

LUNGISA CHARACTER PROFILE



Khumba's mother - she loves him unconditionally and hopes that one day he will grow into his skin. She is gentle and intuitive and is proud of Khumba in spite of what the herd thinks of him. Her final gift to her son is to tell him the story of how their ancestors got their stripes, which she tries to use to illustrate how he needs to embrace his difference.

CASTING: Female motherly figure with a light British or South African Accent—35 to 40. Very gentle, finds strength in a weakened state with poor health. Very genuine and believable.

Lungisa gestures weakly for him to come nearer.

LUNGISA

You are not half a Zebra. Your name is, Khumba.

Lungisa is resting on the ground. Khumba arrives with a crescent of melon in his mouth. Its curve makes him look like he has a huge smile - and she brightens.

LUNGISA

Khumba! *(her voice weak)* **You're thirsty. Have some water.
Have the melon. You're growing.**

KHUMBA

No, you need your strength. You have it.

But she just nudges it away, unable to eat, smiles weakly.

LUNGISA

You're just like your father. *(proudly)* You are one-of-a-kind.

KHUMBA

Sure. I'm a freak.

Lungisa watches him staring sadly at his reflection.

LUNGISA

Do you know why I named you "Khumba"? "Khumba" means "skin". They say that the first Zebras to walk the earth all had exactly the same skin - with no stripes at all.

KHUMBA

No stripes??

She nods. Cave painting-like images subtly appear and ripple in the water, illustrating her story.

LUNGISA (V.O.)

But one little Zebra wanted to be different. One day, he took a journey across the vast Karoo. And there, deep inside a huge mountain, he found a waterhole. A magic waterhole. He swam in it and when he came out, his skin was striped!

Khumba's eyes are wide.

LUNGISA (V.O.)

All the other Zebras admired his beautiful skin and he was proud to be so different. So special. *(a laboured breath)* Now all the other Zebras wanted to be different and special, too. So one by one, they all swam in the magic waterhole. And when they came out; they were all striped, too.

KHUMBA

So I can get my stripes in this waterhole? Where is it!?

LUNGISA

***(coughing)* No Khumba, don't you see? *(falls back, drained)* Then they all looked the same.**

KHUMBA

Wait till Tombi hears this!

And he bolts - too excited to listen as Lungisa finishes:

LUNGISA

***(to herself)* And the little Zebra wasn't special anymore.**