

umuntu omkhulu, noma akhulume noyise womkhwenyana uma emkhulu, izinto zonke zimlungile.

Lezi-ke ezendile zonke zazithathwe ngabantu abakhulu, futhi bazilobola kahle bonke. Wayejabule wafa uManamuza mhla ebekwa eba yinduna yokuthetha amacala kaChief Dumdumu ngoba lokho phela kwamnika ilungelo lokuba abize ishumi nesihlanu lezinkomo ngentombi yakhe. Ezintathu zazende eseyinduna. Ngakho inhliziyi yakhe ihlala njalo ibuhlungu ngalomntanakhe oyedwa owenda esengumuntu nje, walotsholwa ngeshumi nenkomo eyodwa. Nasenhliziyweni yakhe, lona owayengalethanga izinkomo eziningi engathandwa kahle likhehla elinguManamuza.

Useba novalo kodwa uManamuza inxa ecabanga ngokubaleka kukaBajwayele. Usebona ukuthi lokho hleze kuhambe kuhambe kuzikhiphe izinkomo zikaZulumacansi esibayeni sakhe, ngalokho abe ngumuntu ompofu ngezinkomo ezilishumi nesihlanu uma sezibuyile athi mazisale. Futhi-ke kubuye kufike kuyena ukuthi uZulumacansi ngumuntu onolaka; futhi ongesabi icala ukuba alise emaJajini. Nasebandla futhi uyahlonishwa. Konke lokhu kumnike imicabango eminingi uManamuza ekhathazayo.

Sekuthi noma kulelwe ebusuku, yena ebhekile, inhliziyi ifuna amasu okuthi konje uBajwayele angambuyisa ngani. Ihambe ihambe ingqondo yakhe ize ikhathale ngoba phela nalapho igijima khona kakundlela ende efika kuphi ngoba usheshe acabangele emakhambini nasekuncindeni, abese esheshe ekhathala. Lokhu ukuba indlela angasheshi ukuyithola bese kumngenisela itwetwe; abese esaba nokuba kelithintwe njena igama likaZulumacansi. Uma kuke kwethukeka lithintwa bambone esenyakaza esihlalweni akuso. Uma kuthiwa nangu uZulumacansi eza, afinyelele engakangeni nakungena. Uyothi engena uZulumacansi

abese ethule ethe cwaka uManamuza, esebheke phansi. NoZulumacansi athi uma efica uManamuza ake eme athi ukuqalaza. Anele ambone abuyise uhlonzi lube lunye. Uyonele enze njena abese ezwakele uManamuza athi: “Woza ngalapha mkhwenyana; nansi indawo” esho esudukisa abantu abaseduze kwakhe.

Ngalelilanga-ke uZulumacansi uqhamuka egqumeni esekhaya uManamuza, engakayi ebandla. Uhleli esithangamini, ubukela abafana besenga: amankonyane ayatshakadula, kukhala ubisi emathungeni, abafana bashaya amakhwelo izisu zigcwele. Laphaya ngasenhla komuzi kukhala imbokodwe ithi “ziki! ziki!” izintombi zakhe zigaya. Ezinye zenza eminye imisebenzi. Uhleli esigqikini laphaya uManamuza inhliziyi imnandi, igazi ligijima kahle. Ulokhu edane ethi ukuphulula amadevu, abuye avungule, abuye abheke ngaphesheya ethafeni ebuka amasimu akwakhe. Ikhamba lapho lihle limnyama lithe bhuqe. Abuke amagquma ezintaba zakubo awabone eluhlaza onke kuthi cosololo enhliziyweni, ezwe ngempela ukuthi ungumnumzane ezweni laseButhunqe.

Lapha la ehleli ngakhona kubheke endleleni eza kwakhe. Uthi lapho eqeda ukugojela umancishana wotshwala obabusale ngayisolo ubona isithunzi sisekudana. Akaze adinga ukuba aze asibheke kabili. Wasithi nhla nje uvalo lwamshaya lwameqa ikhanda.

Asho ngelincane ememeza intombi kaMemunce. “We nina kaDumezweni, ubani lowaya oza edlwathizela songathi yilesisilima somkhwenyana wakwakho? Nasiya. Yiso impela. Kawusiboni? Sihamba songathi siyalwa. Sizobuza uBajwayele. Ukhona umuntu owake wathi uma aliwa wase elokhu ebeleselene nabasebukhweni bakhe ethi kabamfunise umkakhe obalekile? Hhayi oZulumacansi, umuntu angababona bedonse ameh!wana aze athi lukhulu abayilo,

kanti lapha ekhanda kugcwele udaka lodwa. Uzoke akhulume nawe namuhla nina kaDumezweni.”

Nebala siphume endlini isalukazi sakhe, siwumisa umkhanya, simsingisise kalufifi lona ozayo, bese sishilo sithi: “Nguye uqobo lwakhe. Nanti ihembe liza lilenga ngaphandle nokukhulu ukwehluleka ukugqoka. Kazi-ke uzobheda uthini namuhla.” Sisho siphindela endlini isalukazi siyozelukela ucansi.

