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‘Mani! Papa!’ Khazamula shouted as he ran in through the gate followed closely by his sisters, Khanyisa and Misaveni. ‘We won. We won. And I scored two goals.’ Khazamula was very excited.

His school had beaten the neighbouring school in a soccer match and he was the hero.

‘You should have seen him, Papa, he played just like Lucas Radebe,’ Khanyisa laughed.

‘That’s great, Khazamula,’ his father said. ‘So you scored two goals.’

‘Papa, he scored the winning goal!’ Misaveni shouted excitedly.

‘Yes, Papa. We were two goals all and there were five minutes left. Then Themba headed the ball to me and I dribbled all the way past the defenders and scored.

The goalie didn’t know what was happening to him.’

His parents laughed.

They were very proud of him.

'I think you're ready for Bafana Bafana, Khazamula,' his mother teased.

Father laughed. 'We have to celebrate our son's success.'

'I know, let's go to Khazamula's favourite restaurant for dinner,' said Mother.

'Great, Mani, I'll get ready.' Khazamula dashed off to the bathroom to shower. He turned on the shower taps, then took his toothbrush and toothpaste and brushed his teeth.

When he bent down to rinse his mouth, he heard a strange hissing sound.

It was coming from under the washbasin.

Khazamula was about to look under the washbasin when something suddenly flashed at him. He jumped back in fear when he saw that it was the head of a snake. He moved back cautiously towards the door, dashed out and slammed the door closed.

‘Papa! Papa! Come quick. There’s a snake in the bathroom!’

‘What!’ cried Father as he, Mother and the girls came rushing out of their rooms. ‘Where is it?’

‘I closed the door. It’s in there, under the sink.’

They all rushed outside and Papa looked through the bathroom window.

'Look for it under the washbasin, Papa,' shouted Khazamula.

'Oh my, it's a mamba. It's coiled around the pipes under the washbasin,' said Father.

'Thank God, it didn't bite you,' Mother was quite agitated.

'I want to see! I want to see!' shouted Misaveni who was too short to look through the window. Father picked her up and when she saw the snake, she screamed, jumped out of Papa's arms and ran to the edge of the garden.

Khanyisa looking through the window laughed, 'Look out Misaveni, it's coming for you.' Misaveni screamed and ran to Mother.

'Stop that now, Khanyisa. Papa, what are we going to do?'

‘We can’t leave it in there. Let me see.’ He went round to the side of the house and came back with a long pole. ‘Get the shaving cream from my room, Khazamula.’ Khazamula dashed off to get the cream.

‘Why do you need shaving cream?’ Mother was puzzled.

‘If I can push this pole right up to the pipe, the snake may crawl along it and out of the window. If I put shaving cream on the pole we’ll be able to see whether the snake crawled up the pole or not when we come back.’

‘You mean we’re going off and leaving that thing in there!’ Mother exclaimed.

Misaveni screamed, 'We'll never be able to use the bathroom again!'

'Oh, shut up, Misaveni,' Khanyisa was cross because she too was getting worried. 'Are we really going to leave the snake in there, Papa?'

'What else can we do?' Papa took the shaving cream from Khazamula, smeared it on the pole, pushed the pole through the window and carefully lowered it under the washbasin.

Then they went off to the side of the house and watched from there. Nothing happened.

'Let's not wait. This will take a long time,' Papa said. But just as they were about to go, Khazamula caught his father's sleeve.

'Look, I think it's coming out,' he whispered.

They turned to look and saw the snake's head emerging from the window.

'I'll get a stick,' said Papa as he ran off toward the garage.

‘Be careful, Jabu. That’s a green mamba,’ Mother was afraid.’

Papa came back with a big stick. Just as the snake’s head touched the ground, he raised the stick and brought it down with a crashing blow. The snake’s head was smashed to a pulp.

Its body twisted violently and then fell limp.

The snake was dead.

Papa pulled the rest of it out of the window.

It was very long, almost two meters.

Papa smiled with relief, ‘Well, that’s that.’

‘And it’s not too late. We can still go out to dinner to celebrate Khazamula’s soccer victory,’ Mother reminded them.

‘We mustn’t forget that,’ said Papa. ‘Khazamula hurry up and change.’

Khazamula went into the bathroom. He looked around carefully to make sure that there was nothing under the sink, in the bathtub and in the shower.

The shower taps were still running and Khazamula undressed quickly and took his shower.

When he was ready, the family set out for the restaurant. But they forgot all about Khazamula's two goals. they could talk about was the snake in the bathroom.

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'I'm sorry I killed it,' Papa said. 'I was so afraid of it. I didn't even think.'