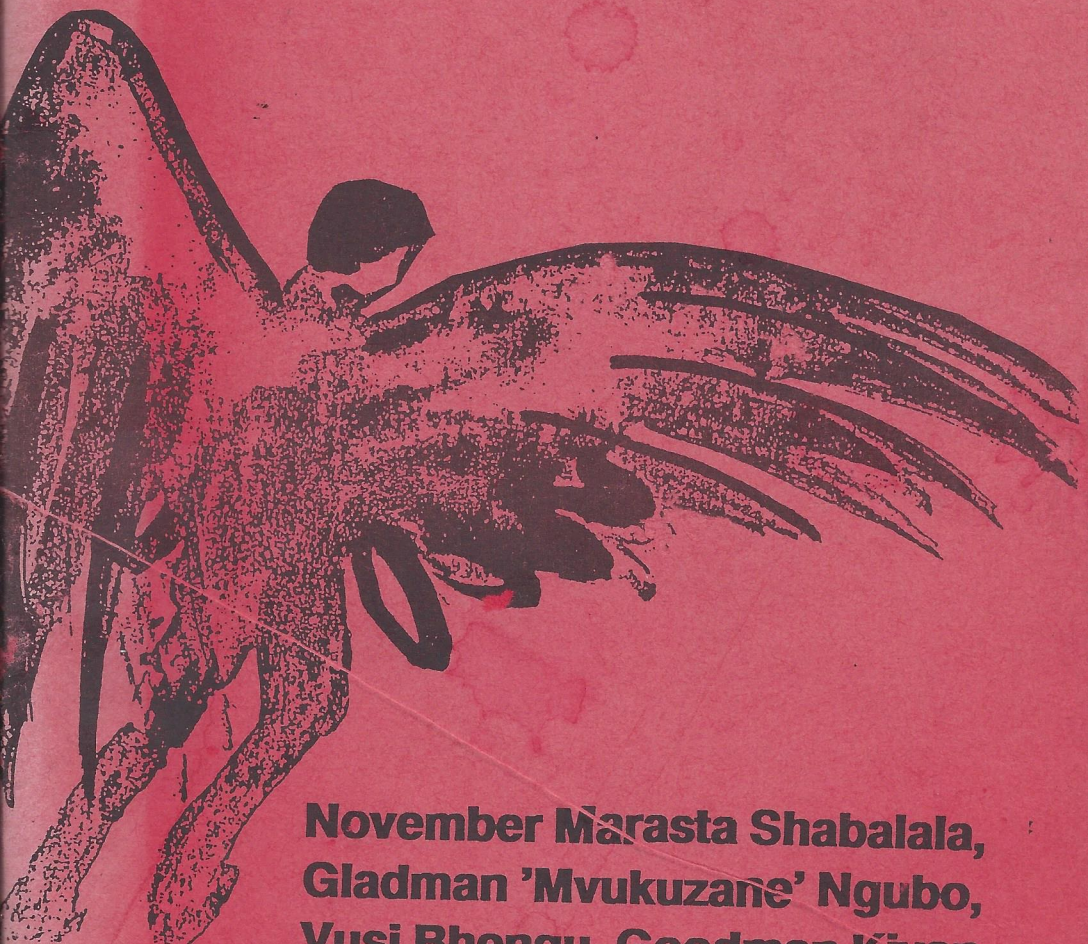


The Man Who Could Fly

and other worker stories and poems



**November Marasta Shabalala,
Gladman 'Mvukuzane' Ngubo,
Vusi Bhengu, Goodman Kivan,
Nester Luthuli**

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November Marasta Shabalala,
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VUSI BHENGU

I am Vusumuzi. My father said that the name stands for an unretiring fighter striving for success and harmony in his family and nation. I was born in 1957, two years before the people's organisations were banned.

I grew up in a mission place where schooling and going to church were important. I had to move to KwaMakhutha for secondary education. My mother and the other children joined me later when faction fights broke out. In 1980 I started work as an office worker, which I am still doing now.

My father had a compulsory hostel room where I used to visit him. They fed me amadombolo, a staple food for men by men. I had a love for culture at school, although I did not know that drama, music, art and creative writing is culture.

My mother encouraged me morally. Together with the one I love and respect she is my back-bone. I dedicate this writing to you, Bongi, and I thank you for your support.





GOODMAN KIVAN

I grew up not knowing who my father was. When I was three years old my mother changed my name, Andile, because she feared that I will be bewitched. At school we were forced to register with a Christian name so she called me Goodman.

I grew up in the rural areas where people slaughtered goats to worship ancestors. It was a place of dense forests and wild animals and many different kinds of birds.

1978 was a turning point in my life because my mother died. I learnt how to be a man. I had to leave school and look for a job. I worked in the Hlobane mine and joined NUM. We fought for better working conditions, but in 1990 Xhosa workers were driven out of the mines by UWUSA. I was one of them.

NESTER LUTHULI

I was born at Nkululeko because all the people were free and kind. It was near the river where people used to do their washing. The Chief called that river eNgobiyeni because he used to pass riding his horse whenever people were washing. It was at the time when the Indians were fighting each other.



My father gave me the name Makhosazane because he was very old, so he did not believe that he will have a child. To him I was a princess. My father was a driver of two donkeys and a cart. After delivering the groceries to our school, he used to come back with Marie biscuits for me and I sat on his knees. I had a cut on my face because I had ringworms and I was treated following the superstition.

I am medium size and I am not fat like a pumpkin. I work as a domestic worker, and I am a member of SADWU.



GLADMAN 'MVUKUZANE' NGUBO

I'm generally known by my nickname, 'Mvukuzane'-mole. I got the name from my friends when I was very young, because they said that most of the time I was shy to speak, but able to do awkward things, contrary to my appearance.

My real name is Gladman. My parents gave me that name because they wished me to always be happy in life. I am their only child and they had me when they had almost given up hope of having a child. I was born in Mkhumbane at the time of stokvels and marabi music. But through forced removals we came to live at Umzimkulu where I went to school until standard 8.

I have the skill of recruiting workers to join the union. I must have learnt that when I organised other kids to play sketches from the bible at sunday school. As the

youngest amongst them I always ended up with the role of David, in 'David and Goliath'.

My interest in writing came at an early stage. I liked reading Zulu novels and other literature. I wished to write something of my own when I would be grown up. But then I realised that most of the books were written by highly educated people like doctors and professors, and my hope vanished.

In 1987 when I was a factory worker under the banner of COSATU the veteran poet Alfred Qabula came to my union local in Pinetown to talk to us about peoples' culture. He told me that one does not need a university degree to become a writer. Then I started to write poetry and later I was heard reciting them at big meetings and rallies.

With my writing I want to encourage people, and especially workers, to write in order to express their inner feelings and to make a contribution to world literature.

**NOVEMBER
MARASTA
SHABALALA**



I was born in summer on a sunny day. When my mom was suffering from labour pains she just went under the tree and that is where I was born. At that time there were no clinics.

I was named November because I was born in November. I don't want to shave because I want people to see that I am really grown-up. They used to tell me that I am a child because I am short.

As a writer, I think I'll give the readers interesting stories about our rural areas, and urban life stories and the struggle of workers.

As a factory worker I can also tell them the struggle for workers' and peoples' rights, for which I think there is a great need in our communities in these days of changes in the world as a whole.

The Story of the Man who could fly

**G. Kivan, G.M.Ngubo, N.Luthuli,
N.M.Shabalala, V.Bhengu**

**I want to tell you the story about a man who could fly.
No, don't laugh! I have not eaten the ntsomi root, nor
am I insane.**

**After leaving school I decided to visit my uncle down at
Umtanvuma river to assist him with looking after his
cattle and to lend him a hand in the mealie-fields,
before going to the mines.**

**Indeed, I strode the hills and valleys until I reached my
destination at dusk. Mind you the country-side where
my uncle lives has its own history. No, don't worry, I
won't tell you the history of my uncle's country-side, I
will get to the man who could fly.**

**When I was about to enter my uncle's yard what an
extraordinary thing happened! The wild dogs were
yelling and barking at me in such a strange rhythm I had**

NOVEMBER

never experienced before. What frightened me most was how the dogs were let loose and that noone dared to come out of the hut to rescue me from those savages.

