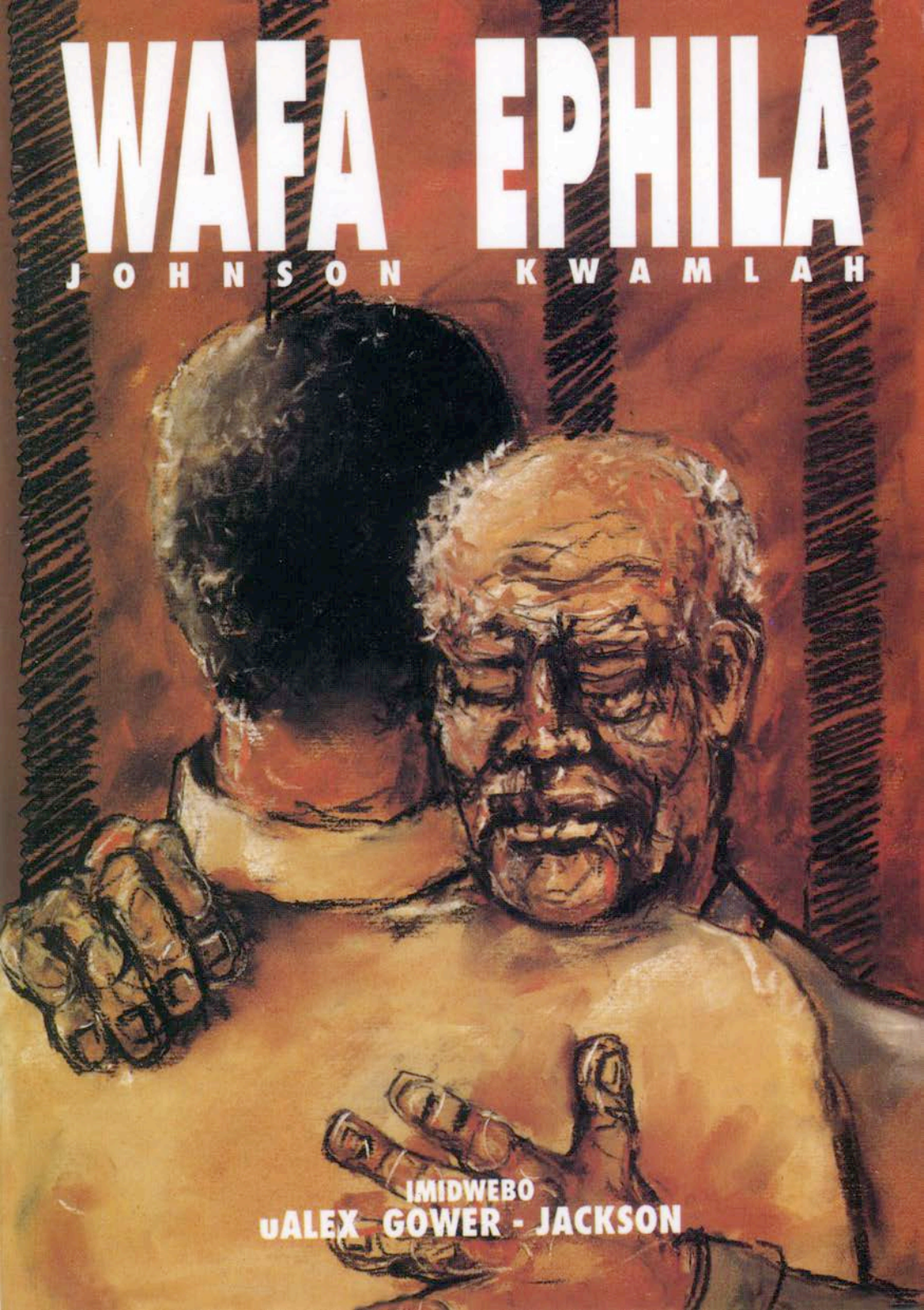
WAFA EPHILA

JOHNSON KWAMLAH



IMIDWEBO

uALEX GOWER - JACKSON

ISIZULU

WAFA EPHILA

ngu

Johnson Kwamlah

yahunyushwa yahlelwa ngu

Nozizwe Madlala

yahluzwa ngu

Sizakele Mkhize

imidwebo ngu

Alex Gower-Jackson

NEW READERS PUBLISHERS

Ngalencwadi

UJohnson Kwamlah ungowase-Ghana ngokuzalwa. Manje uhlala eKwaluseni, eSwazini, lapho efundisa khona. Lendaba wayibhala ngesiNgisi, wayibiza ngokuthi, "Alive and Dead". Wabe eyibhalela umncintiswano wendaba emfushane owawenziwe abe-Easy Reading for Adults (ERA), eNyuvesi yase-Wits eGoli, ngo 1991.

