana phakathi izintombi nezinsizwa wezwa

kuvunganywa kuzo zonke izinsebe zomuzi, eyedwa othi :

“ Uyayibona leyaya wethu? ”

“ Usho yiphi? Suka wethu awusenamehlo, bengingathi usho leyaya ephethe igekle ngesandla. Ungibekele yona kusasa seziyogeza. Ngifuna ukuyimisa, ngikhuz'impisi.”

Inkulumo yahamba kanjalo nezintombi zakwaMthethwa nazo zazimi, zincike ngezindlu zawonina, zimi izixukwana, enye ibambelele emahlombe awenye. Zizodwa ezazikhex'imilomo kuzo zonke izwi lilinye lokuthi :

“ Kuyazalwa kwaZulu, ak'ufuk'indlela abahloba ngayo, nemizimba yabo engathi igudulwa ngamalula.”

Bonke phakathi nomuzi babethwele amehlo sengathi izihambi lezi kazivakashele nkosi, zivakashele bona. Abanini bendaba kabavelanga obala.

Umlangeni wabathatha abendlunkulu wayewabathela kuMaNdwandwe lapho wayesebalungisele, kwafumaniseka nokuthi uDingiwe naye usefikile ekanye noMaMdlalose. Bakhwishiza besizwa nayizinsila zenkosi uqobo lwayo uDingiswayo, ngingasabali izinceku nezichaka. Kwathi phakathi kobusuku kwaba yikhani kuqala ukuthi cwaka.

Ukusa kwaziwa uNobantwana waqoqa idlanzana lamakhosikazi kanye nezintombi ezazingumundlunkulu wathi :

“ Sengibonile ukuthi amaZulu lawa eze ngoaba ezosidlelezela. Nathi masenze okwethu kuze kungathiwa, eBalungwini kukhona izinsizwa namadoda kodwa akukho zintombi namakhosikazi. Nithini? ”

Waphendula wathi uDingiwe :

“ Nginawe lapho dadewethu.”

“ Into engikengayicabanga leyo, nkosikazi, kusho omunye. Mina ngiyavuma, nithini nina? ”

“ Nathi siyavuma. Khonake sibaya esikhulu.”

“ Yisho sizwe Dingiwe, uwena oligagu,” kusho abanye.

“ Qha, akusekho sikhathi sokuqamba igama elisha lapha, thathani elaziwayo noma enake nalizwa. Mina ngithi akuthathwe elikadadewethu uNobantwana kusinwe ngalo, “ kusho u Dingiwe.

“ Hhayi, musani ukungixabanisa nezwe kuthathwe igama lakwaNdwandwe kusinwe ngalo koMthethwa.”

“ Kanti wena ungowakwaNdwandwe yini? Ingani wagcagcela kwaMthethwa, nayo yonke into ethi wena, ithi Mthethwa.” Kusho omunye emakhosikazini. Enye yaqedela yathi :

“ Asiz'ulibala yilabo abangathandi lelo-gama. Thatha nkosikazi sizwe, thatha mame wethu, thina bothinanye sekuluma izinyawo.” Kusho amashinga-ke manje abafecuphe uchuku balwe.

“ Ngilihlabelele namagama alo na? ”

“ Sifuna lonke njengoaba linjalo,” sekusho isixuku.

Abanye basebekhe namahlamvu abazosina ngawo. Nempela waliqala kancane uNobantwana wathi :

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Zalithinta izintokazi ezindala lazela vuthwa zalishayela ihlombe, zaseziklela sezilungela ukugadlela. Pho, usho kobani koMaMdlalose abasuka maqede bathi ukuthi ba baphakamisa unyawo izandla zilokhu zabeka phezu zikhombe inhlamvu yelanga. Wonke umunqa manje wasewangena wagadlela, baze bajuluka, beshuqungana bephenduka, lapho uNobantwana noDingiwe abasabukani sekuthule-nje, sebekhohlwe nawukuhlabelela, sekumnandi ukusina kuphela. Ingabe uDingiwe wayecabanga ngobani, kasazi.

Kwadlula amalanga amabili bephumule kwaMthethwa abakwaZulu, wayeseya kubona uDingiswayo eyozicelela ugwayi ngoba phela okuyiyona ndaba eyahlanganisa uZulu noMthethwa, yiwo ugwayi lona.

“ Namhlake nina bakwaZulu, nizophuma niyobukela ukusina kwamaButho akithi. Kukhona nedlanzi lamakhosikazi ami azosinela omame laba.”

“ Yebo Mthethwa kesalule amadolo siphumele enkundleni,” kusho uSenzangakhona.

“ Ngokwakithi sisina amaqembu njengokuButhwa kwaBo abantu. Kusina abadala kuze kufike emabungwini,” kusho uDingiswayo. Abuye elule isandla, bamchathazele ugwayi omame bakwaZulu.

Phakathi kwaBo kwakukhona uMaNtuli, uBimbi kaSompisi kaKuguqa owalamana noNdlela okwathi esefile uShaka sekubusa uDingana, uNdlela lona waba yiyona ndunankulu eMgungundlovu ondukuzibomvu. Ezinduneni zikaSenzangakhona uMudli okwakunguyena oweluleka uNandi wathi kuye makabaleke noShaka nodadewaBo kaShaka uNomcoBo ngoba uSenzangakhona wayeqonde ukubulala uShaka. Nempela wabaleka uNandi wazewafika lapha kwaMthethwa. Kwakukhona nezinye izinduna oMbikwane noNgomane. Yibona bonke laba okwathi ngokuhamba kukaNandi

basala bakhuphula uBimbi, unina kaSigujana okunguyena owayezobusa kwaZulu. Bambeka uBimbi waba yinkosikazi. Elinye igama likaSigujana waziwa ngokuthi uNomqwayimba. Yibo bonke laba ababe fike noSenzangakhona beze kwaMthethwa.

Baphumake baya enkundleni, bephelkezelwa yizikhulu zakwaMthethwa. Bafica sekuphethuzela; balhala phansi.

Zaqala izinsizwa zasina, zasina kwazekwafika eButhweni likaMasuka kaNtelana waseMzizini; wathi ukweyama uDingiswayo wakhuluma.

“ Laba-ke Zulu, yibona okuthi uma kusinwa ngikhethele ngabo. IButho-nje lezinsizwa elisahlabene ngokungengako ngoba uzobona neziqu zaBo entanyeni kusalenga izindondo-nje neziqu zomyezane ngasinye nangazimbili.”

“ Nempela akusho wena Mthethwa, kuyazisho. Yizinsizwa, zikhulile, zinzima.”

Waqhubela kuMudli wathi:

“ Mudli,” kusho uSenzangakhona. “ Awukayiboni inyamazane yakithi na? ”

Wath'uMudli:

“ Sengahlulekile nkosi.”

Yaqalaza inkosikazi, uBimbi kwangathi yethukile ngoba yayiyazi inyamazane efunwayo. Wathi uDingiswayo ukuba ezwe lelizwi lidlula:

“ Kanti nilahlekelwe yini? ”

“ Qha, Mthethwa, amanga, ngoba siyafunisela nalapha nje.”

Wath'uDingiswayo:

“ Inyamazane enemilenze emingaki? ” Bahleka bonke kwangababikho okhulumayo aphenhule.

Kuthe kunjalo waphuma umfana waBo weNyakatho wathi qekelele, waphubuka wahleka uDingiswayo wathi:

“ Uzozwake.”

UJevuza kaNtonteyana naye wayekhona eceleni kwenkosi ebema ugwayi wakhe evuma njalo. Wachathaza omunye ugwayi eshungwini lakhe wathi ukushiyela uMudli wathula, wathula wathi :

“ Lo mfana uyimbongi, uyikho konke. Uthi lapho ebonga athi kuDingiswayo. Ungu

“ *Bubulandaba.*  
*Namhla kungendaba*  
*Ngezithw'ekhanda,*”

aqhubeka umfana akhalise nathi ekade sasibona, kulalwa kuvukwa. Wathula uMudli walalela. Esikhundleni sokuBa bambonge bathi :

“ *Sigidi, Sigidi,*”

omunye wawowaBo waphuma khona lapho kusakhlunywa wathi :—

“ *UNodum'ehlezi kaMenzi !*  
*Iemb'eleq'amany'amalemba ngokukhalipha ;*  
*UGaga libomvu nasekuphathweni*  
*UMlilo wothathe kaMjokwane.*”

Basho njalo yena uyaphuma ohleni uya eshashalazini. Wathi eqeda lona obongayo, wathatha umfana wakhona ngephimbo eqala ihubo laBo lokusina elithi :

“ *Zinomland'omkhulu lezo-nkomo.*”