Faced with that horrible dilemma, I forcefully entered the yard and what a tussle I had with the dogs! I was pounding, kicking and doing whatever I could to quell the fury of the dogs. Yes, you may laugh! The tussle for power between me and the dogs continued for quite a while. I finally forced my way to the door of the big hut while the dogs were pulling me with their big jaws.

Eventually I yelled for help and was rescued. I asked my uncle why it had taken such a long time and he explained that the country had been enveloped by a cloud of fear because of the vigilantes who were rampaging and killing innocent people. Therefore no-one had had the courage to come out into the darkness to look at what the dogs were barking at.

The following day I was in strength to go to the field to hoe. The day was cool and calm. The vultures were gliding high in the sky. Small birds sang sweet melodies.

I began with my job of hoeing and while I was sweating I heard a strange rhythmic noise like the galloping of horses. As I turned my head to look I saw a man

running as if he was fleeing the anger of pharaohs's warriors. As I was about to ask who he was and where he was heading to, a horde of heavily armed men emerged, in a violent mood, hunting him down.

"How can this man escape from these savages?" I asked myself coldly. "Why did they want to kill him?" Seeing that the victim was about to be mauled, I felt a cold chill running down my spine. At that moment the man was no longer running, but just wobbling as if he was drunk.

No mercy in the eyes of the vigilantes, as there was no hope in the eyes of the prey. But just as the attackers were assured of getting the victim a miracle happened. The man flew like a bird up to the sky.

You laugh, my friends - but the vigilantes asked their feet to carry them away in different directions. They, too, ran as if they had wings, their weapons scattered all over the ground.

I myself tried to run as fast as I could but I was just wobbling and paddling as if I was wearing gumboots in a mudpuddle. When at last I managed to reach the nearby bush I had to relieve myself.

When I regained my strength I decided not to look and see what had happened to the man who flew to the sky but to go straight to my uncle's house. But when I related the story to them they just laughed and thought I was telling lies. Even the dogs rattled outside as if they laughed at me.

The next day my uncle decided to go with me because he thought that I was lazy or bewitched. Indeed we undertook the journey to the mealie-fields and we saw a group of people yonder the river at the extreme end of the bush. But the man who flew we could not see.

On that sunny day, I decided to park my car along the side of the road. Taking my camera, I jumped out. My aim was to take some pictures of that area which was looking more green in that summer season.

I was still looking around, when I suddenly heard the sound of voices shouting somewhere in the fields. I took a sharp focus on the spot where the voices were coming from. Not very far from me a terrible thing was taking place. I quickly put two twos together, and realised the situation.

A certain black man was running like a springbok away from a group of men who were chasing him with axes, assegais and pangas.

"Oh, this violence is still continuing? I don't know what's wrong with these black people! Killing each other every day. Just look at those weapons, absolutely dangerous, but all the time they are claiming them as traditional ones. Or probably it's their tradition too to use them in killing each other? Just look, they are even shouting, showing that they are enjoying what they are doing. Let me take some pictures. But nonsense! Everyone has seen pictures of this thing all the time in newspapers," I thought to myself.

When I looked again the men were right on his heels. But then I suddenly saw a wonderful thing which I had never before witnessed in my life. I saw the victim lifting up his body, leaving the ground and flying into space.

"Hey, what's happening now?" I asked myself with amazement. But then I remembered that our garden boy James was always telling us unbelievable stories about incidents which occurred during their faction fights. He said that they were using some herbs which they call "muti" which was preventing from getting injured by bullets.

"Maybe this is one of those magics!" I wondered, shaking my head. I watched him until he was beyond the hill. "But why are these fools still running and following him?"

I didn't take pictures of that area after all. I just went to my car and drove off, thinking about what I had seen.

" Earth, make me a hole to disappear into
Things are bad outside!
Holediggers that never sleep, come!
Elephants that grind everything, come!

What is happening in this world?
What is happening in this country?

Ancestors, when are you going to remember us
Because we trust in you.
Do you still visit the Lord?
Aren't you close to Him?
Here we are dying of violence!

**My children are finished!
My sisters are finished!
My brothers are finished!
The same thing goes for my wife.**

**What is happening in this world?
What is happening in this country?**

**Earth, make me a hole to disappear into
Things are bad outside!
Holedigger's that never sleep, come!
Elephants that grind everything, come!**

**Please help!
The Spring winds are blowing me away
Ancestors, are you the same as Noah's pigeon?**

**Do you still visit the Lord?
Please run and tell Him the story:
Your grandchildren are dying!**

**Hawu! do you still remember me?
I thought you had long forgotten me!**

**Please pass my greatest gratitude
to that unseen man!**

Now I've got wings!
I am a bird with wings!
Remain behind with your spears!
Remain behind with your assegais!
You satans with degrees!
You holediggers who never sleep!
You elephants who grind everything!"

I was walking through the fields when I heard a voice calling me. It was my boyfriend, Mpo. I asked him why he was running and he said that the vigilantes wanted to kill him.

I called him to come to me so that we could pray together. I believe God is going to help us when we look in his face. And so I started to pray and called His name: "God please help me and my boyfriend! You've got the power and no one can help me in this case except you! Please enter my heart and my boyfriend's heart and dwell.

The next minute my boyfriend flew away to the sky and disappeared. The vigilante came over to me and asked me what had happened to the man who had been with

me. And I answered: "He is in heaven. If you want to follow him you must pray to God. He is the helper." The vigilantes were too scared to say that they were trying to kill my boyfriend. So they started to ask me how to pray to God and I explained to them that God said: Thou shall not kill. So they must not kill each other. They kept calm and they were so amazed about what had happened in front of them and they also heard my preaching.

Then afterwards when I was still praying, and after the vigilantes had gone into the bush I saw my boyfriend coming back. He came to me and he also became a born-again like me because he saw the power of God. He explained to me that it happened like he was dreaming. He praised the Lord and thanked Him.

"I think everybody is ready for action as we are hiding here. As soon as we see him walking there along the road, we immediately attack him," I said with anger, reminding my group.

Mpungose whispered that he wished the man had already approached because he wanted to stab him

several times on that big mouth he's always shouting with, boasting around.

"O.K. let's wait and see" I responded. A few minutes passed by and on the road we saw him walking.

"There he is" nearly all of us said simultaneously, and jumped off running towards him. He glanced behind, and saw us. No one told him what to do.

Dube, an old athlete even during our youth days was running closer and closer to him.

"You catch him until we arrive!" someone shouted among my group. "Hhewuuuu....." today is today!" some of us were shouting.

Dube knocked a stone and fell down. I cursed him inside my heart but he quickly stood up and tried to run again. But he suddenly stopped and looked at his weapons to make sure that they were all still with him. Not taking any care of him we passed by. But very soon he was amongst us again.

Our victim was now getting tired and he was shouting asking the animals of the field for help. We also shouted, calling him to stop. But he never did.

We were just really close to him, when he suddenly did a wonderful thing. He lifted off his body and flew into space. "Habe, what is he doing now?" I asked loudly and we all watched him flying higher and higher.

We were still confused, when Ngcobo a short coal-black bald-headed man whom we had left some distance away, reached us. With great anger he shouted to us: "Hey, madoda this donkey thinks that he knows, let's follow him!" He said that and took a small bottle of muti from his pocket. He shook it and poured some of it's contents on the ground. "He is going to come down here again, I'm telling you. Let's follow him."

We didn't say a word, but started running after that bird-like man. He flew beyond the hill. We ran also towards his direction. Beyond that hill we found him hanging on telephone wires.

"I've told you. You see where he is now? Not very long he will be on the ground again", Ngcobo said with satisfaction.

We shouted, calling him and swearing at him. Then a man with tools arrived and stood at a distance. We didn't bother him. But when we saw the police-van approaching we dispersed.

When I was a child, here in this place, people used to fight and kill each other. These wars were caused by arguments or fights between people who believed different things.

One day the war was on in our area, and people were dying like ants. My family and I decided to leave the house that night and go for hiding in the forest. At sunset we started our walk to the forest where we were going to spend the night in order to survive. On our way I got lost from my family. This was a hard time for me because I couldn't call their names because my shout would fall into the wrong ears, that is my enemies' ears. They would catch and kill me like an ant.

I was so tired of walking and I ended up being fast asleep in the middle of the forest. My first night in this place was so bad, as I had never slept in the forest before.

