Umseshi ohamba phambili

Ngqo! Ngqo! Ngqo!

“Neo!” kusho uGogo. “Ngicela ubheke ukuthi ubani ongqongqozayo.”

UNeo wagijima waya emnyango ongaphambili. Ngesikhathi evula emnyango wabona uBella nomama wakhe. UBella wayekhala.

“Kwenzenjani?” kubuza uNeo. UBella wakhala kakhulu-ke manje.

UGogo wagijima waya emnyango ongaphambili. “Ngenani. Ukhalelani uBella?”

“UNoodle,” kusho umama kaBella. “Unyamalele.”

“Akekho uNoodle,” kufumfutha uBella. “Ngabe nike nambona?”

“Ake nihlale phansi,” kusho uGogo, enikeza uBella iphepha lokuzesula. “Sula izinyembezi zakho. Sizokusiza. Neo, ngicela ushayele ucingo uJosh bese umcela ukuthi eze la.”

Ngesikhathi uNeo eshayela uJosh ucingo, uGogo wahlala esofeni phakathi kukaBella nomama wakhe.

“Ugcine nini ukubona uNoodle?” kubuza uGogo.

“Namhlanje ekuseni,” kusho uBella. “Ubedlala ensimini.”

“Njalo nje uba sekhaya ngesikhathi sesidlo sasemini,” kusho umama kaBella.

“Gogo,” kusho uNeo, “uJosh uthe yena noHope bazoza la ngokushesha okukhulu.”

“Sizokwenzenjani, Gogo?” kubuza uBella efumfutha kakhulu.

“Sizoqhamuka neqhinga uma sekufike uJosh noHope. Okwamanje sizophuza itiye sonke.”

Akuphelanga sikhathi kwezwakala okunye ukungqongqoza! *Ngqo! Ngqo! Ngqo!* emnyango. UHope wadudula wangenisa inqola kaJosh ehamba ngamasondo.

“Ungakhathazeki, Bella, sizomthola uNoodle,” kusho uJosh. “Sizoba abaseshi sonke, futhi sizomfuna.”

“Yebo,” kusho uGogo. “Manje-ke ake usisize ngokungasinika umkhondo, Bella. Ake usitshele ukuthi uthanda ukuyaphi uNoodle.”

UBella kanye nomama wakhe babatshela izindawo uNoodle athanda ukudlalela kuzo nokuzivakashela.

“Kuhle,” kusho uGogo. “Ngizofaka uMbali esitulweni sakhe esiqhutshwayo bese sonke sihamba siyomfuna.”

“Mhlawumbe kumele sishone ezindaweni ezahlukene. Kuzoshesha lokho,” kuphakamisa uJosh. “Gogo, uma wena, uNeo noMbali nehla ngoRiver Road, uBella nomama wakhe bazobe sebeyobheka ekhaya kanye nasensimini futhi. Bazobe-ke sebenyuka ngoSchool Street. UHope nami sizokwehla ngoSambals Street.”

“Umqondo omuhle lowo,” kusho uGogo. “Usuzwakala njengomseshi wangempela, Josh.”

“Kanti kuzodingeka ukuthi sonke sihlangane endaweni ethile,” kusho uHope. “Sizobe sesizwa-ke ukuthi kwenzakalani.”

“Sizoshayelana izingcingo kanye nje ngesikhathi sisamfuna, sizobe sesihlangana enxanxatheleni yezitolo,” kusho uJosh.

“Ngabe sesingahamba manje?” kubuza uBella.

“Nxese bandla, Bella,” kusho uMbali, embambatha isandla sikaBella.

Wonke umuntu wahamba wayofuna uNoodle. UHope wadudula inqola kaJosh ehamba ngamasondo onqenqemeni lomgwaqo lokuhamba abantu. Bobabili babememeza igama likaNoodle.

“Akekho kulo mgwaqo,” kusho uJosh. Kusenjalo kwakhala ucingo lwakhe. “UGogo,” etshela uHope, “Ngethemba ukuthi bamtholile uNoodle.”

UHope wayengezwa ukuthi uGogo wayethini kuJosh, kodwa wayezwa uMbali ememeza kakhulu ethi, “*Phinki! Phinki! Phinki!*” ezwakala ngemuva.

“Cha,” kusho uJosh ngesikhathi eseqede ukukhuluma noGogo, “abakamtholi uNoodle.” Lwaphinde lwakhala futhi ucingo lwakhe. “Lowo-ke bekunguBella nomama wakhe. Abakamtholi nabo.”