Saxhumana nabe-ERA sabacela ukuthi basivumele siyihumushe, siyikhiphe ngolimi lwesiZulu. Nempela sabe sesithintana naye u-Johnson owakuthakasela ukuthi lendaba siyihumushele esiZulwini.

Lase liyoshona lapho kufika isalukazi esifushane esasigqoke izingubo ezimnyama. Safika emnyango sangqongqoza kepha asifunanga ukungena. Sangigqolozela imizuzwana, amehlo aso ephuphuma impilo sengathi ukungibona kokhela amalangabi omlilo emehlweni aso.

“Sawubona. Ngingakusiza?” Ngibuza ngididekile ukuthi ngiqale ngithini.

“Ngifuna ukubona umama wakho,” esholo phansi.

“Akekho, uye emsebenzini.”

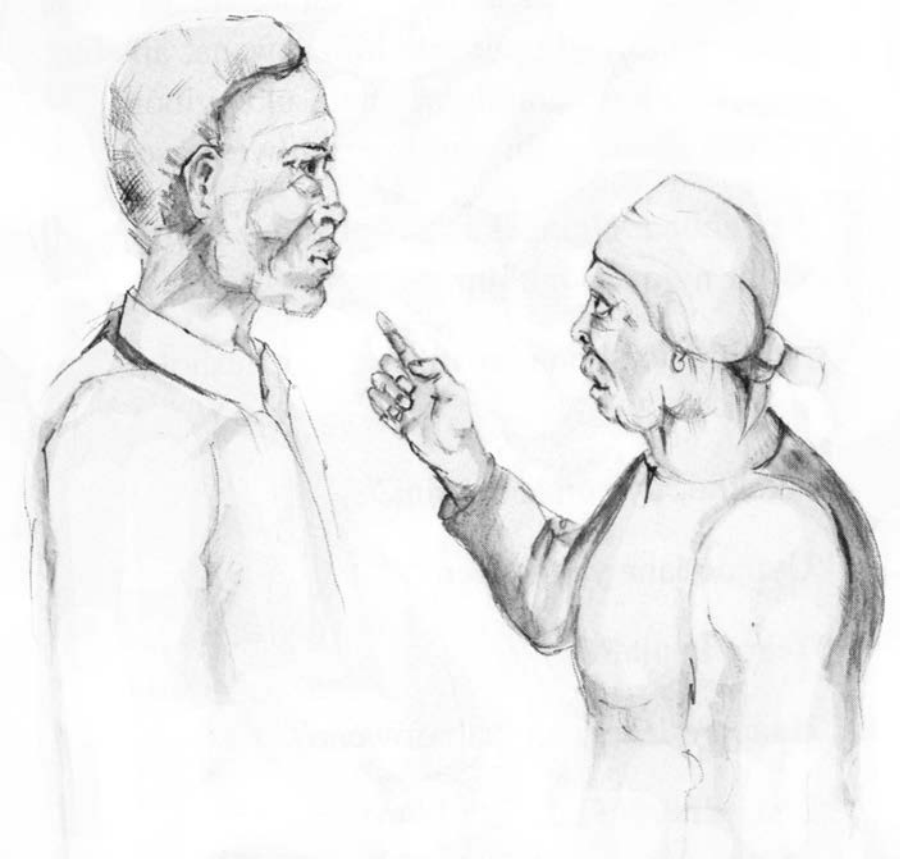
“Uyindodana yakhe wena?”