By the time I woke up, the sun was high up in the sky, I was so frightened when I thought of those killers that if they saw me sleeping there they would have killed me. But my only worry was the separation of myself and my family.

I started looking for my family. I looked and looked but I couldn't find them, even when I went to look for them

at home there was no sign of them. I felt very bad because I didn't know what had happened to them. I left my home to carry on searching for them in other places. When I was a long distance away from my home, I saw a group of people making a circle like a kraal.

I realized that they were part of my enemies, and I prayed as I was sure that that was my last day. That day it wasn't a sunny day, but I felt hot and sweat like I couldn't believe. I saw the earth becoming small like a fish can, that time I just thought of death and nothing else. While I was still in that state of confusion I heard a voice from the sky, it said to me that I mustn't be frightened. Even though I heard that promise, I didn't believe that I was going to survive as I was facing death. These people were coming closer and closer to me and I knew very well that I was going to die.

When they were only meters away from me something unbelievable happened. A strong wind blew all over the place and these people were blown backwards, their weapons were thrown down. When I was shocked by that I felt as if something lifted me up to the sky.

After that I can't tell you what happened because I was like a corpse or a fainted person. Yes, I flew like a bird that day. But I did not enjoy myself because I was not conscious.

Slowly, slowly my memory returned as I was still flying up in the sky. When I looked at myself I realized that my head facing downwards and my feet upwards going down on the ground. When I arrived on earth I felt that something was catching me and placing my feet on the ground. As I come down I realized that I was at home. I saw a lot of changes, like trees and grass when I came there and it was clear to me that I had been away for a long time. I had long forgotten my brothers, sisters and my parents.

When I got home, my whole family was shocked, they all ran away from me except my mom who just came to me, touched me and realized that I was not a ghost, I was still alive. They only believed that I was their brother when they heard me talking to them. My family was so excited and surprised when I explained what had really happened to me, about my story of flying. They gave me a warm welcome by organising a big party for me where they slaughtered a cow. They invited all the relatives and we had a nice day together.

One day I was called for a faulty telephone wire line in the township. As usual I took my record-book and toolbox together with my mobile receiver and left in my bakkie.

When I arrived I found that up on the pole number 2234 a man with wings was hanging. Down near the pole was a group of men with dangerous weapons like pangas, axes and spears. I was frightened, but I also felt irritated by the extra work: the man with wings was destroying telephone lines with his weight.

I felt cold all over and my feet and hands would hardly move to stop the bakkie. I stopped the bakkie quite close to the group and with eyes wide open from fear I asked, "what happened to that half bird and half man?" One of the vigilantes answered in a harsh voice: "We don't know. Go and ask Unyoko, you blerrie fool."

Looking fearfully at the sharp assegais made me keep on praying for my stomach which I considered as a first and soft target.

Suddenly the man hanging above us shouted in a crying voice: "Hey, I am better off here. I'd rather be killed by telephone wires than by cowards and fools".

I was confused and frustrated but managed to drive a little further on to the telephone exchange booth. I took out my mobile receiver and phoned the manager. I took my time explaining the situation and problem to him but he just said: "I know it is a Friday today, but it is too early that you are so badly controlled by alcohol the way you behave, man. Vusi I have no time to be wasted by you. Get up and fix the lines before it is too late. There is no man with wings and there are no vigilantes there! Start your work and all the vigilantes will run away and the man with the wings will fly away. Good luck Vusi!"

I was very frustrated. When the manager put down his receiver on the other side I sat down, with tears hot in my eyes. He was so free that he could not understand my problem.

Three children came around. I heard them loudly saying: "Hoo, what happened to the big bird up there!" One child screamed and said: "What kind of bird is that, it looks like a human being". Another one said "Hey forget about the bird - what about those impis with pangas and axes, let us run away." They ran away quickly.

One of the vigilantes said harshly: "Zakewu, Zakewu, drop down from the tree." The joke was quoted from the Holy Bible but by a vigilante, it was another case.

I thought to myself that maybe I was asleep and dreaming.

Suddenly, a police van came fast in our direction with dust from the street flying up. I do not know who called the police. The weapons were scattered all over the streets as the vigilantes were running away as fast as they could.

A white policeman asked me: "What is taking place here?" I answered: "I do not know. I came here to fix a faulty line! When I arrived I saw a group of men with weapons and that man up there with wings."

Another white police directed his question to the man up on the lines: "Wat makeer met jou? Wat is jou naam? Is jy n man of n dier? Praat jou, donner". He then took out his gun, and pointing it on the man shouted: "Praat man, of ek maak jou vrek."

I came to my sober senses and went out of the bakkie to listen to the story. The man on the wires looked down and cried loudly. He pleaded: "Help me down and I shall tell you the whole story."

After some argument, one of the policemen, a short fat white man came out fast from the van with a saw and angrily began to saw at the pole. When it fell over he said: "kom hier, the job is klaar". The man fell down with a thud, and feathers from the wings scattered all over. The policemen took out shamboks and gave the man a thrashing.

The weather changed suddenly, and it became cloudy but with some rainbows.

One of the vigilantes said harshly: "Zakewa, Zakewa, drop down from the tree." The joke was quoted from the Holy Bible but by a vigilante, it was another case.

Kufanele Siqonde Ngekusasa

November Marasta Shabalala

Nakuba izinga lodlame kuleli lakithi lisezingeni elethusayo, futhi nelingakaze libonwe, nokho lisekhona ithemba lokuthi sizofika enkululekweni. Noma lokhu kubukeka njengento ethi ayibe buqamama, kodwa ukhalo olusasilele luncane kakhulu kunalolu esiqhamuka kulo waqala umzabalazo wabantu bakithi. Lolukhalo oseluhanjiwe lulinganiselwa eminyakeni engamashumi ayisishiyagalombili.

Phakathi kwalelibanga elingaka lomzabalazo, kuningi osekwen-zekile, esikubonile, kanye nesikuzwile kwizwekazi lethu le-Africa.

Ngasekupheleni kweminyaka yo 1950 kuya eminyakeni yo 1960, kuzekube yimanje, maningi amazwe ase-Africa athe akhululeka. Leyo nkululeko enye yayo yaba wumphumela wokudela ukufa, isibindi kanye nenhloso yokuzikhulula kwingcindezelo yemibuso yedlanzana. Nathi lokhu kusinikeza ithemba lokuthi sizonqoba.

Kulomshikashika omkhulu kangaka wabafowethu base-Africa, kwahlaluka ukuthi emva kokuthi sebeyitholiile inkululeko, kunokuthile okugamaphutha okwenzekayo. Lawo maphutha ayedalwa ukungaqondisisi kahle ngezombusazwe.

Phela ipolitiki lena iyinto exakile ngempela idinga abantu abayiqondayo, ikakhulukazi imfundo. Nokho kuliqiniso ukuthi ingxenye enkulu yabantu bakithi abafundile ngokwanele, kodwa naphezu kwalokho sisethubeni elihle lokuziqonda izinto ezinhle nezimbi.

Uma sibuyela emaphutheni abawenzayo, babecabanga ukuthi inkululeko isho ukuthatha noma yini okungesiyona eyakho ngaphandle kwemvume, abanye bashiya imisebenzi yabo ngomqondo wokuthi konke kuzozizela ngaphandle kokukusebenzela, abanye bashiya izikole, bethi asisekho isidingo semfundo ngoba sebekhululekile kanti cha akunjalo, abanye baqala ukudakwa kakhulu kunakuqala njengoba izwe selibuyile, abanye babecabanga ukuthi noma ungabulala umuntu ngeke uboshwe ngoba nakhu phela izwe libuyile. Kuliqiniso futhi ukuthi amazwe ase-Africa ayecinde-zelwe izizwe ezimhlophe, kulapho-ke abantu bazitshela khona ukuthi sebengavele bamhlasabule ngempama umlungu ngoba umbuso wabo phezu kwethu usubaphelele kungabi ndabazalutho-kanti lutho

akunjalo. Abanye babecabanga ukuthi njengoba sebekhululekile sebezokuba nezimoto zohlobo oluphambili ngaphandle kokukhokha ngisho nelimnyama isenti leli-kanti phinde.

