

AUDITION MONOLOGUE

SENIOR GIRLS

Excerpt from "Have you seen Zandile?" by Gcina Mhlophe

ZANDILE: Dear Gogo. How are you? I'm still not happy in this place. You must come and fetch me now. Alas when I write to you, they tear the letters, now I hope if I write like this, on the sand, the birds will see this letter and bring it to you. They are my friends and talk to me all the time. Maybe if you can talk with them, they will bring me a message from you. I don't get time to play anymore, there are so many chores to do. Maybe it's good for me, maybe it can make me strong.

And you know what? Yesterday I had to chop wood before I went to school, and I got a splinter in my hand, and blisters. When I told my mother, she said I was making excuses for being lazy. During lunch break at school my teacher saw me crying and she took the splinter out for me. She put Zambuk on my blisters, and that reminded me of you. They don't have Zambuk here. [ZANDILE becomes quite enthusiastic now.]

My teacher, I like her. Her name is Miss Maduma. She is very clever. I always come first in all my subjects. I am very lucky because she takes all my classes. I will show you my report and test books. [Zandile lies down as if to rest.]

The GRANDMOTHER re-enters, with a photograph of ZANDILE in her hand. She asks a member of the audience:

GOGO: Have you see this child? [Showing the photograph.] Have you seen her? Her name is Zandile. [She moves to others.] She is eight years old, she disappeared on the 14th December 1966. She was wearing a little dress with animals on it. [She moves on.] Have you seen Zandile?

Just as she begins to leave the auditorium ...

ZANDILE: But soon now, I must go and cut grass for thatch for the roof. And it's very far to walk to fetch the grass. And Gogo, when you come please can you bring me some shoes? They won't let me wear them here. They only wear shoes when they go to church. Do you think that God can see their shoes under the benches? I must still wear the ones you bought me and they are too small now and old and the children always laugh at the way these shoes make me walk.

They also laughed at me when I didn't know how to put cow dung on the floor. They said I was making funny faces when I did not like the smell. But I can do it much better now and I always help them when it's their turn.