Incutshe yomcuphi

Nkqo! Nkqo! Nkqo!

“Neo!” utshilo uGogo. “Nceda ukhangele ukuba ngubani na lo unkqonkqozayo.”

UNeo wabaleka waya kumnyango wangaphambili. Xa ewuvula wabona uBella nomama wakhe. UBella wayelila.

“Yintoni undonakele?” wabuza uNeo. UBella wakhala ngakumbi ngoku.

UGogo weza naye ebaleka kumnyango wangaphambili. “Ngenani. Kutheni uBella elila nje?”

“NguNoodle,” watsho umama kaBella. “Asimboni tu.”

“UNoodle ulahlekile,” watsho efixiza uBella. “Ingaba nikhe nambona nina?”

“Hlalani phantsi,” watsho uGogo, enika uBella ithishu. “Sula iinyembenzi zakho. Siza kukuncedisa, sikukhangelise. Neo, nceda utsalele umnxeba uJosh, umcele ukuba makafike apha.”

Lo gama uNeo etsalela uJosh umnxeba, uGogo wahlala phakathi kukaBella nomama wakhe apho esofeni.

“Ugqibele nini ukumbona uNoodle?” kubuza uGogo.

“Kusasa nje,” watsho uBella. “Ebedlala phaya ethafeni.”

“Udla ngokuba sele ebuyile ngexesha lesidlo sasemini,” watsho umama kaBella.

“Gogo,” watsho uNeo, “UJosh uthe yena noHope baza kufika kamsinyane kangangoko banako.”

“Siza kwenza njani, Gogo?” kubuza uBella esafixiza kakhulu.

“Xa uJosh noHope befikile siza kucinga icebo. Okwangoku sonke makhe sifumane iti.”

Kungekudala kwavakala omnye u*Nkqo! Nkqo! Nkqo*! emnyango. UHope watyhala, engenisa isitulo esinamavili sikaJosh ngaphakathi.

“Ungakhathazeki, Bella, siza kumfumana uNoodle,” watsho uJosh. “Sonke siza kuba njengabecuphi xa simkhangela.”

“Ewe,” watsho uGogo. “Ngoku khawusincede usilandise umkhondo, Bella. Kuqala sixelele ukuba uthanda ukuya phi na uNoodle.”

UBella kunye nomama wakhe babaxelela zonke iindawo apho uNoodle athanda ukudlala nokuya kuzo.

“Kuhle ke oko,” watsho uGogo. “Ndiza kufaka uMbali kwiprem yakhe size sihambeni sonke siye kumkhangela.”

“Mhlawumbi kuza kufuneka sihambe ngeendlela ezahlukileyo. Oko kuza kwenza sikhawulezise,” wacebisa ngelitshoyo uJosh. “Gogo, ukuba wena, noNeo noMbali ningehla ngeRiver Road, aze uBella nomama wakhe baye kukhangela ekhaya nasethafeni kwakhona. Emva koko bangenyuka ngeSchool Street. Mna noHope siza kwehla ngeSambals Street.”

“Licebo elihle kakhulu elo,” watsho uGogo. “Uvakala njengomcuphi wokwenene, Josh.”