Phela inkululeko, noma umbuso wentando yeningi isho uHulumeni okhethwe ngokwentando yeningi, ukhlonishwa kwamalungelo abo bonke abantu, ilungelo elifanayo kwimfundo, umhlaba, ezenhlala kahle kanye nezempilo, ngaphandle kokukhetha ngokwebala, inkolo, ulimi kange nobulili.

Kunesisho esejwayelekile okuye kubizwe ngaso umuntu okhuthela esithi, usebenzisa okweJalimane. Phela lesisisho saqhamuka ekutheni, emva kwempi yomhlaba ama-Jalimane asebenza ngokuzi-khandla ukuze umnotho wezwe labo usheshe ubuyele esimweni esihle nesigculisayo ngoba phela nakhu umnotho wawubhidlizwe yimpi. Namhlanje izwe lase-Jalimane lihamba phambili ekwakheni izimoto zohlobo oluphambili.

Ukuze nathi singalenzi iphutha elenziwa ngabafowethu bakwamanye amazwe ase-Africa, kungcono silandele lesi sibonelo sama-Jalimane.

Sifo sini esi

Goodman Kivan

Sifosini esi?

Esingeva mhlabelo nancakuba,

Esingqwigqisa - sigqugqisa

Nomsintsi wokuzimilela

Sichitha-chitha, sidunga-dunga,

Isigqi ntlonipho yendabuko.

Sifondini! ndiyakoyika.

Undishiye ze ndimbatshile

Ndingenasigqi nasithunzi.

Undishiye ndimgumlwelwe

Nezwe lam lilambatha

Nesizukulwane uyakusishiya nombuzo.

Noomakhelwane sesakhelene

Sikhelelana iinkobe gokelela

Kungekho kunyevulelana.

ENatala ushiye iincwina nezijwili
Amaxhego exhegokile
Amaxhegwazana eludwayiba.
Awu! Hayi kumlisela nomthinjane
Wawupic'elimfusa.

Nabezempilo ubashiye bamaphaphu aphezulu.
Wena ubuyinkomba bembuza.

Nochwepheshe abobona kude ubadidile.
Nonomathotholo bethetha isindiya-ndiya
Nababhali bamaphepha bephelelwa ziintsiba.

Iincwina nezijwili zivakele nakwelenduduma,
Angqungqa mamakholwa, andiyaza amagwala.
Xhalanga elimaphiko elabonwa mhla mmene.

Sifondini! awuva.
Iindlebe zakho zingamatshijolo.
Zangqawuza iimbongi zirhorhozela
Zibona umntwana omkhulu wohlanga.
Zagxalathelana zimendlalela umhlanga.
Kowu! kanti akabuzanga kosiyazi.
Sifosini kanti esi,
Esishiya neendonga ziwelene.

**Ndisivile nesijwili sowesifazane,
Yasik'imfesane ndacela nakweyabantwana.
Mthezi weenkuni kodwa inyanda ingekho**

**Undisukele ndingumsintsi wokuzimilela
Wanditshixa nalomasebe am abukhali obuqhawe.
Wanditshisa ndazithandabuza.
Bendikade ndisisihandiba, isinunza-nunza
Seqhawe elimisebe ivutha ingacishi.**

**Ubuqhawe bakho sibubonile
Nesigqi sakho sivakele.
I-Africa uyishiye ineentloni
Izibuza - iziphendula.**

**Nabezempilo ubafundise isifundo
Nabomthonyama abasoze bakulibale.**

**Iintlanti zabo uzivalile
Hamba ngoku, noMajola abuyele esibayeni
Nomzimba wam ngoku ukhathele ziintlungu
Sele ndiyinto engento
Andisakwazi nakuthetha.**

**Ngoku sele bekwazi nokundingxamela,
Bandibiza ngento engento
Qongqololo.**

Ngixoshwa udlame

Nester Luthuli

**Ngilele obenyoni
Kungathi ngiyaphupha,
Kusengathi seyibambene
Ngezihluthu**

**Yekelelani bo!!
Nazi izigoloza,
Ezimehl' abomvu,
Ziza zifuthazela,
Ziqotha imbokodo nesisekelo,
kusho owesifazane.**

**Pansi kwesihlahla
Somyezane,
Ngakhala ezimathonsi.
Sezimdle zamtshokoza,
Ezimehl' abomvu.**

**Msindo ngiphinde ngawuzwa
Khona kwesikabhadakazi
Wenanelwa izihosha
Namawa.
Kwabanda kwamancane
Ngamba ngambulula.**

Lapho kuphela inyanga kuzimuka ikhanda

Vusi Bhengu

**Ukwenyuka nokwehla kuyafana
Ukulamba nokwesutha umzabalazo
Klo-klo kukhala isisu phakathi kwamabili
Izikelemu zizitikela nje emathunjini
Izamule indoda, ihlengezel'izinyembezi
Nxa iqabuke yathola okusaqashana,
Ihleka kuvele elomhlathi
Nanxa amaphakethe elandula
Elandula nsuku zonke
Bajik'batekule ngawo amakinati**

**Lapho kuphela inyanga kuzimuka ikhanda
Helele! naziya izintambo zokuxhumana zivala
iphakethe
Naziya zibala ibanga nenani
Umabonwa kude uzisholo wona
Ukhumbuza indoda ngelayisense
Uphahla lugqobhoza iphakethe
Izisu kubantwana ziyakhala
Izinyembezi zehla ngambili ehlweni lilinye**

Lapho kuphela inyanga kuzimuka ikhanda
Umnumzane ukhipha amehlo okwesibhudu
Izitolo ziyamemeza
Esezingubo neminqwazi sifuna inkokhelo
Inkokhelo yezigqiki namatafula
Nke-nke kushaya ikhanda endodeni
Ezibhebheni zenzliziyo kufike ukuzisola

Kufike ukuzibiza ngesithutha
Unembeza weqiniso ududuze
Usho uthi hayi bo!
Hay bo! ngihola imali encane
Koze kubenini?
Ikhanda lenjula-kucabanga lesinde
Lesinde kungekho sixazululo

Lapho kuphela inyanga kuzimuka ikhanda
Nanguya umfazi namehlo osizi
Ngezindebe zomlomo ezomile kuyazisho
Izidikiselo zibheke phezulu ziyalandula
Hayi ikati lilele eziko
Shintsha bashintshile
Bheka nje izandla
Izandla zizilondalonda
Qhamu, mfana mumbene nesu
Yiyo indod'ibheke ezimayini
Awu! kusho izwi lokumangala,
Kwakungcono izibabuli

Hm! ukugqobha itshe bukhoma
Ukugqobha itshe umsebenzi wami
Kungumsebenzi wami engawuphumela ekhaya

Lapho kuphela inyanya kuzimuka ikhanda
Okubuhlungu nokulukhuni
Umsebenzi ongaholeli
Lapho nginikwa iklwa nehawu
Kungekho bani onesizathu nami
Ngiwufaka umkhonto ubuye negazi!
Igazi elingenacala
Usho unembeza kimi, uthi
Engabe lezo ntandane zokwenziwa,
Zintandane ziyokondliwa ubani na?
Usi lwegazi selukhinyabeze ingqondo yami

Iqunga lezintelezi liyangishoshozela
Lapho kuphela inyanga kuzimuka ikhanda
Emini ngigqobha itshe lengcebo
Kepha umgqobhi wetshe lengcebo
Le emuva kwantuthu
Balala bengakuthanga mbibi
Umfazi ucwaninga ucadolo
Kuhle okwemvu kumbe imbuzi
Ekhaya belala bebuka izinkanyezi
Bezibala ziye zifikise ubuthongo
Izichotho nezimvula ziyazenzela
Okuyizingane ngamapaklazana ngezisu

Ubaba oseGoli uyithemba
Ithemba lokuphila
Hawu! ngiyesaba baba ndini weqa izidumbu
Uyaphikelela ngeklwa, zande.
Emini ugqobha itshe
Ebusuku ulala ngenkomo

Lapho kuphela inyanga kuzimuka ikhanda
Ehostela nxa indod'ilele
Indod'ithuk'izanya
Akukho ngqondo nakucabanga
Izinkinga zomndeni ziza muva
Amaqhingana okunqoba aphambili
Iphunga legazi nokulomela
Yiyonanto engumgogodla
Umgogodla wempilo
Nxa kuphaphanywa, kwesikabhadakazi
Amavo ka Mfenekayigugi,
Athi, ungizwile ngeklwa lami?
Ungibonile ngilala ngenkomo?
Lapho kuphela inyanga kuzimuka ikhanda.

