Umakhulu noTatomkhulu

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Translated to iziXhosa by **Vuyokazi Ngemntu**

Ilanga lalichwechwela ngasebaleni lakwa Alpha, lilungiselela imini entsha kwakho. Wayedinga iimbotyi zekofu eziluhlaza. Ezazishiyekile, sele sivuniwe, zahlanjwa, zaqhotswa kwiveki edlulileyo, zaseziphela ngokutsho komkakhe uJeneba. Kodwa zazanele ukwenza isitshoqolo sokuphungisa yena nowakwakhe.

UAlpha wavuna imbotyi ezibomvu ezivuthiweyo wazifaka engxoweni yesaka awayeyibophelele esinqeni sakhe. Ilanga leNtshona Afrika laligqats' ubhobhoyi, limtsho wanathontsana okubila ebunzi. Wayengakwazi ukukhawuleza nje ngesiqhelo.

Izandla zakhe ezigadalala kukoma nokuguga zakha iimbotyi zekofu ngocoselelo phambi kokuzifaka engxoweni.

“Sthandwa sam, khawuzofumana okuya phantsi kwempumlo” wakhwaza ngelitshoyo uJeneba, emi kumnyango ojolise emva kwendlu, nalapho uAlpha wayekhetha isivuno sakhe. Loombelukazi inde injalo ukumila, itsho ngeenwele eziyephuyephu ezixubileyo, nezicwangciswe zaphothwa zayokuwela ngapha kwamagxa. Wawungetsho ukuba kanti izele isixhenkxe sonke seentsana kwiminyaka edlulileyo. Inkangeleko yayo yayinga ngumfazana oselula. “Ungakulundi de kuphole oku kutya!”

Wabuliswa livumba leplanteni eqhotsiweyo namaqanda abilisiweyo esangena kwikhitshana lalomzi wabo waselalini. Wamanga wamthi munxu esidleleni wamncumela umkakhe. Umfana oncedisayo wamhlangabeza ngokukhawuleza umqeshi wakhe uAlpha, wamothula loomthwalo wesaka elisindayo.

“Bhota Mnumzana”. UAlpha wagragrama ukuphendula, engatyhilekanga ncam. uSheka waye ngumncedisi-khayeni omde, obhityileyo. Okhutheleyo noxa wayengumnyebelelana. Ozimiseleyo nangona wayekwayingxaki. UAlpha walibukela eli tyendyana ligalela iimbotyi zekofu esityeni lisiya kuzihlamba phandle. USheka wakha iemere yamanzi kwemimnye yemiphanda emikhulu kumabala akwa Alpha. Iinkonkxa zeoli esetyenziselwa ukubilisa amanzi nokupheka zazihleli zinzi ndawonye nemiphanda leyo, zikhangeleka okwabantu abathinzileyo.

“Hlukana nalo mfana!” Watsho uJeneba, ekrwaqula owakwakhe phambi koba achophe kwisihlalo sakhe etafileni. Warhabula ikofu yakhe ngononophelo nozinzo. “Uyamazi uzilungele lomfana: usebenza kakuhle aph’ endlini, awabethe acoceke amabala – akukho sidingo sakumhlupha. Kunjalo nje ukuhloniphile!

“Undihloniphile?” Wadwanduluka ebuza uAlpha. “Akukho ntlonipho ngandawo ekuthatheni into engeyoyakho.” Watsho ehlaba enye yeeplanteni eziqhotsiweyo ezisesityeni sakhe ngefolokhwe, phambi koba ayitye. Wakhomba owakwakhe ngefolokhwe, “Ukuba la nkwenkwe ibingesosizalwane sakho, ngendayigxotha kudala kwam!”

Kodwa wazi njani ukuba nguye, sthandwa sam? Baninzi abantu abaphuma bengena kulo mzi, andithi? Abantwana bethu beza nabazukulwana rhoqo xa besingise emisebenzini yabo edolophini. Sikwanabo nabanye abantu abancedisayo, abakwa zizizalwane zethu–” UAlpha wazihlekahlekisa, “Uxolele ukumthethelela? Uyazazi ungulo usoloko eshiya imali ithe sa kulent’ alendlu. Rhoqo uba uvela emarike, ushiya imali kwigumbi langasese, kumagumbi okulala naphi na – imali engeyoyakhe!”

