



# Nalibali

It starts with a story...

## Family matters

Young children learn to read and write easily when they know that reading and writing are useful and enjoyable activities. For this to happen, they need lots of experiences with stories and books. You can help them by:

- Telling stories:** Tell stories to stimulate children's imagination and develop their language. Listen to *their* stories too, and show your appreciation! Once children realise that stories are also found in books, they start wanting to read for themselves.
- Sharing books:** Just 10 minutes a day with a good storybook can make a big

For more information on reading to children as well as how to read to children of different ages, go to [www.nalibali.org](http://www.nalibali.org)

Ukuthola ulwazi olubanzi ngokufundela izingane kanye nokuthi uzifundela kanjani izingane ziminyaka ehlukene, yiya ku: [www.nalibali.org](http://www.nalibali.org)

difference. Good readers in class are often the ones who read with family and friends after school.

- Be encouraging:** Value early reading and writing attempts just like you valued your baby's first words! Young children are only just beginning to read and write and they need lots of support to develop their confidence. Listen to their pretend reading, and pretend to read what they have written. They need to behave like readers and writers to *become* readers and writers.
- Write and read:** Allow your child to see you go about your daily activities that involve reading and writing. Let them

watch you writing shopping lists and letters and reading timetables, letters and newspapers.

- Use your home language:** First stories should be in children's home languages. A strong foundation in a child's home language is the basis for all successful learning, because to learn well, we need to understand well. When children know their home language well, they can learn other languages (as well as reading and writing) more easily.
- Getting books:** Books are expensive to buy, so join a library – and use it! The librarians are there to help you.

[www.nalibali.org](http://www.nalibali.org)

## Eziqondene nomndeneni

Izingane ezincane zifunda (learn) ukufunda (to read) nokubhala kalula uma zazi ukuthi ukufunda kanye nokubhala yizinto ezizusizo nezijabulisayo. Ukuze lokhu kwenzeke, kumele zithole isipiliyoni kakhulu ngokuxoxelwa izindaba kanye namabhuku. Ungazisiza ngokwenza okulandelayo:

- Ukuzixoxela izindaba:** Xoxa izindaba ukuvusa uqgqozi lwezingane ukuba nobuqambi kanye nokuthuthukisa ulimi lwazo. Lalela izindaba zazo nawe kanye nokukhombisa ukuzijabulela! Uma izingane ziqaphela ukuthi izindaba zitholakala nakumabhuku, ziqala ukufunda ukuzifundela.
- Ukwabelana ngamabhuku:** Imizuzo elishumi (10) nje ngosuku nebuku lendaba elimnandi kwenza umehluko omkhulu. Abafundi abahle eklasini bavamise ukuba yilabo abafunda nemindeneni kanye nabangani babo nalapho isikole siphumile.
- Khuthaza:** Thatha ukufunda nemizamo yokubhala njengento ebaluleke ngokufanayo namagama okuqala ingane yakho ewakhulumayo! Izingane ezincane zisaqala ukufunda nokubhala kanti futhi zidinga ukusekelwa kakhulu ukuthuthukisa

ukuzethemba kwazo. Lalela noma zilingisa ukufunda, kanti nawe lingisa ukufunda lokho ezikubhalile. Kumele ziziphathe njengabafundi nababhali ukuze zibe ngabafundi nababhali.

- Bhala nokufunda:** Yenza ukuthi ingane yakho ikubone wenza imisebenzi yansuku zonke ebandakanya ukufunda nokubhala. Yenza ukuthi zikubone ubhala uhla lwezinto oyoziithenga kanye nokubhala izincwadi kanye nokufunda uhla lwezikhathi zokwenziwa komsebenzi, ukufunda izincwadi kanye namanyuziphepha.
- Sebenzisa ulimi lwasekhaya:** Izindaba zokuqala izingane ezixoxelwa zona kumele zibe ngolimi lwasekhaya. Isakhelo esiqinile ngolimi lwasekhaya lwengane yisisekelo sakho konke ukufunda ngempumelelo, ngoba ukufunda kahle, kumele siqondisise kahle. Uma izingane zazi kahle ulimi lwasekhaya, zikwazi ukufunda ezinye izilimi (kanye nokufunda nokubhala) kalula.
- Ukuthola amabhuku:** Amabhuku ayabizwa ukuwathenga, ngakho-ke joyina ilayibrari – kanti futhi uyisebenzise! Abasebenzi baselayibrari (librarians) bazokusiza.



Wina!

Yiya ekhasini lika-7 ukuthola ukuthi ningaziwinela kanjani ilayibrari encane yenani lika-R25 000!

Win!

Turn to page 7 to find out how to win a mini-library worth R25 000!



Dreaming big for our children  
Ukuba namaphupho amakhulu ngezingane zethu



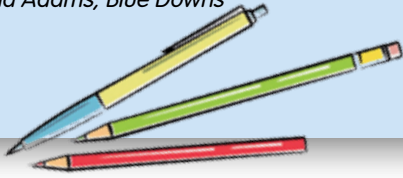
It starts with a story...



Hi Na'ibali

Thanks so much for the reading and story tips! I've started to read to my children, who are 2 and 4 years old, every night after supper. At bath time I tell them a story too. It's amazing – they can't get enough stories!

Shakeela Adams, Blue Downs



Dear Na'ibali

Ngiyithandile indaba kaSefudi ngisho noma ibijabhisa. Umamkhulu wami washona ngineminyaka eyisikhombisa (7) kanti lokho kwangenza ngajabha kakhulu. Indaba yakho ingenze ngaqondisa ngokujabha kwami. Manje sengiyabhala kunokudweba njengoSefudi! Ngiyabonga.

Nozi Nkoli, 13, Pimville

Dear Na'ibali...  
Na'ibali othandekayo...

Write to  
Na'ibali at PO Box  
1654, Saxonwold, 2132 or  
letters@nalibali.org

Bhalela ku-Na'ibali e: PO Box  
1654, Saxonwold, 2132 noma  
letters@nalibali.org



## ★ Story stars...

The Vulindlela Reading Club in Langa was started in December 2006. Over the years it has grown in size and is so well-known in Cape Town that many of the club members travel quite a distance to attend. This club planted the seed for what has grown into the Na'ibali initiative in South Africa! We asked, Xolisa Guzula and Ntombizanele Mahobe, who started the club, a few questions.

**Q: How many children are there at the club?**

A: There are between 80 and 120 children. Many of the children come from Langa but there are quite a few who live in other parts of Cape Town. Some of the children have been coming since the club started 5½ years ago!

**Q: How old are the children?**

A: Between the ages of 2 and 16.

**Q: How often, when and where do you meet?**

A: We meet at St Louis Primary School in Langa for two hours every Saturday morning.

