



Ihlathi Leenyoka

Inyoka Yehlathi, Umagilogilo

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Ilali iSinyaire ijikelezwe ziinduli neentaba. Kuhlala iinyoka ezininzi kwihlathi elikwezi ntaba. Eyona nyoka inkulu yayibizwa ngokuba yi-Unyalego ngabantu belali. Le nyoka yayisoyikisa abantu abaninzi kuba yayiginya ibimbilize iibhokhwe kunye neegusha ezipheleleyo.

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Indawo yaseNsingweni izungezwe amagquma, amahlathi nezintaba. Zaziziningi izinyoka ezazitholakala kula mahlathi akulezi zintaba. Kwelinye lamahlathi, kwakukhona inyoka enkulu, inhlwathi, eyaze yanikwa igama kwathiwa nguMagilogilo. Le nyoka, akekho owayengayesabi, ngemikhuba yayo. Yayigwinya wena mvu, wena mbuzi.



Ngenye imini u-Apiyo, u-Ajoh kunye no Atieno babesiya ehlathini beyokutheza. Umakhulu wala mantombazana wayewalumkisile wathi, “Nilumkele u-Unyalego inyoka enkulu. Ningathathi nenye into ehlathini ngaphandle kweenkuni.” U-Ajoh akazange ayihoye nokuyihoya into awayeyixelelwa ngumakhulu wakhe.

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Langa limbe, uNono, uSanele noNtonjana bahamba bayotheza kuleli hlathi. Ugogo wabo wayebadonse ngendlebe wathi, “Anibobhasobha uMagilogilo. Ningathathi lutho olunye ehlathini ngaphandle kwezinkuni.” Kodwa uNtonjana akalalelanga isiyalo sikagogo wabo.



Amantombazana apakisha umphako wobisi, iibhanana, ibhatata kunye namanzi. Athatha neentambo zokubopha inyanda kunye nezembe lokugawula iinkuni. Ahamba ke apha thelela ukuya ehlathini.

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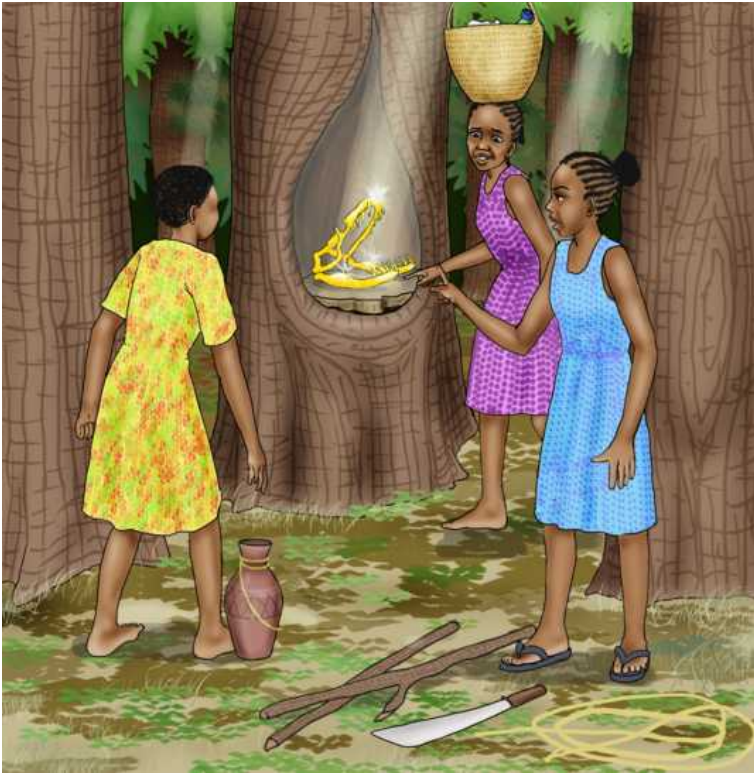
Amantombazane ayeziphathele umphako wobisi, wena bhanana, bhatata kanye namanzi. Bathatha nezibopho kanye nembazwana yokugawula izinkuni. Nabaya belibhekise ehlathini.