Yasho ingoma yakhuza phezulu zikhala ngezinkomo ezinomlandu, laqala ihlombe kwashaya noBeyisiBukeli. Esikhundleni sokuBa ligcine eziBukelini, wezwa nase-nhla kwezibaya ezindlini zawomame ivuma nakhona ingoma kukhalwa ngezinkomo ezinomlandu. Umfana wasina kanye nowaBo kwashuquka uthuli abantu

bangabe besabonana, naphezu kwalokho ihlombe laqhwakaza. Kwathi sekuqediwe ingoma wamemeza umfana wakhona wathi :

“ *Ngalahleka nje*  
*Ngangiyaphi ?*”

Liphendule lonke ibandla enkundleni njengoBa laselethukile lithi umfana akazugiya ngegama lakhe loqobo, aziqambela lona. Laphendula ibandla lathi, lonke lathi :—

“ *Walahleka nje*  
*Wawuyaphi ?*”

Waphinda umfana wamemeza wathi :

“ *Ngalahleka nje*  
*Ngangiyaphi ?*”

Lathi ibandla :

“ *Walahleka nje*  
*Wawuyaphi ?*”

Kwabuye kwathathwa ngokusha kwasinwa, manje kwangena ngisho nezintombi zasekhaya kwaMthethwa zasina zingamenywe muntu kodwa zithathwa usinga, lwabafowaBo seBeshaya ingoma yaBo yezilomo neyokuhlabana. Kwasuka izalukazi zashanela phansi, wezwa nabantwana emagcekeni enhla nomuzi bekhala ngazwi linye fethi :

“ *Walahleka nje*  
*Wawuyaphi ?*”

Ngenxa yokuthatheka usinga lwengoma zathuka izintokazi zakwaZulu sezisukumile zathi :

“ *Asingabafeli umona abantu bezizwe.*”

Zasukuma zakha amahlamvu zashanela phansi phambi kwebutho leNyakatho ezinye zathatha zawathshinga amahlamvu phezu kwamakhanda alezozinsizwa zisina, zenanela. Zabuya zahlala phansi.

Wahleka uDingiswayo wathi :

“Kunjani Zulu, ungengikhombise ukusina kwakwaZulu?”

Wathi uSenzangakhona.

“Inhliziyo yami iyala. Uma ngivuma ngafe ngikutshakela amathe ukusina kwa bantu bakho ngahlu-lekile. Ngelinye ilanga uyofika kwaZulu nawe u bone ukukhetha kwamabutho.”

“Angazi Zulu, umhlaſa ulala uguquka-nje, ngingazi kanjani okwangomuso ngoſa nawe-nje funa mhlawumbe uſona lokhu-nje, us’uqala ukungizonda.”

“Amanga Mthethwa.”

Sekubuz’inkosikazi uMaNtuli ethi :

“Pho, lowaya mfana onesithunzi esesabekayo kangaka, ungomunye wamadodana akho, nkosi na?”

“Qhaſo nkosikazi,” kusho uDingiswayo. “Omunye wamagosa abafana laſa.”

Usephendukela kuMudli uDingiswayo uthi,

“Awukayiboni inyamazane yakho Mudli, nama-nje?”

Uyahleka okaNtonteyana uthi :

“UMudli akanamehlo okuhlaziya ezixukwini. Kuhle kufakwe mina ebuduneni bakhe.”

Bahleka bonke nezikhulu.

Kwahlukwana bonke baya ngezindlu zaſo sekuyodliwa ukudla. UDingiswayo waya elawini lakhe elandelwa uJevuza.

Ukufika elawini wathi :

“Vondwe! kusho ukuthini ukuſa uSenzangakhona uzofuna inyamazane yakhe?”

“Kawuboni yini? kanti useyingane?”

“Qhaſo kusho ukuthini?”

“Inyamazane ibonwa ibulawe. Uma kuyiyona enamandla iyaguquka ibulale umzingeli. Laphake akube inyamazane ebulalayo.”

“Uthini futhi lapho, Vondwe?”

“Ngisho njalo,” Washo ethatha idosha lakhe ebema njalo.

“Uthi uShaka makabulale uyise?”

Singezixabaniſe nomhlaſa wonke wakwaZulu?”

“Qhaſo! kanti uzothatha umkhonto amhlaſe yini? Akabizwe eze kimina ngizokukhombisa into azoyenza.” Nempela waphuma uJevuza wathi :—

“Nang’uVukani ſo! Nang’uVukani ſo!”

Ngesikhashana uVukani wafika wangena. Kwathi-wa kuyena akayobiza uShaka. Wahamba wayombiza. Wafika maqede wathi kuye uDingiswayo.

“Umbonile uyihlo?”

“Bayede!”

“Uthi uyinyamazane yakhe.”

“Ngiyezwa Zulu.”

“Pho kuzokwenziwa njani?”

“Angazi, wen’ophezulu,” kush’uShaka.

Wangena uJevuza wathi kuShaka.

“Nank’umuthi, hamba uwuhlikihle ezandleni, uſ’u-s’uhamba uyoziveza kuyihlo. Ucele ugwayi woku-bema kuyena. Uyochathaza ubeme, uſ’us’uhlikihla lomuthi kulo ishungu lakhe, ulibuyisele emuva. Uma ephandle uqaphele okokuſa isithunzi sakho siwele phezu kwakhe.”

Nempela ſamlumba uShaka wahamba. Esehambile wathi uDingiswayo,

“Ngiyamthanda lomfana. Yikhani esazongilwela izimpi zami, zakwaNdwandwe, namanye amakhosi athwele umhlwenga.”

“AbakwaMdwandwe boneni kangaka? Bona ngoſa

bakuzalela umfazi? Eyomndeni kayingenwa. Kubi Mthethwa ukuba uxafane nomlamu wakho uZwide ngenxa kaMalusi noZenzile lona. Awuyikubuyelwa lutho neze. UZenzile ukwakhela imigese. Yinike akusize ngayo kuwo wonke lomsebenzi? Ingani uS'uthwelwe nguNobantwana noDingiwe noMaMdlalose nabanye, yena esong'izandla ebeke ukukhonzwa?"

"Kulungile sizobona Vondwe. Manje sengiyacambalala ak'ungiyeke ngedwa."

Nempela waphuma uJevuza wahamba eyishiya yodwa inkosi.

NoShaka waphuma lapho enkosini wahamba waqonda endlini kaSenzangakhona lapho efikele khona. Wafika wangqonqoza wangena.

"Sanibonani nina bakwaZulu."

"Bathi sibona wena."

Babukana oMudli noNgomane bathula. Babuka, babuka uShaka, babuka uBimbi, babuka uShaka. Nendlu yonke yashaqeka.

"Ungubani mfana na?"

Wathi uShaka:

"Sengathi izinduna zakho ziyangibona, babu, noma wena ungasangiboni."

"Hawu mntanami nguwe lowo?"

"Ngisabona yini sengaguga-nje?"

Wasukuma uShaka waxhawula kuYise ngesandla sokunene njengoba wayehlikhle umuthi ngakwesokhohlo. Wahlala phansi wathi:

"Ake ungishiyele ugwayi," esho kuyise. Uyise wathi kuBimbi inkosikazi,

"Mnike ishungu lami achathaze kulo."

Wasukuma uBimbi walithatha ishungu walinikeza uShaka wabuya wahlala phansi. Wachathaza, ekhuluma nabo, kanti uyalikhuhla ngomuthi lona awutha-

the kuJevuza. Wayeselibuyisela kunina uBimbi wathi:

"Ubani lona na?" ebuza uBimbi.

Waphendula uMudli wathi:

"Inkosikazi uMaNtuli."

"Nguyena nina kaSigujana na?" kubuza uShaka.

"Usushilo," kusho uNgomane.

"Yikho nje ngithi nginibingelela yena angavumi na?"

"Nguyena nina kaSigujana," kusho uMudli ngokucophelela.

"Hawu babu, ngiphe umkhonto," kusho uShaka.

"Thatha leya mikhonto Ngomane uyilethe lapha," kusho uSenzangakhona.

Wayithatha uNgomane wayiletha.

"Zikhethele owuthandayo kuyona," kusho uSenzangakhona. Nempela wakhetha uShaka. Wathatha owawuphothwe ngenhlali lapho kuhlangana isibambo nokudla kwembemba. Wawulinganisa uShaka, wahleka. Kodwa uyise wawubuka wayesethi:

"Qha, lowo, ungawuthathi ngoaba okaSigujana."

Zehla izihlathi kuShaka, bonke bakubona lokho. Wawubeka phansi uShaka, wakhetha omunye umkhonto, wafonga.

"Umkhonto kaSigujana uzokwenzani lapha lokhu yena akakho?" kubuza uShaka.

"Ungene kweminye imikhonto ngesiphosiso," se-kuphendula uMudli.

Waphendukela kuMudli uShaka, wahleka, wathi,

"Hhawu kunjalo Mudli na?"

Emva kokusho lelizwi waphuma phandle wavalelisa, wahamba.

Owakhuluma okokuqala lapha endlini kwaaba yinkosikazi, yathi:

“Umazi kanjani uSigujana?”

