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Chapter 8

Go Down to Get Up

MUSIC: (FADE IN) BLIZZARD OF OSBORN THEME

NARRATOR (V.O)

You're listening to The Blizzard of Osborn by Michael Sheen Cuddy.
Chapter 8: Go Down to Get Up.

MUSIC: BLIZZARD OF OSBORN THEME (FADE OUT).

Scene One: Ext. River cliffside – Day.

SOUND: Flowing water, birdsong (FADE IN)

NARRATOR

Sly was trying to make sense of what Cassie told him. Not only had Queen Mavis appeared before the little girl, but apparently she also gave Cassie a strange silver rhombus to take to the Emperor. It sounded unbelievable, like a fairy tale.

CASSIE

That's what Queen Mavis said, 'Always look for the tallest tree'.

NARRATOR

Sly glanced up at the stand of trees swaying on top of the rocky cliff above them.

SOUND: wind in trees

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SLY

Well. The tallest tree nearby would be one of those up there.

CASSIE

This cliff is so high. How can we get up there?

SLY

Well, there are many paths, some less obvious than others. Follow me.

NARRATOR

Sly snaked his way around boulders and slithered among jagged rocks until he came to a hole in the ground, a small burrow that tunneled down into darkness. He started to slide into the hole which was not much bigger than a fox's den.

CASSIE

You want me to crawl into that dark hole?

SLY

Yeah. It's a shortcut.

CASSIE

Shortcut? I need to get to those trees on the top of the cliff!

SLY

Yeah, I know. But sometimes you gotta go down to get up, go up to get down, get in to get out.

CASSIE

Are you sure?

SLY

Trust me.

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CASSIE

Trust a talking cobra?

SLY

Absolutely. It's the non-talking kind you gotta worry about.

NARRATOR

Cassie crouched down, and peered into the hole.

CASSIE

I don't think I'll fit.

SLY

Nah, you will. You're little and I know these caves inside out.

CASSIE

I can't see in there, it's pitch dark.

SLY

Just follow the sound of my voice, I'll guide you.

NARRATOR

Cassie looked at Jet. How did they end up in such a strange place? Killer Icemen and orange rivers and talking snakes! What next? Still, Jet looked ready to follow Cassie anywhere, and Cassie knew Jet had no problem crawling into dark holes. In fact, that was one of her favorite things to do. Truth be known, Cassie was very frightened, but she didn't want Jet or Sly to know it. So she decided to take a chance and follow Sly.

MUSIC: dark, brooding cave ambience

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Scene Two: Int. Cave – Day, but pitch dark.

NARRATOR

Sly slithered along, talking constantly so Cassie could follow the sound of his voice.

SOUND: Sly talking in background

NARRATOR (cont.)

She wondered how he could find his way so well in the dark. She'd read somewhere that snakes don't have good eyesight but do have very sensitive tongues. They could detect all sorts of things by flicking their tongues in the air: smells and subtle changes in temperature, humidity and air pressure.

Sly understood that crawling in the dark was difficult for Cassie because he kept speaking to reassure her there was nothing to fear. Jet helped too by staying close to Cassie and nudging her gently whenever she faltered.

SOUND: cat purring

NARRATOR (cont.)

After crawling along flat, sandy ground it felt like the pitch of the narrow cave shifted and they started to crawl up an incline. Gradually the angle grew more steep. Sly explained that they were now climbing upward, and eventually, they would come out at a grotto on top of the cliff. Cassie found this hard to believe because the cliff top had looked so high.

MUSIC: dark, brooding cavern ambience

NARRATOR (cont.)

Cassie had never been surrounded by such darkness. Back home in her room some nights she would stare at the ceiling in the dark and notice that the longer she stared the more she could see. Even with

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the lamps off and the blinds drawn a little light always found its way in, maybe from the streetlight outside her house or the pale reflection from the white ceiling above her bed. But the dark in the cave was absolute. She couldn't see anything whatsoever and was completely dependent on following the sound of Sly's voice and feeling Jet nudge her forward.

SOUND: Sly talking in background; cat purring

CASSIE

This dark is making me nervous.