Endleleni amantombazana ayehamba ezincokolela nje futhi ehleka, kumnandi. U-Apiyo owayemdala kubo bonke wavakala esithi, “Thulani. Sele sisondele apho kuhlala khona u-Unyalego.”

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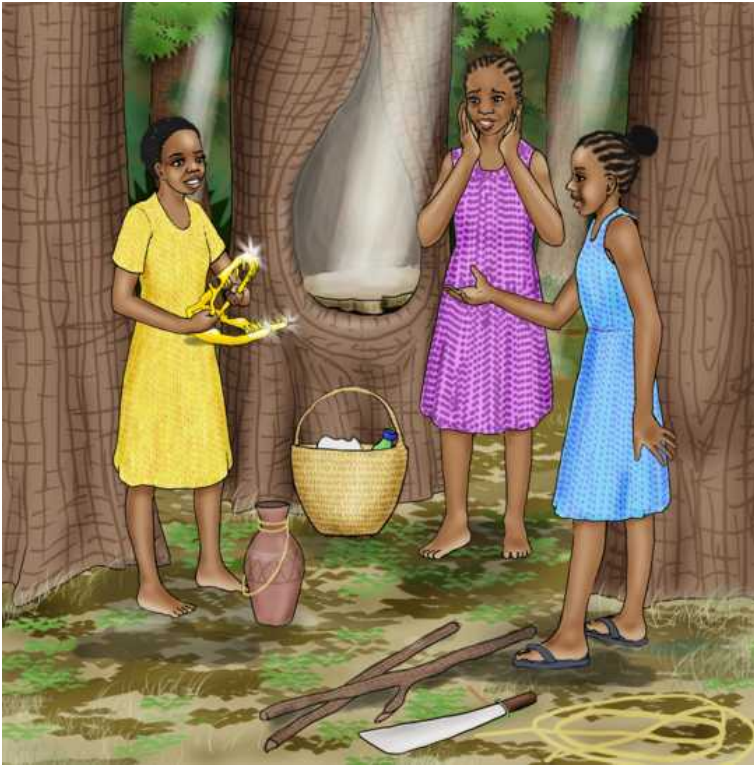
Endleleni amantombazane ayehamba ezixoxela futhi ehleka. Besazixoxela kanjalo kwezwakala uNono okunguyena omdala esethithi, “Sh! Sh! Sesisondele endaweni kaMagilogilo manje.”



U-Atieno wathi, “Yehake, khanijonje nanga amazinyo ka-Unyalego abugolide, masiwathatheni.” U-Apiyo wabakhumbuza, “Ningalibali imiyalelo kamakhulu. Akufanelanga ukuba sithathe nantoni na apha ehlathini ngaphandle kweenkuni.”

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USanele waphendula ngelokuthi, “Hhayi bo! Bhekani! Sengathi amazinyo kaMagilogilo egolide nje lawa abantu abahlale bexoxa ngawo. Asizithatheleni wona.” uNono washeshe wabakhumbuza, “Niyashesha ukukhohlwa. Utheni ugogo kithi? Akashongo ukuthi singathathi noma singacoshi lutho olunye ngaphandle kwezinkuni?”



U-Ajoh wathi, “Andiyikholelwa mna into ethethwa ngumakhulu. Ndinga ukuba ubesitsho nje kuba engafuni ukuba sizithathele izinto esizithandayo. Unomona umakhulu. Ndiza kuwathatha mna la mazinyo egolide.” Oodadewabo bakhathazeka kakhulu ngale nto. “Ajoh, uze ungathi khange sikuxelele.” U-Ajoh akazange abahoye.

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“Ogogo! Angikholwa mina yiloko. Ubezikhulumela nje ugogo. Mina ngiyawafuna, ngizozithathela la mazinyo. Awegolide pho! Hhayisuka! Ngiyawathatha,” kuphendula iqhalaqhala elinguNtonjana. Odadewabo bakhathazeka ngesenzo sikaNtonjana, mncane kodwa akakhuzeki. Omunye wabo wezwakala esegcizelela inkulumo yabo wathi, “Ungasho njalo ukuthi asikukhuzanga.” Yize odadewabo babemkhuza, akalalelanga.