Aqale aqinisele uManamuza. Kwedlule imizuzwana, kwale. Abese eshilo ngengila: “Nina kaDumezweni ngiphethwe yisiswana esibana lapha, siyangiluma. Siqeda nomusa wokukhuluma naloluhlanya. Ubokhuluma wena.”

“Ngikhulume naye ngangikhona yini lapho umnika umntanami? Ingani ngangenqaba mina? Wathi wena lisiko; wathi uyindoda, ufuna loludaba luphathwe nguwe, ngiphume mina kulona? Luphathe-ke luze luphele ngoba phela selulingene wena ngempela manje.”

“Hhayi bo, ngiyagula wena. Konje ukwejwayele lokho ukulokhu udaza izinkani. Umuntu angaze afe kuwe. Khuluma naloluhlanya, nantu selusondele. Uma lungibuza ukuthi ngikuphi, ulutshele ukuthi kangikho.”

Athule unina kaDumezweni kuthi ngelikade athi: “Kulungile.” Asukume masinya uManamuza aye athi swace ngalena kwendlu. Kuthi ngoba eseseduze kakhulu uZulumacansi, uManamuza angabe esaya endlini ngoba uzombona enqamula ebaleni. Aziphonse esilulwini khona lapho. Lapha esilulwini-ke kade kukhona izinkuku, zizicoshela ummbila. Zethuke zigxume ziphonseke phezulu. Eyodwa lena afike wahlala phezu kwayo ikhale njalo ilokhu ithe “Ko! Ko!” ngoba ifukamela. Ayihlale ngomphimbo, ithi ukuthi bhu, bhu, bhu iphele njalo.

Kukhona-ke namagundane nawo azifunela ummbila. Wona-ke ameqe ephangelana ebheke emlonyeni wesilulu.

Zingathuli izinkuku noma seziphumile esilulwini. Aphume unina kaDumezweni ukuzobona izinkuku. Azithele phezu kwamagundane ehambe ezithukuza noma yikuphi ebaleka. Lapho-ke sezithe hlokololo umsindo izikhukhukazi.

“Zethuswa yini izinkuku wekaMdanyana?” kubuza isalukazi kumakoti wakwaso, umkaDumezweni.

Umakoti kanti uthe ephuma kwenye indlu walithi shazi ikhehla sekuvele imilenze lingena esilulwini. Wathi ukuba abone uZulumacansi eza, naye umakoti akabe esaya ngasesilulwini ukuyobheka ukuthi kwenzenjani. Waphuthuma masinya wangena exhibeni, wanela wabona ukuthi usithele, futhi uyedwa, wahleka kwaze kwaba buhlungu izimbambo, iphinifo elibeke emlonyeni. Ezwe izigqi zesalukazi siza exhibeni, abese ephakamisa iphimbo masinya athi: “Zibona amagundane. Ngiyabona ukuthi nawo ethuswe yinyoka. Amanye abaleke aye angena othangweni laphaya. Ukube ubaba ukhona ubezoke ashunqise isihlungu. Sezizingi kabi izinyoka laphaya othangweni.”

Sinele sizanelise isalukazi ukuthi akukho lutho singene endlini. Zibuye sikhale izinkuku ngasesangweni. Simemeze isalukazi sithi: “WeBongiwe!” Kuzwakale izwana elincane lengane liphendula ngasesangweni lithi: “Gogo!”

Usuzenzani izinkuku zikagogo mntanomntanami?”

UBongiwe lona uzalwa nguDumezweni. Akakaqedi kahle ukukhuluma. Aphendule athi: “Umuntu!”

Sicabange isalukazi ukuthi ingane, ithi “Lutho.” Sithe

sisacabanga ukuba sithi kayibuye ingane, sezwa izwi limemeza ngenkani ngasesangweni lithi: “WeManamuza, ngakhuleka kwaze kwasha izwi, kwenziwa yini lokho?”

Kugubhe isilulu ngalena kwendlu. Isisu asizwe sithi kasimthathe uManamuza. Inhliziyo igide ibange umsindo kube ngathi yisando sishaya ipulangwe. Kuthi akaphume esilulwini, aye kuZulumacansi ayokhuluma kahle naye, enye ithi ukufa kodwa lapho. Aqinisele athule esilulwini athi akusale sekwehla noma yini okungenani.

Laphaya ngasendlini enkulu intombi kaMemunce ithule ithule kwale, ebese iphumele phandle. Imbone uZulumacansi ngasesangweni ezimelele ngewisa. Izinhlonzi usezibuthe sezintathu. Inganaki nokuthi laliphelephi intombi kaMemunce, isimze nje ithi: “Hho, yimihlola yini?” isho inxifa ingena endlini. Ungena njena endlini lona okaMemunce kukhona into emmangalisayo aseyi-bonile. Okuyingane lokhu okunguBongiwe kumi phambi kukaZulumacansi, izandla kuzibeke lapha okhalweni, kumbuza ngesikhulu isineke lesi kuthi: “Ubani wena igama lakho? Uzoshaya bani ngenduku? Hhi?” Kukhuluma ulimi luselukhuni impela nje. Ahle anganaki uZulumacansi. Aphikelele ememeza abangaphakathi komuzi. Kuke kuthi akahleke ebona ingane encane kangaka imjamele ngoba ingazi lutho yona, kodwa kuthi ngokuthukuthela, ikakhulu osekuvuthelwe yisalukazi, azibambe.