"Kodwa asiyazi uba nguye–"

Wamnqamla uAlpha, "Andizunyamezela obu buhedeni emzini wam! Yhini le! Lantwana ithatha kwanto iyibobayo. Seyivela kuxelwa kubavangeli ngoogxa bayo esikolweni ngezityholo zokuba amaphepha namakhandlela. Aba bavangeli ndisebenza ndithandaze nabo mihla le. Isekwa ngabo naba bandinika umsebenzi onesidima ekumele ndiwulondolozile. Asoze ndiyeke lo mzi uhlazeke ngenxa yongantweni wenkwenkwe!

UJeneba waphendula ngomkhulu u'Mnxim', engayithatheli ntweni lentetho. "Iyawa nguwe nale cawe yakho!"

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Kwasekudlule iiveki zaliqela benaloo ncoko uAlpha nomkakhe ngala ntsasa. Ngobusuku obuthile obufudumeleyo, uAlpha wayehleli phambi kwendlu, eguqulela iBhayibhile kulwimi lenkobe laloo lali yakubo, weva ngengxolo esuka ngasendlini. Kwadlula imizuzwana engayinakanga, ethe chu ukubhala ivangeli kwincwadana yakhe, yade ingxabano yaqatsela, kwanzima nokusebenza ngenxa yengxolo esuka endlini. Wagqwashula ukuyokungena endlini, nalapho ingxolo yayivakala isuka ngasemva.

"Kwenzeka ntoni?" Wabuza edikiwe. "Yingxolo yani le?" UJeneba wayesele ebambelele ngezandla esinqeni macala, engatyhilekanga nasebusweni. Ecaleni kwakhe kwakume iintombi ezimbini ezibasebenzelayo, zijongeka zikhathazekile. USheka wayeme kufuphi nesi sithathu, suka wanqunyelwa linqathe akubona uAlpha, wamhlophe okwesidumbu luvalo.

Yaxela kwaoko enye yezo ntombi, itsho ngelizwi elithintithayo luloyiko, "Uyithathile! Kudala esiba imali lo, Mnumzana!" Waphika kwaoko uSheka. "Thul' ufe! Akhange ndithathe nto mna!"

UJeneba waqhwaba izandla exakene nento, "Maside sifikelele esiphelweni salento. Nanku esithi ukubobile usiba imali, wena uyaphika. Yhi, Sheka?" amehlo akhe ayemthe ntsho umzala wakhe, enga athi 'Nceda uthi kuyaphazanywa, asinguwe lo wenze lento.'

UAlpha wathatha amanyathelo angephi, we zinzi phambi kwentombi yesibini, neyayizithulele. "Thetha inyaniso: ubone ntoni?" Yamjonga, yothukile, yajongisa amehlo ayo phantsi intombi. "Ndijonge utheth' uvakale!" wayingxolisa uAlpha.

Yaginya ingwiqi intombi, yacacisa isoyika injalo, “Kunjalo, Bawo. Nguye uSheka. Ndimbone ngokwam ekhupha imali kwisipaji sikaMam’ uJeneba, ngexa yena uMa ebevela emarikeni. Ndaphinda ndambona uSheka ethatha imali uMa ebeyishiye etafileni kwigumbi langasese.” intombi yakewaqula uAlpha, yadlulisela iliso kumphathikazi ways phambi koba ijongise intloko phantsi isenziwa ziintloni.

UAlpha wamthi ndwanya umkakhe, “Uyabona? Wazisa lomgulukudu wenkwenkwe apha, jonga ke ngoku!”

UJeneba waphefumla, ephoxekile yinyani eyayisanda kuvela. Wayemazi uAlpha indlela awayengagungqi ngayo xa efuna ukuvakalisa inqaku. Emva kweminyaka yokuqeqesha esohlwaya ngendlela erhabaxa kubantwana babo ababebakhulise kunye yonke leminyaka, wayengazukwenza ngakumbi kuSheka. Loonto ayizange imthintele ekumnqandeleni umzala wakhe. “Khawukahle, Alpha–”

“Uzumele ecaleni, Jeneba. Andifuni kuva nto kuwe!” Wanyikinya intloko yakhe, ejiwuzisa izandla phezulu ukunqamla iinzame zowakwakhe zokuthomalalisa umsindo wakhe.