“Sizokwenzenjani manje?” kubuza uHope.

“Kuzomele sihambe siyohlangana nabo bonke enxanxatheleni yezitolo,” kusho uJosh.

Emizuzwini embalwa ngemva kwalokho wonke umuntu wayesemi phambi kwenxanxathela yezitolo. Amehlo kaBella ayebomvu tebhu ukukhala. UGogo wayebukeka ekhathazekile.

“Ngabe kumele sihambe sibuyele emuva siyobheka futhi?” kubuza uGogo.

“Noo … Noodle …” kusho izwi elincane.

Baphenduka bonke babheka.

“Noodle!” kusho uMbali futhi. Wayekhomba esitolo esisekhoneni.

“Mbali,” kusho uGogo. “Kuphi?”

“Akukho lutho laphaya, Mbali,” kusho uNeo.

“NOOOOOODLE!” kumemeza uMbali.

“Ake sihambe siyobheka,” kusho uHope.

Bahamba baya esitolo esisekhoneni. Sasidayisa izikhwama namabhengela, amahembe nezicathulo. Bama bonke bavimba ngasemnyango.

“Ngenani! Ngenani!” kusho uMbali ekhomba phakathi esitolo

“Sanibona,” kusho umnikazi wesitolo. “Nemukelekile. Ngenani ngaphakathi. Ake nginike umngani wami ibhisikidi, ngizonisiza.”

“NOODLE!” besho bonke kanyekanye.

UBella wagijima wayosingatha uNoodle. “Ubukuphi? Besikufuna yonke indawo.” UNoodle watshikizisa umsila wase ekhotha ubuso bakhe.

“O,” kusho umnikazi wesitolo. “Ungowakho. Uyeza azongibingelela ekhaya njalo ekuseni.”

“Endlini ephinki!” kusho uMbali.

“Yebo. Indlu ephinki esekhoneni eduze kwensimu. Uyeza azodlala nenja yami encane, uTrixie. Ngiyaxolisa uma benikhathazekile. Uyaqala ngqa ukuza esitolo.”

Ngesikhathi wonke umuntu esingatha, ephulula futhi embambatha uNoodle, umnikazi wesitolo wabatshela ukuthi igama lakhe kwakunguNkk Modise. Wayesanda kufika edolobheni futhi wayesanda kuvula isitolo sakhe.

“UNoodle waba umngani kaTrixie kusukela ngosuku esafika ngalo la,” kusho yena. “Bayadlala njalo nje ekuseni bese uNoodle egoduka. Kodwa bekuwusuku oluhluke kancane lolu lwanamuhla. Namhlanje kwenzeke lokho obekungalindelekile kakhulu, kwadingeka ukuthi ngize noTrixie emsebenzini.”

Kusenjalo kwaphuma uMbali esihlalweni sakhe esiqhutshwayo wase eqala ukumemeza.

“NOODLES!”

“Yebo,” kusho uNeo, “umtholile.”

UBella waqabula izihlathi zikaMbali. “Yebo, ngibonga kakhulu.”

“Cha, cha, cha” kumemeza uMbali. “Noodle, Noodle, Noodle! BUKANI!”

UGogo, uNeo, uBella, umama wakhe, uJosh kanye noHope baya lapho okwakume khona uMbali. Bangunga uMbali begqolozele okuthile.

“Yebo,” kusho uNkosikazi uModise, “YIYO-KE le nto enkulu ebingalindelekile eyenzekile.”

UNoodle wapulukutshela phakathi kwemilenze yawo wonke umuntu wayohlala eduze kukabhasikidi kaTrixie. Wayebukeka eziqhenya kakhulu.

“Bhekani,” kusho uMbali, “Noodle, Noodle, Noodle!”

UTrixie wayekubhasikidi nemidlwane emithathu ephinki futhi yomithathu yayifana noNoodle.

Kwakhuluma wonke umuntu kanyekanye. Kwamthokozisa kakhulu uNkk Modise ukuhlangana nabanikazi bakaNoodle. UBella wayethokozile ngokuthola uNoodle. UJosh noHope babecabanga ngemidlwane. UNeo noGogo babemamatheka. UNeo wabe esephenduka eqabula uMbali kakhulu futhi, emsingatha.

“Mbali,” kunyenyeza yena, “ungumseshi ohamba phambili.”

Wansinsitheka uMbali. “Baphinki,” kusho yena. “ONoodles abaphinki!”