Aphinde futhi amemeze: “Akukho muntu yini lapha ekhaya?” Leli lithi kalimqede uManamuza esilulwini. Usebona ngokusobala namuhla ukuthi uzofa nya lulaka lukaZulumacansi. Kuthuthumele umzimba; abasathe uyaziqinisa kuxege amathambo. Athi umakoti uma ebona kuthe nya, umkhwenyana engaphendulwa muntu, aphume exhibeni eze ngasesilulwini, ashaye songathi ubengabonanga lutho, ahambe ekhuluma yedwa.

“Izinkuku seziwuqedile ummbila wami lapha esilulwini.” Aye khona, afike athi lungu, abone uyisezala esemanzi ukujuluka. Anele abone umakoti uManamuza ahlebeze athi: “Tshela unyoko uthi akaye kulomuntu masinya.” Akhawuleze umakoti nebala aye kuninazala. Ungena endlini umakoti lapho sivula umlomo isalukazi simemeza sithi: “Luhlanya luni lolo olumemeza umnumzane ngegama emzini wakhe? We Bongiwe, kanti nawe usunezinhlanya ezikulandelayo yini? Ngangingathi izinhlanya zaganwa ngoBajwayele?” Lamazwi ehlise izithukuthuku ezibandayo kuZulumacansi ebunzini. Siphume isalukazi sinikele kuyena. Sihamba sikhuluma nengane lena elokhu imi esangweni ijamelene noZulumacansi imbuza igama.

“Mamo!” kusho isalukazi. “Nawe ufuna ukuya ezinhlanyeni yini we Bongiwe?” Sithi lapho sisondele kuZulumacansi sithi: “Sawubona we mkhwenyana. Kwenzenjani namuhla! Wema esangweni? Ngena.”

“Ngingumkhwenyana namuhla ngoba intombazane usuyithengise kolayitha bamasampula? Ngifuna izinkomo zami. Iphi lempungana enguManamuza? Ngifuna ukukhuluma nayo.”

“Wangethuka mkhwenyana? Uyazi ukuthi uzongihlawula mina? Ngifunga uMemunce ezalwa uDlova.”

“UDlova obe esanda kuqeda ukwenzani? Ngingahle ngikugininde amadodlwana khona manje! Ujama phambi kwami?” asho esikaza idolu lesalukazi ngewisa, “Mamo, ngahle ngilikhumule khona manje idodlwana leli!”

“Hhawu! Hhawu! We bantu, ukuphi weyise kaDumezweni uke uzongizwisa nazi izimanga zingivelela libalele, ngizothukwa umuntu emzini wami. Mkhwenyana, uzoshaya idolu lomkhwekazi? Bake basilaya noBajwayele.

Awu, bake basilaya noyise abathanda izinkomo zabantu abanjena!”

Ingane lena ebe ilokhu imi ibuka yabe inele yabona uninakhulu yase isondela kuyena, ibambelela ezingutsheni zakhe. Inele ibona uZulumacansi esikaza uninakhulu kayisabuzi, ebese izilahle amathambo, iziphonsa kuyena. Iye ifike iphisele izinyo edolweni kuZulumacansi! Anele ezwe ukuhlaba kwezinyo, ayichilize. Iye ifumbeke phansi. Mamo, okuyingane! Ubumame bonke obusakhulayo busuke bume ngezinyawo! Kukhale kube luqanduqandu. Kuyavuka phansi sekuma kude nesandla sikaZulumacansi kuthi: “Omtshela mina umkhulu! Ehhe. Umubi wena muntu. Ukhona umkhulu wami laphaya. Ya, uzokulungisa. Ukhona laphaya esilulwini. Omtshela akushaye ngemvubu yakhe,” isho ithathela ingane ngejubane ibanga esilulwini. Abasayimemeze uninakhulu inganaki ingane.

Konke lokhu ukuzwa ngazo zombili laphaya esilulwini uManamuza. Kufike kuyena ukuthi uma ingake isondele ingane ngalesosikhathi angayisakaza ngetshe ngoba akazi ukuthi iyaphi. Athi esacabanga ukuthi uzokwenzenjani ezwe isisishaya ngesandla zombili isilulu ithi “Mkhulu! Mkhulu! Muntu shaya Gogo!” Apendule ehlebeza uManamuza, ngokukhulu ukufutheka athi: “Suka lapha! Hamba kunyoko!” Ibelesele ingane imtshela ukuthi uninakhulu ushaywa ngumuntu esangweni. Kanti uZulumacansi unele wezwa ukuthi uManamuza usesilulwini wase engena ngaphakathi, weza kusona.

Inele imbone ingane eza isishaye ngamandla isilulu ithi: “Phuma mkhulu! Phuma! Nango muntu eza. Phuma!”