**Q: Who helps at the club and what do they do?**

A: A group of adults plays games, sings songs, tells and reads stories, and writes with the children. We are all volunteers so we are not paid for the services we provide. Some of the adults who help are parents. Others are community members, teachers and students. It really is a case of a whole village raising its children!

**Q: What languages do you use?**

A: isiXhosa and English

**Q: How did you grow the club?**

A: The children who came to the club and teachers from their schools spoke to others about the club. The children also brought siblings and friends with them to join.

**Q: What do you aim to achieve at the club?**

A: We want to create a place where children can explore books and stories, and experiment with writing. (This helps them to develop as readers and writers.) We focus on just enjoying reading and writing with adults who care about children and are passionate about stories, reading and writing.



Esa Alexander



Want to read more about the Vulindlela Reading Club or nominate someone you know as a story star? Go to [www.nalibali.org](http://www.nalibali.org) and check out our story stars section.

## ★ Ongcweti bezindaba

Vulindlela Reading Club ese-Langa yasungulowa ngoDisemba 2006. Ngokuhamba kweminyaka isikhulile kanti yaziwa kakhulu e-Cape Town kangangokuba amalunga e-club ahamba ibanga elide ukuza emihlanganweni. I-club yatshala imbewu yalokho manje esakwaziwa njengomkhankaso weNa'ibali eNingizimu Afrika! Sibuze, uXolisa Guzula kanye no-Ntombizanele Mahobe, abaqala i-club imibuzo embalwa.

**Ngabe zingaki izingane ezikwi-club?**

Kunezingane eziphakathi kuka 80 no 120. Izingane eziningi zibuya eLanga, kodwa kukhona izingane ezimbalwa ezihlala kwezinye izingxenye ze-Cape Town. Ezinye zalezi izingane zaqala ukuza kwi-club lapho isaqala eminyakeni emihlanu nohafu eyedlule!

**Zineminyaka emingaki izingane?**

Ziphakathi kweminyaka engu 2 ukuya ku 16.

**Nihlangana kangaki, nini kanti futhi kuphi?**

Sihlangana e-St Louis Primary School eLanga amahora amabili njalo ngemiGqibelo.

**Ngobani abasiza kwi-club kanti futhi basiza ngani?**

Iqembu labantu abadala badlala imidlalo, bacule amaculo, baxoxe kanye nokufunda izindaba kanye nokubhala nezingane. Sonke singamavolontiya ngakho-ke asikhokhelwa ngesikwenzayo. Abanye babantu abadala abasizayo ngabazali. Abanye ngamalunga emiphakathi, othisha kanye nezitshudeni. Yisibonelo sangempela sokuthi wonke umphakathi ukhulisa izingane!

**Ngabe nisebenzisa ziphi izilimi?**

IsiXhosa ne-English (IsiNgisi)

**Nalikhulisa kanjani i-club?**

Izingane ezeza kwi-club kanye nothisha abavela kwizikole bakhuluma nabanye nge-club. Izingane zenza nabafowabo nodadewabo kanye nabangani bazo ukuzojoyina.

**Nizimisele ukufezekisa ziphi izinhloso nge-club?**

Sifuna ukwenza indawo lapho izingane ezithola khona ulwazi ngamabhuku nezindaba kanye nokuqala ukuzama ukubhala. (Lokhu kwenza ukuthi zithuthuke njengabafundi kanye nababhali.)

Sigxila nje ekujabuleleni ukufunda kanye nokubhala nabantu abadala abathanda izingane kanti futhi abanogqazi lokuxoxa izindaba, ukufunda nokubhala.

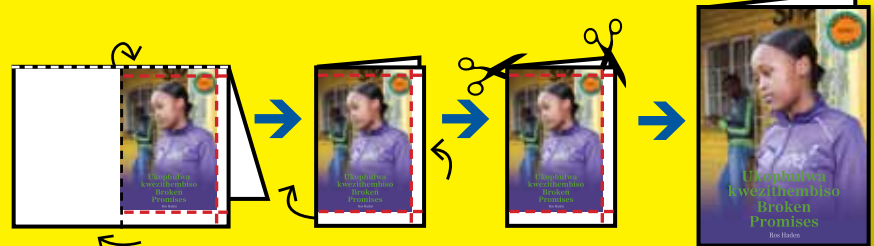
Ngabe ufuna ukufunda kabanzi nge-Vulindlela Reading Club noma ukuqoka omunye umuntu omaziyo njengomuntu othanda ukuqala ukuxoxa indaba? Ngena kwi-[www.nalibali.org](http://www.nalibali.org) ebese uhlolela isigaba sabaqali bezingxoxo zezindaba.

### Create your own mini-book

1. Take out pages 3 to 6 of this supplement.
2. Fold it in half along the black dotted line.
3. Fold it in half again.
4. Cut along the red dotted lines.

### Zenzele ibhukwana lakho

1. Khipha ikhasi 3 ukuya ku 6 kulolu shicilelo.
2. Lisonge libe nguhafu lapho kunomugqa (ulayini) wamachashaza amnyama khona.
3. Lisonge libe nguhafu futhi.
4. Sika lapho kunomugqa wamachashaza abomvu khona.



## Get story active!

After you and your children have read *Two* on page 8, try out some of these ideas.

### If you have 10 minutes...

- Look at pages 2 and 3 of the zig-zag book again. Ask your children: How many bananas can you see? How many butterflies? Why does the boy say "Yum"? What do you think he would do if the dog ate his banana?
- Ask your children to find the red ball in the pictures. In which picture is there no red ball? Where do they think it might be?

### If you have 30 minutes...

- With your children, look at the picture on pages 10 and 11 again and talk about hugs. Why do we hug each other? Who do they like to hug? Who don't they like hugging and why? Now suggest that they draw a picture of someone they like hugging. Help younger children write about their pictures by writing down the words they tell you. Let older children write on their own and encourage them to try to spell words for themselves – even if their spelling is not quite right!
- Say some number rhymes that you know with your children and let them do the actions. Here is one for you to try:

I can knock with two hands,  
Knock, knock, knock!  
I can rock with two hands,  
Rock, rock, rock.



Go to [www.nalibali.org](http://www.nalibali.org) and enter our competition to win a copy of the book, *Knowing you, knowing me*.

Ngena ekhelini elithi: [www.nalibali.org](http://www.nalibali.org) ebese ungenela umncintiswano ukuwina ikhophi yebhuku elisihloko sithi: *Knowing you, knowing me*.

## Bamba iqhaza endabeni!

Uma wena nezingane zakho senifunde indaba ethi: *Owesibili!* ekhasini 8, zama eminye yale mibono.

### Uma unemizuzu engu 10...

- Bhaka ekhasini 2 kanye no 3 lebhuku le-zig-zag. Buza izingane: Ngabe mangaki amabhanana owatholayo? Ngabe kunoverwane abangaki? Ngabe yini umfana ethi: "Kumnandi"? Ngabe ucabanga ukuthi angenzani umainja ingadla ibhanana lakhe?