NoMudli wathi:

“Kusho ukuthini ukungivalelisa kwakhe, ngithi ngiyindoda ngingaka angibize ngegama?”

“Qha madoda, lomfana kuhle aqasheliswa, into ayiyona ngiyamesaba,” kusho uNgomane.

“Nifonile ihungulo analo kwaManye abantu ngenkathi egiya? Ubani ngisho kwaZulu, amaqhawe esebuthene, ongasina kuzamazame sonk'isizwe njengalomfana?” Kusho uMudli.

“Kuhle Mudli uma ukubona konke lokho ngoba imisebenzi yakho yonke le.” Kusho inkosikazi.

“Ukuba kawukhokhobisanga uNandi, uShaka nodawabo uNomcoba baze bafike lapha ngabe akukho konke lokhu.”

“Hhawu, uthini mame na?” KuBuza uMudli ngokumangala.

“Sengishilo,” kusho uBimbi unina kaSigujana. Washo maqede kwaBuye kwaBuye kwathula endlini kwathi nya.

Wayesehambile uShaka,

“Ophehlwe weva, wanjengomlilo.”

Washiya benukana fodwa, waphuma wehla ephethe umkhonto wakhe awuthathe kuyise.

Kwalalwa kwathi ebusuku uSenzangakhona wakhala ngekhandla, wathi uMudli akovuka ayobika enkosini ukuthi akanamandla okubukela omunye umdlalo, umzimba wakhe akawuzwa.

Kuthe ukuba afike enkosini uMudli ehamba noNgomane nanye induna, wathi:

“Wo, wena wakomkhulu inkosi ithi kayiwuzwa umzimba ngakhoke kayizi emdlalweni namuhla.”

“Kufanele emva kwaloluya luthuli ebesiluhlalele,

nami kangizizwa kahle. Pho, Mudli, usuyitholile inyamazane yakho na?”

“Qha nkosi, angikayitholi.”

“Yeboke, ngizokulandela yona.”

“Qha, nkosi, ungeke uyazi.”

“Usho mina, Mudli, ngiyayazi ngizokulandela yona njengoba ngishonje. Wena Vukani, memeza amadodana ami afike nelembe elidl'amanye. Basheshe.”

Waphuma uVukani wabuya nabo abafana phakathi kwabo kukhona uShaka. Bonke babengabebutho leNyakatho. Kwathi ukuba bangene wathi uDingiswayo.

“Ikhona lapha inyamazane yakho.”

Wabakhomba ngamunye bonke abafana bakhe ebasho ngamagama ebathopha ngezibongo zaBo waze wafika kuShaka wathi:

“Lonake uShaka kaSenzangakhona.”

“UNodum'ehlezi kaMenzi,  
Ilemb'eleq'amany'amalembengokukhalipha  
USishaka kasishayeki  
Uteku kwabafazi bakwaNomgabi  
Batekula behlez'emlovini  
Bethi kakubusa  
Kanti laph'ezakunethezeka.”

“Uyena lona-ke omfunayo, Mudli, omBiza ngokuthi inyamazane yakho.”

“Hhawu, ithin'inkosi?” kusho uMudli.

“Phela ngichaza inyamazane yakho. Nanso ithathe ugoduke nayo.”

“Ngingamthatha ngigoduke naye kanjani, wena ophezulu, lokhu ngabe ngiqhatha izwe?”

“Hhawu,” kusho uDingiswayo. “Ubanike osumbeki esihlalweni? Konje kuthiwa us'ubek'uSigujana na?” kuBuza uDingiswayo.

“ Akabekwanga yimina, futhi akakabekwa.”

“ Ehhe usho kahle ngoba wawumthuma lapha-nje lomfana ukuba ngimkhulise abange nalaba bami? ” Washo waqinisa amehlo, agcwala igazi, bambona oJevuza ukuthi usevukwa iqungo, bamthulisa bathi :

“ Awukahle Mthethwa, phoza Mdangabana.”

Nempela waphoza uDingiswayo. Wakhuluma eqhufela phambili wathi :

“ Ucabanga ukuthi wawumthuma lomfana ukuba azolungiselela umbuso wakwaMthethwa awulungisele uSigujana? Ngeke kwenzeke lokho nakanye, ngifung’uDingiwe, kuvuk’uJobe ahambe ngezinyawo.”

Washo maqede wavakasha way’enhla wayenzansi epethe iwisa lakhe, abuye alivivinye. Wagcina wathi :

“ Jevuza, iNyakatho iyogodukisa lomfana kaSenzangakhona ngokwethwasa kwenyanga. Makagoduke aye kufo ukhulile. Uyezwa Mudli? ”

“ Ngiyezwa baba.”

Wahamba uMudli nezinduna ezazimphelezela wayefika kuSenzangakhona, wamfika ehlezi wathi uSenzangakhona,

“ Mudli salusuphindela futhi enkosini uthi kuyona ukufa kuyangixinya. Kosa ngihambe.”

Wenza njalo uMudli. Kwasa inkosi yamaZulu ihamba. Yaphelzelwa yizichaka zakwaMthethwa zazayibeka ekhaya. Zafika seziyithwele ngoba ukufa kwadlanga kakhulu.

Yahlala izinsukwana, yafa. Yabulawa ishungu lelo elashiyela uShaka elinikwa nguBimbi, unina kaSigujana.

Kwabikwa kwaMthethwa ukufa kwenkosi. UDingiswayo wathi :

“ Sengizwile ”

UJevuza wathi :

“ UsekwaGoqanyawo.”

## ISAHLUKO X

NANGAPHAMBI kokufo kufe uSenzangakhona uDingiswayo wayeseliguqule lonke izwe lakwaMthethwa laba ngolunye uhlobo. Ngenkathi ehamba nenanabuke wazewayibulala wayephuca zonke izinto zayo, walinga ngawo onke amandla ukuba azi indawo lapho yayiya khona. Ngempela wakuthola konke ukuthi yayiya eDalagube, ezweni elikude eNyakatho lapho umuntu wayekwazi ukuthola ubuhlalu, nezingubo zokulala ezakhiwe ngendwangu; athole futhi izihlalo ezibaziweyo ngebumba noma ezingamagobongo. Kulelozwe laseDalagube wayethumela izinkomo eziningi, kwenye inkathi zibeyikhulu.

Njengoba izwe babengalazi abakwaMthethwa, babephelekezelwa yilaba bantu bakwaMahlase baseZifisini, okuyibona ababeyazi yonke indlela eya eDalagube. Kuyiqiniso ukuba babehamba beyizixuku ezinkulu, kodwa babuye sebeyidlanzana nje. Babeqedwa yimikhuhlane ebangwa ngomiyane; abanye babulawe yizilwane zasendle; abanye babulawe izizwe ababedlula kuzona zifuna ukubaphuca izinkomo lezi.

Ezimpahleni ababebuya nazo eDalagube ngelinye ilanga babuya nesihlalo esakhiwe ngezinti. Ukuba zisibone izingcweti zakwaMthethwa, zasithatha zisibuka, zasuka zagawula umuthi onesiqu esikhulu, zawudiya kahle, zawunquma, isihlalo leso nemilenze yaso, nomhlane waso, saphuma njengoba sinjalo.

Lesi-sihlalo yisona uDingiswayo ayethethela kuso amacala, kuthi noma ephaqulwa uJevuza, aqhiyame



kusona; lapho ethamele ilanga wayehlala kuso, nalapho mhla kufike uSenzangakhona wayehleli kuso, ebukela uShaka esina kanye nabanye owafo.

KwaMthethwa, ngenxa yalokhukuhlangana nabe-  
lungu baseDalagube, kwaveza ukuhlakanipha okukhulu  
ku bantu. UDingiswayo waduma ndawozonke, naye  
wangathanda ukuba kuzwakale ukuthi ikhona inkosi  
yesinye isizwe engase idume phezu kwakhe.

Amanye amakhosi ayeselokhu ethuma izinhlozi  
ukuba ziyonyokela okwenziwa kwaMthethwa nawo  
enze ngokunjalo. Uthe ethuka uDingiswayo kwaku-  
thiwa uThokozwayo kaMandayiya owayebusa isizwe  
sakwaButhelezi, kade eguba naye umkhosi wokwe-  
shwama ingani lomkhosi wenziwa kwaMthethwa ku-  
phela. Ngisho nabakwaZulu uqobo babefika babike  
kuyena uma bezoguba umkhosi wokweshwama.

Ngalesisenzo sakhe uThokozwayo wathunyelwa isi-  
gijimi kwathiwa kuye.

"Thokozwayo, okunike amandla okuguba umkhosi  
ngubani na?"

Waphendula uThokozwayo wathi:

"Ngiyinkosi-nje nami bengizocela kubani na?"

Ngalokho kuphendula-nje kwafo ukhe phansi uTho-  
kozwayo. Kukulempi lapho uShaka wathola khona  
izibongo zokuthi.

"Sigidi, Sigidi."