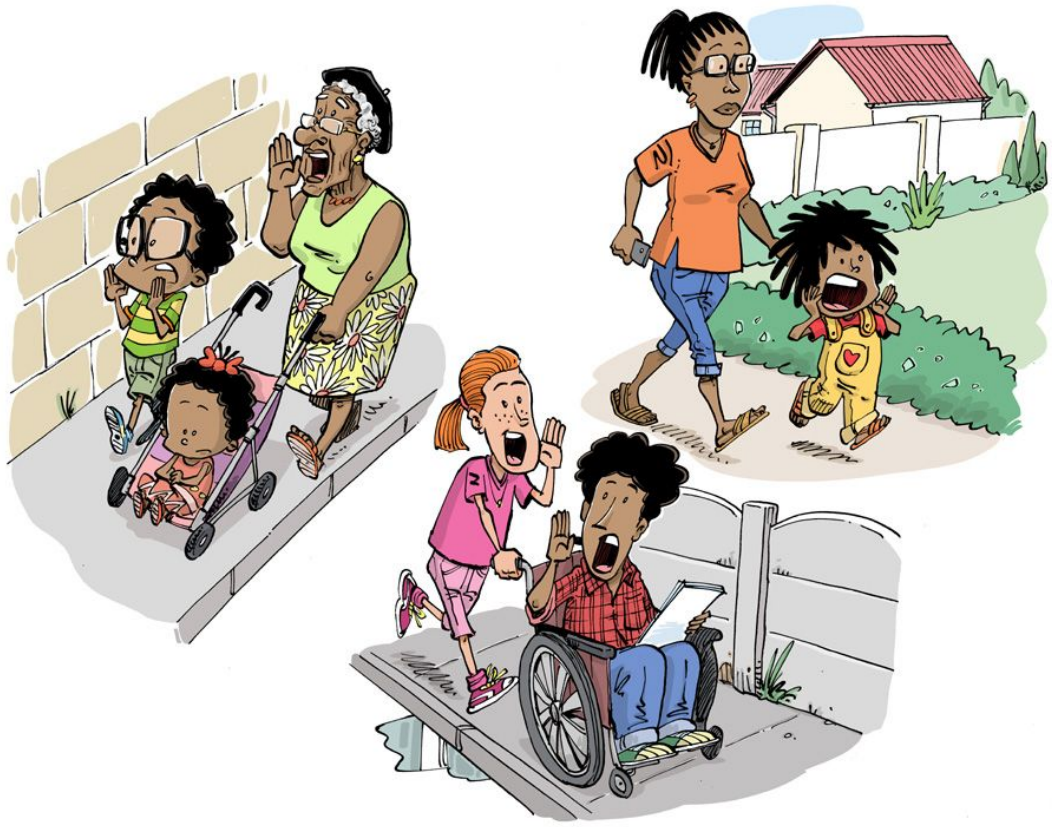
“Kwaye kufuneka sidibane ndaweni ithile,” watsho uHope. “Sakuthi ngokwenza njalo, sonke sazi ukuba kwenzeka ntoni na.”

“Siza kutsalelana umnxeba kanye lo gama sikhangela, size ke emva koko sidibane phaya koobhazabhaza beevenkile,” watsho uJosh.

“Singahamba ke ngoku?” wabuza uBella.

“Usizana olunguBella,” watsho uMbali, ephulula isandla sikaBella.

Wonke umntu wahamba esiya kukhangela uNoodle. UHope watyhala isitulo esinamavili sikaJosh, bahamba ngendledlana yabahambi ngeenyawo. Bobabini babekhwaza uNoodle ngegama.



“Akakho kwesi sitalato,” watsho uJosh. Kanye ngelo xesha kwakhala umnxeba wakhe. “NguGogo,” waxelela uHope, “Ndiyathemba ukuba bamfumene uNoodle.”

UHope wayengeva ukuba uGogo uthini kuJosh, kodwa wayemva uMbali ekhwaza esithi, *Pinki! Pinki! Pinki!* ngokuvakalayo phaya ngasemva.

“Hayi,” watsho uJosh asakugqiba ukuthetha noGogo, “abakamfumani uNoodle.” Umnxeba wakhe waphinda wakhala. “Lo ibinguBella nomama wakhe. Nabo abakamfumani.”

“Ngoku kuza kwenzeka ntoni?” wabuza uHope.

“Kufuneka sihambe siye kudibana nomntu wonke koobhazabhaza bevenkile,” watsho uJosh.

Emva kwemizuzu embalwa wonke umntu wayemi phambi koobhazabhaza beevenkile. Amehlo kaBella ayebomvu kukulila. UGogo wayekhangeleka ekhathazekile.

“Ingaba kufuneka siphinde sijike siye kukhangela kwakhona?” uGogo wabuza.

