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Chapter 26: Mule-Headed

MUSIC: (FADE IN) BLIZZARD OF OSBORN THEME

NARRATOR

You're listening to The Blizzard of Osborn by Michael Sheen Cuddy.
Chapter 26: Mule-Headed.

MUSIC: BLIZZARD OF OSBORN THEME (FADE OUT)

Scene One: Int. Regional Detention Center. Day.

SOUND: Fluorescent light buzz

NARRATOR

When the tribunal asked the question, *who should we interrogate first*, opinions differed.

MORFUS

Obviously the egghead is the brains behind the operation. He speaks 13 languages, and when apprehended, he was found to be carrying a

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Swiper Mark VII.

LEYU

What about the dark girl?

MORFUS

Get serious. What is she, ten?

LEYU

Old enough to make trouble, according to the security guards.

CHURBIN

Don't forget that snake, it's not normal, it can talk. Maybe it's the mastermind.

DATH

The snake certainly does have a facility with language.

SKAW

Yes, Turtox said the snake is a born liar that answers every question with a slander against someone else!

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MORFUS

Being a born liar might make him a skillful politician, but that doesn't mean he's the brains behind the operation.

CHURBIN (in jest)

As long as we're considering talking animals what about the donkey? Perhaps the ass is the true brains behind the operation.

SOUND: Laughter

DATH

Well, it wouldn't be the first time genius hid behind a mask of seeming simplicity.

SKAW

Hmmm, the idiot savant! You may be on to something.

MORFUS

No, our prime suspect has to have hands! Whoever stole that data drive had to have fingers so that eliminates the snake and the ass. Let's start with the eggman, he seems to be the brightest of the bunch.

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LEYU

I say we start with the dark girl. Of all of them, she looks the most suspicious.

MUSIC: (interlude passage, dark)

NARRATOR

When the tribunal called Cassie to testify first, Assam assumed it was because she was the one carrying the data drive, which had caused such a panic. After Cassie, they called Memyselfandi, and Assam assumed it was because they believed he was the smartest, what with his Class V Interactor Technical Specialist certification and his eyes glued to his Swiper most of the time. But after Memyselfandi, the tribunal called Sly, which Assam assumed was for no other reason than to personally insult him.

ASSAM (internal, + reverb)

They assume I'm stupid! They make the same mistake everybody does, they take one look at me and think, mule-headed. How many times have I heard that before? Surely they can see I'm made of finer stuff than a common mule but they insult me anyway!

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NARRATOR

Like a grand marshal waving his baton in a parade, Kentash sauntered up to Assam. But in this case Kentash's baton was an electric cattle prod.

SOUND: electronic zap, donkey bray

KENTASH (shouting)

What's in the data drive the dark girl stole?

ASSAM

I don't know. She never told me. I just assumed it was a good luck charm or somethin', maybe a present Queen Mavis wanted Cassie to give to the Emperor.

NARRATOR

Kentash glanced back at his fellow tribunal members. Then he crossed over to Assam's other side and stood near his rear flank.

SOUND: electronic zap, donkey bray

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KENTASH

What can you tell us of the dark girl's role in the assassination of the Crow's brother?

ASSAM

I never seen nobody get assassinated. And Cassie never confided in me so I assume, like most people, she has her secrets. Now and then I'd hear her whispering to Sly or Memyselfandi, and one time I thought I heard her say something about 'never wanting to hurt no one.'

One thing I do remember: one day Sly was bickering with Memyselfandi about who was or wasn't carrying their own weight. Well now Sly said Cassie was the most important of all of us because Queen Mavis herself thanked Cassie for eliminating the Crow's brother.

SOUND: Gasp, hubbub

KENTASH

Order! Order! For the benefit of the entire tribunal, and to be clear for our recording equipment I command you to repeat your last statement.

ASSAM

What. Sly said Cassie was the most important of all of us because

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Queen Mavis herself thanked Cassie for eliminating the Crow's brother.

SOUND: Hubbub of crowd

MUSIC: Blizzard Theme (FADE IN)

NARRATOR

Next: A technician proposes conducting a radical test, and Cassie must be the test subject!

MUSIC: Blizzard Theme (FADE OUT)

[end Chapter 26]