Ukuze uDingiswayo abone, akholwe ukuthi uThoko-  
zwayo ubulewe ngempela wayala amabutho ukuba  
amqume ikhanda abuye nalo. Amanye amakhosi  
uma ebona ukuthi ayajoqa esethi ayabusa, wayesuka  
athumele impi, iyafika ibutha sonke isifazane sesigodlo  
ibuye naso.

UPhakathwayo kwabanjalo. Njengoba uPhaka-  
thwayo wayemazela ukuthi uyinkosi yempela, wathuma

izinhlozi ukuba keziyofona ukuthi sewakhula wabanga-  
kanani umbuso wakwaQwabe ophethwe nguPhaka-  
thwayo. Zibuya izinhlozi zawubabaza kakhulu.

Usethi uDingiswayo kuNtonteyana benoVukani.

"Ngisafuna ukuvakashela kwaQwabe lapho ngashiya  
khona inanabuke."

"Uthini nkosi na?"

"Ehhe ngiyafisa kakhulu."

"Kawesabi yini ukuba isilwane lesa abasibulalayo  
bathola lukhulu phakathi kuso na?"

Wathi uDingiswayo:

"Yonke imphahla yaso ngayithatha, nansi kimina.  
Anifoni yini ukuthi amandla aso ayekuwo umbobo  
wezulu lona? Izinyawo zaso kwakuyiyo injomane  
lena. Manjena ngokuhlangana kwethu nezinye izi-  
lwane zakubo sesize sathola injomane ezinye."

"Yebo uqinisile lapho," kusho okaNtonteyana.

"Vukani!"

Wesabela uVukani.

"Phuma uhambe uyotshela ibutho leNyakatho li-  
hambe liyothatha sonke isigodlo sakwaPhakathwayo,  
sibulale onke amabutho uma elwa."

Wahamba uVukani wayokusho lokho, wabuya wa-  
hlala. Kanjalo zahamba izinsizwa zayohlasela kwa  
Qwabe. Zangena khona lapho kuthi nwi enzansi,  
ngenkathi kuphuma abafazi ekuseni bethi baya kolima.  
Wabona umuntu amahlanze emthika, emnyama enya-  
kaza, waze wathi.

"Wewu! Izinkomo kazibuyanga namuhla. Kazi  
ezakobani? Amasimu ethu aphelile yizona."

Zasondela izinsizwa, kwabekusa enzansi, kwezwakala  
izigi, ababengalele baqaphela bathi:

"Yini leyo."

Hhawu kwathi gumbeqe, kwahlwa emini, nginyani-

sile. Yayisihlangene. Kwathi klebu-klebu mbo kwaBa uBumayemaye, nongafa-mina. Yaqembuka eyakwaQwabe, yabaleka. Bathi bayayilandela bayayixosha, yamemeza induna yathi :

“Izimpondo neno! Khumu, zinsizwa ezinkulu.” Nempela babuya. Kuleyompi babuya nezinkomo eziningi bashiya uPhakathwayo engenankomo, lokho kwamBangela okokuBa abuye ahambe elandela impi yakwaMthethwa ayocela okungenani ezamasi abantabakhe.

uDingiswayo akabanga nalunya ngoBa wamnika ezinye ezinkomeni zakhe wabuyela nazo emuva. Umbuso wakwaQwabe waBa ngaphansi kukaDingiswayo njalo.

Wabuye wabeka futhi uDingiswayo wabona nanguya, uMatiwane ngaphansi kwezintaba zoKhahlamba. Wamsukela naye. Lempi yakwaMatiwane iyisikhumbuziso ngezinto ezimbili. Okokuqala induna yempi yakwaMthethwa kwakunguZiyongo wasemaHlaseni okanye nalaBa abafika belandela uDingiswayo. Kwathi lapho isiphathene impi abakwaMatiwane baphanga ingubo yakhe uZiyongo, kwathi noma ebuya kungaziwa owahluliwe ingubo leyo yasala khona lapho. Ngenxa yokwesaba ukuhlaselwa ngokwesifili uMatiwane wayiphindesela ingubo kaZiyongo wayiphelekezela ngezinkomo zafika izinceku zathi :

“O, wena kaXaba! Silapha nje sithunywa okaMasumpa ukuBa umthole.”

“Uniphathiseni eyisibonakaliso sokutholwa kwakhe.” Kuba uDingiswayo.

“Naz'izinkabi zekhethelo phandle esifika nazo.”

Wathula, wathula uDingiswayo wahleka, wathi :

“Uhlakaniphile okaMasumpa. Pho, iphi ingubo yenduna yami, uZiyongo.”

Bathi :

“Siyiphethe nayo, nkosi, nansi.”

Basho beyisombulula beyinika induna yenkosi uVukani, wayemukela. Kusukela lapha phakathi kwesizwe sakwaMthethwa kwabakhona isaga sokuthi

“Uyobuya wedwa okwengubo kaZiyongo.”

Okwesifili okwenzakalayo kulempi, kwathi lapho kudliwa ingubo kaZiyongo impi kaDingiswayo yona yadla sonke isifazane senkosi abuya naso yayeyasithi qithi phambi kwenkosi.

Ukufika kwaso isifazana sashaya ingungu sabekisa amakhanda phansi, senqaba ukudla, abanye kwathi noma bebafaka ezindlini balokhu behlabelela amagama akubo. Lokhu kwenza kwalesisifazane kwathinta uNobantwana, kwathi inkosi ihleli yodwa wathumela kuNtonteyana ukuBa ufuna ukukhuluma nenkosi. OkaNtonteyana wavuma wathi uzokumyisa enkosini.

Nempela wafika maqede wamngenisa uJevuza. Ngalelelanga uNobantwana waya enkosini efake isiphuku sakhe sesilo wafika wahlala phansi wathula.

Inkosi yethuka yathi :

“Yini Nobantwana?”

“Qhabo akulutho, baba. Ngikhuluma ngalaba bantu, baba. Umoya wami usuwaphukile, Nkosi.”

“Waphulwa yini?”

“Nkosi ngingunina wesizwe, nowezingane. Ukukhala komntwana kuyangihlupha kuvusa usizi enhliziyweni yami. Kodwa ukukhala kwabantu abadala bengezingane, ngizwa kuthi kangisuke ngihambe ngiyekude, noma ngife nokufa. Ngenxa yami nothando enginalo kuwe, baba, nabantu bakho nesizwe sawo babamkhulu, ngiyancenga khulula lesisifazane sigoduke.”

Esikhundleni sokuḅa amphendule wamemeza uJevuza. Kwabasengathi uJevuza ubazi, wasabela eduze, wangena, wathi,

“Sengikhona, Xaba.”

“Lalela kulokhu okushiwo indodakazi yakho. Phinda maNdwandwe.”

Nempela waphinda uNobantwana wathi:

“Wena kaNtonteyana ngize lapha enkosini, ngikhulumela lezizintandane zabantu ezilokhu zisililela, zinqaba ukudla, zikhalela amakhaya azo, nawawonina. Ningenze ngcono, bandla?”

Wema okaNtonteyana wabuka inkosi wabuka uNobantwana wathi:

“Nkosi, ngenxa yakhe yedwa lona ongumame wethu kulomuzi, noma engumntwana nje, ake sihloniphe kanye isikhundla sakhe simnike akucelayo.”

“KaNtonteyana, akuḅe njengoba usho.”

Wanele washo lokho, wasukuma uNobantwana wahamba wabashiya bebukana uJevuza noDingiswayo. Babona ngethunzi emnyango ukuḅa usehambile.

Bagoduswa abesifazane labo ngesicelo sikaNobantwana.

Izenzo zikaDingiswayo nodumo lwakhe lwaduma nxa-zonke, nesitha sakhe uZwide waluzwa loludumo, waqala ukuḅanga izinto eziningi.

Izwi likaDingiswayo lokuḅa athumele kuye ukuḅa akhiphe uMalusi, izithunywa zakhe zibuye naye ehamba ngazo zozimbili izinyawo zakhe, lamhlupha kakhulu uZwide. Wathi lapho ekhumbula ukuthi konje lapha ekhaya kwakhe kukhona umuntu kaDingiswayo waqala ukusola ukuthi mhlawumbe lomuntu uzomenza isilo sengwe, amguqukele kabi. Ngakhoke wabizwa uSiqongo phambi kwenkosi.

“Kusho ukuthini lokhukukhuluma kwenkosi

yakini ukuḅa kangilethe uMalusi ehamba ngezinyawo na?”

“Wena wenkosi, kangazi ukuthi kusho ntoni. Kodwa ngokwami ukwazi uDingiswayo, kusho ukuthi uma ngempela uMalusi wambulala uzokuhlasela alwe nawe.”

“Yisiluleko sini wena ongase usinike kule-ndaḅa?”

“Nkosi kangazi.”

“Kawazi kanjani lokhu nguwenamaziyo uDingiswayo?”

