

Extract from *The Island*

Robert and Winston play games to survive their ordeal in the Robben Island prison.

- JOHN *(He is now seated on his bed-roll. After a moment's thought he holds up an empty mug as a telephone-receiver and starts to dial. Winston watches him with puzzlement.)*
Operator, put me through to New Brighton, please... yes New Brighton, Port Elizabeth. The number is 414624... Yes, mine is local... local...
- WINSTON *(recognizing the telephone number)* The Shop!
(He sits upright with excitement as John launches into the telephone conversation.)
- JOHN That you, Scott? Hello, man! Guess who!... You got it! You bastard! Hell, Scott, man... how things with you? No, still inside. Give me the news, man... you don't say! No, we don't hear anything here... not a word... What's that? Business is bad?... You bloody undertaker! People aren't dying fast enough! No, things are fine here...
(Winston, squirming with excitement, has been trying unsuccessfully to interrupt John's torrent of words and laughter. He finally succeeds in drawing John's attention.)
- WINSTON Who else is there? Who's with Scott?
- JOHN Hey, Scott, who's there with you?... Oh no!... call him to the phone, man...
- WINSTON Who's it?
- JOHN *(ignoring Winston)* Just for a minute, man, please, Scott...
(Ecstatic response from John as another voice comes over the phone.) Hello there, you beautiful bastard... how's it, man?...
- WINSTON Who the hell is it, man?
- JOHN *(hand over the receiver)* Sky!
(Winston can no longer contain his excitement. He scrambles out of his bed to join John, and joins in the fun with questions and remarks whispered into John's ear. Both men enjoy it enormously.)
How's it with Mangi? Where's Vusi? How are the chaps keeping, Sky? Winston?... All right, man. He's here next to me. No, fine, man, fine, man... small accident today when he collided with Hodoshe, but nothing to moan about. His right eye bruised, that's all. Hey, Winston's asking how are the punkies doing? *(Big laugh.)* You bloody lover boy! Leave something for us, man!
(John becomes aware of Winston trying to interrupt again: to Winston.) Okay... okay...
(Back to the telephone.) Listen, Sky, Winston says if you get a chance, go down to Dora Street, to his wife. Tell V., Winston says he's okay, things are fine. Winston says she must carry on... nothing has happened... tell her to take care of everything and everybody...*Ja....*
(The mention of his wife guillotines Winston's excitement and fun. After a few seconds of silence, he crawls back heavily to his bed and lies down. A similar shift in mood takes place in John.)

And look, Sky, you're not far from Gratten Street. Cross over to it, man, drop in on number thirty-eight, talk to Princess, my wife. How is she keeping? Ask her for me. I haven't received a letter for three months now. Why aren't they writing? Tell her to write, man. I want to know how the children are keeping. Is Monde still at school? How's my twin baby, my Father and Mother? Is the old girl sick? They mustn't be afraid to tell me. I want to know. I know it's an effort to write, but it means a lot to us here. Tell her... this was another day. They're not very different here. We were down on the beach. The wind blowing. The sand got in our eyes. The sea was rough. I couldn't see the mainland properly. Tell them that maybe tomorrow we'll go to the quarry. It's not so bad there. We'll be with the others. Tell her also... it's starting to get cold now, but the worst is still coming.
(*Slow fade to blackout.*)

Extract from *Sizwe Bansi Is Dead*

Buntu has persuaded Sizwe to use the pass book belonging to the dead man, Robert Zwelinzima

MAN (*after a pause*) I'll try it, Buntu.

BUNTU Of course you must, if you want to stay alive.

MAN Yes, but Sizwe Bansi is dead.

BUNTU What about Robert Zwelinzima then? That poor bastard I pissed on out there in the dark. So *he's* alive again. Bloody miracle, man.

Look, if someone was to offer me the things I wanted most in my life, the things that would make me, my wife, and my child happy, in exchange for the name Buntu... you think I wouldn't swop?

MAN Are you sure, Buntu?

BUNTU (*examining the question seriously*) If there was just me... I mean, if I was alone, if I didn't have anyone to worry about or look after except myself... maybe then I'd be prepared to pay some sort of price for a little pride. But if I had a wife and four children wasting away their one and only life in the dust and poverty of Ciskeian Independence... if I had four children waiting for me, their father, to do something about their lives... *ag*, no, Sizwe.

MAN Robert, Buntu.

BUNTU (*angry*) All right! Robert, John, Athol, Winston... Shit on names, man! To hell with them if in exchange you can get a piece of bread for your stomach and a blanket in winter. Understand me, brother, I'm not saying that pride isn't a way for us. What I'm saying is shit on our pride if we only bluff ourselves that we are men.

Take your name back, Sizwe Bansi, if it's so important to you. But next time you hear a white man say 'John' to you, don't say 'Ja, Baas?' And next time the bloody white man says to you, a man, Boy, come here,' don't run to him and lick his arse like we all do. Face him and tell him: 'White man. I'm a Man!' Ag, kak! We're bluffing ourselves.

It's like my father's hat. Special hat, man! Carefully wrapped in plastic on top of the wardrobe in his room. God help the child who so much as touches it! Sunday it goes on his head, and a man, full of dignity, a man I respect, walks down the street. White man stops him: 'Come here, kaffir! What does he do?

(Buntu whips the imaginary hat off his head and crumples it in his hands as he adopts a fawning, servile pose in front of the white man.)

'What is it, Baas?'

If that is what you call pride, then shit on it! Take mine and give me food for my children.

(Pause)

Look, brother, Robert Zwelinzima, that poor bastard out there in the alleyway, if there *are* ghosts, he is smiling tonight. He is here, with us, and he's saying: 'Good luck, Sizwe! I hope it works.' He's a brother, man.

MAN For how long, Buntu?

BUNTU How long? For as long as you can stay out of trouble. Trouble will mean police station, then fingerprints off to Pretoria to check on previous convictions... and when they do that... Sizwe Bansi will live again and you will have had it.

MAN Buntu, you know what you are saying? A black man stay out of trouble? Impossible, Buntu. Our skin is trouble.