Illustrated by Nikki Jones  
Izithombe ngu-Nikki Jones

- Cela izingane zakho ukuthola ibhola elibomvu ezithombeni? Ngabe ibhola elibomvu likwisiphi isithombe? Ngabe zicabanga ukuthi likwisiphi?

### Uma unemizuzu engu 30...

- Wena nezingane zakho, bhakani esithombeni ekhasini lika 10 nelika 11 futhi ebese nikhuluma ngokwengana noma ukusingathana. Kungani sengana noma sisingathana? Kungani bethanda ukusingathana? Ngobani abangathandi ukusingathana futhi kungani? Manje phakamisa ukuthi zidwebe isithombe somuntu ezithanda ukusingathana. Siza izingane ezincane ukubhala ngezithombe zazo ngokubhala amagama ezikutshela wona. Nikeza izingane ezindala ithuba lokuzibhalela ngokwazo kanye nokuzikhuthaza ukuthi zipelete amagama ngokwazo – ngisho noma ukupeleta kwazo kungeyikho ncamashi!

- Yisho izinombolo ezihambisana nezigi ezithile ozaziyo nezingane zakho ebese uzicela ukuthi zenze isenzo esihambisana nalokho. Nazi ezinye ongazizama:

Ngingangqongqoza ngezandla ezimbili,  
Koko, koko, koko!  
Ngingashushuzela ngezandla ezimbili,  
Shu, shu, shu.



## Win a mini-library worth R25 000!



Our wonderful sponsors have donated books so that we can give away fine mini-libraries. If you live in the Western Cape, Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal or Gauteng, you stand a chance of winning one of these mini-libraries for your reading club or school.\* SMS NALIBALI followed by your name, the name of your reading club or school, address and contact number to 32545. SMSs cost R1. Closing date: 31 July 2012

\* Terms and Conditions apply.

Go to [www.nalibali.org/supplements](http://www.nalibali.org/supplements) for more details.

## Wina ilayibhrari encane yenani lika-R25 000!

Abaxhasi bethu abayisimanga banikezele ngamabhuku ukuze sinikeze ngamalayibrari amancane amahlanu. Uma uhlala eNtshona Kapa, eMpuma Kapa, eKwaZulu-Natal noma eGauteng, unethuba lokuwina i-club yenu yokufunda noma isikole elinye lamalayibrari amancane.\* Thumela i-SMS yegama elithi: NALIBALI ulandelelise ngegama lakho, igama le-club yenu yokufunda noma isikole, ikheli kanye nenombolo yokuxhumana ukuthumele kwinombolo ethi: 32545. I-SMS ibiza u-R1. Usuku lokuvala ngumhla ka: 31 Julayi 2012

\* Kukhona imibandela nezimo ezisetshenziswayo.

Yiya kwi [www.nalibali.org/supplements](http://www.nalibali.org/supplements) ukuthola imininingwane ebanzi.

CAMBRIDGE

OXFORD

PEARSON

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### In your next Nal'ibali supplement:

- Things to think about when you start a reading club
- An interview with a reading club volunteer
- Mini-book, *The little hare*
- The story, *The running shoes*

Can't wait until next week for more reading and story tips, tools and inspirational ideas? Visit [www.nalibali.org](http://www.nalibali.org) or find us on Facebook: [www.facebook.com/nalibali](http://www.facebook.com/nalibali) or [www.facebook.com/nalibalireadingclubs](http://www.facebook.com/nalibalireadingclubs)



Find us on Twitter: @nalibali  
Tholana nathi kwi-Twitter: @nalibali

### Kushicilelo lwakho olulandelayo lwe-Nal'ibali:

- Izinto okumele nicabange ngazo lapho niqala i-club lokufunda
- Ukuxoxa nokubuzwa imibuzo kwivolontiya le-club yokufunda
- Ibhukwana *The little hare* (Unogwaja omncane)
- Indaba, *The truth tree* (Isihlahla seqiniso)

Ngizilindele ngamehlo abomvu izindaba kanye nezaluleko zendaba ngeviki elizayo, ukuthola izinto ezizusizo kanye nemibono efakela ugqozi? Vakashela ekhelini elithi: [www.nalibali.org](http://www.nalibali.org) noma usibheke kwi: Facebook: [www.facebook.com/nalibali](http://www.facebook.com/nalibali) noma ku: [www.facebook.com/nalibalireadingclubs](http://www.facebook.com/nalibalireadingclubs)



1

**Two!**



**Owesibili!**

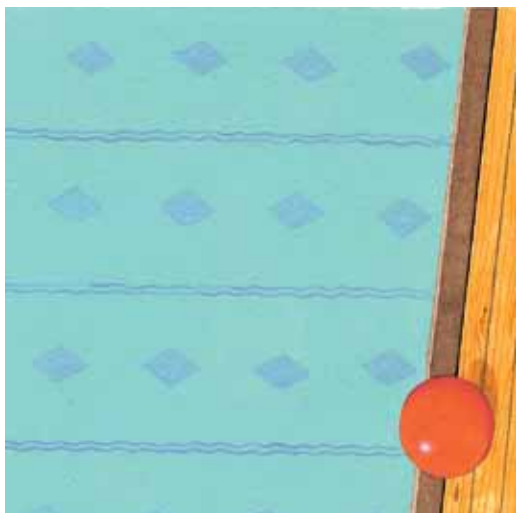
Carole Bloch & Richard MacIntosh

*It starts with a story.*

**LITTLE HANDS**

8

and two loving arms to HUG!



nezingalo ezimbili UKONGA  
(UKUSINGATHA)!

2

**“Yum!”**

FOLD



“Mhmm imnandi!”

7

“Hello, baby!”




“Sawubona muntuza!”

3

Two little hands to hold

FOLD



Izandla ezimbili ezincane  
ukubamba

9


two little ears to hear...



izindletshana ezimbili ezincane  
ukuzwa...

4

Two little feet to kick...



Izinyawana ezincane  
ukukhahlela...

5

two little eyes to see...



amehlwana amabili amancane  
okubona...



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Uma ujabulele ukufunda le sampuli ethi: *Broken Promises*, ngakhoke zi-odele ikhophi yakho manje! Ibhuku libiza u-R70, okubandakanya nemali yokuposela kwikheli lokudiliva eNingizimu Afrika. Okwamanje ibhuku litholakala ngesiNgisi kuphela

Fakela i-oda yakho:

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Ngocingo ku: 021 702 1177

Joyina i-FunDza's mobi iqembu labantu abafundayo ukuze ufunde ngesihloko esithi: *Broken Promises* kanye nezinye izindaba kwiselula yakho!