Kwathi kusenjalo kwathi gqi u-Unyalego ezokukhangela amazinyo akhe. Wacaphuka kakhulu akungawaboni. U-Unyalego weva amantombazana encokola futhi ehleka. Wazimela phantsi kwelitye elikhulu elalikufutshane nendlela amantombazana ayeza kudlula kuyo.

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Ngaso leso sikhathi, memfu uMagilogilo ezobheka amazinyo akhe. Yacasuka yafa inyoka ingasawatholi amazinyo ayo. Kusenjalo, yezwa umsindo wamazwi amantombazane exoxa, egegetheka. Yacabanga ikhuluma yodwa, "Ngizobathola, bacabanga bahlakaniphile, nami-ke, ngihlakaniphile. "Yahuqazela inyoka yahamba yayocasha ngaphansi kwetshe elikhulu elaliseduze nendlela lapho amantombazane ayezodlula khona.



Amantombazana ayethwele iinyanda entloko. Eva ngomsindo wenyoka efuthayo, “Fu-u-u-u-u-u-u-u!” Oothuka azama ukuzimela. Nankuya u-Unyalego phambi kwabo evule umlomo wakhe elindele ukuluma.

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Aqhamuka amantombazane ethwele iminyaba yezinkuni. Bezwa ngomsindo ohazayo, bathuka bazama ukucasha. Waloku uqhubekile umsindo sengathi usondela kubo. “Ssssss!” Besalalele loko, memfu! UMagilogilo phambi kwabo. Wayesephakamise ikhanda lakhe, evule umlomo elindele ukugadla.



U-Unyalego wawabuza amantombazana wathi, “Ngubani othathe amazinyo am egolide?” Akuzange kubekho mntu uphendulayo. Inyoka yathi ndiza kumfumana umntu owabileyo. “Lo ongenatyala uza kucula kakuhle angayenzi impazamo kodwa lowo onetyala yena uza kuthi xa ecula kwenzeke impazamo. Uza kuba kukutya kwam kweentsuku ezintathu ezizayo!”

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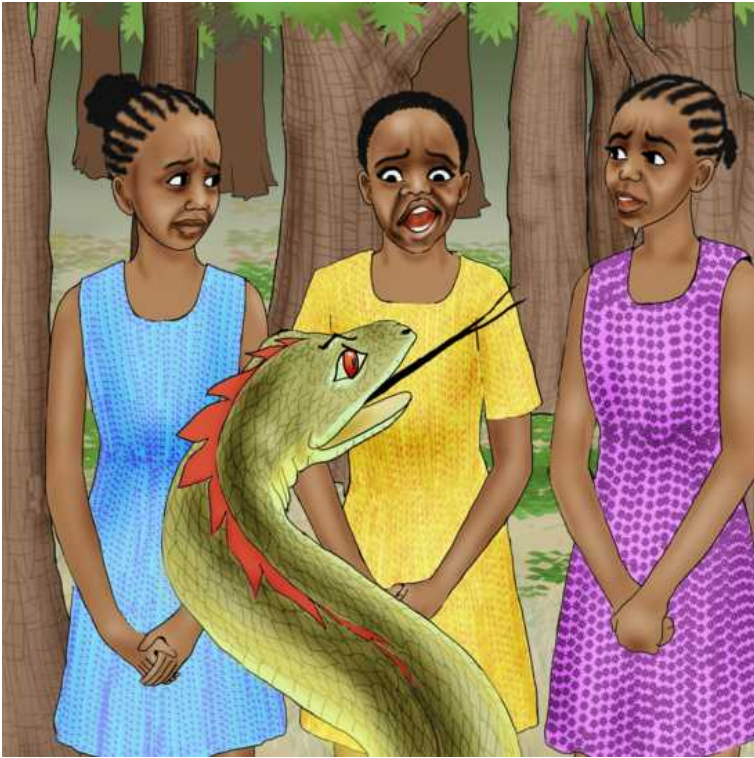
“Ngitsheleni kahle, ngubani othathe amazinyo ami egolide?” kubuza uMagilogilo ngokucasuka. Waqhubeka wathi, “Owathathile ngizomthola masinya nje. Lalelani la, nizongiculela-ke. Loyo oyocula ngaphandle kokwenza iphutha, nguyey ongenacala. Futhi loyo, nguyey oyoqhubeka nomyaba wakhe aye ekhaya. Kodwa-ke, loyo oyobhimba ngiyamzwela.”