“Ngisho kahle nkosi ngoba mina ngazi luhlangothi lunye, olunye kangi lwazi. Engingalwaziyo yilolu lwakwa Ndwandwe. Lunezinduna zalo, neziphakanyiswa zalo, mina kanginakuluphendulela.”

“Khuluma wena ubuzwa yimina, ungesabani lokhu noma kunjani engikushoyo kuyama, nengikufisayo kuyenziwa?”

“Nkosi inye indlela yokwahlula uDingiswayo nabantu bakwaMthethwa. Ukuḅahlasela akunakusiza lutho ngoba banamandla, banamabutho aviviwe angaphenduki abek’emuva uma impi iphambi kwaḅo.

“Khona namhlanjena sebenamandla ngokunye ngoba baneghawe eleqa kwaZulu. Liyindodana yenkosi uSenzangakhona. Yilo elihola izimpi uma ziyohlasela izizwe.

“Leliqhawe linomoya engingazange ngiwubone wokuqung’isiḅindi emabuthweni. Lapho kuhola lona khona kuvuleka indlela.

“Ubani igama lalelo qhawe?” kufuza uZwide.

“NguShaka.”

“Pho?” kusho inkosi.

“Njengoba ngishilo Ndaḅezitha, inye indlela yokumahlula ukuḅa sithole yena inqu yakhe simluthe eze lapha ekhaya. Sesingenza into esiyithandayo ngaye.”

“ Angaluthwa kanjani lokhu kasinakumthola? ”

“ Kulula nkosi. Njengoba mina bengike nginyamalale ngiye kokumba imithi kude, bengihamba ngiyengifike nakhona eBalungwini. Ngelinye ilanga ngangilele ehlathini, kade ngihamba ifanga elikude ngifunana nemithi ngayengathi qatha ngaseduze komuzi wakwaMthethwa.”

“ Wawusuyakwenzani khona lokhu wawusewaba-leka na? kanti wena ubuy' uye khona na? ”

“ Qhabo nkosi, unginquma umlomo, Ndahezitha, ngidedele ngiqede.”

“ Qhubeka ngizwe ngoba kangiboni ukuba wawulandeni khona.”

“ Nkosi nginezihlobo zami khona, futhi ngangifuna ikhambi elithize elingenakutholwa lapha.

“ Uthe wawulele emmfuleni ngasehlathini, ngifuna ukuzwa khona lapho.”

“ Uqinisile nkosi, ngangilele ehlathini, ngezwa udadewenu uNobantwana ehilana noZenzile udadewabo kaMalusi. Bathethisana, bathethisana, bathi abaphathane ngezandla kodwa babuye badamba. Enkulumeni yabo ngabona ukuthi uZenzile intandokazi kaDingiswayo, noma uNobantwana kunguyena nkosikazi. Ngezwa kuthiwa kuzofika uSenzangakhona uyise walel'iqhawe lakwaZulu elikwaMthethwa. Ngezwa futhi kuthiwa kuzoba khona umgido omkhulu ongazange ubekhona.”

“ Ngalala phansi, nkosi, baze bahlukana odadewenu, uZenzile weza emmfuleni, kanti uzogeza nezinye izintombi ezazimphelezela. Kwathi sengibona ukuthi sebeqedile ukugeza ngasondela ngalokhu nginyakazisa isihlahla esimaqondana nendawo lapho kwakuhleli khona uZenzile. Njalo lapho ehleli ebeke ngakimi nginyakazise leso sihlahla wazewabona, waqaphelisa,

ngasukuma, ngabek'isandl'emlonyeni ngamqhweba uku-fa eze kimi.

“ Nempela weza kimi eshiya amanye amantombazana.”

“ Eze kanjani lokhu ungumuntu wesilisa, angakwesabi yini?

“ Qhabo Ndahezitha izintombi kazesabi uma ziqhwetshwa amakhehla asefangeni lawoyise ngoba zisuke zazi ukuthi aziqhwebela okukhulu.

“ Uku'afike kimina uZenzile sahlala phansi ngazibika ukuthi ngingubani, wamangala wathi ngibe-kwa yini lapha na? Ngathi mina ngibe-kwa unyawo mntanani. Wayesengitshela ukuthi sewake wezwa ngami nokuthi ngabaleka ngeza kuwe. Wabuzo indaba kaMalusi umfowabo ngamtshela njengoba ngiyazi ngashiya engingakwazi. Kanjalo-ke ngasengithi kuye angase anganzele nje into engingayicela na? Wabanamahloni ngoba wayengazi ukuthi ngiqondisephi. Ngashesha ngamchazela ukuthi, izindaba zimi kabi lapha. Kunganjani ukuba angebele noma yini yenkosi uDingiswayo khona isithunzi sakhe singenakungisinda ngihambe ngikhululekile nalapha kwaNdwandwe na?

“ Futhike lokho kwakuzosiza fona bakwaNdwandwe ngoba ngasengikhululiwe ngaba yinyanga. Ngamthem-bisa ukuthi uma ekwenza lokhu ngizomnika umuthi wentando angazange awubone. Ngenxa yokufuna ukuba angalahlekelwa isikhundla sakhe sofuntandokazi wavuma uZenzile wathi uzongifunela angase angitholele khona.

“ Pho mtanami singabonana phi? ”

Wathi yena,

“ Singabonana khona lapha kusasa.”

“ Kanjalo-ke Ndahezitha ngabuya ngangomuso kuyo leyo-ndawo kodwa waqhamuka yena engaphethe lutho

kuphela iqhabangana elalikade lisetshenziswa uDingiswayo angasalikhathalele. Lelo qhabanga ngalala ngathi kuhle angifunele into enjengeyokugqokwa, ethintene nomzimba wenkosi.

"Wayesethi qha uzongilungisela angilinde amalanga amabili ngelesi thathu uyohlangana nami khona emmfuleni endaweni efanayo. Izinto zazimbele kabi ngoba inkosi uSenzangakhona wayesefikile.

Kothi mhla esinelwayo bonke abantu besenkundleni abenamandla okungena endlini yenkosi athathe intwana engeke isheshe ibonakale.

"Namike nkosi ngathanda ukuyobukela umsino wezinsizwa kuze ngingezwa ngendaba. Ngagqoka ngafihla ubuso ngamashoba, ngagqiza yonke indawo ngayengema ngalapha kwakukhona khona abakwa-Zulu, ngema ngazi ukuthi abazukungibuzi, bazocabanga ukuthi ikhehla lizokweshela ezintombini. Nabo abakwaMthethwa bazocabanga ukuthi ngingowakwa-Zulu.

"Ngahloma amehlo yonke indawo ngangambona uZenzile lapho kwenziwa noma yintoni. Ngithe ngingazelele ngambona emi njengolahliweyo ezixukwini zamakhosikazi, amabibi enkosi, naye amehlo akhe ebeke ngakimina. Okokuqala ngocabanga ukuthi akangiboni kodwa ngabe ngisabeke ngambona engibukisa, naye wabeka umunwe emlonyeni wawususa, wahamba.

"Ngathi nami qha, manginyelele ngoba funa angishiye. Ngathi ngiphuma esangweni kwakuphuma omunye wakwaMthethwa indodana kaMalume wayo inkosi uDingiswayo igama layo uVukani, wangibiza wathi,

"Awungimele khona lapho mnumzane" ngala mina ngathi.

"Ngilinde khona lapho ngisaya laphaya ngizobuya." Esikhundleni sokuba angilinde wanyamalala ezixukwini, kangibuyanga ngimbone.

"Ngahamba-ke ngafika endaweni leyo ngahlala phansi ngalinda. Akubanga mzuzwana wangena naye uZenzile ehamba ekhefuzela, esandleni sakhe wayephethe isibeqe sobuhlalu sasentanyeni, sayo inkosi uqobo lwayo. Nami ngamthakela imithi ngamnika khona lapho ngoba ngangihamba ngiyifake ngaphansi kwezinyakayaka zami engangizifakile. Ngasuka lapho ngathath'izinyawo ngoba uVukani ngangimsola. Kwathi ngithi phasha obala ngaphumela phezu kwezinsizwa ezimbili zathi kimina, mangime ngingubani igama lami. Kangilindanga, ngasubatha ngangena futhi ehlathini, ngagqashula iziyayayaka ngoba zazingangithiya emahlozini. Ngabaleka, ngalala ngiwa ngivuka, nakhu ngilapha. NdaBezitha."

Washo lawamazwi okugcina wethula isikhwama sakhe emhlane, wathi ukuqqa uqhotho olwalusifophile, wasombulula amakhambi, nezimpondo, waze wafika emshuqulwaneni omncane osongwe ngokucophelela okukhulu. Wawuqqa umshuqulo lowo, kwaphuma phakathi isibeqe sobuhlalu obuhle obugqokwa kuphela ngamakhosi. Wawubuka uZwide wathi kuye:

"Akusho wena, uyazisho lomgexo."