**I-FunDza imnandi kabi, futhi kulula ukuyijoyina kanti futhi ... KUMAHHALA!**

Okudingayo nje yi-cellphone!

**Zixhumanise!**

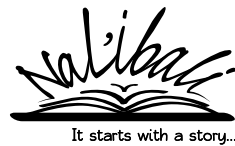
Vakashela i-FunDza's mobi site (itholakala nge-Inthanethi kanye ne-cellphone):

[www.fundza.co.za/mobi](http://www.fundza.co.za/mobi)

Noma xhumana ne-portal ye-FunDza's Mxit:

Mxit > TradePost > Mxit Reach > mobiBooks > FunDza

Nal'ibali is a national reading-for-enjoyment initiative to get people in South Africa – children and adults – passionate about telling and reading stories. For more information, visit [www.nalibali.org](http://www.nalibali.org).



Nal'ibali umkhankaso kazwelonke wokujabulela ukufunda ukwenza ukuthi abantu baseNingizimu Afrika – izingane nabantu abadala – babenogqozi lokuxoxa kanye nokufunda izindaba. Ukuthola ulwazi olunabile, vakashela e: [www.nalibali.org](http://www.nalibali.org).

Teen-read  
Ezingafundwa  
yintsha



# Ukwephulwa kwezithembiso Broken Promises

Ros Haden



"Ntombi, I'm going out."

"Mama, you can't. It's the third time this week and I've got ..." But before Ntombi could finish her sentence her mother was already giving her a list of things to do while she was at Thabiso's Tavern.

"There's some money left for you and Zinzi. Make sure Zinzi does her homework – and don't let her stay up too late! How do I look?" She did a twirl in the middle of the living room. Ntombi looked at the silver top and new jeans her mother was wearing and her heart sank. They were yet another gift from her mother's new boyfriend, Zakes. Every time he went out with her mother he gave her something – but there was never enough money left over to buy something for her or her sister. He never had anything for them except for his unwanted 'words of advice'. Words that made Ntombi want to throw something at him. Cruel, mean, words.

"You girls will never get boyfriends looking like that. Why don't you do something to your hair? You look like village moegoes. No, what you need is to go to the hairdresser, get some braids."

With what money? thought Ntombi, but she knew if she questioned him out loud, he would get angry and her mother would only take his side. She was forever saying, "Now don't upset Zakes," or "He's only teasing; don't be so sensitive," or, even worse: "Maybe you should take his advice. You know he's a very successful businessman." And once when she was really mad, she shouted at Ntombi: "He is my boyfriend and you must respect him. His word is law!" Their mother had become a stranger. Ntombi wanted her old mother back.

Even when it was just the three of them it wasn't the same. Zakes still messed things up between them. "What does he do?" Ntombi asked her mother on one of the few nights that her mother was home these days.

But her mother had looked unsure and started picking at her nail polish. "He's in business..." she said uncertainly.

"What kind of business?" Ntombi wasn't going to let her mother off the hook so easily.

"I don't know. He's a car dealer, a sales rep." Her mother sat up on the bed, where they had

been lying. "Anyway why all the questions? Are you the police?" Her mood had changed and she was glaring at Ntombi. "All I care about is that he treats me good, and that he's got a good job. You've seen the way he dresses, and the car he drives."

"Mama, you used to tell me those things didn't matter. You used to tell me it was what was inside that mattered. You told me you married Dad for love..."

"And look where that got me!" her mother interrupted. "I don't see him in this room. Do you?" That was the end of the conversation. Her mother had got up and gone through to watch a soapie on TV.

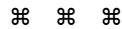
⌘ ⌘ ⌘

Ntombi didn't trust Zakes one bit. He was a fake through and through. And what was worse, she didn't like the way her mother acted when he was around. Like she was their older sister, competing over guys, rather than their mother who should be looking after them, giving them good advice, and protecting them from men like Zakes.

When her dad left a year ago, just after her fourteenth birthday, her mother was very sad, but at least they still felt like a family. They cuddled up on the couch together and watched Bold, and laughed and cried together. And then, one day, Mama came home from the rich private school where she worked cooking lunches, and told them she was going out that evening. The kitchen staff at the school had persuaded her to join them at Thabiso's Tavern and she thought it might be good for her. Ntombi had helped her choose an outfit: a nice denim skirt, just below the knee, a tight black wraparound top with a white denim jacket. And to top it off, some gold earrings. Mama looked great. She had kissed her mother goodbye and wished her luck. Little did she guess that that night her mother would meet Zakes and their lives would be turned upside down again.

Ntombi knew the first time she saw Zakes, with his gold chains and flash smile that didn't reach his eyes, that he would bring nothing but trouble. Even his car looked like a fake. It had been resprayed and that could mean one of two things: he had been in an accident, or the car was stolen. Things felt wrong when Zakes was in the house. He seemed too big for their small couch, sitting there with his beer, interrupting their conversations with his loud voice. He loved to say things like, "Girls, you are my daughters now. Go fetch another beer for your father."

"Do as he says," their mother would add if they hesitated, as she cuddled closer to her new boyfriend. There was no time for Ntombi or Zinzi when Zakes was around.



"Here." Her mother handed Ntombi a five rand coin from her new gold bag. She smelled of some strong perfume Zakes had bought her. "Buy yourself some sweets at the shop," she said as she rushed out, putting on lipstick as she went.

"Mama, I'm meant to be at singing practice. The competition is next week and..." But her mother was already out of the door and in the seat of Zakes' resprayed BMW with its fluffy dice bouncing from the rearview mirror and couldn't hear her. All she could do was watch as Zakes reversed with a squeal of tyres, and then they were gone.

## Chapter 2

Ntombi looked at the five rand coin in her hand. "What does she think I can buy with five rand?" she thought. One small bag of chips at the spaza, and a small packet of sweets, which she'd have to share with Zinzi. It wouldn't buy her what she really needed – just ten minutes of time with her mother, when they could sit down and watch TV together, or talk, like they used to.

Just then Zinzi came in. She had been playing soccer in the street and her knee was grazed and bleeding. "Where's Mama?" she asked Ntombi.

"Guess," said Ntombi. "It's not that hard."

"Zakes?"

"Where else?"

"I thought you had singing practice this evening?" said Zinzi as she slumped on the couch and dabbed at her cut with a tissue.

"Not any more. Mama said I've got to stay home and look after you."

"I can look after myself."

"You're twelve," said Ntombi, fetching the Dettol from the bathroom and dabbing it on Zinzi's cut.

"Ouch!" Zinzi complained. "Stop it. You're hurting me."

"Don't act like a baby. You don't want it to get worse, do you? Do you want to go to hospital with an infected cut?"

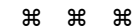
"Why are you in such a bad mood?"

"Wouldn't you be if you were missing a chance to go to the national finals of South Africa's Teen Voice Competition?"