Uyafika esilulwini uZulumacansi akasabuzi. Athi ukulikhokha iwisa, abese eliphelelelisele kusona. Sikhulu, futhi ngesotshani obulukhuni. Kepha kuthi ngoba noZulumacansi yinsizwa, umfutho wezikhwepha zakhe

usisuse phezu kwezinti esimi kuzona siye sithi mbo ngomlomo emhlabathini. Asigingqe uZulumacansi, abasabone gelekeqe uManamuza esephuma kusona namaqanda enkuku. Uphuma usephaphatheke usungathi uyafa ngaso lesosikhathi. Ekuthukutheleni kwakhe uZulumacansi abese eyigaxile imvubu kuManamuza; inhliziyo isikhumbula ukuthi yilo lelixhegwana elimonele yena izinto zisamhambela kahle. Aphakamise izandla uManamuza athi: “Awu, mkhwenyana! Pho sengingasale sengibulawe nguwe mntakababa? Ngenzeni kangaka? Konke okwami okwakho. Yini enginayo ongeze wayithatha? Yona intombazane uthi ngingeyilande lapho ikhona ngibuye nayo?”

Alwehlise olulodwa uhlonzi uZulumacansi lokhu ubese ezibuthe zozine, abese ethi: “Suka khona manje uye eBenoni ubuye naye umkami. Uyezwa?”

“Baba!”

Washo ephenduka njalo eyophuma ngesango. Kwamlandela okunguBongiwe kwaye kwema esangweni kwase kuthi: “Umubi wena!” Ekuthukutheleni kwakhe uZulumacansi angaze akuphendula, ahambe aye ekhaya, nenhliziyo yaneliswe ukuba izinto zimhambele kahle ngalelolanga.

## ISAPHLUKO VIII

Uthe ukuba alithathe ithikithi uManamuza lokuya eBenoni wase efuna indlwana esitimeleni lapho ezohlala yedwa. Washeshe wayithola. Wazithi shuthe engosini. Sathi ukuba sisuke wasuka kancane waya efasiteleni, walunguza, ebuka izinkalo zezwe aselishiya, engazi noma uyobuya yini ngoba azi ukuthi eGoli kugcwele olayitha. Athi esalunguzile amehlo awaphendule awabhekise ngakuboZulumacansi. Ambone umkhwenyana wakwakhe ejame ebaleni elinde sona isitimela ukuba sedlule. Anxaphe abese ephindela engosini. Sahamba sahamba isitimela sathi lapho sesizosithela ezintabeni ezizungeze isigodi saseButhunqe kwala kuManamuza ukuba aze asithele impela engasaliphonsanga elokugcina kobukaMagayi. Wathi lungu efasiteleni, wambona uZulumacansi esemi ebaleni kwabo, ephakamise imvubu ekhomba ngayo isitimela. Wazishutheka engosini akabe esanyakaza.

UButhunqe bukaMagayi lobu kwakuyindawo enkulu, buzungezwe zintaba eziphakeme, esiziguduza size sibe sincane isitimela. Uze usibone sesingangeshongololo sizungeza izintaba. Umuntu abone ngentuthu emhlophe. naso silokhu sishilo sathi: “Khofu! Khofu! Khofu! Khofu! Khofu!” uma sidonsa emiqanseni. Sithi lapho sesiya emathafeni, injini ithi ukuhlaba ikhefu, ingabe isaphuma intuthu emhlophe ngamandla, kuguquke nezwi laso, sisho ngeliphansi elingafuthekile sithi: “Ngadl’ indoda! Ngadl’ indoda.”

Uthe esalalele zonke lezizinto uManamuza, wezwa sesikhala sithi “Pe!”. Walunguza efasiteleni, wabona ukuthi sikhalela ukweqa umgwaqo wezinqola ophuma emapulazini amaJalimane.

Uthe eseqeda ukucabanga ukuthi sesiphume saphela eButhunqe, wezwa amazwi ezingane ezincane eziningi

ehlabelela. Ke, phezu kwabo bonke ubuthakathaka bakhe wayezithanda ngempela uManamuza izingane. Wase elunguza ngefasisela. Wakubona okuzingane emgwaqeni wezinqola kuchwaza kuthi?

“Yaguduza! Yaguduza! Yaguduza!  
Imeyili!

Yaguduza! Yaguduza! Yaguduza!  
Imeyili!

Lokhu kwamsusela olukhulu usizi uManamuza. Wakhumbula amazwi ezingane zakwakhe, zisakhula. Nakwakhe zazichwaza kanjena. Walalelisisa, lokhu isitimela sihamba kancane uma sesiya ngakhona, wezwa songathi kakusewona amazwi ezingane zakulomhlaba. Kwamduduza lokho.

Izingane lezi, lokhu usezibona, zixubile. Kukhona esezinkudlwana ezabafana nezamantombazana, kanye-ke nobhuzane olungakakwazi kahle ukukhuluma. Konke kuyahlabelela, kuyagida kanyekanye. Lokhu okungakahla-kaniphi kahle akukakwazi ukuziqeda kahle izinhlamvu zeculo, nomphefumulo usasheshe unqamuke bese kuzihambela kuye kufike ekuthini kuphela:

“Yagudu . . . Yagudu . . .”

Noma kubhimba kunakwe ubani ngoba lapho zihlakaniphe khona izingane zedlula abadala yisekubeni nobhimbayo negagu bayamukelwa ngoba kuyasethenzwa. Nebala-ke emhlabene kukhona amagagu namabhimbi.

