Kwaqala ngomdlwane

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"Indaba, indaba, bandla Gogo, sicela usixoxele indaba," kuncenga uNeo. UBella wamamatheka wavuma ngekhanda.

"Yebo, siyakucela bandla," kusho u-Afrika owayegone kuGogo.

Wahleka uGogo. "Kulungile," kusho yena, "ake nginixoxele indaba yokuthi naba abangani kanjani. Ngabe niyazi ukuthi kwaqala ngomdlwane?"

UNeo wavuma ngekhanda. UBella wamamatheka wathi, "Sixoxele, sixoxele." UGogo wabe eseqala ukuxoxa indaba.

Ngobunye ubusuku, esikhathini esingekudala kakhulu, kwakukhona umdlwane owawuzula unuka imigqomo owawufika kuyo. Wawulambile futhi ulahlekile. Wawungazi ukuthi uyaphi kodwa wawazi ukuthi akunalutho esiswini sawo futhi udinga ukudla!

"Umdlwane wabantu, bandla," kusho u-Afrika.

Kodwa kwakungekho kudla eduze kwemigqomo. Umdlwane wawukhalela phansi. Wawudinga ukudla nokuthola indawo yokulala efudumele. Wawehla ngomgwaqo. Kwakukhona izindlu eziningi kodwa ezinye zazo zazinezinja ezinkulu ezaziwukhonkotha ziwuvezele namazinyo azo. Wawesaba kakhulu.

Kwase kuthi, ngasekugcineni komgwaqo, wabona indlu encane eyayingenazinja ezinkulu egcekeni. Yayinezibani ezikhanya ngaphakathi futhi yayibukeka ifudumele, inobungani, ngakho umdlwane waya kuyo.

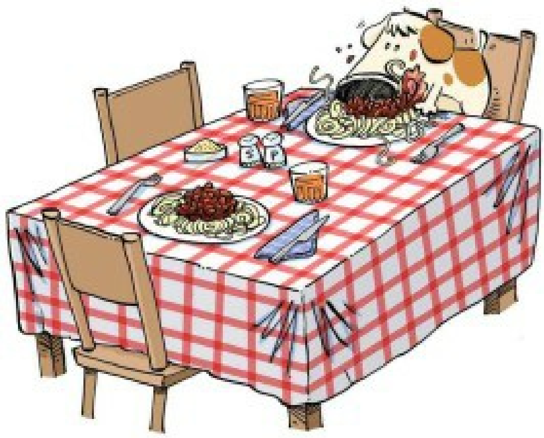
Ngesikhathi usondela kuyo wezwa iphunga elimnandi. Isicabha sangaphambili sasivuliwe, ukwazi ukubona ngaphakathi. Wabona intombazanyana ifunda incwadi. Yayihleka ngesikhathi ibuka izithombe.

"Sekuyisikhathi sokudla kwakusihlwa," umdlwane wezwa kumemeza iphimbo elipholile, elinobungani. Wawubuka ngesikhathi umama wentombazane ebeka amapuleti ama-noodles etafuleni. "Ngizolanda ipuleti lami ne-sauce. Geza izandla zakho ngokushesha," kusho owesifazane ngesikhathi ebuyela ekhishini. Intombazanyana yaphuthuma ekamelweni lokugezela.

Leso kwakuyisikhathi esasilindelwe umdlwane. Wagulukudela phakathi, wagxumela

esitulweni, wazitika ngama-noodles afudumele, amnandi asepuletini wawashaya wawabhuqa. Wase uphuma ngesicabha esivuliwe ngokukhulu ukushesha wayocasha phandle.

“Hawu Mama,” kumemeza intombazanyana ngesikhathi ihlala etafuleni, “akukho kudla epuletini lami.”



“INI?” Umama wayo waphuthuma ekamelweni. “Kodwa bengikuphakele nje.” Waphenduka wabheka isicabha esivulekile. “Ihe,” kusho yena, “kukhona into noma umuntu ongenile wantshontsha ukudla kwakho.” Wavala isicabha sangaphambili wasikhiya.

Ngaleso sikhathi umdlwane wawusugijime waya engadini engemuva. Wathola isicabha sasekhishini sivuliwe wangena khona. Lonke ikhishi leli laligcwele iphunga elimnandi lokudla. Laphaya etafuleni lasekhishini kwakukhona ibhodwe elikhulu nelinye ipuleti eligcwele ama-noodles. Umdlwane waphinda wagxumela esitulweni futhi wangenela ukudla okwakusepuletini, waqala ukuzitika.

Ngaleso sikhathi kwangena intombazanyana nomama wayo ekhishini.

“Kwenzakalani la?” kumemeza umama wentombazanyana.

Umdlwane wawethuke kakhulu; wabalekela ekhoneni wakhala.

“Sizokwenzani? Ungcole KAKHULU,” kusho owesifazane.

“Ooo,” kusho intombazanyana, “futhi umlomo wakho usagcwele ama-noodles!”

“Vala isicabha,” kusho umama. “Sizodla kuqala bese siwugeza.” Nempela benzenjalo.

“Manje-ke,” kusho uGogo, “ngubani ongaqagela ukuthi bawuqamba bathi ubani umdlwane?”

“UNOODLE!” kumemeza uBella noNeo.

“Yebo,” kusho uGogo. “Pho ngabe niyazi yini ukuthi kwakungobani laba abasendabeni?”

“UBella nomama wakhe,” kumemeza u-Afrika.

“YIMI!” kumemeza uBella. Wahleka uNeo.

“Kodwa ayipheli lapho indaba,” kusho uGogo. “Kwadingeka ukuthi uBella afune umnikazi womdlwane. Uma engamtholi umnikazi, uzobe eseyawugcina umdlwane. Ngakho, ngosuku olulandelayo uBella nomama wakhe bahamba bephuma bengena bebuza ngomdlwane. Kodwa akekho umuntu owayeke wawubona ngaphambilini. Endleleni uBella wahlangana noMme wa Afrika no-…”

“NAMI!” kumemeza u-Afrika.

“Yebo,” kusho uGogo, “ngakho nonke nase nazana noNoodle. Naba abangani kanjalo-ke, uNoodle waba inja kaBella, ngoba wayengenamnikazi.”

“Futhi uyinja enhle kunazo zonke emhlabeni,” kusho uBella.

“Kanti futhi singabangani abahle ukudlula bonke emhlabeni,” kusho uNeo.