“Yebo, kunjalo.”

“Unabo odadewenu nabafowenu?”

“Cha, yimi nj a kuphela kumama.”

Sathatha amanyathelo ambalwa isalukazi sisondela. Sangibuka, sanikina ikhanda sengathi amehlo aso ayasikhohlisa. Ngamane ngadideka ngokwedlulela-ke manje. Ngasibuka emehlweni.



“Uhm! Impela kunjengoba bengicabanga. Ungubaba wakho nje ezihlalele,” sisho sihleka kancane.

“Angimazi ubaba. Akasekho emhlabeni.”

Sanikina ikhanda isalukazi, simangele. “Wafa? Wafa nini?”

“Wafa ngingakazalwa.”

Baguquka ubuso besalukazi, kwangathi imibimbi esebusweni baso obubanzi iyanezeleka. “Usho ukuthi awukaze umbone uyihlo?”

“Phinde, selokhu ngazalwa.”

Wathi ukuhleka kancane. “Usaphila uyihlo,” esho ngokugcizelela. “Uze ubuze umama wakho. Uzokutshela okuningi ngaye.”

“Yini ungangitsheli na?”

Sahleka futhi isalukazi sathi, “Uyihlo uphila saka. Buza kumama wakho.”

“Ubaba sewafa. Umama sewangitshela.”

“Musa ukulokhu ungiphikisa. Ibalulekile lento engikutshele yona. Uma uthanda ungalithola ngokwakho iqiniso. Sala kahle.”

Sasuka njalo sahamba isalukazi. Sangishiya ngididekile. Kwaba sengathi izinyawo zinamathele phansi. Ngehluleka ngisho ukuwuvula umlomo ngisiphendule. Sabe sesihamba njalo sayosithela ngale kwesiduli.

Ngasala umcabango wami ugcwele isalukazi esigqoke ezimnyama laze layoshona ilanga. Akuzange kuvume nokuthi ngiphumele phandle, ngilangazelele ukuthi umama asheshe abuye.

Laze layoshona ilanga, phandle kwahwalala umama engabuyile. Ngakhanyisa isibani ngalinda, kungavumi. Ngemuva kwesikhashana ngalizwa isango. Wangena umama ebukeka ekhathele. Ukukhathala kwakhe akungethusanga nokho ngoba kwakuyimpelasonto. Umsebenzi wakhe wawumvusa ekuseni nsukuzonke eyowasha izingubo ebucwazicwazini base-Fairview yena esuka la emijondolo.

Ngahlala ngathula, ngazibamba ngifuna umama athi ukuhlala phansi abuyise umoya.

“Yini ungakakudli ukudla kwakho?” engibuza emva kwemizuzwana.

“Hayi, angikadli mama.”

“Awulambile yini?”

“Ngilambile, kodwa futhi ngikhathazekile.”

“Ukhathazwa yini?”

Ngadonsa umoya ngizama ukumphendula. Yena ngalesosikhathi uyangibuka, elindile. Amalangabi esibani akhanyise ubuso bakhe obuyindilinga. Amehlo kube sengathi yizinkanyezi.

“Mama, yilena inkinga. Kunenkosikazi engitshele okuthize ngobaba ongasekho.” Wethuka kwasengathi ushaywa yinhlamvu yesibhamu. Wangibuka, edidekile wathi, “Ubani lenkosikazi evusa okudala ngoyihlo, ekade azifela?”

“Angiyazi nami. Ifike yafuna wena.”