Wawuthatha wawucubungula kodwa uSiqongo wathi,

"Musa ukuwucubungula ngoba ngiwufuna nazo zonke izinsila zawo."

"Uzozenzani Siqongo na?"

"Lomgexo sizowusebenza noMaguduza ziwubile siwuthake nayo yonke imithi yethu kuthi mhla ihlangabezanayo impi yakho nekaDingiswayo thina silwe nomgexo lo, ngawo siluthe uDingiswayo athuke eshiya

impi yakhe, angene lapha emzini wakho eDlovungu.”

“Ningakwenza lokho noMaguduza na?”

“Sihlangene sobabili, asinakwahlulwa lutho, wena wohlanga.”

Kanjalo uSiqongo wasinda ekufulaweni uZwide ngoba wakhombisa ukuthi akayena umngane kaDingiswayo, uyamzonda umfisa efile noma eyisigqili sikaZwide. NoZwide ngenxa yokwenza kukaDingiswayo waguquka wamzonda udadewabo kaDingiswayo uDingiwe ingani wayefuna ukumthatha amenze omunye wamakhosikazi akhe.

Wahamba uSiqongo wayewawunika uMaguduza umgexo lowo, baqalake ukuwubila.

Emuva le, kwaMthethwa kwasekulungiselwa ukuba ahlaselwe uZwide. Ezwa lokhu uNobantwana waya futhi enkosini wayoncenga ukukhuluma nayo kodwa kwamthatha isikhathi ngalelo-langa ukuba angene ayithole inkosi yodwana. Nokho emva kwezinsuku lafika izwi liza nenceku ukuba angeza uNobantwana ngoba izinduna kaziziningi. Nempela weza uNobantwana ehamba naye uJevuza owayelokhu emphelezela uma kuyiwa enkosini noma engazi ukuthi uNobantwana uya ngani.”

Wathi ukufika wathi uDingiswayo.

“Namhla kwenzenjani-ke MaNdwandwe lokhu phela sengibagodusile abasemaNgwaneni?”

Wahleka uDingiswayo noNobantwana wahleka olwabayeni.

“Qhabo, baba, ngizoxoxa nje nawe.”

“Hhawu ungikhumbule-nje kwenzenjani? Kade okaNtonteyana ekugcaba ngamuphi namhlanje? Ngiyesaba.”

Washo bahleka futhi bonke, wathi okaNtonteyana:

“Umuntu angathuka esegcaba nabangafanele kugcatshwa.”

“Qhabo, baba, ngizobuza ukuthi ngikulungiseleni ngoba nakhu uyaphuma uphuma nempi namhlanje?”

“Qha ngihamba ngomuso.”

“Pho ngingakulungiselani? Kukhona insangu enhle ekade yabekwa endlini yami, nesiphuku ekade ngaqala ukusithunga ngenzela ukukhokha lesiya owangipha sona, ngiseyintombi. Ngingathanda uma uhamba uhambe naso. Into engenza ukuba ngithande ukuba uhambe naso yile: ngiyesaba, angazi ukuthi yini. Kodwa ngiyesaba ngalokhu kuhamba kwakho nalemp'eyakohlasela kwaNdwandwe.”

“Wesaba ukuthi izoqeda abantu bakini? Uma kunjalo ngeke kufulawe namunye wendlu yakwenu, ngisho uZwide uqobo lwakhe, ngenxa yakho-nje kuphela.”

“Amanga Mthethwa! Kangesabeli namunye waki, ngesabela wena. Noma ungabaqothula bonke, kimina akuthi diki. Kuphela ngesabela siqu sakho.”

“Usho ukuthini uma usho njalo na?”

“Kwelakithi izwe imithi iyaphathwa. Uma kuqiniswa impi iyaqiniswa ngezintelezi zezinyanga, nezanzansi, ngisho nezamandiki. Lapha ekhaya kayikho intelezi eyenziwa ngamandiki. Amandiki lawa, mafi Mthethwa, akehlulwa lutho phansi kwelanga uma eyisophile. Ngiyesaba, ngiyesaba ngawe, Mthethwa, ngiyesaba ngawe wedwa. Kodwa ubungengisize usale ungamhambi nempi na?”

“Wena MaNdwandwe ufuna ngiphuphe ngibe umquba wasekhaya. Wawungasho ngani kuzo zonke lezizimpi ekade ngizilwa ukuba uyisaba na?”

“Yingoba ngangazi ukuthi uya kubantu abangesiyo intanga yakho, abangenamandla okukuvimbela. Kodwa namuhla awuyi empini yimikhonto kuphela, uya

ngisho kweyamandiki. Ungaka-nje wake walibona indiki, Mthethwa?"

"Khona izolo lokhu, Nobantwana, uthe mangigoduse abeseifazane nezingane zafo baphindele kwaMatiwane ngoba ukukhala kwafo kukulethela usizi nezinyembezi. Ngenxa yakho namhla-nje sebegodukile baphindela emakubo. Akuyinto enkulu lokho, Nobantwana?"

"Yebo, bafo, kuyinto enkulu kakhulu."

Sekuphendula uJevuza okade elalele sonke lesisikhathi engathandi ukuphazamisa.

"Yebo nkosi, kulula ukudela izwi lowesifazane ngoba kwesinye isikhathi izinto zehla phezu kwafo njengamafu zibacindezele phansi. Nakhu manje kwehlakala izinto ezimbili ngasikhathi sinye. Ubophekile ukufo azoncenga zozimbili kanye-kanye. Eyokuqala useyini kiwe yokufa encengele abantu bakwaMatiwane ukufo bagoduke. Lena yesibili immele kafo ngoba iphathelene nawe nabantu bakubo."

"Bengazi, wena Juveza ukuthi ungeke uyeke ukuvunana noNobantwana. Kayikho into ake ayikhulume uyiphikise." kusho inkosi.

"Kuhle, Mafavuke, ngimvune lomntwana, lo, ngoba phela lapha kulomuzi uyedwa. Izwe, ngisho nawe uqobo lwakho usezithendeni zikadadewabo uZenzile. Yena phela angaphumelela kanjani uma kuyojatshuliswa intandokazi?"

"Ukhuluma kanjani, Jevuza, kimina?"

Wathi ukuba asho kanjalo, uNobantwana wathuthumela, ecahanga ukuthi ozothatha umkonto amgwa-ze. Kodwa uJevuza wathatha ishungu lakhe walivula wabema, wabema. Yath'inkosi: "ududwa ukwesutha lapha eBalungwini. Yekanini, ngimfunge uDingiwe, ngikhumbule oYengweni, khona manje."

"Kahle, Mafavuke, mus'ukufutheka kanjalo. Mina nginguyihlo, lentombazana le, nguyena nyoko, akakh'omunye ngaphandle kwayo. Musa ukuthi ngidudwa umbuso, Mafavuke, kungekho mbuso engiwudlayo. Ngihamba-nje ikhanda lami lilengela eweni ngenxa yakho. Mina lo ngikusindise kokufo. Hhawu uthi Mafavuke, kungaba yimi lowo na? Phuma sihambe mntanawabantu, phuma sihambe."

Wathi lapho emdonsa ngengalo, uJevuza edonsa uNobantwana, wala uNobantwana. Waphuma uJevuza wafashiya bofabili.

Wathi uNobantwana:

"Kangifuni ukufo ngihambe sixabene noma wena uhambe nempi yakho unghukuthelele. Xhawula, Mthethwanas'isandlasami uze uhambe kahle, amathongo akithi akubeke."

Washo wasondela kuDingiswayo wakhothama, waziwisa phansi phambi kwakhe, wagaqa ngamadolo izandla zakhe esalokhu ezalulile njalo.

UDingiswayo wahlala phansi lapho emshiye khona uJevuza wambuka uNobantwana, inhliziyi yakhe ilwa esifubeni kuyena sengathi anganqamuka.

Amazwi kaJevuza abuya ezindlebeni zakhe ancence-  
tha, wakhohlwa ukuthi uNobantwana ukhona phambi kwakhe, wagqolozela phambili. Kwathula endlini kwathi nya. Wabuya futhi umqondo wakhe amehlo akhe abeka phansi wabona uNobantwana esalokhu ezalulile izandla zakhe amehlo egcwele izinyembezi zokwahlukana. Wasukuma emgqikini owayehlezi kuwo wazibamba izandla zikaNobantwana wathi kuye.

"Sala kahle."

Wasukuma uNobantwana wahamba wazimboza ngesiphuku sakhe wayewangena endlini yakhe.

Ngafo lofofbusuku kwakhala uphondo lwenduna

uVukani, lwakhala lwaBelushilo, zavuka izinsizwa zahaya ingoma yakwaMthethwa zithi :

*"Lezonkomo zimbala muni na?  
Zinomland'omkhulu lezonkomo."*

Zavuka, waluzwa uphondo lukhala lwaye lwasithela ngezintaba. NangakwaNdwandwe impi yayiphuma ibuthana nayo iyohlangabeza eyakwaMthethwa. Seyihambile ilanga lonke kwasa ngelesibili ilanga ekuseni ibonana kwaHlabisa.

