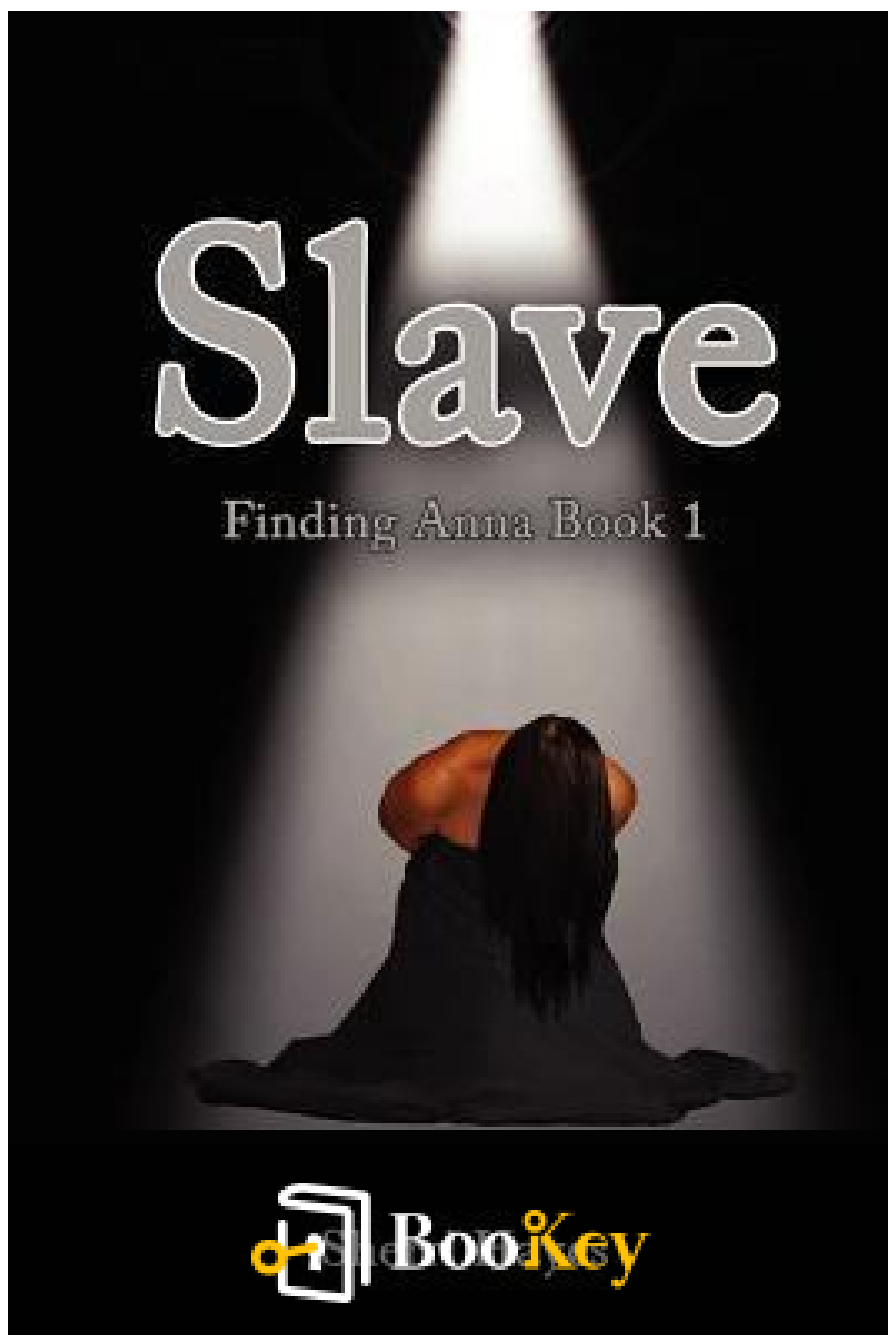


Slave PDF (Limited Copy)

Mende Nazer



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Slave Summary

A Journey from Darkness to Hope and Freedom.

Written by New York Central Park Page Turners Books Club

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About the book

In "Slave," Mende Nazer shares her tragic yet inspiring journey, beginning with her childhood in a Nuba village in Sudan, which is abruptly shattered when Arab raiders invade. At just twelve years old, Mende witnesses the horrific murder of her community, a brutal act that leads to her abduction and subsequent sale into slavery.