SLY

Be patient. You're doing really well.

CASSIE

I'm cold!

SLY

Hmmm.... I didn't think of that, since I'm cold-blooded myself.

NARRATOR

Crawling on her hands and knees slowly and blindly Cassie put her hand down.

CASSIE

Eee-yew!

SLY

What is it?

CASSIE

Something slimy!

SLY

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Ah, it's probably just a slug, it won't hurt you.

CASSIE

I can't stand this!

SLY

We're getting close. Listen, have you ever heard the story of the sloth and the monkey?

CASSIE

What? No.

SLY

Well, you know what a sloth is, yeah?

CASSIE

Yes. I saw a nature program about them. They're very very slow and sleep most of their lives away.

SLY

That's right. Well, this is the story of a sloth and a monkey.

NARRATOR

Sly kept talking. And as he talked he wound his way forward so Cassie had no choice but to follow the sound of his voice in the dark.

SOUND: Water dripping

SLY

You see, once there was an old sloth named Victor. He was not only lazy but he was very old too so he was even slower than all the other sloths. He was so slow and lazy he grew tired of all the effort it took to climb up a banana tree and pick a banana. So for days and days Victor didn't eat a thing because it was just too much bother. The other sloths told him, 'Victor, you're going to starve if you

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don't try to get some food'.

NARRATOR

Cassie crawled along in the dark, thinking Sly's story sounded very weird.

SLY (cont.)

Oh what's the use?' Victor said. 'By the time I climb all the way up that tree some fast monkey is just going to race up there and get the bananas first.' Just as he said this a monkey named Al rushed up a banana tree and shouted down to Victor. 'Hey sloth! I can get you all the bananas you want and you won't ever have to climb a tree again!'

Now Victor may have been old and lazy but he wasn't stupid. He knew the monkey would expect something in return.

NARRATOR

Maybe it didn't really matter if Sly was talking nonsense because at least Cassie had something else to think about other than the cold darkness.

SLY (cont.)

Just then a snake poked its head out of a banana tree. 'Beware the monkey, Mr. Sloth,' said the snake. Victor and Al both looked up at the snake in the banana tree who spoke again. 'The last time a monkey made such an offer the sloth ended up as bait. The monkey sent the sloth into a banana grove first and watched to see if a lion was nearby. Soon a lion pounced on the sloth and the monkey ran safely away!

'Why, that's evil!' Victor said.

'Hey, why don't you mind your own business, snake? This is between me and the sloth,' the monkey said.

'It is my business,' the snake said. 'Everything that happens to the animals in the jungle is my business because I'm one of those animals myself.'

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NARRATOR

Cassie waited for Sly to say something else but he was quiet for a while. Finally he said,

SLY

Well, what do you think of that?

CASSIE

What--that's it? That's a dumb story!

SLY

No it ain't, it's a great story!

CASSIE

No it isn't. The sloth is still lazy, the monkey doesn't get what he wants and the snake...the snake just spoils it for everyone, even the lion!

SLY

No he doesn't. The snake saves the sloth's life by telling him how the monkey was going to use him as bait for the lion!

CASSIE

I don't get it. I thought it would be like the Garden of Eden or something.

SLY

The garden of what?

CASSIE

You never heard of the Garden of Eden?

SLY

Nope.

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CASSIE

Wow. There's a snake in that story too but it's totally evil.

SLY

An evil snake? What kind of a crazy story has an evil snake in it?

CASSIE

Are you serious?

SLY

Well, look around you.

NARRATOR

And that was when Cassie finally saw a bright ring of blue sky ahead. Just a few more feet and they would climb out of the dark cave into a bright sunny day!

SOUND: wind in trees, birds singing

CASSIE

I can't believe we made it to the top -- just like you said we would!

SLY

Of course we did. Now, you didn't think I was a liar, did you?

MUSIC: happy, incidental

NARRATOR

Next: When Sly sees how little Cassie knows of the ways of the Empire he decides to guide her a bit farther.

MUSIC: Blizzard Theme (FADE OUT)

[end Chapter 8]