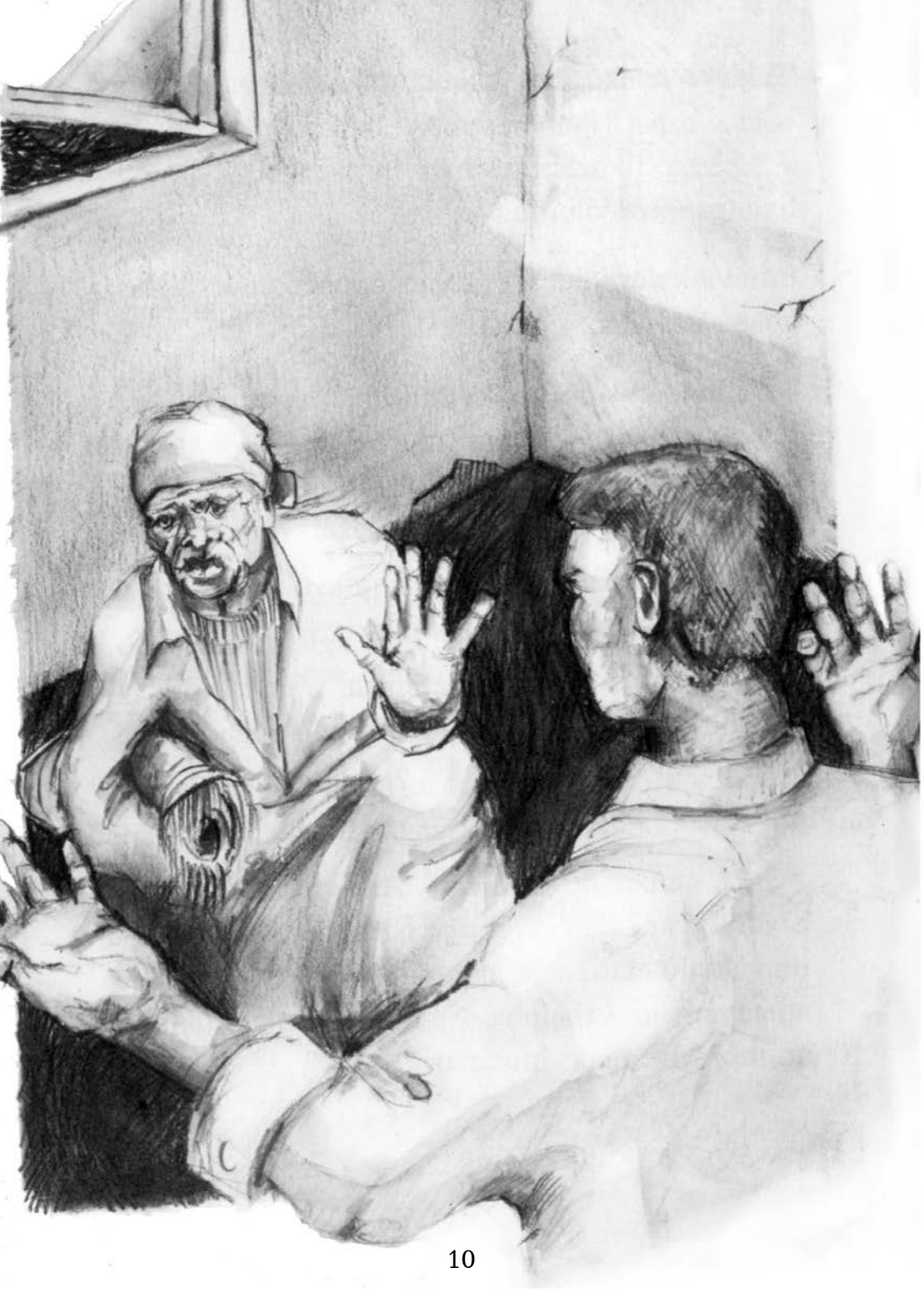
“Yini enye ekutshele yona?” Ngathula isikhashana. Ngabona ubuso bukamama bufiphala. Ilangabi lesibani kwasengathi liyenganywa yilelifu.