"I thought the judges were only coming next week?"

"They are. But every practice is really important. Mr Masondo says that we have to work hard and make Harmony High proud. Otherwise he won't let us compete."

Ntombi had been chosen, along with ten others at Harmony High, to perform for a panel of talent scouts that was travelling around the country auditioning high school students for the Teen Voice singing competition. If she was chosen out of the ten students from her school then she would go on to the national finals in Jozi. The prize was R10 000 and a recording contract. Ntombi had promised herself that she would work as hard as she could, attend every practice, and go to the nationals. Sometimes she even let herself dream of winning the competition. It would change her life – she would work really hard and produce an album. She'd buy a proper house for her family, and make sure her sister finished school. With the money she could go to university and study to become...



Just then there was the sound of girls laughing outside in the street.

"It's the giraffes," Zinzi said from the couch where she was watching Days on TV. She called Ntombi's three girlfriends the giraffes because they were taller than other girls. In turn, they called Ntombi "shortie", although she was average height. Ntombi opened the door and hugged her friends Busi, Asanda and Lettie. At least she could rely on them for support. Asanda and Lettie had also been chosen to compete in the singing competition and Ntombi could see that they were on their way to the practice. Busi was going along to watch in the

hope of attracting the attention of Unathi, who was also competing. At the last practice she sat in the front row seats in the hall, blowing kisses to Unathi and holding up a big piece of paper with "I love Unathi" painted in lipstick. Unathi had just smiled and waved. Ntombi had told Busi that Unathi had a girlfriend back in Jozi, where he was from, but Busi wouldn't listen. She didn't want to hear.

"Come on, lazy girl," Asanda laughed. "We'll be late." The practice was in the school hall, a taxi-ride away.

"I can't go," Ntombi told them.

"You must be joking!" Lettie said. "What's wrong with you? I thought this was your dream?"

"Mama went out and I have to look after Zinzi."

"You know what this means. Mr Masondo is not going to be pleased."

"I know." Ntombi was close to tears and her friends could see it. Mr Masondo was their singing coach and he was strict. Two missed rehearsals and you were out of the competition.

Asanda gave her a big hug. "Listen, we'll bring you the lyrics back and help you practise. Cheer up. I'll tell Mr Masondo that you got food poisoning." Asanda was the queen of excuses, and with her charm the teachers always believed her.

"Thanks chommies. You're the best." Ntombi tried to smile bravely, but she felt terrible.

"By the way, there's a party on Saturday at Thabiso's Tavern. We're going," Busi said. "Why don't you come? It should be fun. Unathi's going to be there with his cousin from Jozi."

"How many times do I have to tell you Unathi has a girlfriend?" Ntombi despaired of Busi. She really lost her head over boys and forgot who she was – the intelligent and charismatic girl who had a great future if she could just stay focused.

"He's never mentioned her," said Busi. "And anyway evidently his cousin is even better looking, and I've always wanted to go to Jozi. They say the men are hot up there."

"You're going to burn yourself one day," joked Ntombi. "Just be careful."

"Yes, Mama," the girls laughed.

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Ntombi watched as her friends ran down the road to catch the taxi. They were laughing and chatting. She went back inside and shut the door. The girls were right to call her 'Mama' – that's what she was at the moment, and she was only fifteen. It was like her mother and her had swapped roles. The other girls used to complain about their strict mothers and tell Ntombi she was lucky. But Ntombi had noticed they didn't say that anymore, not since Zakes had arrived on the scene. And Ntombi did not want to be a mother. Not for a long time. Not until she had finished studying and definitely not with someone she didn't love and respect!

"I'm hungry," complained Zinzi, who was watching *The Bold and the Beautiful*.

Ntombi wanted to just walk away from the house. But she knew she couldn't.

She put the last bit of mielie meal into the pot. Sometimes she loved porridge for supper. But she was getting tired of it now. Before Zakes, her mother had always made sure that there was enough food in the house for them. It was a struggle on her salary, but she would always cook them a good meal in the evening and they would sit together and chat about the day. She had been sad a lot, but then they also had good times together. They went shopping in town on Saturday at the end of the month when her mother would give them each pocket money to spend. Now she didn't have time for them any more. Ntombi had been telling her how the fridge needed to be fixed (it kept going on and off) and that the drain at the back of the house was blocked again. That's when she really missed her dad. He would have fixed it by now. And where was Zakes when something went wrong in their house – out selling cars?

She served the pap onto plates. "Careful, it's hot," she warned.

"Not this again," complained Zinzi.

"Don't tell me, tell Mama," said Ntombi. "If she's ever here to tell." As they ate, on *Bold*, a soapie star reclined on a lounging chair beside a pool somewhere in America – somewhere hot and lush with lots of money. A butler handed her an ice cold cocktail... she didn't have a care in the world. Her nanny was looking after her kids, and Ntombi knew that her fridge would be brimming with food. Just then there was a sizzling sound and a bang from the back of the TV. The smell of burned plastic filled the room.

"No!" screamed Zinzi. "Not the TV! My life has ended." And she buried her face under a cushion.



“Don’t be such a drama queen!” yelled Ntombi. She went into the bedroom to get away from her sister, before she exploded like the TV. She lay on the bed she shared with Zinzi and started paging through a magazine. But she wasn’t reading the words. She kept thinking of Asanda and Lettie standing on the stage of the school hall, learning the words of that new song, and them all laughing and having fun as they got one step closer to the finals, while she was stuck in this dump with a younger sister who was driving her crazy and not helping one bit around the house.

She looked down at the glamorous pop stars in the mag. Who did she think she was, trying to compete with girls like this? Maybe she was dreaming after all. Maybe Zakes was right. Maybe she didn’t have what it took to be a Teen Voice star. “Why bother entering the competition,” he had said. “These days you have to have the whole package: the looks, the sex appeal and the voice. You’ll only be setting yourself up to be taken down.”

Her dad would never have said those hurtful words. He had told her that he was so proud of her when she had got into the choir at Harmony High. And when he had his employer’s car for a few days he had taken her to practices himself. Once when she wanted to go and get her ears pierced he had said, “Why spoil something so beautiful already?”

Now she didn’t even know where he was, or who he was with. Maybe he had a whole other family somewhere, another daughter, whom he loved now, more than her?



As she lay there she thought of the three promises she had made to herself on New Year’s eve three months ago. First: to enter the singing competition and go all the way to the final. Second: not to go out with a guy unless he was kind and respected her – not like the guy Busi had dated in the holiday, who had seemed the real deal – too good to be true – because he was too good to be true. He was good looking and clever, but he had left her with a broken heart and a broken arm after he had pushed her and she had tripped and fallen hard. If Ntombi and Asanda hadn’t run when they heard her cries from behind the sports shed at school, things might have been a lot worse. But when they appeared Ebenezer had left her and run – a coward at heart.