Kukhona-ke nezinye izingane ezingakakwazi ukuhamba, ezinye zisancela. Zonke lezi zibeletwe yilezi ezinkudlwana. Kulomhlangano kukhona abagqoke amahenjana namalokwana kakhakhi. Abanye abafana abangconywana

bafake namabhulukwana. Iningi lizintazela ngamahembe amade nje odwa. Ezinye, kodwa ezimbalwa, kazembethe lutho, zizihambela nje, futhi kazinake nakunaka. Zonke ziyasina, iningi selijuluke selimanzi lathi te. Abhekisise uManamuza abasathe, mamu, okunye okungabafanyana kunqamule amabheshwana khona lapho – awesikhumba sembuzi. Ungene kamnandi ezindlebeni umsindo wokuzingane kuhlabelela noma kusina.

Sithi uma sesiqondene nazo izingane abelungu baphonse izindibilishi, nopeni nezinkwa namakhekhe. Zisine izingane zibheke phambili. Naye UManamuza afake isandla esikhwameni, akhiphe izinhlamvana zibe mbalwa zesiliva, athi ukumoyizela yedwa, aziphonse ngewindi ziye ziwele phansi ngasezinganeni. Zihlabelele ngamandla izingane. Sinele sedlule isitimela ziyibuthe imali zicazelane yona nokudla.

Sigijime njalo isitimela, siye singene emahlathini kawatela, kuwona ngempela amapulazi amaJamane. Izulu lithule, kalishayi moya, umuntu uzwa kukhala ujentshi phansi uthi: “Nkeqe! Nkeqe! Nkeqe! Nkeqe!” ungqutshuzwa lisondo. Ezwe manje uManamuza ukuthi uhamba ngempela.

Kube yikhathi-ke ehlala phansi ecabangisisa loluhambo ahamba ngalo. Wazibuza eminingi imibuzo. Konje uma ekhaya bembona esebuyile, engasayanga eBenoni, bangathini? Yena uZulumacansi angathini? Kodwa lombuzo wesibili washeshe wawedlulisa emqondweni ngoba esebona ukuthi impilo kuye ingaba lukhuni kabi. Sekungafuneka ukuba ahlale kuphela emzini wakhe, angake alokothe aphumele ngaphandle, ukuze angahlangani noZulumacansi. Wacabanga, wacabanga, kufike nokuthi konje iBenoni yona ifana nasilwane sini kuzo zonke zomhlaba. Kwathi ngoba eminingi imicabango ehluleka ukuba ayiphendule wezwa sekukhathala

ubuchopho. Wase ethatha ujazi wazemboza ngawo, wathi hlwathi.

Alale yonke imini yasekuseni. Kuthi emini enkulu, esefudumele, aqale ukuphupha sengathi usekhaya. Aphuphe lezizinto ezenzeke kuyena ngayizolo. Kepha ephusheni azibone edaza izinkani noZulumacansi. Abuye azibone esesilulwini. Uthe ezwa kwase kusongathi uZulumacansi umhlaba ngobhoko emkhipha esilulwini. Wagxuma wabheka phezulu ethukile. Ugxuma nje kanti usefike ekupheleni kogojwana lolu lwesitimela okuhlalwa kulona. Aye athanqazeke phansi. Khona ngaso lesosikhathi ezwe izwi lithi:

“Tikit! Tikit!”

Anehlo awabhekise ngalapho, kuphuma khona izwi. Azithele phezu kwezinjela zamadevu kagadi. Umlungu usebuthe izinhlonzi naye ebona uManamuza ezigingqi phansi. Lezizinhlonzi zimshayise olusha uvalo, akhohlwe nokuthi ulifake kusiphi isikhwama ithikithi. Kodwa-ke avuke athi gubhubhu, eme ngezinyawo, aphuthaze lapha ebamba eyeka umlungu aze acishe ukuphelelwa yisineke. Kuthi ngelikade buthi damu ubuthongo, alithole, abese elinika umlungu aligqobhoze.

Uthe uma esesele yedwa, kwayikhathi ehlala phansi ezibuza kahle ethi: “Kwenziwa yini lokhu ukuba ngiphuphe uZulumacansi? Uthi bekungeyena obeesengeleka ngesithunzi lapho ngilele? Lokhu kade ngilele, nakhu nelanga selize latsheka, uthi akakhwelanga isitimela wabuye wehla futhi? Yini ngimphuphe libalele?”

Nebala asuke phansi acathame kancane kuso sonke isitimela ehambe elunguza kancane efuna ukubona ukuthi akekho yini uZulumacansi. Ulunguza njalo uyeyesaba. Uthi evula kuleyo naleyondlwana abe elungele ukuba athi uma

ebona uZulumacansi athathele ngelikhulu ijubane eya kweyakhe. Wesaba ukuthi uma ekhona esitimeleni uZulumacansi lungathi uma lumsukile ulaka lwakhe alidumele ixhegwana labantu aye aliphonse ngesiwindi, kufahlake amathanjana alo, kungasemathanjana alutho.

