

Ihlabathi lemilingo Iminqweno Emithathu

IikaNkszn Helen

Ndikwazisa umhlobo wam, uHelen. Wazalelwa kwidolophu encinane kwiKaroo ebizwa ngokuba yiNieu Bethesda. Kwakungekho nto ingako yenzekayo kule dolophu. Kodwa yena wenza ihlabathi elipheleleyo apha. Wade wenza nam. Indlu yakhe wayithiya ngam.

Ibizwa ngokuthi "The Owl House" (Indlu yeziKhova). Uninzi lwabantakwabo Helen noodadewabo babekhulile futhi sebebambile ngelixa lokufika kwakhe. Kodwa wayesenabo oodadewabo, uAnnie noAlida.

UHelen wayengenabahlobo baninzi apha, kodwa kwakungamkhathazi oko. Kwasekuqaleni, uHelen wayesenza izinto ngendlela eyahlukileyo xa kuthelekiswa nabantu abaninzi.

Emva kokuba bendulukile oodadewabo, uHelen wasala yedwa nabazali bakhe. Wayethanda umama wakhe, kodwa emthiyile utata wakhe. Wonke umntu wayevuma ukuba uyindoda engaqhelekanga kakhulu.

Udadewabo omdala uAlida wayekhenketha kulo lonke ihlabathi. Ngenye imini wathumelela uHelen iposikhadi evela eYiphutha.

Engcingeni yakhe uHelen wabona inkosana neephiramidi kunye neenkamela esantini. Wathi akukhula uHelen, wafunda amabali amaninzi ngeendawo ezikude. Wayithanda ngakumbi imibongo evela ePheshiya kwiMpuma eseMbindini. Ngenye imini waphupha enotyelelo oluya kulwandlekazi. Wagcina unokrwece kwitafale engasebhedini yakhe, waze wayengcingane ngokungathi uyasiva isandi samaza phakathi kwakhe.

Kodwa ngokuqinisekileyo, wayethanda izikhova ngaphezu kwazo zonke ezinye izinto!

UHelen wayezithanda iincwadi namabali kakhulu kangokuba wenza isigqibo sokuba ngutitshala. Wayeyincutshe nakulo msebenzi. Wasuka wadibana noJohannes Pienaar. Naye wayengutitshala, umbhali nomdlali wemidlalo yeqonga.

Wamqinisekisa ukuba ufanele ukugcagca naye.

UHelen noJohannes batshata. Baya kwidolophu ezininzi ezahluka-hlukileyo, befundisa futhi bedlala imidlalo yeqonga. UHelen wacinga ukuba mhlawumbi kungamlungela ukuqalisa ngosapho, njengoko babenze njalo oodadewabo. Kodwa kwakungazi kuba njalo. Yena nomyeni wakhe babesoloko besilwa.

Wathi akugula kakhulu umama wakhe, uHelen wenza isigqibo sokuba lalifikile ixesha lokubuyela ekhaya.

UHelen wayengonwabanga. Umama wakhe wayegula



kakhulu, ukanti utata wakhe yena waye nguchiki.

Wasuka wakhetha ukuba yedwa. Abantu babecinga ukuba akaqheleki.

Ngobusuku awasweleka ngabo umama wakhe, uHelen waligcina likhanyisa ikhandlela ngasebhedini yakhe ubusuku bonke. Ngoncedo loko kukhanya kuncinane, uHelen wayengaziva eboyika kangako ubumnyama.

Kwaye khumbula, thina zikhova sasilapho kunye naye. Wasingadile, sikhwaza sisithi woo-woo!

UHelen wenza isigqibo sokuba ufuna ukukhanya ebomini bakhe. Waqala ngokutshintsha indawo akuyo.

Kodwa wayedinga abancedisi. Amadoda amathathu alapho, uJonas Adams, uPiet van der Merwe noKoos Malgas, benza izinto awayezicinga ngeengcingo nangasemante.

Wazalisa isithi sakhe emva kwendlu ngezidalwa ezazitsala umdla. Kwakukho abantu abanemizimba yeengonyama neenkamela, oomamlambo neekati. Kwakukho inqwaba yezikhova! Wayesithi yiyadi yakhe yeenkamela. Ecingweni wenza uphawu olungumbhalo ngocingo.