Transported to Khartoum, Mende is forced into servitude for a wealthy family, where she faces relentless physical and emotional abuse, living a life devoid of rights, freedom, and human dignity. This dark period represents the broader realities of human trafficking, particularly in regions rife with conflict and instability.

Amidst this bleak existence, Mende's fortunes change when she is assigned to work for a diplomat in the United Kingdom. This new setting offers her a glimmer of hope and introduces her to a network of supportive fellow Sudanese who understand her plight. Their encouragement fuels her courage, culminating in a dramatic escape in September 2000.

"Slave" serves as a potent exploration of the modern slave trade, shedding light on its devastating impact while honoring the resilience of the Nuba people and Mende's indomitable spirit. Through her story, readers are urged to confront the realities of human trafficking and recognize the strength that

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can emerge from unimaginable adversity.

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About the author

Mende Nazer's journey is a harrowing yet inspiring tale of resilience and courage, vividly depicted in her memoir, "Slave." Born into the Nuba tribe of Sudan, Mende's life took a tragic turn at just twelve years old when she was captured during a 1993 raid and sold into slavery. Her captors subjected her to horrific abuse and dehumanization, stripping her of her identity and spirit, and she was harshly renamed "Yebit." Despite the relentless trauma in Khartoum, Mende held onto hope, keeping her spirit alive even when faced with grave adversity.

After years of suffering, Mende was transferred to serve a diplomat in the United Kingdom, which created a pivotal opportunity for her escape. In September 2000, she courageously seized this chance, ultimately breaking free from the chains of slavery. Through her memoir, Mende reveals not only her personal ordeal but also sheds light on the broader implications of the modern slave trade that continues to affect her people.

"Slave" serves not only as an account of her own battle for freedom but also as a powerful celebration of the dignity and strength of the Nuba tribe. Mende Nazer stands as a beacon of hope, embodying the unbreakable will of those who refuse to be defined by their experiences, determined to reclaim their lives and share their truths with the world.

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Chapter 1 Summary: 1 My Home

Chapter 1: My Home - Summary

In this opening chapter, we are introduced to Mende, the youngest of five children in her family, named after the gazelle—a symbol of beauty in the Nuba culture. Her story unfolds in a picturesque village nestled in the mountains, where life is simple yet full of vibrancy.

Mende's home is described as a rectangular compound, known as the "shal," which contains two facing mud huts surrounded by protective walls. The larger yard, called "tog," serves as a space for livestock. Mende shares her hut with her parents, sleeping on bamboo-framed beds and relying on a constant fire for warmth during the rainy season.

The dynamic within Mende's family is lively and affectionate. She often shuffles between her parents' beds, highlighting their close bond and joyful interactions. Her two older sisters and brothers live nearby, reflecting the strong sense of community that characterizes their lifestyle.

Traditions play a crucial role in village life, with communal meals shared among neighbors. Mende describes their staple foods, such as roasted sorghum, kal (sorghum mash), and waj (curried stew), illustrating the

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importance of food as a symbol of unity. The lack of privacy in the village leads to a shared existence, where even the simplest acts, like using the toilet, are communal experiences for children.

Mende recounts her youthful adventures, from facing snakes to fetching water, embodying the spirited nature of village life. However, a severe drought casts a shadow over their joyful existence, leading to famine and desperation as villagers seek assistance from foreign aid.

Cultural elements are emphasized, particularly the significance of cows and the rite of passage for boys through circumcision ceremonies. Mende admires her mother's beauty, expressed through traditional body scars, which are viewed as marks of beauty in their culture.

The household is portrayed as a haven of love, with her father depicted as a nurturing figure and her mother as a respected, albeit quieter, presence within the village. Through Mende's eyes, we glimpse the gender roles and societal expectations that shape their lives.

Amidst hardships, Mende's innocent affection for her cat, Uran, and the joy of witnessing the birth of kittens capture the essence of childhood. Her playful interactions with siblings and friends provide moments of carefree happiness, juxtaposing against the backdrop of their challenging realities.

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The chapter concludes by painting a rich tapestry of Mende's life, blending personal anecdotes with cultural traditions, family connections, and the spirit of community in the Nuba Mountains. Through her narrative, readers are drawn into the warmth, challenges, and boundless joy that define her childhood.