Lomcabango wamathambo umkhumbuze ukuthi wake wacishe walimala kabi evela elimweni kwaSonkholo, khona kobukaMagayi. Lalikade linotshwala obuningi lelolimo. Uthe esebuya uManamuza wadlula phansi kwebhuloho lesitimela egibele inkabi yakhe emhlophe yehhashi. Kanti kuza isitimela, yena kanakile ulokhu ulibele ukuhlabelela, kubila amabele esiswini. Lathi lisuka laligxuma ihhashi lamlahla phansi wathola isenyelo esibana. Bekuthi noma kade kuphuzwa ebandla, esefuna ukugwiya angaze agwiya kahle. Asukume athi:

“We mfokazana ndini!  
U-yo-tha-th’-e-ka-ba?”

Ibandla-ke lithi:

“Ngi-yo-tha-th’ e-ka-Manamuza!”

Athi noma ethi uphakamisa umlenze, ezwe kunyazima imbilapho angabe esaqhubeka agcine ngokulinganisa.

Yonke lemicabango igcwale ekhanda ngenkathi ethungathana nezindlu zesitimela. Kwezinye avule ahlangani nentuthu ebabayo kagwayi wamaMpondo aya ezimayini. Amanye awafice ehleli phansi ekhwelelene nesinkwa esisheba ngojamu nenyama enonile yengulube. Athi edla amanye abe ebhiyoza ngezwi elindonda okwesihosha. Asho abe ebhiyoza ngezwi elindonda okwesihosha. Asho uManamuza ukuthi ukuhamba kuzala induna ngempela.

Uthi esacathama wethuka sekuqhamuka ugadi esebuya. Bahilane kabana nogadi, lona omhlophe ecasulwa ukuba uManamuza ehambe evula evala iminyango. Amtshele athi uma ehamba enze njena uzombizela amaphoyisa ngoba amasela ahamba enze njalo.

Limkhonkabalise leli lokuthi hleze abekwe icala lokweba ngoba useze wamdala kangaka nje akazange ake athathe into yamuntu. Eme ambukisise lomlungu. Athukuthele umlungu, asho ukumkhahlela njena uma elokhu emi phambi kwakhe. Athi uManamuza: “Mlungu, kodwa ungihlolelani ngoba selokhu ngazalwa angizange ngisebenze kuwe?” Elamaphoyisa kodwa limthambise abese ethi: “Cha, nkosi, ngilahlekelwe lapha.”

Engasizwa kahle isiZulu umlungu acabange ukuthi uManamuza uthi ulahlekile, abese emkhombisa indlu yakhe. Aphindele emuva uManamuza. Kuthi ngoba eziningi wayesezibonile, aziduduze ngokuthi akekho uZulumacansi.

Aqalise manje ukuzibuza ngokuthi khona inxa efika eBenoni uyoya kwabani. Asho athi uma eke wambona njena uBajwayele uyoke aqale amgaxe ngemvubu kuqala engakakhulumi nelilodwa kuyena. Abese ekhumbula ukuthi ekubhuduzeleni kwakhe esuka ekhaya ube esekhohlwa nenduku. Khona lapho izigebengu zaseGoli zimhlasela uyoziphunga ngani? Lomcabango wezigebengu umkhumbuze imali, ngoba wayesezwile ukuthi lena eBenoni umuntu bamkhuthuza libalele lithe saka. Akhumule isicathulo yonke lena engamaphepha ayifake kusona, akhumule nesinye enze njalo aze ayeke ngoba sezincinza izicathulo. Esala lapho-ke ayishiye ezikhwameni. Wawadonsa ngamandla amafosi ezicathulo, eseke wazibhekisisa kodwa ukuthi kazinambobo yini lapho kungaphuma khona imali. Kwathi noma zimncinza

ngamandla akaze anaka ngoba ephike ngokuthi kulungile uma kusinde imali yakhe.

Lithe ntambama ilanga laqala ukungena ngefasitela, lahlala onyaweni. Luzwa ukufudumala unyawo lwathanda ukuncibilika nalo. Pho, luzoncibilikelaphi esinkinyankinyeni sesicathulo? Wathula nje uManamuza. Lwavuvukala unyawo igazi lingasahambi kahle. Amafosi angena enyameni. Luqaqambe unyawo. Manje akhohlwe ukuthi uzokwenza njani uManamuza, ikakhulu ngoba nasekhaya akusiye umuntu ojwayele ukusebenzisa izicathulo. Zifakwa kuphela uma kuyiwa esontweni, noma-ke kuyiwa enkantolo. Enye inhliziyi ithi akaqinisele ngoba uma eke wawaxegisa amafosi hleze athi ethi uyahamba imali iphume ilahleke yonke.

Lugunye unyawo lungazange luboshwe kanjena selokhu lwadalwa. Aze azijube naye uManamuza awaxegise amafosi. I thi damu iminjunju.