U-Apiyo waqala wacula kakuhle akabinangxaki.
Kwalandela u-Atieno, naye wacula kakuhle.

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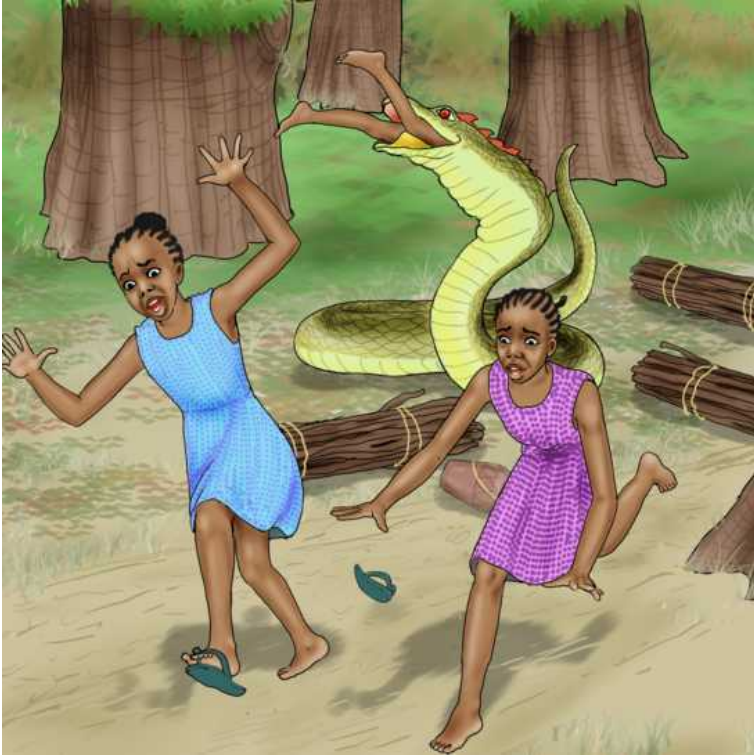
Kwacaca ukuthi kumele acule amantombazane
ukuze kubonakale onecala. Kwaqala uNono,
kwalandela uSanele.



Ekugqibeleni kwacula u-Ajoh. Wayenexhala kakhulu. Wathi xa eqala ukucula ilizwi latshothoza namazwi engoma akavakala kakuhle. Wakhwaza u-Unyalego wathi, “Awukwazi ukucula kakuhle njengabanye?” Inyoka yabona ukuba nguye kanye u-Ajoh owayethathe amazinyo egolide.

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Kwagcina isalakitshelwa esingu Ntonjana. Wayevevezela ukwethuka. Wathi uyaqala, izwi alangaphuma kahle, wahoshozela, namagama eyengezwakali nokuthi uthini. Kwezwakala uMagilogilo esethi, “Uyabhimba, awuzizwa?” Kwacaca enyokeni ukuthi nguye othathe amazinyo ayo.



Bimbilili! U-Unyalego wamginya u-Ajoh.
Oodadewabo babaleka bagoduka bayokuxela esi
senzo sibi kangaka esenzekileyo.

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Akazange achithe isikhathi uMagilogilo, mimiliti
uNtonjana. Bathathela ngejubane odadewabo
bebheke ekhaya, beyobikela abadala
ngokwenzekekile.



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Inyoka Yehlathi, Umagilogilo

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