Emuva kwesikhathi eside ngamphendula, “Uthe ubaba usaphila.”

Kwathula kwathi cwaka endlini, sengathi kufiwe. Izindebe zomlomo kamama zavevezela. Wanikina ikhanda, ekhuluma yedwa. Ngawathi njo amehlo kuye. Wabuza ngezwi eliqhaqhazelayo ethi, “Uye wathi ukuphi uyihlo na?”

“Akazange achaze. Ngithe uma ngiqhubeka nokumphenya wamane wadinwa, wangishiya kanjalo.” Umama wangijamela njalo engakholwa akuzwayo, elokhu elinikine njalo ikhanda. Wasukuma wagoqa ucansi ayekade ehlezi kulo.

“Saki, mntanami, kuhlwile. Asiluyeke loludaba. Siyolubona kusile. Nginike isikhathi sokucabanga impendulo ekufanele ngikunike yona.” Wathatha amanyathelo wahamba. Ngamlandela, ngilokhu ngimphonse njalo imibuzo.



“Saki, musa ukungilandela. Musa ukube usangibuza imibuzo.”

“Mama, ulula kabi lombuzo engikubuza wona. Wena ungitshele ukuthi ubaba wafa. Inkosikazi ithi ubaba uyaphila. Yikuphi okuyikho? Uyaphila noma sewafa?”

“Uzwile engikutshele khona? Nginike isikhathi.”

“Ngifuna impendulo manje. Ubani okhuluma iqiniso? Uwe noma isalukazi esigqoke ezimnyama na?”

“Akukho engingakutshela khona manje ngiyeke,” esho ngokufutheka. Uthe esuka wayema ethi khimilili. Ubuso bakhe bugcwele intukuthelo. Ngesikhashana futhi ngabona igudluka intukuthelo idedela usizi, kwagcina ngezinyembezi.

“Hawu, yini ngempela eyenza ukhale ngibuza umbuzo olula kangaka?”

“Awulula neze umbuzo wakho.”

“Ulula lombuzo. Uyaphila ubaba noma sewafa na? Angiseyiyo ingane. Ngiyihlanganisile iminyaka engamashumi amabili nambili. Kufanele ngazi. Ngitshele manje mama.”

Lamhlaba lelizwi lami umama. Ngambona ephuma ngokushesha endlini, eyokuma eduzane kothango. Ngamlandela, ngema eceleni kwakhe. Isibhakabhaka sasicwebile. Inyanga egcwele yayilenga sengathi isigaxa sikapopo ovuthiwe. Sama sobabili sayigqolozela inyanga sengathi silindele ukuthi iwe phansi ixazulule lenkinga esibhekene nayo.

Kusenjalo kwadlula ifu elimnyama layemboza inyanga. Ebumnyameni wathi umama, “Sengikhulile. Ngineminyaka engamashumi ayisithupha. Kufanele ungibekezelele.”

Ledlula ifu yasikhanyisa futhi inyanga ukukhanya kwayo kwabonakalisa intukuthelo eyayigcwele ebusweni bami nobakhe. Ngasondela kumama ngathi, “Awuzimisele ukuwuphendula umbuzo olula engikubuze wona. Usangithatha njengengane ekhasayo. Sengisola nokuthi hleze awusiye umama

wami. Kusasa lokhu okusayo ngiyahamba la ekhaya."

Lamethusa lelo umama wacishe washayeka phansi. Ngaphuthuma, ngambamba. Wayeqhaqhazela umzimba wonke. Izinyembezi zizehlela nje ebusweni bakhe.

"Saki, uyazizwa ukuthi uthini? Uyangiphika? Uthi angizange ngikuzale? Kungiphathe kabi okwenze kimi namhlanje. Ubaba wakho wafa ephila. Ungahambi kusasa. Ngizokuthatha ngikuse kuye. Ngiqinisile uma ngithi sizohamba umbone ubaba wakho. Uzilungiselele kusasa. Emuva kweminyaka engamashumi amabili nambili uzombona naye akubone."