Sigijime njalo isitimela kuze kuhlwe. Kuyasa ngakusasa siyangena eBenoni. Anele ehle eplatifomu ezwe kukhala ezindlebeni imisindo aselokhu azalwa angazange ayizwe. Akhulume yedwa:

“Hhawu! Kuhlalwa kanjani lapha ekhaya, kulomsindo ongaka?” Wayeseke waya kaningana eMgungundlovu uManamuza, kodwa wayengakaze awuzwe umsindo wedolobha elisebenza ngamandla njengalawaya aseGoli. Nabantu eMgungundlovu kababaningi kangakaya. Eme, kusaduma ikhanda, ecabanga ukuthi konje uzokuyaphi. Enye inhliziyi ithi akaye emaphoyiseni, afike awatshela ukuthi uyinduna kaChief Dumdumu waseButhunqe bukaMagayi. Lokho kuyowenza asukele phezulu amaphoyisa ngoba phela naye ungumuntu kaHulumeni. Kepha abuye athi lokho kuyomenza exwayeke kubantu azofuna kubona uBajwayele.

Kuqhamuke umuntu ofana neShangane. Anikele kuyena uManamuza afike athi: “Sibonene wena wangasenhla!”

“Enhla kwani? Angisiye mina muntu wenhla. Ngimuntu wanzansi.”

“Qha, mntanenkosi ukuthi ungowangasenhla lizwi lesiZulu lokuhlonipha.”

“Lo baba ka mina ayi yena lo chief.”

“Cha, baba, ngingumuntu wasemakhaya. Ngivela kwelakwaZulu, kwesikaChief Dumdumu waseButhunqe bukaMagayi. Ngilahlekelwe yintombazane yami uBajwayele. Ubaleke washiya umkhwenyana sengimendisile. Ngibuza ukuthi kawuzanga umbone na?”

Lihleke lize lilale phansi iShangane. Linele lincibilike nesiZulu salo siqale ukuqonda kanti bese siphambuke kakhulu ngenkathi licasukiwe.

“Yini Bajwayele? Mina ayi yazi lo into.”

“UBajwayele ngumntanami, mina nginguyise.”

Ledlule iShangane liziyele emsebenzini. Alibukisise uManamuza.

“Baze banonya abantu baseGoli bo!” esho ekhuluma yedwa. Ayaluze lapha eplatifomu ehla enyuka aze abone izihlalo kuhleli khona abantu abafana naye, kuzona afike ahlale phansi. Iningi labantu ngamakhosikazi abeSuthu. Ababuze munye ngamunye ukuthi bayamazi njena na uBajwayele.

Abanye bathi akahambe aye kwaNdabazabantu, afike alubike khona loludaba. Lesiseluleko simduduze, kodwa



abe nokwenqena kancane ekhumbula ukuthi owakubo uNdabazabantu unolaka. Kodwa athi kungcono ukuya khona.

Unyawo-ke lapho selungagentaba, lulale esicathulweni – lungasejwayele nokwenza. Useyaqhuga. Asukume aqhuge eyophuma ngesango. Kube yikhathi ewubona kahle umuzi waseBenoni. Abasathe angawubona lapho uphela khona abone ukuthi uzilayile wazofuna ubajwayele kulelidolobha. Okungenani ngayezihlalele eButhunqe, wancama ulaka lukaZulumacansi.

Uthi lapho esemi, ecabanga ukuthi konje uma efuna ukuya kwaNdabazabantu uzosuka abhekephi, kuqhamuka iziboshwa ziqhutshwa ngamaphoyisa. Zona-ke wayeseke wazibona eMgungundlovu. Kodwa kungeyona into ayejwayele angaze apha theka kahle.

Phezu kwawo onke amaphutha akhe, uManamuza, kwakuthi uma into eseyisophile, ayenze noma sekunjani Nalokhu ukuyofuna uBajwayele wayesezimisele ukuba abuye naye ngoba wayeseze wasuka phansi. Asizwe nesicathulo singaselutho.

Kuthi kusenjalo kuqhamuke indoda yomSuthu. Aye kuyona uManamuza.

“Ake ungisize mntanenkosi ungilayele indlela eya kwaNdabazabantu.” UmSuthu abone ukuthi yintothotho yasemakhaya lena. Amthathe aye naye egumbini lomgwaqo afike athi: “Uyawubona lowayamgwaqo?” Avume uManamuza.

“Yehla njalo ngawo kuthi ekupheleni kwawo kuthi ngakwesokudla lapho uphela khona ungene. Kukhona kwaNdabazabantu.”

Akheleze uManamuza enyusa umgwaqo. Athi lapho ephakathi nendlela, kuqhamuke imotokali efana neyamasampula. Ithi ukuthi hwi, yedlula. Ayiphonse iso elibi uManamuza ngoba esezwile ukuthi ingane yakhe yahamba nomuntu wamasampula.

“Mhlawumbe yiyo lena eyathatha umntanami!”

Nokho angayinaki kakhulu. Uthe ethuka yase ikhalisa amabhuleki khona lapha eduze kwakhe, kwaphuma iphoyisa lomlungu, lambiza njalo. Waya khona engazi lutho uManamuza. Umlungu wafuna ipasi lentela. Walikhipha uManamuza. Babiza ipasi lokuba seNtalasifani. Waphuthaza waphuthaza ezikhwameni uManamuza akaze alithola. Babe bayambamba njalo bamfaka emotweni. Wazikhalela uManamuza wathi: “Ngabuthenga-ke ubulima namuhla.”