The third promise was to find her dad and bring him home. There was no way that she was going to let Zakes move in with them and pretend to be their father.

“Ntombi, ngisahamba.”

“Mama, awukwazi ukuhamba. Nakhona okwesithathu kuleli viki, kanti futhi ngine...” Ngaphambi kokuthi uNtombi aqede afuna ukukusho, umama wakhe wasemnikeza uhla lwezinto okumele azenze ngesikhathi yena eseThaveni kaThabiso.

“Kukhona imadlana enginshiyele yona wena noZinzi. Qinisekisa ukuthi uZinzi wenza umsebenzi wakhe wesikole – kanti futhi ubone ukuthi usheshe alale! Ngibukeka kanjani?” Wazisonta-sonta ezungeza phakathi negumbi lokuhlala. UNtombi wabuka itop esabusiliva kanye ne-jean entsha kamama wakhe ayekugqokile, inhliziyo yakhe yashona phansi. Konke lokhu kwakuyizipho zikamama wakhe azinikezwe yisoka lakhe elisha, uZakes. Njalo nje uma bezophuma bahambe nomama wakhe wayemthengela okuthile – kodwa kwakungenamali elingene yokuthengela yena nodadewabo okuthile. Wayengabaniki lutho bona, ngaphandle ‘kwezeluleko zeze’ ababengazidingile. Uzakes wayekhuluma amagama ayemhlaba kabi uNtombi ezwe sengathi angamjikijela ngokuthile ngesikhathi ewasho. Amagama ayisihluku nonya.

“Nina mantombazane, ngeke nithole amasoka uma nibukeka nibabi kanje. Yini ningenzi izinwele zenu zibezinhle? Nibonakala sengathi ningobhari basemaplazini. Hayi, hambani e-salon niyobreyida izinwele.”

Ngayiphi imali? kucabanga uNtombi, kodwa, wayazi ukuthi uma engambuza lokho, wayezothukuthela kanti umama wakhe wayezovunana naye. Wayehlala njalo ethi, “Thulani, ningathukuthelisi uZakes,” noma athi, “Udlala nani nje; musani ukuzwela kangaka,” mhlawumbe kokunye ashokuyisihlungu kakhulu: “Kungani ningathathi iseluleko sakhe. Niyazi ukuthi ungosomabhezini wempumelelo.” Ngesinye isikhathi, lapho ethukuthela, wathethisa uNtombi: “Yisoka lami, futhi kumele nimhloniphe. Okushiwo wuye, kumele nikwenzwe nakanjani!” Umama wabo wayesefana nomuntu abangamazi. UNtombi wayefisa sengathi umama wabo angafana nakuqala.

Ngisho noma kuyibo bobathathu, izinto zazingasafani nakuqala. Uzakes wayesenze izinto zabamuncu phakathi kwabo. “Empeleni wenzani?” UNtombi wabuza umama wakhe ngobunye ubusuku lapho umama wakhe engahambanga, okwasekuyinto engavamile kulezi zinsuku ukuthi abe sekhaya.

Kodwa umama wakhe wabukeka engaqinisekile nakhona waqala ukubamba-bamba upholishi wezinzipho zakhe. “Unehizini...” washo ngokungabaza.

“Ibhizinisi lanhloboni?” UNtombi wayezimisele ukuqhubeka acindezele umama wakhe ngemibuzo.

“Hayi, angazi kahle. Uyi-car dealer, ungumdayisi.” Umama wakhe wasukuma embhedeni, lapho bebekade becambalele khona. “Yini wangibuza amapasi nezipesheli? Ngabe uyiphoyisa?” Umoya kamama wakhe wase ushubile kanti wayegqolozele uNtombi. “Enginendaba nakho, ukuthi ungiphatha kahle, kanti futhi unomsebenzi omuhle. Uyambona nje ngendlela agqoka ngayo, kanye nemoto yakhe.”

“Mama, wawuthanda ukungitshela ukuthi zonke lezo zinto azisho lutho. Wawuthanda ukusho ukuthi okubalulekile okungaphakathi komuntu. Wangitshela ukuthi ubaba wamshadela uthando...”

“Awubheke nje ukuthi kwangisiza ngani lokho!” kusho umama wakhe emvala umlomo engakaqedi akushoyo. “Angimboni ekhona kuleli gumbi esikulo. Wen’uyambona? Kwaba ukuphela kwengxoxo yabo lokho. Umama wakhe wasukuma wahamba wayobukela ama-soapie kwi-TV.

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UNtombi wayengamethembi neze uZakes. Wayembona engumkhohlisi nomlisa mbumbulu. Kanti futhi okubi kakhulu, ukuthi wayengathandi indlela umama wakhe ayeziphatha ngayo lapho ekhona uZakes. Wayeziphatha njengodadewabo omdala, njengababangisana naye amasoka kunokuziphatha njengomama okumele abanakekele, abanikeze izeluleko ezinhle, kanye nokubavikela kubalisa abafana noZakes.

Lapho ubaba wabo ebashiya kuloya nyaka, ngemuva kokuba uNtombi eqede iminyaka engu 14, umama wakhe wayejabhe kakhulu, kodwa babezizwa benjengomndeni. Babehlala bagonane esofeni babukele i-Bold, behleka kanye nokukhala ndawonye. Kwathi ngelinye ilanga, uMama ebuya esikoleni se-private sabazigwili ayesebenza kuso ephaka ilantshi, wabatshela ukuthi uzophuma ngalobo busuku. Asebenza nabo ekhishini esikoleni bamcongobezela ukuthi abajoyine ukuya eThaveni kaThabiso, naye wacabanga ukuthi lokhu kungayinto enhle ukuthi ake aphume nabangani. UNtombi wamsiza ukukhetha impahla ayezoyigqoka: Isiketi se-denim esihle, esasithe ukuba ngaphansi kwamadolo, i-top emnyama, kanye nebhantshi le-denim elimhlophe. Wayesefakela amacici egolide. UMama wakhe wayebukeka emuhle kabi. Waqabula umama wakhe wathi uhambe kahle futhi wamfisele inhlanhla. Kanti wayengazanga ukuthi ngalobo busuku umama wakhe wayezohlanguka noZakes nokuthi impilo yabo izoshintsha ibembi.

UNtombi wavele wambona kwakanye uZakes, ukuthi lomlisa ofaka imigexo yegolide entanyeni, kanye nomoyizela okokuzenzisa, akalungile neze. Ngisho nemoto yakhe yayibukeka iyimoto-mbumbulu. Yayispreyiwe ngopende futhi, kanti lokhu kwakusho izinto ezimbili: ukuthi wayesengozini yemoto, noma imoto yakhe yeyingentshontshiwe. Izinto zazingahambi kahle lapho uZakes esendlini. Wayebonakala emkhulukazi kwisofa yabo encane, ehlezi laphaya nebhiya, ephazamisa ingxoxo yabo ngezwi eliphezulu. Wayethanda ukuthi, “Mantombazane, manje seningamadodakazi ami. Lethelani ubaba wenu enye ibhiya.”

