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Chapter 20: Big Yellow Dinka

MUSIC: (FADE IN) BLIZZARD OF OSBORN THEME

NARRATOR

You're listening to The Blizzard of Osborn by Michael Sheen Cuddy.

Chapter 20: Big Yellow Dinka

MUSIC: BLIZZARD OF OSBORN THEME (FADE OUT)

Scene One: Ext. Desert. Day.

SOUND: battle mayhem – gunfire, exploding rockets, whizzing
bullets

CASSIE

Jet! Where are you?

NARRATOR

Cassie was up and running, not thinking of the bullets and rockets flying all around her. No matter what, she had to find the uven pens where they took Jet before dinner. Ducking and dodging like she was on a soccer field, she tripped over a long thick tube—no—it was Sly! He was side-winding across the sand, flicking his tongue, seeking cooler air away from the heat of the battle.

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SLY

Hold on Cassie! Staying low is our only chance!

NARRATOR

Cassie scooted down and held fast to Sly's back while he darted to and fro. It was like riding The Wild Cobra at the Harrison County Fair Cassie thought, as Sly twisted and turned and darted among the sand dunes. His speed and quick reflexes soon got them clear of the battle. Once they reached a quieter place Sly stopped for a breath, hoping they could come up with a plan.

SOUND: braying

CASSIE

Did you hear that?

SLY

It sounded like Assam!

CASSIE

That's what I thought! He sounds close.

SOUND: braying

NARRATOR

With Cassie still holding on, Sly angled cautiously up the side of a dune and peaked over. From the crest of the dune Cassie could see down into the uneven pens. She saw Assam standing among a flock of

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uven, then spotted the crate where they'd put Jet.

CASSIE

Look! There's Jet and Assam!

SLY

Cassie—wait—it's too dangerous!

NARRATOR

But Cassie had already leaped off Sly's back and was running down to the pens.

MUSIC: (IcemenHotPursuit)

SOUND: footsteps running, coming to a stop

CASSIE (gasping, out of breath)

Assam—you found Jet—oh thank you!

NARRATOR

Cassie threw her arms around Assam's neck and gave him a big hug. Assam hadn't actually set out to find Jet. Panicking from the battle he simply ran until he saw something familiar: the flock of uven, huddled in their pen. They reminded him of the old days when he boarded with other animals: sheep, goats, cows, even a llama or two. He didn't have a plan in mind and truth be known, hadn't even noticed Jet was in the crate. He just suddenly felt better surrounded by shy animals instead of berserk warriors.

Cassie went over to the crate and unlatched the door. Jet sprang

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into her arms.

SOUND: wooden latch, meow, purring

SLY

What the devil is that?

SOUND: flapping, wind

NARRATOR

A great billowing yellow bulb loomed up from behind a sand dune like a delirious sun.

MEMYSELFANDI

Ahoy mateys!

NARRATOR

As it rose higher above the dune the great yellow ball showed itself to be one of the giant spherical *dinka* of which King Hubaija had boasted. When he had shown it to them earlier it was in storage, folded into a fraction of its present size so they were amazed at how big it was when deployed for flight.

Leaning over the edge of the *dinka's* gondola Memyselfandi looked small as he threw down two ropes and shouted:

MEMYSELFANDI

All aboard, mateys!

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NARRATOR

But Sly saw the problem—only two ropes for three more passengers—Cassie, Sly and Assam, never mind Jet.

MUSIC: (BOZ-TensionBuild)

SLY

Cassie—hold Jet and climb onto my back again. I'll coil around one rope so Assam can use the other rope!

ASSAM

How am I supposed to hold onto a rope, with my teeth?

CASSIE

I'll wrap it underneath you, then we'll lift you, like in a sling!

NARRATOR

Assam had seen this done once in the mines when a tunnel collapsed and it was the only way to get trapped mules out. He didn't like the idea but he didn't want to be left behind either.

MEMYSELFANDI

Hurry up! I don't know how to control this thing!

NARRATOR

And sure enough, the big yellow dinka drifted away so Cassie had to run to catch it. She leaped and grabbed hold of one of the ropes.

SOUND: footsteps running, grunting, straining

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CASSIE

Hold this in your teeth Assam!

NARRATOR

The wind was filling the *dinka* with warm desert air causing it to rise. As Assam struggled to hold the *dinka* back, Cassie grabbed the other rope and tied a loop around his hindquarters, then his front quarters. A real cowboy would have roped Assam properly but Cassie did the best she could.

NARRATOR (cont.)

Once she had Assam secured, Cassie grabbed the second rope so Sly could coil around it. Then she scooped up Jet and climbed onto Sly's back, suddenly feeling the ground fall away beneath her. Looking down she saw the battle raging below but fading farther away each second. Then she saw a soldier on the ground, aiming a rocket launcher at them. A white flash flared by, barely missing them as they dangled from the ropes trailing beneath the big yellow *dinka*.

SOUND: rocket launcher, battle mayhem fading

MUSIC: (intense, climax, battle score)

NARRATOR

Next: Cassie, Jet, Sly, Memyselfandi and Assam are on the run again, but this time they venture out into uncharted waters never before crossed by man nor beast!

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MUSIC: Blizzard Theme (FADE IN / OUT)

[end Chapter 20]