



Isifo somkhuhlane



Room to Read





UMbuyane usebenza nzima. Usebenza kusukela ekuseni kuze kube sebusuku. Nanoma kumakhaza, akagqoki izimpahla ezifudumalayo. Manje usebambe umkhuhlane. Umkhuhlane omubi. Ugula kakhulu.



UMbuyane ube semakhazeni. Uyachazela futhi uyathimula. Unefiva.

UMbuyane ugula kakhulu.





“Lomkhuhlane uyingozi, uzongibulala,” kusho uMbuyane. “Angikhanuki ukudla. Angikhanuki lutho. Amasotsha ami omzimba abuthakathaka.”





Indvodzana yakhe uManqoba ikhathazekile. “Ubaba akadli futhi akalali. Uyaphenduka”, kusho uManqoba. UManqoba wavuka ekuseni kakhulu, waya entabeni. Wabuya nomuthi i-*Artemisia*. Uzowuphuza yini uMbuyane? UManqoba wawubilisa, wanikeza ubaba wakhe. UMbuyane washaya inkomishi umuthi wacitheka.



“Baba, awufuni ukuphola? Uwucithelani umuthi? Uzowuphila kanjani?” kusho uManqoba.





UManqoba uhlala nobaba wakhe osekhulile.
Umama wakhe usebenza emakhishini edolobheni
abuye ekhaya kanye ngenyanga.

UManqoba washayela umama wakhe ucingo
mayelana nesimo esisekhaya. Umama wameluleka
ukuthi athengele ubaba umuthi womkhuhlane.



UManqoba wagijimela ekhemisi wabuya nomuthi womkhuhlane.

Wanikeza ubaba, waphuza walala.





UMbuyane waphenduka, ibhodlela lomuthi lawa laphuka. “Maye! ibhodlela liphukile. Ngizophola kanjani? Lomuthi uyabita.”



“Baba, ibhodlela liphukile umuthi wacitheka,” kusho uManqoba. “Awu! Ndodana yami, kube yingozi,” kuphendula umuntu omdala ebonakala ekhathazekile.





Ntambama uManqoba wahlala endlini yokuphumula ebukela umabonakude. Imicabango yakhe yayikhashane, ecabanga ngokugula kukababa wakhe. Wanaka uma ezwa ngalesifo esesabekayo ezindabeni. Bakhuluma nge-*COVID-19* ebulele abantu abaningi emhlabeni. Wathuka.



Ibhodlela lomuthi liphukile. Umkhuhlane usemubi kakhulu. Umzimba wonke kaMbuyane ubuhlungu. Akasakhoni lutho. UManqoba wacabanga ngalomkhuhlane oyingozi. “Manje ngikuphelezela emtholampilo ukuyohlolwa,” kusho uManqoba. UMbuyane ehlahle amehlo, wanikina ikhanda wathi, “angiyi lapho.”





Ekuseni uManqoba waya ezitolo ukuyothenga iphephandaba ngalokujwayelekile. Ekhasini lokuqala kwakubhalwe *COVID-19* isifo esesabekayo, ngamagama agqamile. Uma efika, wahlala phansi wafunda kahle lesihloko. Sachaza izimpawu futhi basho ukuthi kufanele abantu bahlolwe.



UMangoba usekhathazekile. Waya ekamelweni likababa wakhe, wambheka elele embhedeni engakhoni lutho. Lomuntu omdala uyathimula uyakhwehlela okungapheli. Wathatha iphephandaba walibeka phambi kukababa ukuze afunde. UMbuyane wafunda, wabheka indodana yakhe wase uyaguquka.





UMbuyane waphenduka ilanga lonke. UManqoba ucela ubaba wakhe. “Ngiyacela baba, asiye emtholampilo. Ngiyakuncenga.” UMbuyane wabheka phansi.



UManqoba wasiza ubaba wakhe ukuthi asukume, baya emotweni wase uyashayela baya emtholampilo.

“Sizani, sizani!” kumemeza uManqoba. Abahlengikazi baletha isihlalo samasondo. Bahamba naye egunjini lokuhlola.





UMbuyane wahlolwa ngudokotela. UMBuyane
nendodana yakhe bahlololwa i-COVID-19.
Bamnikeza umuthi bathi makaphuze. Baphinde
bamnikeza nomjovo. UMBuyane walala.



Abahlengikazi bakhumbuza uManqoba ngokuphepha ngalesikhathi se-*COVID-19*:

- Hlala ugeza izandla ngamanzi nensipho.
- Naka ibanga lokudedelana.
- Faka imaski uma uya emphakathini.
- Uma uthimula noma ukhwehlela, sebenzisa iphepha lethishu elilahlwayo noma ukhwehlelele endololwaneni yakho.





Umkhuhlane walapheka, uMbuyane waqala
ukukhanuka ukudla. Useyakujabulela ukudla.
Akasaphenduki aguquke. UManqoba nobaba wakhe
babuyela emtholampilo ukuze bathole imiphumela
ye-COVID-19. Ngenhlanhla, imiphumela yayimihle.
Bazizwa bekhululekile.



UMbuyane noManqoba babonga udokotela nabahlengikazi, babuyela ekhaya. Kusukela ngalolo suku, uMbuyane waqinisekisa ukuthi ugqoka afudumale uma kumakhaza. Wayengafuni ukubamba umkhuhlane futhi. Wayehlala egeza izandla ngamanzi nensipho. Uqinisekisa ukuthi ufaka imaski ukuze azivikele kwi-*COVID-19* neminye imikhuhlane.