“Sheshisani, yenzani akushoyo,” kungezela umama wabo uma bebonakala sengathi bayangabaza, njengoba yena esondela egonana nesoka lakhe. Wayengenaso isikhathi sikaNtombi noma uZinzi uma uZakes ekhona.

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“Mi, thatha lapha.” Umama wakhe enikeza uNtombi i-R5 yohlweza ayikhipha esikhwameni sakhe sombala osabugolide esisha. Wayenuka i-perfume kakhulu uZakes ayemthengele yona. “Zithengeleni amaswidi esitolo,” washo egijima ephuma endlini, efakela i-lipstic emlonyeni njengoba ephuma.

“Mama, Bekufanele ngiyophrakthiza emculweni. Umqhudelwano ungeviki elizayo kanti futhi...” Kodwa umama wakhe wayesephumile emnyango ehlezi kwi-BMW kaZakes espreyiwe futhi, futhi enedayisi elilenga efasiteleni, kanti futhi akamzwanga ngisho nokumuzwa. Wavela wabukela uZakes ngesikhathi ehlehlisa imoto ngesikhulu isivinini, kwashunqa amathayela emoto kwaba ukunyamalala kwabo lokho.

## Isahluko 2

UNtombi wabheka u-R5 wohlweza esandleni sakhe. “Ucabanga ukuthi ngizothengani ngale-R5, ezicabangela yedwa. Isikhwanyama sama-chips espaza, kanye nephakethe elincane lamaswidi, okumele ngiwadle noZinzi. Yayingeke ithenge lokho ayekudinga ngempela – imizuzo elishumi nje nomama wakhe, lapho ababekwazi ukuhlala phansi babukele iTV ndawonye, noma ukuxoxa njengoba babehlala benza ngesikhathi esedlule.

Kwathi kusenjalo uZinzi wangena. Wayekade edlala ibhola emgwaqeni, kanti wahuzuka edolweni wabuya opha igazi. “Uphi uMama?” ebuza uNtombi.

“Awuqagele nje,” kusho uNtombi. Kulula kabi.



“UZakes?”

“Angabuye abe kuphi?”

“Bengicabanga ukuthi uyophrakthiza emculweni namuhla?” kusho uZinzi njengoba ehlala esofeni esula lapho asikeke khona nge-tissue.

Cha, akusenjalo! UMama uthe ngihlale ekhaya ngigade wena.”

“Ngiyakwazi ukuzinakekela.”

“Uneminyaka elishumi nambili,” kusho uNtombi, elanda iDettol ekhabethini wase esula ngayo lapho uZinzi asikeke khona.

“Ushh!” Kukhalaza uZinzi. “Awukahle. Uyangilimaza.”

“Musa ukutetema njengengane. Ufuna ukuba nesilonda esichichimayo? Ufuna ukuya esibhedlela ngenxa yesilonda esinamagciwane?”

“Wenziwa yini ucasuke kangaka?”

“Ubungeke ucasuke wena ukuba ubuphuthelwa yithuba lokuya kuma-final kazwelonke e-South Africa’s Teen Voice Competition?”

“Bengicabanga ukuthi amajaji aza ngeviki elizayo?”

“Namanje bayeza. Kodwa ukuya ephrakthizini njalo kubalulekile. UMnu Masondo uthi kumele sisebenze kanzima nokwenza isikole sethu iHarmony siziqhenye ngathi. Uma singakwenzi lokho ngeke asivumele siye emqhudelwaneni.”

UNtombi wayekhethwe nabanye abafundi abalishumi base-Harmony High, ukuyocula phambi kwe-panel ehamba ithungatha amathalente abaculi kulo lonke izwe ezikoleni, ukungenela umncintiswano womculo we-Teen Voice. Uma ekhethwe phakathi kwabafundi abalishumi esikoleni sabo, wayezoya kuma-final kazwelonke eJozi. Owinayo wayezothola imali engu-R10 000 kanye nekontraki yokurekhoda. UNtombi wayezithembise ukuthi uzosebenza kanzima kakhulu, aye kuwo wonke amaphrakthizi njalo kanti futhi aze ayofinyelele nakuma-final kazwelonke. Kwesinye isikhathi wayezithola ephupha ezibona ewinile kumncintiswano. Kwakuzoshintsha impilo yakhe – wayezosebenza kanzima akhiqize i-album. Wayezothengela umndenani wabo indlu, aqinisekise nokuthi udadewabo uqeda isikole. Ngemali ayitholayo wayezoya eyunivesithi ayofundela ukuba...

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Kwathi kusenjalo wezwa umsindo wamantombazane ayeheleka ngaphandle emgwaqeni.

“Zindlulamithi,” kusho uZinzi ehlezi esofeni lapho ayebukela khona i-Days kwi-TV. Wayebiza abangani bakaNtombi abathathu ngokuthi zindlulamithi ngoba babebade kunamanye amantombazane. Kanti nabo babebiza uNtombi ukuthi u-“shortie” ngisho noma wayengemfishane kangako. UNtombi wavula umnyango wanga abangani bakhe uBusi, u-Asanda kanye noLettie. Wayebethembile ngokuthi babemsekela. U-Asanda noLettie nabo babekhethelwe ukungenela umncintiswano womculo kanti uNtombi wayebona ukuthi basendleleni yokuyophrakthiza. UBusi wayehamba nabo ukuyozama ukuthi abonwe ngu-Unathi, naye owayesemqhudelwaneni. Kuphrakthizo lwabo olwedlule, wayehleli esitulweni esingaphambili ehholweni, efutha imiqabulo ku-Unathi, kanti futhi ephethe iphepha elikhulu elibhalwe ukuthi “Ngiyakuthanda Unathi” ayelibhale nge-lipstick. Unathi wavele wamoyizela nje wamphakamisela isandla. UNtombi wayetshela uBusi ukuthi u-Unathi unentombi eJozi, lapho ayevela khona, kodwa uBusi wayengenandaba nakho konke lokho engakulaleli. Wayengafuni nakancane ukuzwa.

“Sheshisa ntombazane sihambe, U-Asanda wahleka. “Sizoshiywa yisikhathi.” Iphrakthizi yeyiseholweni lesikole, kwakumele babambe itekisi.

“Angikwazi ukuhamba,” kusho uNtombi.

“Hawu, uyadlala wena!” Kusho uLettie. “Kwenze njani ngawe? Bengicabanga ukuthi leli yiphupho lakho elikhulu?”

“UMama uhambile kumele ngisale ngigade uZinzi.”