Wena okubone izinkalo zakwaZulu nanamuhla, lapho uthi uqhamuka okhalweni ubone phansi laphaya kwendlalekile amahlathi ezihlahla zeminga neminqawe; kuthi laphaya nalaphaya kubekhona imivuthwamini nezihlahla zamasundu. Yahlangana phansi esigodini ngasemfulaneni wezwa okokuqala kuqubuka ingoma yakwaMthethwa yezinkomo ezonomlandu, wakhala uVukani wathi :

*"Nisababuka na bababa?"*

Yayisibuqene. Kwathi klebu, kwathi qhuqhuqhu, iwisa likhwela phezu kwenkumba, wezwa omunye ethi.

*"Washa kuthi, kuthi,"*

Omunye wathi :

*"Lala khona lapho, wawulandel'obani?"*

Omunye wathi :

*"Hlomu wethu."*

Phezulu entabeni yeHlabisa wayehlezi uDingiswayo nabanye oJevuza nezinduna ezithize ebukela kanye noMlangeni. Bayibona imikhonto ibenyezela phezulu, zidla izinsizwa, kodwa kwaba sengathi eyakwaMthethwa kayiphakwanga kahle. Yathatha ngamawala isijwayele ukuzithathela, kwamanye amakhosi.

*"INyakatho nayo yayingekho, yayihambise uShaka*

ngokufa kukayise uSenzangakhona. Wathembisa uShaka ukuthi uyohlangana nabakwaMthethwa eMfolozi emhlophe ngaphambi kokuba bahlangabezane ngoBa wayecabanga ukuthi bayobavimbezela khona eDlovunga, bangatholani endle.

Ukubona lokhu uDingiswayo wasangana ikhanda, wazula ethi uhlola impi yakhe, wazula wehla, wenyuka ummfula elandelwa uMlangeni, kwathi besazula bahlangana noVukani ekhefuzela wathi :

*"Nkosi, alikafiki yini ilemb'eleq'aman'amalembe na? Simi kabi, impi iningi ngokweqile."*

Waphendula uDingiswayo wathi :

*"Mus'ukusa'usahamba, hlala nami lapha, izinduna ozishiyile zizoyiphaka impi. Hlala nami, Vukani, ungabe usahamba ngifikelwa ukwesaba, sengathi ngibukwa isilwane sasendle sifuna ukungizuma. Wozani sihambe."*

Nempela behla bafika emmfuleni bawenyusa, bahamba belandela inkosi bengazi lapho kuyiwa khona, izihlangu behamba beziyekethisile njengamavaka.

Babeyizwa ngenzansi impi ibambene izinsizwa zeqana zisasho zithi :

*"Ngadla mina ngenkomo kababa."*

Kodwa kwezwakala njalo ukuvungama manje okuningoma yakwaMthethwa kwaya kwaya yacima ingoma kwakhula ukuvungama kwezinsizwa zifulalana, ngaphansi kwezihlahla zeminga neminqawe, lapho kukhula khona imisenge namaqabunga amakhulu. Phansi kwayo kwakulele izinsizwa zawobani nobani. Ezinye zikhubazekile, ezinye zilele unomphela, ezinye ziyalela zikhala ngonina noyise emakhaya zithi :

*"Bongitshelala ubaba nomame ukuthi ngafela lapha ngilwa, ngilwel'inkosi yami."*

Ezinye zisho okwazo zithi :



“Ngafa mina kaSifani bani, ngingenamuntu wokungival’amehlo.”

Ezinye zifa zingazange ziwuvule umlomo zikhulume. Imisindo enjengalena uDingiswayo akayizwanga, wathi ethuka kwakuvuka ezinyaweni zakhe intombazane ingathi iluhlanyana, kayithathi kahle yathi :

“Thela, sesikufumene.”

Wathi qalaqala wahleka uDingiswayo etheliswa umuntu wesifazane kodwa kwavuka idlanzi lezinsizwa zekhetho phakathi kwazo kwaqhamuka uZwide wathi :

“Wawazi Dingiswayo ukuthi uyozithela phezu kwami ngendlela enjena na? Thela!”

Waqalaza abalandeli bakhe wabafumanisa bebane kuphela, wathi kufo: “Masingalwi, masivume nje senze lokho abathi asikwenze.”

Balandela impi yakwaNdwandwe baye bafika eDlovunga eduze kweMfolozi emnyama, bafika bangeniswa bahlaliswa njengeziboshwa.

Emuva impi yakwaMthethwa yachithwa yahlakazeka nezintaba, nalapho sebeyibuza inkosi kwafumaniseka ukuthi kayaziwa muntu.

Lapha eDlovunga uDingiswayo wahlala njengenkosi izinsukwama kwasekukungena icala lakhe. Wabizwa ukuya esigcawini kodwa yena akayanga kwaya uVukani wayomphendulela ngendaba yokuthi yini athi kuZwide akakhiphe uMalusi.

Ukunqaba kwakhe kwathukuthelisa lonke ibandla lakhala lonke lathi :

“Makalethwe lapha simbone, aziphendulele yena luqobo.”

“Qhabo inkosi kayizange ithethiswe icala njengomuntukazana,” kusho uVukani noMlangeni.

“Hambani nina Siqongo nabanye nimlande. Uphi

uMaguduza? Yena akangahambi akasale lapha,” kusho uZwide.

Nempela bahamba bathi ukuqhamuka uVukani wambona uSiqongo waphuma wathi :

“Nangu lomthakashana, yifa nami ngife khona lapha kunokuba ungasondela enkosini.” Washo njalo esukwa iqungo wamsukela. Wathi ethi uyamthatha wavika uSiqongo, bathi damu, abanye ngofo basebefikile, oDingiswayo noMlangeni nenye induna. Wathi ethi uvikile uSiqongo evike uVukani, wamthatha uDingiswayo washo wathi :

“Mayifeinja. Lala khona lapho ulandele uMawewe.”

Akaliqedanga lelozwi, wahlala umkhonto esiphangeni wangena waphukela phakathi, wawa khona lapho uDingiswayo. Wathi ukufoona lokhu watshinga phansi izikhali uVukani wagijima wamfukula wathi :

“Musa mtanenkosi! Musa Mafavuke njengedwangufoane!”

Waphendula uDingiswayo umoya usuphela wathi.

“Uphi uJevuza?”

“UJevuza akakho Mthethwa.”

“Uphi, uphi,” lapha kwaphela umoya igazi laphuma ngamakhala nangomlomo, labuye lathi nqamu, walinga ukukhuluma kodwa ubuso bakhe sebuguqukile, baphaphatheka, nezinwele zabangwevu, walinga ukukhuluma wathi :

“Uphi, uphi, u-uNobant. . .” Wabuya wanqamuka umoya. Baphuthuma abanye bayobiza uZwide, wafika masinyane; kodwa uDingiswayo akabuyanga esakhuluma wambona kodwa walinga ukwalula isandla wasifamba uZwide waguqa naye wamsekela njengoVukani wathi kuye :

“Hhawu mkhwenyana, bengingakuqondile mina lokhu, yingozi Mthethwa, yingozi.”

Wabuya wavul'amehlo uDingiswayo wababuka ababemzungezile waphinda wathi :

“ Uphi, uphi, uNofa. . . .”

Waphela. . . .

Bambeka phansi uZwide uqobo lwakhe wamval'amehlo, wasukuma wahamba ikhanda libeke phansi.

Bamenzela konke okusemandleni obukhosi uDingiswayo, kodwa abamphindelisanga ekhaya kufo ngofo izizwe zazisaxabene.

UNobantwana noJevuza babakhona emngcwaßeni kaDingiswayo.

## ISAHLUKO XI

EMVENI komngcwafo uVukani waphuthuma ukuyobikela uShaka kwelakwa Zulu ngakho konke okuvelele izwe lakwaMthethwa. Wafika kwaZulu wafumanisa izinto eziyisimanga ngesikhathi esufushame-nje. Wezwa kuthiwa uShaka wafika wabajuqajuqa mgomkhonto uMudli nabanye bezinduna zikayise, wafulala noSigujana nonina uBimbi washiya abafowafo bezinye izindlu, oDingana, noMpande, nabanye. Wabona umuzi omkhulu owakhiwebusha.

Wanele wakuzwa lokhu uShaka wathumela ezizweni zonke ezasezahluliwe nguDingiswayo njengamaHlubi nafo abakwaMthethwa noZulu. UShaka wayazi ukuthi uZwide uphethe amaqhawe akanaku-nqoba kalula.