Lwalusithi: "This is my world" (Eli lihlabathi Emini uHelen wayesenza imikrolo. Wayephinda aqokelele iiglas nezipili, amakhandlela nezibane.

Nayiphi na into enokukhazimla. Wayebeka iilanteni egumbini ngalinye. Izipili zazifunxa ukukhanya ezaziphinda zikhanyise ngako. Wagquma iindonga ngeentwana zeglasi ukuze iindonga zimenzezele nazo.

Emva kokusweleka kukatata kaHelen, indlu yaba yeyakhe. Ngobusuku ngabunye wayetshintsha alale kwelinye igumbi. Wayesoloko ekhetha

elimbonisa ngokuthe gcaa inyanga neenkwenkwezi.

Abantu baseNieu Bethesda xa begqitha kwisithi sikaHelen babebuka izidalwa ezikuso.

Abanye abantwana baselalini babemzisela iibhotile zeglasi ukwenzela imikrolo yakhe futhi babembiza ngokuthi "Nkszn Helen". Wayesoloko ebabulela ngeelekeke. Kodwa abanye babengenabubele. Babemnike amagama okumenyelisa bephosa namatyephezu kophahla lwendlu yakhe.

UNkszn Helen wayechitha yonke imali yakhe ethengisa iglasi nesamente. Wayephila ngesonka neti emnyama.

Kwidayari yakhe wayebhale wathi: "Phakathi kwesithukuthezi sam ndonwabile." Isithi sakhula, sakhula, kwade akwabikho sithuba sishiyekileyo sokubeka ezinye izidalwa.

UNkszn Helen waqalwa kukudinwa. Izandla zakhe zaba neenkantsi zabuhlungu. Amehlo akhe ayengasaboni kakuhle ngenxa yokusebenza ngamasuntswana amancinane eglasi.

Wayengakoyiki ukuba yedwa, kodwa wayesaboyika ubumnyama. Kanti ihlabathi lakhe laqala ukuba mfliba laya ngokuba mfliba. Wayesazi ukuba kungekudala wayengazi kubona kwanto.

Kodwa wathi xa evala amehlo akhe kwilixa lokugqibela, uNkszn Helen akabona bumnyama. Wabona ilanga nenyanga neenkwenkwezi. Wabona amadoda azizilumbo noomamlambo, iinkamela neekati, abantu abanemizimba ethambileyo nezikhova ezinamehlo eglasi amakhulu antsendu namenyezelayo.

Kaloku nanamhla oku sisemi apha, nje ngendlela awayesishiye ngayo, esityeni awasenzayo, esijonge empumalanga.

Kwaye kukho inkosikazi eyayihlala nomyeni wayo kufuphi noMlambo iHlimbitwa. Yonke imihla le nkosikazi yayilishiya ikhaya labo, ihambe iye ehlatini ukuya kutheza iinkuni. Yonke imihla umyeni wayo wayeyinika ibhotile yamanzi nokutya ukuze ibe nento yokusela neyokutya xa ingene Phakathi ehlatini. Ngenye imini yayiphumile le nkosikazi, iye kutheza yaze yakhetha umthi omkhulu ukuba iwugawule uwe.

"Lo uya kukulungela kakuhle kakhulu ukugawulwa," yatsho. "Mkhulu kakhulu kwaye ndiya kufumana iinkuni ezininzi kuwo."

Yakhupha izembe layo, yalibamba ngazo zozibini izandla zayo, yalijiwuzisela phezulu sele ilungele ukuqalisa ukugawula. Ithe xa kanye iza kugawula yeva ilizwi liyicenga ukuba wuyeke.

"Ngubani lowo utshoyo?" yabuza njalo.

"Jonga phantsi apha," latsho eli lizwi, "kwaye nantoni na oyenzayo, uze uncede, nceda ungawugawuli, uwuwise phantsi loo mthi."

Le nkosikazi yothuswa kakhulu koko ikuvileyo, kodwa yathi xa ibona apho lalivela khona eli lizwi, ayakwazi nokuba mayithini! Phantsi emhlabeni, ecaleni kweengcambu zomthi, kwakukho eyona ndoda incinane eyakhe yabonwa yile nkosikazi. Yasuka yathi nkebe umlomo ikhamisile, ingakukholelwa eyayikubona. Ekugqibeleni kwaphela ukothuka.