“Uyazi ukuthi kusho ukuthini lokhu. UMnu Masondo ngeke akujabulele lokhu neze.”

“Ngiyazi.” UNtombi wase ehlengezela izinyembezi kanti nabangani bakhe babekubona lokhu. UMnu Masondo kwakungukhoshi wabo womculo kanti futhi wayeqinisa isandla kabi. Uma uphuthelwa ngama-rehearsal amabili, wayekukhipha emqhudelwaneni.

U-Asanda wamonga kakhulu. “Lalela la, sizokulethela amaculo ukuze ukwazi ukuphrakthiza. Ungaphatheki kabi. Ngizotshela uMnu Masondo ukuthi uphethwe yisisu kabi siyakuhambisa.” U-Asanda wayenguchwepheshe wamaqhinga, kanti futhi othisha bemkholelwa.

“Ngiyabonga bangani bami. Ningabahlobo bami abakhulu.” UNtombi wazama ukumoyizela ngisho noma inhliziyoyakhe yayibuhlungu.

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UNtombi wabhaka abangani bakhe njengoba begijima emgwaqeni beyogibela itekisi. Babehleka futhi bexoxa. Wabuyela ngaphakathi endlini wavala umnyango. Amantombazane ambiza u'Mama' – ngoba yilokho ayikho okwamanje, kanti wayeneminyaka eyishumi nanhlanu kuphela. Kwakungathi yena nomama wakhe bashintshisane ngezikhundla. Amanye amantombazane ayethanda ukukhalaza ngokuthi omama babo banemithetho eqinile nokuqinisa isandla kubo, babetshela uNtombi ukuthi unenhlanhla ngoba umama wakhe akanjalo. Kodwa uNtombi waqaphela ukuthi babengasakusho lokho, selokhu kwaqhamuka uZakes. Kanti uNtombi wayengafuni ukuba ngumama. Wayengakazimiseli neze ukuba ngumama okwamanje. Wayengafuni ukuba ngumama kuze kube useqedile ukufunda, futhi efuna ukuba ngumama nomuntu oyomthanda nokumhlonipha!

Waphaka iphalishi eputetini. "Qaphela, lisashisa iphalishi", waxwayisa udadewabo.

"Hayi iphalishi futhi," ngikhathele yilo kukhalaza uZinzi.

"Ungatsheli mina lokho, tshela uMama", kusho uNtombi. "Uma ngabe uyoke umbone ngoba akasalali lapha." Badla iphalishi bebukele i-Bold, umdlali wodumo we-soapie ehlezi enethezeka emasofeni eduzane nedanyanga lokubhukuda – endaweni epholile yobukhazi-khazi. U-butler wamlethela isiphuzo esipholile... enethezeka enganake lutho. U-nanny wakhe enake izingane zakhe, kanti uNtombi wayazi ukuthi ifriji lakhe ligcwele liphuphuma ukudla okuzinandi-nandi. Ngaleso sikhathi kwakunomsindo ohlilizayo kanye nokuqhuma ngemuva kwe-TV. Ukunuka kweplastiki kwagcwala lonke igumbi.

"Hayibo!" kukhalaza uZinzi. "Hayi nge-TV! Sekuphelile ngempilo yami." Wacindezela ubuso bakhe kwikhushini.

"Musa ukungicasula mina ngokuzenza isinyenyevu!" kusho uNtombi. Wahamba waya egumbini lokulala ukuze ahlukane nodadewabo, ngaphambi kokuba aqhume ukucasuka kakhulu njenge-TV. Wacambalala embhedeni ayelala kuwo noZinzi, kanti futhi wapheqa amakhasi emamagazini. Kodwa wayengafundi amagama. Wayecabanga ngo-Asanda noLetie bemi esiteji sehholo lesikole, befunda amagama eculo elisha, kanti futhi behleka bejabule njengoba besondela ephupheni labo lokungenela umqhudelwano, kanti yena ebe ecindezeleke kulesi sihogo nodadewabo omncane owayemcasula kakhulu futhi engasizi ngalutho endlini.

Wabhaka izintokazi zikanokusho kumagazini. Ngabe wayecabanga ukuthi ungubani, ukuzuma ukuqhudelana namantombazana angonokusho njengalana? Mhlawumbe kwakuyiphupho nje leli. Mhlawumbe uZakes uqinisile. Mhlawumbe akamuhle ukufaneleka ukuthi abe yinkanyezi ye-Teen Voice. "Yini kumele azikhathaze

ngokungenela umqhudelwano," uZakes wayekade esho kanjalo. "Kulezi zinsuku kumele ube yisicwazi-cwazi nokuba yintokazi enhle ngaphambi kokuthi uthole inhlanhla enjalo: ube muhle, ube yintokazi econsayo kanye nokuba nezwickazi lokucula. Uzophoxeka nje, ngokuzama ukungenela lomqhudelwano."

Ubaba wakhe wayengeke asho lawo magama abuhlungu kangaka. Wathi kuye uyaziqhenya ngaye lapho engenela ikhwaya yase-Harmony High. Kanti lapho enemoto yabaqashi bakhe izinsukwana ezimbalwa, wayemhambisa esikoleni ukuyophrakthiza. Kanti ngelinye ilanga lapho efuna ukuyobhoboza izindlebe zakhe ukufakela amacici, ubaba wakhe wathi, "Kungani ufuna ukona into enhle kangaka, umuhle unjalo nje?"

Kodwa manje, akazi nokuthi ubaba wakhe ukuphi. Mhlawumbe unomunye umndeni aziqalele wona, enye indodakazi, ayithanda kakhulu kunaye?

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Njengoba ecambalele embhedeni, wacabanga ngezithembiso ayezenzele zona ezintathu ngoSuku lokuqala loNyaka ezinyangeni ezintathu ezedlule. Esokuqala: ukungenela umqhudelwano womculo aze ayofinyelele kuma-final. Okwesibili: ukungabi nesoka ngaphandle kokuba kungumuntu ozobanomusa nokumhlonipha – umuntu ongafani nesoka likaBusi ayehlakane nalo ngesikhathi samaholidi, owayebonakala engumuntu omuhle – kanti wayengumkhohlisi. Wayebonakala emuhle futhi ehlakaniphile, kodwa wamephula inhlizyo kanye nokumephula ingalo, ngemuva kokuba emfuqile wakhubeka wawa walimala. Uma uNtombi no-Asanda babengaphuthumanga lapho bezwa ukukhala ngemuva kwebala lomdlalo esikoleni, wayezolimala kabi uBusi. Kwathi lapho uNtombi no-Asanda beqhamuka, u-Ebenezer wagijima wabaleka – igwalandini.

Isithembiso sesithathu kwakuwukuthola ubaba wakhe ambuyise ekhaya. Wayengazimisele neze ukuvumela uZakes azohlala nabo, azenze ubaba wabo.