Uzozo enhliziyweni yami

Gladman "Mvukuzane' Ngubo

**Lapho Likikilikiga okwesithathu
Libika ukufika kwemini,
Umzimba wami usuke ulale uhlevane
Ngizwe ngiqhaqhazela
Kungebe bengingembethe,
Ubelesele uzozo ekujuleni,
Kwenhliziyo enguMbusi wami.**

**Ngisuke ngifise sengathi,
Ngabe Kuthiwa liyashona,
Ngiqale ukwakha ngomcabango,
Khona manjalo ngibhidlize,
Ungibhaxule emzwangedwa,
Ngizwe izigqi esifubeni,
Ubelesele uzozo ekujuleni
Kwenhliziyo enguMbusi wami.**

**Hhayi! kuyobuye kulunge,
Ngisho belu ngiziduduza,
Qedane ngivuke ngizithathe
Kuhle kwesosha elafungayo**

Ngiphikelele khon' ejokeni,
Phansi'emathinjin'omhlaba
Nginapha ngiqalekisa
Ngingazenzi kuzenzekela,
Uzozo ulokhu unkenketha
Uyidabula inhliziyo yami.

"Nakhumul'izigqoko nawuthola!"
Ibhas'bhoi imphongoloza,
Isho ngendelelo nokuchwensa
Ngizwe zihlengezela kimi,
Lapho sengimthuthwana,
Kuhle kweThwasa liphum'emgoqweni.
Kodwa ngibuye ngimoyizele,
Laph'umunt'egomela
Kepha yena engahlosile kimi,
Esho ethi, ngifung'abaphansi

Makhathaleni inkeneneze
Ibik'ukuthi sekwanele,
Iyonqwamana ngomso.
Kodwa ngizwe lungeqa,
Kakhulu kunakuqala,
Umzimba usho ugubhazele
Ngisuke ngifise sengathi,
Ngabe kuthiwa kuyasa
Ngizwe uzozo ubelesela
Ekujuleni kwenhliziyo yami.

Phel'ukuphumul'akukho
Esitebelen'omuny'umgodla
Uhlel'ungilindele
Phela singamaphisi
Izikhathi zezinyamazane siyazazi
Siciba ziwe ubudiklidikli
Ngizwe ngabo abafu
Besho bethi, ngadla, ngadla
kusho amakhoza oqobo
Kuphela aswel'imisila
Ngabe ayayitshikizisa
Ubelesele uzozo ekujuleni
Kwenhliziyo enguMbusi wami

Ngabe kwenze njani?
Kuyoze Kube nini?
Ngikahlanyezwa inyoni kayiphumuli
Ngiphinde ngizigwaze ngowami
Ngisungul'umhlambi wezintandane
Kazi angisalikhumbuli yini na?
Lelo bel'esalincela sashiyelana
Lemibuzo ifika yelakanyana
Ifosi liwubhaxule unembeza wami
Usho ubelesele uzozo ekujuleni
Kwenhliziyo enguMbuso wami.

Sasuka emakhaya

Nester Luthuli

**Sasuka emakhaya sixoshwa
Umphangazane
Ikati selilala eziko
Sibhekana emehlweni
Indida yokuntula umsebenzi.**

**Amabombo ngawabhekisa kwaNdongaziaduma
Ngako belu ukuyogqwaba umsebenzi
Izinhlobonhlobo zabantu,
Ubuphithiphithi
Izinyokotho kuhle kosayidinsi.**

**Lapho kuntwela ezansi, kubonwa yithi
Imindeni yethu isele dengwane
Umduduzi inkece kuphela
Phambili nansi inkilibathwa
Izinqola zihamba zibuye ngomnyama.**

**Ibambene ngezihluthu
NgeyakwaNtamoqinile**

**NeyakwaHlakanipha
Kazi iyozala
Nkomoni.**

**Nampa nogqayinyanga baqaphile
Esikhundleni sokuvikelwa
Siyanikelwa
Sizothi webani asabelephi
Sibhidlangile isifo.**

**Imbo ihlasele izingcweti
Zaya kwagoqanyawo
Yahlasela ulusha, yaqothula
Yahlasela omama e-Africa,
Sasala dengwane.**

**Maye! unenkani njengexoxo
Sesibe siyathe siyakuhebeza,
Kunhlanga zimuka nomoya
Sesidikibele ubumnyama bakho
Awunamahloni!**

**Siphelile isikhathi sakho
Sisele sikhala ezimathonsi
Thokolathemba
Lizobuya elikaMthaniya
Okungapheli kuyahlola.**

The Man with the Umbrella

Goodman Kivan

That Sunday afternoon the sky was cloudy and it was working up for rain. We were coming from one of the hotels of Durban where we had drinks to cool our nerves and to have some new adventures.

At the end of the day my friend asked me whether this time we could go home to Umlazi by train and not the taxi: "the journey by train is a convenient mode of transport because we can rest and have more space than in a taxi. Furthermore we will have a chance to befriend ladies without disturbances".

I thought that nowadays the journey by train is a very risky exercise. But due to his insistence I eventually agreed to move by train.

We strode to the train station until we reached the security checkpoint gate where we had to buy a ticket to Mnyandu, our destination. By sheer luck we arrived at the gate when the ticket issuing clerk was busy

chuckling with a lady. So we passed him without paying for a ticket and went down to platform 4.

At platform No.4 we saw various people waiting for the same train we had to board. As we moved forward looking for a safe place to relax we came across a man busy romancing a lady, not even disturbed by our presence.

The day seemed blessed with enjoyment: the ticket issuer was busy with a lady and again on this platform a man was romancing a lady. But in my mind there was no happiness at all. Why did I feel worried while people around were enjoying the day? Did I feel guilty because I had not paid for a ticket to Mnyandu?

I was rescued from my morbid thoughts by the arrival of the train. People began to jostle for a place in the train and my friend and I took our seats in the 1st class compartment. I chose a place by the windows and my friend sat just in front of me.

He looked relaxed and enjoying the journey while I was sweating with anxiety. Maybe he did not understand what was on my mind. The fact that he was used to going by train without paying was exciting to him.

The fear that gripped me was due to a picture that had formed deep in my mind even before.

It was a picture of being thrown through the windows of the moving train by the ticket examiners if found guilty for not having a paid ticket. Worse than that - the most brutal pain in my mind was to be caught up by those forces who used to roam about the train looking for innocent people and to shoot and stab them. Those vigilantes had no moral values. Therefore one had to be careful when going by train.

Things took a dramatic turn when a big long bellied man entered our compartment. He had a heavy body, red starring eyes, a long paunch and a long unusual umbrella. He really attracted attention to himself.

As soon as he moved to get his seat I felt like bursting into laughter. It was extraordinary: the umbrella man got seated and without wasting any time he began to sleep. Even the noise of the commuters and the movement in the train could not rock him in his strange, half-conscious doze.

How could he behave like this? Why was he not afraid to sleep in a train amid the noise and the fact that there are vigilantes who attack and throw people out of the

windows while the train is in motion? The man with the umbrella seemed not to have been perturbed by those circumstances.

Whenever the train halted at stations to allow people to ascend and descend the man never stopped sleeping. But when the train stopped at Mnyandu where we had to get off the paunch man opened his eyes, starred at us with those frightening eyes and clasped his umbrella.

I got off, and crossed the bumpy road with terrific speed. I feared that the man might be a vigilante. Suddenly there was pandemonium: the people who were at Mnyandu station waiting for taxis and the train were separated into two groups. They began a fight. The man with the umbrella vanished through the crowds.

'My Life and Experience at Sea', told by the Fish.

Vusi Bhengu

I think I am lucky to be what I am, a fish. I think the life I live is natural and free compared to any other life in the whole world. I have heard about people's life and experiences. I have heard about the violence and that they fail to solve their problems by themselves in this world. Hmm! What a shame for them. I love my world the sea. I love swimming around.

But yesterday I experienced something bad and new in my world. When my friend and I were hunting for food I suddenly noticed a strange shape moving about outside on the sand at the shore. It had two hands, two eyes and two legs. When I looked at it curiously, I saw a stick with a long line leading into my world, the sea. That stick was tightly in his right hand.