Wakhala isililo umama eyongena endlini, ezivalela. Ngema emnyango ngizisola ngamazwi engiwashilo. Ngalobobusuku ngalala ngiphenduka ngenxa yamaphupho amabi. Kwathi entathakusa ngavuswa umama engqongqoza emnyango.

"Lungisa sihambe siyobona ubaba wakho. Lude uhambo."

“Ngabe ukhuluma iqiniso uma uthi siyobona ubaba?”

“Musa ukube usachitha isikhathi. Uthe ufuna ukubona ubaba wakho, sheshisa ulungise.”

Ngafikelwa uvalo nokujabula. Kwagcina ukujabula sekulwehlulile uvalo. Emuva kwemizuzu engemingaki ngaqeda ukuzilungisa sabe sesisebhasini.

“Uhlalaphi ubaba?” ngikhulumela phansi.

“Angifuni ube usangihlupha ngemibuzo. Wena landela mina nje kuphela.” Saze sayofika esiteshini sesitimela eMpaka kungekho okhulumisa omunye. Umama wathenga amathikithi amabili esitimela sagibela imbombayi. Kwakuwuhambo olubuhlungu nolude ngenxa yokuthi sihamba nje umama uthule nami ngithule. Kwakukhuluma kuphela ubuhle bemvelo. Izihlahla nezintaba notshani yikho okwangilethela ukuthula. Ngabuka ngadela.

Kwathi ngingazelele ngezwa umama ethi, “Nizohlazeka nobabili maduzane nje.”

Ngethuka ngagxuma esihlalweni engangihlezi kuso ngifuna ukuzwisisa ukuthi ngabe uthini umama kodwa akaphindanga athi vu. Ngabona kuphela eqinisa imihlathi kwasengathi ingase ingihlabe uma eke waphenduka ngokushesha wabheka ngakimi. Akekho owakhulumisa omunye. Kwayilowo wazibhekela ngaphandle izihlahla zidlula ngesivinini esikhulu. Safika kwaManzini ebusuku. Sagibela ithekisi elasibeka emzini okwanombolo 24. Sangqongqoza emnyango kwaphuma inkosikazi ezosamukela. Kwacaca ukuthi bayazana nomama futhi bangabantu abajwayelene. Wase engitshela ukuthi lona nguSarah ongumngane wakhe kusukela ebunganeni. Emuva kokudla kwakusihlwa sabe sesiyolala.

Phakathi kwamabili ngezwa umama noSarah behlebeza endlini yokuphumula. Yayingezwakali kahle yonke inkulumo yabo. Engangikuzwa kahlehle kwakuyizwi elithi, ‘‘Ungalinge uyenze lento.’’ Nelinye elaliphendula ngokuzimisela lithi, ‘‘Ngizoyenza.’’ Emuva kwesikhathi ngezwa ukuthi abavumelani kepha uSarah usekhethe ukuzithulela, usephindela kwelakhe ikamelo.

Ngavuka ekuseni umama engekho endlini. Uma ngibuza ukuthi uyephi, uSarah waphendula ngokudangala wathi kukhona asayokwenza.

‘‘Uyokwenzani?’’ ngibuza uSarah ngenhlonipho.

‘‘Akuwona umsebenzi wami ukuthi ngikutshele. Uyena ozokukhombisa. Luzothi luphela lolusuku uzobe usubonile ukuthi ngiqonde ukuthini.’’

Engakaligwinyi lelo uSarah wangena umama. Ubuso bakhe babubukeka bukhululekile. Ngafisa kabusha ukuqonda ngokwenzekayo.

‘‘Sarah, sengiwenzile onke amalungiselelo. Sizohamba ngensimbi yeshumi. Saki, lungisa sihambe.’’

Sathi sesihamba langethusa ihlo lokudabuka uSarah asibuka ngalo.