UAlpha wayalela iintombi uba zingene endlini, zaya zibaleka phofu zakroba ngeefestile singabhaqwe mntu. Iliso lomnini-mzi lajamela uSheka zisuka. Wasuka apho wayemi khona ukuze abe ujongene naye nqwa umenzi-bubi. Wayethe folokohlo amagxa uSheka, namely echiphiza iinyembezi.

“Ndixelele ngalomzuzu: kuyinyani endikuvayo?”

USheka wayequkumbise intloko elusizana.

“Ewe Bawo. Ndiyaxolisa, Bawo.”

“Ube kumfazi wam, lo ungunyoko kuwe, ze waphika xa ekubuza, akunjalo?”

Ithontsana elinye leenyembezi lasuka emehlweni kaSheka lawela emhlabeni ladibana nothuli.

“Ewe Bawo. Ndiyaxolisa Bawo”

Endaweni yokumyalela ayokukha uswazi kweminye yemithi yemango eyayikufuphi, okanye ukuthi makamphathele elinye lamabhanti akhe enziwe ngofele ahlala kwigumbi lake lokulala, uAlpha wakhomba enye yeenkonkxaa zeoli ezihlala ndawonye nemiphanda yamanzi, ngelithi, “Ndiphathele inkonkxa yeoli.” USheka wathandabuza ephatha kujonga iinkonkxa abuye ajonge uAlpha ngomkhulu umothuko. “Hamba!”

“Kulungile, Bawo.” USheka waya kuphakamisa esondeza enye yeenkonkxa. Ioli etshisayo yayivakala iguntyuza phakathi kwaloonkonkxa yenkcenkce nogama eyixwayile esondela nayo kuAlpha. UJeneba, nowayebukele engangenanga ndlini, wazama ukucenga umyeni wakhe ngelithi makayixolele lenkwenkwe. “Oh yhini, Alpha. Myeke, akasoze aphinde!”

UAlpha akazange amnake unkosikazi wakhe, suka wathi kuSheka makakhuphe izandla zozibini akhongozele.

“Ngxe, Bawo! Ndicela uxolo.”

UAlpha wadidiyala ioli ezandleni zika Sheka, wachola ukhuni emhlabeni. Wasondela kwimbiza ebilayo eyayineenkukhu ezazixhelwe emini. Loombiza yayixhathiswe ngamatye amakhulu amathathu, ngaphantsi kwawo kuvutha umlilo. Watshisa ukhuni wabuyela nalo kuSheka livutha. Zange aphozise maseko, suka watshisa izandla zaloomfana. Wasitsho esofelweyo uSheka. Wongamela umlilo usoja inyama, zavutha zatsha izandla zomzala ka Jeneba, umlilo utsho ngamadangatye avutha okwalo wakwamtyholi, esihogweni ke ukutsho. Wagxwala engayeki umfana, ephekuzisa izandla phantsi naphezulu ngeenzame zokucima loomlilo. UJeneba wayevakala ekhuza ngelizwi elitsholo ezantsi, nogama uAlpha wayepholile engavakalelwa, nto leyo yenza uAlpha agcume ziintlungu zokutsha. Wajulwa nge emere yamanzi, kwabekwa enye phambi kwakhe ukuze azithi nkxu izandla zakhe, aziphosize.

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Kwaqengqeleka iminyaka eliqela, uAlpha no Jeneba de balandulela elimiweyo. NoSheka wakhula wamdala, waqala bomi butsha elalini ethe qelele ngeemayile ezingamakhulu amahlanu. Wayengummi wase Melika, nalapho wayesebenza ekhulisa usapho lakhe. UMfazi wakhe wayesanda kumzalela unyana, nawayembona nje ngendlela kaThixo yokuphendula imithandazo yakhe. Kwakukudala efuna ukuba nonyana. Wabukela owakwakhe encancisa loomveku ekhuseni, emva kweeyurana ezingephi eyibeleke nzima. USheka wakhukhumala lilunda xa umdlezana emnika usana alubambe. Walubamba ngocoselelo ngezandla zakhe ezazimanxena-nxeba, sibalisa isohlwayo esafunyanwa nguyise wosana ngobusuku obuthile kwa Alpha. Usana lakrobisa ubuswana ngaphaya kwetyali yalo, amehlwana esacimele.

Unkosikazi kaSheka wayebukele ngobubele, wajonga umyeni wakhe ehleka.

“Sendilazi igama ozakumthiya lona,” watsho eqinisekile.

“Nakanjani”, wangqina uSheka. “NguAlpha.”