I showed my friend that unusual figure and we swam away, continuing to look for food. Tragically our world

was full of bubbles and there was an unusual br--br--br-- sound all round. Then I saw the same fearful figure again and I paddled away as fast as I could.

It was coming closer and closer into our world. It's two hands were holding the stick tightly and the line was taut. By that time my friend was hanging up and up, outside the sea, our world. This was the last time that I saw my friend.

Late yesterday there were only tears of sadness for my friend. The whole nation was in sorrow. Oh, what a wonderful world we had! We do not have police patrolling. There is no government to govern us. There are no laws and restrictions binding us. There are no boundaries that separate us. The sea music is sweet and full of harmonies. There is no classification of individuals as there are no racial or ethnical lines separating us. No one is richer nor poorer than the other.

We had not encountered any foreign enemy before. The only problem which we had known was natural, and which we cannot blame anybody for. It is the problem of our nation individual's behaviour where the big ones eat the small ones. What happened yesterday was planned by a foreigner against us for his purposes and will. I am lucky to be alive but what a shame about my helpless friend, hmm...poor soul. Hey! Let us stop such tragedies and killings of innocent souls, for the sake of the survival of our world and nation's prosperity!

The Overall

Gladman "Mvukuzane" Ngubo

That Saturday in September was a sunny day, and the blue sky looked more beautiful than ever. As it was Spring, trees had grown green leaves again, and the flowers bloomed in many colours. The buildings of the University of Turfloop looked higher that day, bearing witness that within those walls prominent people in the country were developed.

As early as 10 o'clock in the morning people from different places began to flock into one of the big halls of those buildings. They arrived in different cars and shook hands with those whom they knew, and women were also seen here and there greeting each other or doing brief introduction for each other.

Among those parents was Mrs Dlamini who had come a long way from Durban where she was working as a domestic worker. Today she was not wearing that pink overall, with its frilly pinafore and pink doek, that pink uniform which she had worn for almost ten years.

Today, life had engaged another gear, for she was wearing a navy blue two-piece, with a big hat on her head, and a purse, and both matched her outfit.

Her only son, Ernest Sibusiso Dlamini, in his navy suit, was also amongst those students who had come to graduate in Medicine that day. He was looking happier, and was not at all shy to introduce his mother to his university mates: "My mother has dedicated her life to working from five o'clock in the morning till seven o'clock in the afternoon, every day, just to fulfill my desire for the future. That desire is fulfilled today. As from today she is no longer going to be a domestic worker. But she will be a happy mother, who is going to reap the fruit from the seeds she has sown."

Yes of course, he was right. His mother had lived an unhappy life, since her husband passed away years before. Her husband had been a mine worker in Welkom, and had died in a mine accident. At that time, Sbusiso was doing Standard eight. His dream to be a doctor faded into the horizon of his mind with the tragic news of the death of his father. But after the funeral, his mother consoled him.

It was in the evening, when S'bu was sitting alone in his bedroom at their house at Ixopo, when his mother approached him. He was sitting silently on his bed,

deep in thought. Sorrow was written on his face. His mother, in black mourning clothes, entered his room and sat down next to him. Though in pain herself she comforted him with motherly words, stroking him gently on his shoulders. "Life changes at every minute my son, and it does not need cowards. For they die twice before their actual death comes."

"So, don't lose hope my child. I will try my hardest to take you where you wish. In six months' time, as soon as I am able to go out, I'll go and seek for a job to push you further with your education. Believe me, and be optimistic".

Days and weeks went by, and after six months she was seen one day in one of the Ixopo shops talking to the shopkeeper asking for a job. "Makoti, I'm sorry to say that at the moment, I haven't got a job for you here", the shopkeeper, a bald-headed white man replied, after listening to her request, "But my daughter who got married last week phoned to ask me to look for a girl who can work for her as a servant. But maybe that job won't be suitable for you, because they live in Durban."

"As long as the job is still available, I'll take it," Mrs Dlamini pleaded. The old man phoned his daughter and everything was settled. They arranged for Mrs. Dlamini to be picked up by the daughter at the shop, on Friday.

On Friday Mrs Dlamini was seen getting into the back seat of Mrs Collins' car, with her small old brown suit case, and off they went to Durban.

On their arrival she was given a pink overall with a pinafore and a triangular cloth for her head. And from now on she was not called Mrs Dlamini, but Veronica. "Veronica, this is your uniform. You are going to wear it all the time. Please keep it always clean. Do you understand?" Mrs Collins said, giving her that domestic worker's uniform.

Mrs Dlamini cursed that uniform, because as a widow she was still in black clothes. But now, because of the job, she was compelled to wear that pink overall.

She persevered until her mourning time was over. Although the wage was very low she managed to educate her son until he was matriculated.

S'bu was very bright and he passed his matric with distinction. The Rector of the College got him a bursary for seven years to go and study Medicine. He also did well in Medicine till he completed those seven years. That day in September was their graduation day.

At twelve o'clock that day in that hall Veronica again became Mrs Dlamini. She didn't believe her eyes,

when she was standing next to her only son, who was now wearing as gown like a Bishop. Tears ran down her cheeks, when she remembered those suffering days as a domestic worker, wearing that pink uniform, tolerating the insults and abuse from her madam. They ran down more when the chancellor said to her son: "You are the light and the hope of the world. Please be patient with everything you will encounter in your life."

After the ceremony, S'bu said softly to his mother: "Don't cry Mama, life changes at every minute. As from today, you'll live a happy life. You are no longer going to wear that pink overall. Just because you didn't die twice before your actual death comes. Believe me and be optimistic."

If Dignity is judged by Wealth, how to judge the Poor's Dignity?

Vusi Bhengu

My name is Tom Shair. I want to tell you about a worry that keeps on spinning in my head: if people are given dignity and respect on account of richness, how then are the poor afforded dignity?

I have been to different places. I have seen and met different kinds of people. Life has given me opportunities that many I know cannot afford. In big city hotels I have noticed that the number of beers you can buy determines if you are called Mr. I have been to different churches and I considered a church a holy place. It was therefore surprising that often, to become a deacon, the size of church-donations played a role.

I have been to parties, and no matter how good and hard someone may dance, the brightest coloured and expensive props contribute to who will be chosen best man or best queen of the day. I have also attended

many funerals of different people where I think there is no need for luxury but I noticed that expensive black suits can push up for dignity and respect. Generally in some way or other lately love goes for the expensive.

Last night I decided to visit Malukazi squatters so as to conduct a sort of an interview. I know very well that in mjondolos most of the people are poor. I wanted to get the views from the people who live there.

I knocked at the door of one of the shapeless one roomed mjondolo, made out of planks, confident that I was going to find the answer to the worrying question. A short, one eyed man, who only had one arm, emerged. I got into the room, introduced myself and he also introduced himself as "Thami".

We sat around a mbawula for it was a cold day.

I said, "Mnumzane, I am here not for a joke or to mock you. I can imagine the pain and problems that you are experiencing here in your mjondolo, without flushing toilets, electricity and with great overcrowding. What pushed me to come to you really is a dream that I had last night.

Last night in my dream somebody asked me a question and said, If people on earth are dignified by their wealth

then how are the poor dignified? My friend, I am not that rich but I want us to share our thoughts and experiences about that question. Thami, what is your experience concerning respect and dignity shown to you by other people? How do the rich people treat you and accept you as a person?"

Thami answered: "Hey, Tom, for me it is a new experience that some people like you do worry themselves about us as you do today. In answering your dream-question I shall tell you some stories about my life.

Originally I was born into a poor family and as you can see, I am still poor. I worked for many factories, from factory to factory but wages were very low. Each time I thought I was running for greener pastures but matters went from bad to worse. I got weaker and weaker and my health deteriorated until I got a sick pension.

I thought I would become rich from pension funds and compensation but it all proved me wrong as I got only three thousand Rand for the fifteen years that I had spent with the last company. In all those years my bosses had smiled and patted me on my shoulder, friendly. Today I see that it was all pretence.

My hopes ended finally when the violence started in our place. One night men in balaclavas came and attacked me. That was when I lost my eye and arm. I hoped for some compensation from the government after claims were made, but to no avail. I am disabled today and I shall never work again. Wise or dull I shall die like this.