Nasebhasini umama wayethule. Lathi uma ibhasi selifika enhlukanweni yezindlela wangithinta ngendololwane ukuthi sesiyehla. Sahamba buthule saze sayofika ebhilidini elalinombhoshongo. Uma sisondela kulo laya ngokubalikhulu lelibhilidi futhi nokwesabeka kwalo kwakhula. Ngazibuza ukuthi ngabe yini

esizoyenza kulendawo enje. Safika esangweni ngethuka uma ngibona kubhalwe amagama athi: IJELE LAKWAMANZINI ayebhalwe odongeni.

Ijele? Ngabe sizokwenzani ejele? Umqondo wami wazulazula ngifuna impendulo. Angiyitholanga. Kuphela nje kwaba yiso leso sokulandela umama. Sangena ngaphakathi. Sathi sesiqede imicikilisho yakhona basithatha sehla ngomhubhe omnyama, saze sayongena kwelinye igumbi elincane. Kwedlula imizuzu silapho sekuthi angiqhume ukufuna ukuqonda ukuthi kwenzakalani.

Ngisalindele ngezwa umsindo wezinyawo kukhona abeza ngakithi. Kwaqhamuka ojele ababili behamba nekhehla elaliqhaqhazela. Bahlala phansi buqamamana nathi.

‘‘Ngikulethele indodana yakho, Mike,’’ kusho umama.

Labheka ngakimi ikhehla kwasengathi yikhona liqala ukungibona kahle. Langibukisisa, lingisusa phansi lingiyisa phezulu. Amehlo alo lawavula kwasengathi azophumela ngaphandle. Lasukuma kancane ikhehla langigona.

“Hawu! Ufana nse nami,” esho engidedela.

Umama wayehlezi ebhentshini ngokukhulu ukuzethemba. Indaba yayikulo nje ikhehla elalikhombisa ukudideka kwenjabulo. Ngabona izinyembezi zehla ngemisele esebusweni balo. “Emuva kweminyaka engamashumi amabili nambili, Mike, usuyakholwa na?”

“Umfana uyimi nezinqotho, yimi nezinqotho,” lisho ngezinyembezi ikhehla.

“Saki, uye-ke to ubaba wakho. Ngiyethemba usuwanelisiwe manje. Ngikutshelile ukuthi ubaba wakho wafa ephila.”

Zehla zaphophoma futhi izinyembezi ekhehleni. Kwathi nakumama ngabona sezehla. Kwakungasekho okuningi esasingakusho. Savumelana ukuthi ubaba sesiyombona futhi ngokuzayo.

Bathi bemthatha bebuyela naye emuva nathi sasiphuma ejele nobumnyama balo. Saphumela phandle lapho ilanga elalibalele lithe bha.

“Asikaqedi,” kusho umama emuva kokuba sesihambe ibangana. “Kufanele ngikukhombise okunye okubalulekile. Asihambe.”

Sagibela ibhasi lasehlisa ngaphandle kwedolobha. Umama wayehamba sengathi kukhona okumqhubayo ngaleyontambama. Wayehamba ngokushesha okukhulu. Sadlula umgwaqo owubhuqu. Ngethuka sesingena emathuneni amadala. Sangena esangweni sadlula amangcwaba amaningi saze sama phambi kwelinye elaseligugile. Lalimi ngaphansi kwesihlahla sikamango owawunezithelo.

Wema wathula umama ngamuzwa esethandaza. Kwashaya umoya obandayo owanyakazisa amahlamvu esihlahla sikamango.

“Kufanele ngikukhiphele onke amaqiniso namhlanje. Uhambo esiluqalile kufanele luzophela lapha,” esho ngezwi elivevezelayo umama.

“Ufuna ukwenzenjani? Ufuna ukuzibulala?” kubuza mina ngisondela.

“Cha, ngeke ngizibulale. Ngifuna ukukuchazela kahle konke ukuze upheze ukungibuza imibuzo.”