Imthathe nembala imotokali iye imehlise emaphoyiseni. Kuze kube manje usamangele uManamuza ukuthi okuyiyonanto abanjelwe yona ngempela yini, ngoba uzozifunela umntanakhe kuphela. Futhi akasiso isigebengu. Konke lokhu kumhluphe kabi enhliziyweni. Enye inhliziyo ithi akazijube abuze ukuthi ngempela okuyikhona aboshelwe khona yini. Abuye azikhuze. Bamseshe baze bafike ezicathulweni, bafice imali.

“Uyithathephi lemali khehla eningi kangaka? Uyebile?”

“Ngebe sengimdala kangaka? NgingowaseButhunqe bukaMagayi mina. Ngizofuna intombazane yami uBajwayele, ebaleke sengiyendisele kuZulumacansi kaBhekokwakhe wakhona eButhunqe.” Abelungu bangakunaki lokhu ukuchaza okuyindeyinde.

“Uyifakeleni pho lapha lemali?”

“Ngiyifake, makhosi, ngoba ngesaba izigebengu zalapha. Kuthiwe umuntu zimkhuthuza libalele.” Babone ukuthi ngumuntu wasemakhaya lona akayebile lemali. Bamlondele yona. Yena bamthathe bamuse esitokisini. Ahlale lapho kuze kuhlwe. Babe belokhu bethuthelekile abantu esitokisini lonke ilanga, abafana, izinsizwa namadoda. Abafana baphendukele kuye bathi: “Yes, ol’ man! Wenzeni-ke wena uziphumela emakhaya njena?”

“Lipasi bantabami, angiliboni lapho ngilishutheke khona.” Abuye athule. Athule, athule, kuthi ngelikade abuze kubafana: “Ake ningitshela bantabami, niyamazi uBajwayele intombazane kaManamuza waseButhunqe?” Konke lokhu kube yisiGirigi kubantu basedolobheni abangazi lutho ngenhlalo yasemakhaya. Abanye bahleke abanye badonse amehlo bemangala ukuthi lithini lelikhehla.

Laba abahlekayo abanye babo bahlekiswa ngukuthi ukhona eGoli umuntu osabizwa ngegama lasekhaya ngoba bona leyonto kabasayazi. Sebazi oStifani, noFiniyase, noMaliya noJenete. Laba ngempela abangamahuzwana behluleke nokulisho kahle igama elithi Buthunqe. Acasukwe uManamuza, abese ezihobela egumbini lakhe.”

Amahuzwana-ke lawa angene nezinqamu zikasikilidi azifihla kazaze zabonwa lapho eseshwa. Amanye apethe insangu uqobo lwayo. Kuthi kungadliwa kusihlwa, uManamuza abese elala. Ebusuku amahuzu ayishunqise insangu nosikilidi. UManamuza engazazi lezizinto zimxhile akhwehlele aze ome. Amahuzu aqale amhleke, abese ethi: “Sorry ol’ man!” aqhubeke nokubhena. Intuthu yensangu ize imcobe, alale uManamuza.

Buthi lapho bumthathile ubuthongo uManamuza, amahuzu abhobose imbobo kuthayela, lokhu isitokisi esikathayela, awululeke onke abaleke. Aphuma nje akazi lutho uManamuza. Kuyasa kusasa usesele yedwa. Aqale

angaze amangala ngoba phela akayazi nenhlalo yasekuboshweni. Abasathe nhla odongeni, sekusile, abone imbobo enkulu isikwe okhetheni. Athi kube kuhle imali yakhe yasala emaphoyiseni, izigebengu bezizoyithatha kahle yonke elele.

Kuthi kungaphuma inhlamvu yelanga kufike amaphoyisa esezobavusa ukuba bashanele lapho bebelele khona. Akhangwe zindonga. Luwashaye luwaqede uvalo.

“Baphi okade unabo lapha?”

Asuke akhombe embotsheni uManamuza. Kusuke esikhulu isidumo, sebefunwa. NoManamuza bambuze eminingi imibuzo, kodwa kubonakale ukuthi ube elele. Kunele kushaye izikhathi bamthathe bamqhube bamuse enkatolo lapho kuzothethwa khona icala.

Lize lingene ngemuva kwamadina elakhe. Lingaze lathatha sikhathi. Bathi nje ukumbuza imibuzwana emibalwa, athi engakalindeli lutho ezwe selimtshela ihumusha lithi liyamlahla icala, kodwa imantshi iyambonelela ngoba kuthe noma kukhona ithuba lokuba abaleke, wathobela umthetho. Ngakho imnika isonto ejele noma ahlawule ngompondo. UManamuza-ke kungumuntu owazisa imali, futhi engazi ukuthi uyoyithathaphi eyokuya ekhaya uma ethole uBajwayele ancame ukuba angene ejele zona lezonsukwane ezisikhombisa.

Kuthi ntambama uManamuza bamqhube nezinye iziboshwa, sekuyiwa ejele. Afike agundwe, ebese enikwa izingutshana zikaseyili, lezi ezifakwa iziboshwa. Ngakusasa aphume naye aqhutshwe ayoshaya ingobolwana emgwaqweni abuyiswe ngokushona kwelanga.

Kube lukhuni kuManamuza ukuba asheshe ejwayelane nalaba aboshwe nabo ngoba ubecwasile abantu