UZwide naye wezwa ngemimoya ukuthi uShaka uzokumhlasela ngenxa yesenzo sakhe sokufulala uDingiswayo. Ngakhoke wayiqoqa impi yakhe isuka kwaNongoma yaqonda eMagudu yehla yaya eMahlabathini lapho kwakwakhe khona uZulu. Ukufo afoone lokhu uShaka, waya ngokuhlehla njalo sengathi uyabaleka khona uNdwandwe ezozithela phakathi kwempi yakhe. Wayazi uShaka futhi ukuthi abakwaNdwandwe abaziqhubi izinkomo zokufulawa zidliwe impi, bathwala kuphela amafoele.

Kwathi impi yakwaNdandwe isingene phakathi eMahlabathini, wayiphendukela uZulu kanye noMthethwa, kwaba ububixibixi. UShaka wanela wayiqhatha maqede wakhwela phezu kwegquma, iKhomu,

wayibukela. Yadumelana lapho kwanqamuka izihlala, kwathi ingani indawo ib'igcwel'utshani, yabudleka yagcwala uthuli. Kasekho kwaBakwaZulu ophethe imikhonto ngamithathu khona ezocifa. Bonke baphethe izinqindi zokugwaz'amahlanze nomkhonto muncye wokuthukanje umuntw'ecifile. Yadumelana ibambene izinsuku ezimbili, kwavela ngalelolanga amaqhawe anjengoMvundlana, kaMenziwa wakwa-Biyela :

*" UNdonga zeLangwe,  
Ngibe ngisazibize, ziyesabela.  
Owancitshw'ishoba nguDlungwana woMbelebele,  
Waze waya waliphiwa nguMacingwana waseNgonyameni."*

Kwaba lukhuni. UShaka watshela elinye ibutho ukuBa liqond'eDlovunga kwaNdwandwe, kuze libambe uZwide. Ukuze lingaxwaywa, walitshela ibutho lelo elalihamba noSomveli indodana kaDingiswayo kuNobantwana, ukuthi kothi lapho selisondela eDlovunga lihayе ingoma yakwaNdwandwe yamaButho.

Nempela bathi bethi memfu ngaseDlovunga bayiqala ingoma. AmaNdwandwe abona ukuthi qha, uZulu uchithiwe, kwasekuBa ngukuphuma kwesifazane njalo, sesihlaba imikhosi yokuba uNdwandwe enqobile.

Ngalokho izithi zaze zasondela maduze. Kuthi sezinjeyaya—*yek'uZulu kaMdlamfe!!* Basebēbakhwelele. Bezwa sekush'omuncye nje ethi.

" Ngadla ! "

Bathi bethi qabu, ukukikiza kwaphenduka ubumayemaye. Zasho ezinye izinsizwa zathi :

" Maye ngenkomo kabaBo ! "

Wanela wakuzwa lokhu uZwide waphuma endlini

wathi qalaqala wafohla uthango wafaleka nabayingco-sanyana. UZulu wasa wacoboshisa lapha eDlovunga.

uSomveli ebona lokhu kuBulawa kwaBantu bakwaNdwandwe nguShaka; ebona futhi indlela ayiphethe ngayo impi nokuthi imlalela kanjani, wafaleka, wame-saba uShaka ngoba wabona ukuthi uma kuqhuba kanjena, yena akakho ndawo.

Kwamhlaba, uShaka ukuBaleka kukaSomveli, wayelokhu ekhala njalo ethi :

" Hhayi umfowethu, akasaBuyi ngani ? "

Lokhu kuBaleka kukaSomveli kwaveza ithuba elilula kuShaka ukuBa kuthi emva kwempi yakwaNdwandwe wahlanganisa isizwe sakwaMthethwa nesakwaZulu wazenza sibaya-sinye, waqala ukuBa ahlasele onke amakhosi anamandla waze wanikwa lezizibongo zokuthi :

*" Isidlukula-dlwedhwe, siyadla,  
Sibeke isihlangu emadolweni."*

Ukukhombisa ukuthi isizwe asibusayo sivala kwaMthethwa, kwaNdwandwe nakwaZulu, wabeka izinduna ezivela nxazonke.

Induna yakh'enkulu kwaba nguNgomane kaMqomboli wakwaMthethwa, wabeka phansi kukaMqomboli, uMdlaka kaNcidiozalwa nguLanga kwaNdwandwe. Insila yakhe kwaBanguMxhamama kaNtendeka waseZibisini kwaMahlase lowaya weNanaBuke. UNGqengelele wakwaButhelezi waba yisenaBelo sezinyawo zakhe.

USomveli kaDingiswayo njengoba wayemthanda uShaka njengomfowabo, wazula, wazula waze wabuya eza kwaZulu njengomfokazana ozokhonza, wafika wazibiza ngokuthi unguMbopha. Wahlala wezwa ihubo likayise uDingiswayo elithi :

*“ Lezonkomo zimbala muni na?  
Zinomland'omkhulu lezonkomo,”*

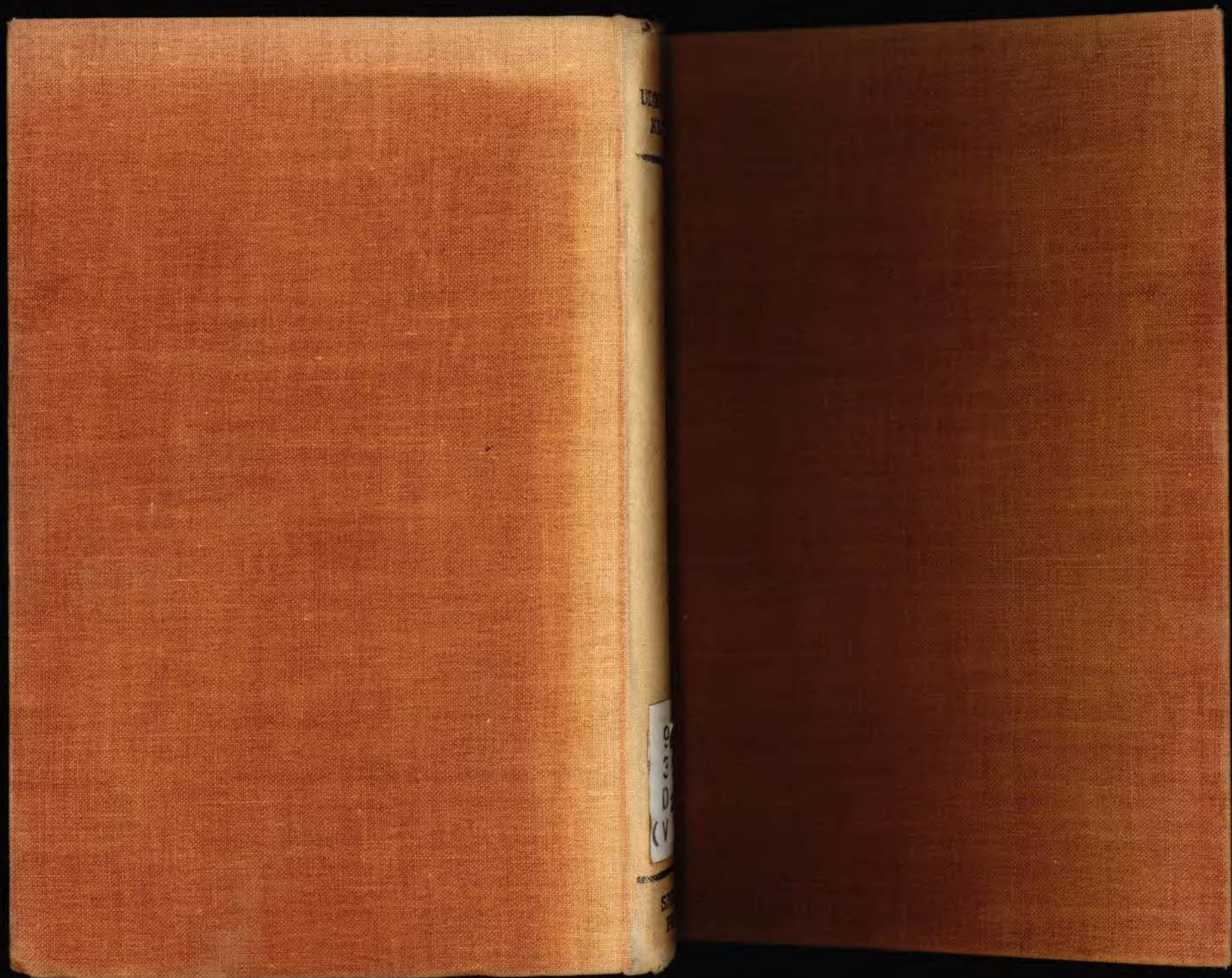
laya ngokuya laphela lakhohleka, kwavuka phezu  
kwalo leli likaShaka :

*“ Waqedaged'izizwe nje,  
Uyakuhlaselaphi na?  
Wahlul'abafo  
Wahlul'izizwe  
Uyakuhlaselaphi na?  
Hhe! hhe! Eya e—eh!”*

Walalela, wacabanga, wacabanga. Wacabanga uMbo-  
pha, akazange akhohlwe.

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