“Kulungile yenza kanjalo mama.”

“Angithi manje sivela ejele?”

“Yebo kunjalo mama.”

“lndoda oyibone khona ubaba wakho. Wagwetshwa ukudilikelwa yijele.”

“Waboshelwani?”

“Yikho lokhu ngikulethe lapha.”

Wathula umama imizuzu embalwa wayesethi, “Lendoda elele la kulelithuna yabulawa ubaba wakho. Uyazi nawe ukuthi ngisebenza ukuwasha izingubo. Ngangiwasha izingubo zayo lendoda. Ubaba wakho wathi siyathandana nayo. Wagcina esekholelwa kuyo lenkulumo-ze. Ngelanga wena owazalwa ngalo wakubheka qede waphimisa wathi awuzalwa uye. Wahamba ethi uyoziphindiselela kulendoda. Wafika wamgenca umuntu wabantu engenacala.

Wambulala kanjalo. Lathethwa icala lamlahla, wayesegwetshwa.

Ngesikhathi agwetshwa ngaso ngabe sengiphuma edolobheni ngayofuna indawo esemaphandleni ukuze ngiphumuze umoya wami. Ngathatha isifungo sokuthi noma sekuthiwani ngeke ngikuthathe ngikuse kuye ukuze akubone. Sengize ngaphoqwa imibuzo yakho. Ubonile ukuthi uye wenzenjani ngenkathi ekubona?"

Ngafikelwa izinyembezi ngathi, "Yebo, uthe ngifana naye nse. Uye wangigona. Ngiyabona ukuthi uyazisola."

"Uyazisola manje. Akwenza, wakwenza engacabanganga, eqhutshwa imizwa. Ngangiyinkosikazi ethembekile kodwa yena wangithela ngehlazo ekugcineni."

Wathi angaqeda ukusho lokho umama wephula ihlamvu emthini kamango walibeka ngokucophelela phezu kwethuna. Wathandaza izinyembezi zizehlela.

“Lomuthi kamango ngawutshala ngelanga angcwatshwa ngalo usunezithelo. Side lesosikhathi.”

Sesihamba laqala ukukhemezela izulu. Singakafiki esangweni sabona kukhona ohamba ngokushesha eza ngakithi. Ngethuka uma ngibona ukuthi ngubani. Kwakuyisalukazi sezingubo ezimnyama. Wathi angafika qede wema, wasusa ibhayi ayemboze ngalo ubuso. Umama wasibona qede isalukazi wakhumbula ukuthi singubani. Waya kuso wasigona. Bobabili bakhala. Ngabuka ngididekile yilokhu osekwenzeka futhi manje.

“Lona yinkosikazi yalendoda eyabulawa ubaba wakho,” kuchaza umama. Ngafikelwa usizi. Samphelezela umama wezingubo ezimnyama eseyobeka izimbali ayeziphethe, ethuneni lomyeni wakhe. Amathonsi emvula ashaya ngokushesha ewela phezu kwezimbali. Saphuma sesinethwe yimvula sesiphindela khona ejele.

IYAPHELA

Ukubonga

Sibonga ku-Johnson Kwamlah, umbhali wayo lendaba, owasivumela ukuthi siyikhiphe ngolimi lwesiZulu. Futhi sibonga laba abalandelayo abasisiza ukuyihlola:

Funaziphi Hlambisa, Bazonzani Hlambisa, Thandekile Hlambisa, noNtombifuthi Molefe beZulu Literacy Class eValley Trust kanye nothisha wabo uNtombi Ngcobo;

M.M. Manqele, B. Mbutho, S. Shezi, N.E. Xulu, N. Mbambo, B. Ngcobo, J. Nkabini, F. Mkhize, K.M. Ngcobo no Z.B. Hlongwane beSpoornet Advanced Mother Tongue Class kanye noThulani Mnomiya, uthisha wabo;

kanye noBheki Ndlovu.

Wafa Ephila

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