"Ndiyakubongoza torho, nceda ungawutshabalalisi lo mthi," yatsho le ndoda encinane.

"Ee... ndiyavuma xa usitsho," watsho.

"Ndiyasankela isicelo sakho. Ndingazingela omnye umthi xa lo ubaluleke kangaka kuwe."

"Ndiyabulela. Wenze eyona nto indivuyisa kakhulu," yatsho indoda encinane. "Unentliziyo entle kakhulu kwaye ngenxa yesi senzo sihle kangaka usenzileyo, ndiza kuphumeza iminqweno yakho emithathu, nokuba iyintoni na." Emva koko, yanyamalala indoda encinane. Le nkosikazi yaba ngayingcingela kuzo zonke indawo ehlatini, zange iyifumane le ndoda ingaqhelekanga.

Ekugqibeleni yakuncama le nkosikazi ukuzingela le ndoda, yagoduka. Kuyo yonke loo ndlela igodukayo yayihlunguzela intloko, imbombozela imane ikhuza yodwa ngenxa yokumangaliswa kokwenzekileyo. Yakuba ifikile ekhaya yahlala phantsi ecaleni kwendlu ukuze iphumle, isazibuza ukuba ingaba kukho umntu obedlala ngayo kusini na. Zonke ezo ngcinga ziyilambisa nangakumbi. "Ingaba sesilungile isidlo sethu sangokuhlwa?" yabuza umyeni wayo owayesuke waza kuhlala ecaleni kwayo.

"Owu, hayi," waphendula umyeni, "asikalungi. Kusasele nje iyure ezimbalwa phambi kokuba silunge."

Le nkosikazi yancwina. "Andilambe ngako, akwaba bekukho nokuba liqathana nje lenyama endinokulitya."

Kungekudala ewathethile loo mazwi – thaxa –



inyama epleyitini eyayithe tshithilili apha kanye phambi kwakhe. Wakhupha amehlo aziingqanda kwanomyeni wakhe ngokunjalo.

"Yintoni le?" wabuza umyeni emangaliswe yiloo nto yayisenzeka.

Le nkosikazi yamxelela yonke into eyayenzeke ehlatini kuloo ntsasa. Umyeni wayo wayijamela yaze nayo le nkosikazi yabona ukuba umyeni uthe fixi ngumsindo.

Yathi yakugqiba ukuthetha le nkosikazi, umyeni wayo wangxola ngelizwi elingqwalabala wathi, "INTONIII? Kaloku ubufanele ukuba uye wacinga phambi kokuba uxele ukuba unqwanela ukufumana inyama. Ugeza kakhulu, akwabe loo nyama ibinokuncamathela kuloo mpumlo yako." Le nkosikazi yathi ingekatsho nokuthi hayi-bo! Labe iqatha lenyama selincamathele empumlweni yayo. Yalibamba ilitsala, kodwa alasuka tu elo qatha lenyama. Umyeni naye wazama ukuyisusa. Bobabini bancedisana, batsala, batsala, kodwa zange baphumelele

"Owu, hayi," yatsho le nkosikazi. "Kuza kuthiwani ngoku?"

"Andazi, kodwa ifanele ukusuka," yatsho indoda. Le nkosikazi yaqonda ukuba kufanele ukuba nento eyenzayo kwamsinyane phambi kokuba umyeni wayo akhuphe elinye ilizwi. "Ndingwenela ukuba le nyama isuke empumlweni yami!" yakhwaza ngelo le nkosikazi. Ngomzuzwana nje inyama yaphinda yaba sepleyitini kwakhona. Bahlala apho, le nkosikazi nomyeni wayo, bejamelene. Kwakungekho minqweno yimbi abanokuyisebenzisa ukuze bafumane imali, okanye iimpahla, okanye indlu enkulu, okanye ulonwabo. Kwakungasayi kuphinda kubekho minqweno yanto kwaphela, kodwa ... okungenani babenenyama emnandi yesidlo sangokuhlwa!

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