Even before the accident happened I noticed that people considered me as nothing, no matter how many good ideas and thoughts I put forward. Let me tell you a major example which is typical of the life of a poor person.

It happened when I lived in the rural area of Mbumbulu. One day I came up with the idea of a business complex being erected in our place. I consulted our chief who was too weak to come up with any initiatives. He was so impressed with my idea that he called an imbizo in the following days. To my surprise my name was not even mentioned at the meeting. High on the comfortable adjustable chairs our chief and the business people from other areas sat. We the poor sat down helplessly on the dusty ground.

My idea about a business complex became his idea amongst the people. The people praised the chief for his wisdom and good character. I sat in silence, pained

and helpless. People paid high respect to the chief and the rich people with their hats on the ground. I thought to myself that people could not imagine such an idea to be originally mine. In the end, Tom, it was agreed that a business complex had to be erected. The chief later then gave first preferences to the rich. The rich got richer and more dignified and respected in our community. I remained poor and still considered as nothing in the place.

Out of such experiences I concluded that people judge each other wise and worth-while on the basis of wealth and outside looks, they value others through artificial things like jewellery and clothing. No matter how good and clever a man can be it is of no use if he belongs to the poor. He is not praised and rewarded for the good that he gives. The rich doubles his wealth and increases his status through the poor person's work and wisdom.

This is how I can try to answer your question.

As a poor man the only thing that I am proud of is that mentally I am rich. All those people who benefit from the shopping complex do so without knowing that it is a product of my wisdom. What I am happy about is that I made a contribution, no matter how small it is, no matter how small I am.

What worries me is: how long is it going to take us people to notice the importance and value of a human being, small, short or big? How long is it going to take us people to see the importance of lifting every voice and of respecting every idea? When will people see the need of human upliftment by other humans, especially the lucky people who are rich?"

Umcebo Onomkhuba Phakathi

November Marasta Shabalala

"Uyabona S'goloza ntangayethu sesineminyaka engamashumi amabili sisebenza lapha eGoli futhi sisebenza phansi emathunjini omhlaba, sigqobha igolide. Kuso sonke lesisikhathi sebe baningi abantu belimala okwafuthi abanye sebehamba ngezihlalo ezinamasondo, ungunaphakade. Kodwa uyabona ukuthi amadlozi ethu asisingethe ngazo zombili?" "Yebo S'khumba senj'endala ntanga-yethu ngiyakuzwa ukuthi uthini, uqinisile ngempela, phela kade izinto zenzeka phambi kwethu ngisho nezingozi ezinyantisa umzimba."

"Manje S'goloza ntanga uma ucabanga ubona ukuthi abaphansi bazosi-phephisa kuze kube nini, ucabanga ukuthi laba abafayo bona abanawo yini amadlozi?... Ngiphendule wethu ngiyabuza? "Angithule ngoba ngingakuzwa kodwa noma kunjalo ayikho into esingayenza ngoba phela sesaphilela khona lapha kobelungu uma kungenjalo izingane zethu zingabulawa indlala." "Ngiyakuzwa ntanga kodwa mina senginomunye umqondo, futhi okuhle ukuthi angisaloboli, kanti nezingane zami sezikhulile, manje

senginomqondo wokuwushiya umsebenzi ngiyozihlalela ekhaya." "Yebo S'khumba ngiyakuzwa kodwa usungahamba, ususalelwe yiminyaka emibili nje vo ukuthi uthathe impesheni?" "We S'goloza, uyazi sonke lesisikhathi bengithi uyindoda kanti ngiyazikhohlisa!... Ngithi ngikhuluma nawe, wena usangitshela ngeminyaka, ucabanga ukuthi unyaka into encane!

Angithi zolo lokhu kufe ixhosa noMsuthu laphaya ku Shaft No.2. He...akunjalo?" Ngiyaxolisa S'khumba ntangayethu bengingaqondile ukuthi sixabane, futhi nguwe oqale lendaba." "Cha wethu asixabani kube ukuphakama kwezwi nje kuphela ntangayethu."

"Hayi-ke kulungile, kodwa nakhu engithanda ukuthi ukwazi phela umuntu uyafa ngisho ezilalele nje ngakho-ke angiboni ukuthi ukufa ungakubalekela." Cha S'goloza namuhla uyangidida, uthi uyazizwa ukuthi lento oyishoyo insumansumane imali yamakhanda uqobo, phela inganekwane le ongitshela yona. Ake usho ubani omaziyo owabulawa ubuthongo!... ngiphendule?" Iyah!... noma S'khumba uzenza umuntu ongazi lutho, mina ngiyazi ukuthi lento engiyishoyo iliqiniso. Kodwa ngoba kuthiwa ohlaba eyakhe akanqatshelwa, ungenza ngendlela obona ngayo." "Vele ngizokwenza ngoba sengicabange kahle. Sengikhathele ukulokhu ngigxiza amanzi njengencuba."

"Hayi-ke S'khumba ngiyakuzwa, kodwa kade sixoxa sekuze koma namathe ake uphakamise lapho wethu ejekeni ngithi ukuqhabula kancane, ingabe unjani lomqombothi wanamhlanje phela oSigqokosengwe sebakohlwa ukuthi baphekela abantu.

Phela lamadoda axoxa nje eceleni kwawo kunojeke womqombothi, phakathi nendawo kunembawula ngoba phela amakhaza lena eGoli ikhaya lawo, kanti futhi babeqhwakele emibhedeni yabo khona njalo enkompolo. Yezwakala enguS'khumba isithi, "wena ucabanga ukuthi ngiyadlala kanti cha, kusasa ngizoya kwimenenja ngiyofaka inothisi bese kuthi ngoMgqibelo ngiqoqe konke okwami ngibheke kwelakithi."

"Hhayibo.. kanti S'khumba awudlali, usuyahamba ngempela, kanti injani nje lendoda." "NginguS'kumba senj'endala mina angisiyona ingane sengishilo angisajiki." Wavele wabona uS'goloza ukuthi ayingangaye lendaba. "Asilale manje S'khumba kusile kusasa." "Uqinisile wethu Kungakho nje ngingasathandi ukusebenza, njalo umuntu ulala ebalisa." Kwathi ngakusasa sekubuywa emsebenzini, uS'khumba waqonda ngqo kwimenenja wafike wafaka inothise.

Kwathi ngoLwesihlanu wayiholelwa yonke imali yakhe. "Njengoba sengiyi tholile yonke imali yami, into yokuqal okufanele ngiyenze ukuthi ngiye laphaya emkhukhwini kuleya ndoda engayixoxelwa uS'goloza ukuthi idayisa

amakhambi emfuyo. Nebala wasuke waqonda emkhukhwini wafike wawathola amakhambi emfuyo. "Nakhoke ekade ngikudinga."

Lathi lishona ilanga langoLwesihlanu konke kwabe sekumi ngomumo. Ngakusasa ekuseni uS'khumba amabombo wawabhekisa kwelakubo.

Wathi efika ekhaya wayethenga izinkomo ezilishumi, kanye nelinye ishumi lezimbuzi. Lezizinkomo zazizala kabili ngonyaka futhi zizala amankonyane ngamabili, kanti nazo izimbuzi zazizala kabili ngonyaka zona zazizala amazinyane amathathu ngesikhathi. Emva kweminyaka emithathu kwayena uS'khumba ubesehluleka ukuyibala yonke imfuyo yakhe. Lobubuningi bemfuyo bamdalela ukuhlonishwa endaweni yakubo.

"Uyabona Mkhonto ntangayethu kukhona into engiyisolayo, sibadala uma singaka, uS'khumba kukhona into enza ngayo, angikaze niyibone kumuntu imfuyo engaka, cha lutho!... Uzongibuza ngolunye usuku." "Uyazi Mathangetshitshi bengithi yimina ngedwa oyibonayo lento kanti nawe uyayibona! Futhi lento kaS'khumba, kungenzeka ukuthi wabuya nayo le eGoli, phela kuthiwa amaxhosa awalithaki ikhubalo aqala kwa A." "Nami impela lento ngiyibona njengawe."

Phela lawa kwakungamakhehla endawo ayezixoxela ehlangane endleleni.