“Noo … Noodle …” kwatsho ilizwi elincinane.

Bonke baguquka bajonga.

“Noodle!” watsho uMbali kwakhona. Wolatha kwivenkile esekoneni.

“Mbali?” watsho uGogo. “Uphi?”

“Akukho nja phaya, Mbali,” watsho uNeo.

“NOOOOOODLE!” wakhwaza uMbali.

“Masikhe siye kujonga,” watsho uHope.

Bahamba baya evenkileni esekoneni. Yayithengisa iibhegi kunye nezacholo, iihempe kunye nezihlangu. Bonke bema xhonkxosholo emnyango.

“Ngaphakathi! Ngaphakathi!” watsho uMbali esolatha ngaphakathi evenkileni.

“Molweni,” watsho umnikazi-venkile. “Namkelekile. Ngenani ngaphakathi. Mandinike nje umhlobo wam ibhiskiti, ndize emva koko ndinincede.”

“NOODLE!” bonke batsho ngaxeshanye.

UBella wakhawuleza ukuya ngaphambili wamanga uNoodle. “Ubuphi? Sikhangele kuyo yonke indawo.” UNoodle wajiwuzisa umsila wakhe waze wamkhotha ebusweni.

“Owu!” watsho umnikazi-venkile. “Kanti yinja yakho le. Isoloko esiza kubulisa apha ekhaya qho kusasa.”

“Pinki!” watsho uMbali.

“Ewe. Kulaa ndlu ipinki isekoneni ngasethafeni. Apho udlala nenjana yam, uTrixie. Ndicela uxolo ukuba ubukhathazekile. Kokokuqala esiza apha evenkileni.”

Lo gama wonke umntu efunqula, ephulula, embambazela uNoodle, unovenkile wabaxelela ukuba igama lakhe nguNkosikazi Modise. Wayesandul’ ukufika kule dolophu kwaye usandul’ ukuyivula le venkile yakhe.

“UNoodle wakha ubuhlobo kumye noTrixie mhla safika,” uhambise watsho. “Badlala kunye qho kusasa aze emva koko uNoodle agoduke. Kodwa namhlanje akwenzekanga njalo. Namhlanje kwenzeke into ebingalindelekanga konke kwaze kwafuneka ukuba ndize noTrixie emsebenzini.”

Kanye ngelo xesha uMbali waphuma kwiprem yakhe waza waqalisa ukukhwaza.

“NOODLES!”

“Ewe,” watsho uNeo, “ufunyenwe nguwe.”

UBella waphuza uMbali esidleleni. “Ewe, enkosi kakhulu.”

“Hayi, hayi, hayi” wakhwaza uMbali. “Noodle, Noodle, Noodle! JONGA!”

UGogo, uNeo, uBella, umama wakhe, uJosh kunye noHope basondela apho uMbali wayemi khona. Bamngqonga bematshekile.

“Ewe,” watsho uNkosikazi Modise, “KUKO OKO ke obekungalindelekanga tu.”

UNoodle watyhala edlula, engena phakathi kwemilenze yomntu wonke, waza wahlala phantsi ecaleni kwengobozi kaTrixie. Wayekhangeleka ezingca kakhulu.

“Jonga,” watsho uMbali, “Noodle, Noodle, Noodle!”

UTrixie wayekwingobozana yenja kunye nemibundlwane emincinane emithathu ebupinki kwaye yomithathu yayifana noNoodle.

Wonke umntu ke ngoku waqalisa ukuthetha ngaxeshanye. UNkosikazi Modise wayevuya kakhulu ukuhlangana nomnikazi kaNoodle. UBella wayevuya kakhulu kuba emfumene uNoodle. UJosh noHope babecinga ngale mibundlwane. UNeo noGogo babencumile. Emva koko uNeo waguquka waphuza uMbali wamanga.

“Mbali,” wasebeza, “ungoyena mcuphi uyincutshe kwabakhe bakho.”

UMbali wahleka. “Pinki,” watsho. “OoNoodles abaPinki.”