Emva kwezinsukwana uS'khumba washona enqotshwa isifo senhliziyo. Ngosuku lomngcwabo kwavela enkulu insumansumane le, ngoba ngesi-khathi sekugqitshwa kwaduma izulu elinamandla elingakaze libonwe kulendawo, kwabamnyama emini nasemehlweni abantu emngcwabeni. Abantu baxakwa ukuthi ingabe kwenzekani.

Kwabonakala abomndeni sebehlangene ndawonye sebefuna ukuthola ukuthi ingabe akukho yini okungenziwanga ngendlela efanele. Unkosikazi wekhaya waphendula wathi, "Angazi ngempela, ngoba bengicabanga ukuthi konke kugciniwe ngendlela. Kodwa mhlawumbe kungenzeka ukuthi kungenxa yaleliya bhokisi elincane ebelivulwa nguye kuphela, mhlawumbe ubaba uyalidinga. Nebala lalandwa labe selifakwa emgodini. Nebala izulu lanqamuka kwabasengathi akukaze kwenzeke lutho. Emva kwalokho wagqitshwa uS'khumba kahle kakhulu.

Abantu babebonakala emehlweni ukuthi bethukile futhi bamangele yilento ababeyiqala ngqa ukuyibona. Ikhehla elinguMkhonto labuza kumngane walo uMathangetshitshi lathi, "Aphi amanga ethu?" Phela

ntangayethu sibadala uma singaka, basuke bengaqambi amanga abafana uma bethi singamathayima ngoba vele izinto siyazithayima."

Emva kwezinsukwana ezingengaki uS'khumba eshonile zaqala ukufa izinkomo kanye nezimbuzi, zifa ubuthaphuthaphu, kwathi kuphela izinyanga ezithathu kwabe kungasekho lutho esibayeni, kwasala umquba wodwa.

Emndenini wakhe okwakuyizingane ezingamashumi amathathu kanye nesi-thembu sakhe samakhosikazi amahlanu, bonke basala bencela izithupha.

Ezwakala lawo makhehla angabangani umkhonto noMathangetshitshi ehla-ngene otshwaleni ethi, "savele sasho ukuthi lomcebo kaS'khumba ubunomkhuba phakathi."

The Radio

Gladman 'Mvukuzane' Ngubo

Along the western side of the town called Pinetown, beyond those small hills, quite a distance, but not too far, there is a place called Ntshongweni. It is a rural place with people who still have farming stock and mealie fields to plough their crops. Here, boys used to go hunting, and the girls often gathered in the rivers with big washing tubs to do their family's laundry. When you approached them, you could hear loud voices of great laughing, and sometimes the singing of traditional songs. People were proud of their culture.

In the evenings, when everybody was back at home, children used to sit around the fire, listening with great interest to their grandmothers and fathers telling them tales and old stories. These tales and stories were vitally important because they were educating the children about bad and good things.

The Kwhela family lived in this place and they lead the same life. Today, that life no longer exists, in fact things began to change completely about twenty years ago.

It was in 1970 when Bhekikhaya Khwela announced that he would come from Johannesburg to pay a visit to his family during the December holidays. He had worked in Johannesburg for the whole year without coming home. His family was feeling very happy about his coming. Even in the mealie-fields during the ploughing his name was always in the conversations of his family.

One day on the way home from the fields Khanyisile, his youngest daughter, said: "When Baba arrives, I'll show him how I'm doing Zulu dancing". She stopped in her tracks and sang a traditional song, urging the others to sing and clap hands. They joined in and she started doing Zulu dancing as a demonstration of what she would do for her father. Everybody laughed with happiness and continued on their way.

"I'll tell him some of the tales granny has been telling us in the evenings", Nokuthula the eldest daughter replied, trying to compete with her young sister. "And me too", Deliwe another daughter said softly, not sure of what she would do. "And you Vukani?" she added, asking her brother. "You mean me?" Vukani asked with a smile. "Of course I'm referring to you. How many Vukani's are here?" Deliwe responded, laughing.

Vukani hesitated and everybody laughed at him, until his youngest sister, Khanyisile replied for him: "Tell her that you'll go out hunting and you'll bring Baba two rabbits." "Exactly", Vukani said, stroking his youngest sister's head. "And you mother?" Khanyisile asked, looking at her mother curiously. "Oh, I'll always make zulu beer for him." her mother replied, laughing. So those were some of the conversations and promises in anticipation of Bhekikhaya's visit.

Days went by until it was the 23rd of December and the day of Bhekikhaya's arrival. He came holding a big suitcase, a brief-case and a portable radio.

After greeting everybody he played cassettes on his radio inviting everybody to dance. Within the wink of an eye, children from the neighbourhood had flocked Bhekikhaya's house. In the evening they all sat quietly listening to a short story which was transmitted from the Radio Zulu station. Children stayed there until they were called by their parents to come back to their homes.

The following day was Xmas day. Always on Xmas days people used to go to an open space to watch the youth groups entertaining them with traditional music. But on

that day things proceeded differently. Very few groups performed Zulu dances because most of the youth went to dance to the radio music at Bhekikhaya's kraal.

All his children forgot what they had promised to do for their father during his visit. Only their mother succeeded in making Zulu beer because she was compelled to do so.

After Xmas began the hoeing period in the mealie-fields. The Kwhela family was seen hoeing their field for an hour or so, and then sitting down listening to their radio which they always brought with them ^{to} their field. That year, they were the last ones to finish the preparation of the fields. And as their field was not hoed properly their harvest was bad that year.

But bit by bit most of the young men who were working at the nearby towns were seen during the week-ends going up and down with radios. Instead of hearing the loud voices of laughing and songs of traditional music from the girls in the rivers, radios were heard playing artificial music. The boys forgot how to hunt because they were now listening to the football matches and boxing on the radios.

Eventually, all the homes were filled with radios and people were listening to the news of the incidents that had occurred in different places. Grandmothers didn't get the opportunity of telling tales anymore. The youth was calling that an old style, while it was now the modern time.

From then on things changed - until the progressive organisations reminded people about their culture. Then the youth started to realise the truth and formed culture groups. Today cultural rallies are taking place again at Ntshongweni.

Who is this Woman?

Goodman Kivan

**Who is this woman
who flew like a little vagabond
in search of our ancestor's archives
yet she had nothing to document.**

**Only spears, assagais, bows
and arrows wafting the
blood of anger.**

**Who will deny that our warriors
had faught most,
yet their killing instinct was no more.**

**Who is this woman?
who without wings
flew faster than the bird,
crossed these wells of
tribalism to the caves of our ancestors.**

Has the determination to wade through
that flood of darkness to vex the bones
of Dr Eiselen and Hendrik Verwoerd.
Their thoughts are checked with mud
silt, sand and layers of hatred,
their souls refuse to die.

Who is this woman?
Though violated a taboo
felt no remorse:
a conquerer of cultural taboos.

As she wondered slowly in those clouds
the roaming voice from beneath
still cried:
Englize them no more,
Science and mathematics
are still not yet for them.
The wells of darkness
is what they should swim in.

Yet she responded with grimace
"I am a woman of principles
and convictions,
the ill wind that blows anybody
no good shall not deter me.
I am not a tale
told by the idiot, full of sound and fury,
that signifies nothing".

She is the woman who could fly
though she had no wings.
Who will deny that she had
nipped ignorance in the bud?
The enemy of rudimentary education,
the foe of the decadent schooling.

When she dies, think only this of her:
there was a woman of wisdom
whom Germany had ever bore;
A symbol of hope,
whom our heirs
would never forget.

A pride to the generations to come
Her voice is like an echo
that will roar in the ears
of the yet unborn generations.

In the deep fathom of history,
verse and prose
she will never be ignored.

So long her image still
lingers on in our minds
we need not to panic.

So long the crooks
and crannies of apartheid
in schools do stand
she shall not succumb.

So long the walls of King George V Avenue
do stand,
she shall be read.

An epic to Astrid von Kotze -
praising her dedication to her work



This is a second collection of stories and poems written by workers during the creative writing course which was part of a two year training programme in cultural organisation and production, offered by the Culture and Working Life Project and COSATU.

As in the first collection 'Where we come from', these texts reflect the concerns of workers in times of political violence and change in Natal. They express the writers' experience of exploitation as workers in South Africa. But they also sparkle with the resilient working-class humour which allows us, like 'the man who could fly', to rise above our daily troubled lives.