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Chapter 2 Summary: 2 Ba and Me

Chapter 2 Summary: Ba and Me

In this chapter, we follow young Mende on an important day as she accompanies her father, Ba, for the very first time to the sorghum fields—a venture filled with both excitement and trepidation. As they journey through the forest, Mende’s heart races with the thrill of time spent with her father, yet she is also anxious about the daunting task of scaring away birds, fearing the solitude that comes with it. Her worries about ghosts and wild animals surface, prompting Ba to dispel her fears with playful banter, showcasing their loving relationship.

The pair encounters a swift river, a symbol of the challenges they must navigate, which Ba crosses with Mende on his shoulders. This tender moment transforms her fear into a joyful adventure as they finally reach the fields. However, upon their arrival, Ba must return to the village, leaving Mende alone to guard their crops. Despite her protests and overwhelming fears, Ba reassures her of her bravery, urging her to embrace her responsibilities.

Once left alone, Mende faces the reality of her fears, intensifying her feeling of abandonment, especially when a wild dog appears. Seeking comfort, she



runs to her uncle, showcasing the importance of family support in times of distress.

The next day brings joy as Ba returns, and Mende exaggerates her wild dog encounter to illustrate her frustration, turning anxiety into humor. Ba, initially skeptical, soon finds himself laughing along with her, highlighting the bond they share through light-hearted storytelling. The chapter concludes with a lively family feast, symbolizing the joy derived from collective experiences and reinforcing Mende's resolve—playfully declaring that she won't allow herself to be left alone so easily again. This chapter not only captures Mende's growth in courage but also the deepening ties between family, laughter, and shared traditions.

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Chapter 3 Summary: 3 A Family Wedding

Chapter 3: A Family Wedding

Musa's Proposal

In the wake of a tense encounter with a wild dog, Musa approaches the narrator's father with a significant request: to marry his sister, Kunyant. This proposal is rooted in a traditional engagement that has existed since their birth, despite the fact that the two have never met. After lengthy discussions involving haggling over the dowry—an important element in securing a marriage that includes cows, goats, and sorghum—a fair agreement is reached, symbolizing both financial stability and familial alliances.

The Wedding Day

On the eagerly anticipated wedding day, the narrator is filled with excitement and curiosity about the intricacies of marriage. Kunyant is transformed by her friends' efforts, donning an exquisite traditional outfit that enhances her beauty. The entire village comes alive with vibrant celebrations characterized by singing and dancing, forming a tight-knit community atmosphere that honors the union of Musa and Kunyant.

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Bride's New Home

Post-ceremony, the newlyweds start their life together in a hut built within the family compound, a customary practice that sees newly married couples residing with the bride's family for the first year. This arrangement not only fosters familial bonds but also allows Kunyant's friends to assist her with housework as she acclimates to her new responsibilities as a wife.

Post-Wedding Tradition

The day following the wedding, the narrator hears loud, sorrowful cries echoing through the compound, signifying the traditional 'illil' celebration—a ritual steeped in cultural importance. The discovery of blood on Kunyant's marriage bed sheets raises questions and worries for the narrator, as she struggles to understand the significance of this custom. Despite her confusion, the elders of the family offer reassurance, hinting at the deeper traditions that surround marriage and the transition into womanhood.

Kunyant's Struggles

As Kunyant begins her new life, she faces physical discomfort post-wedding, which heightens both the narrator's and her mother's concerns. Mardiah, a supportive friend, steps in to aid Kunyant during her

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recovery phase. The narrator remains frustrated and puzzled by the lack of open explanations about the mysterious blood, signaling a gap in understanding the complexities of adult experiences within her cultural context.

Kunyant's Pregnancy

Weeks later, Kunyant's spirits brighten as she reveals her pregnancy, signifying her embrace of her new identity as a wife. However, as her pregnancy advances, she begins to experience discomfort, reflecting the challenges that often accompany this pivotal life event.

Birth and Loss

When Kunyant finally goes into labor, her family waits anxiously outside, listening intently to her cries of distress. Despite their hopes, Kunyant gives birth to a baby girl who tragically passes away shortly after birth, inflicting profound grief upon her and her family. In the face of this heart-wrenching loss, the older women seem resigned, attributing such fates to divine will, illustrating a cultural acceptance of the harsh realities that sometimes punctuate the joys of life and marriage.

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Chapter 4: 4 The Arab School

Chapter 4: The Arab School

The chapter begins with the narrator, now eight years old, embarking on her first day of school following the tragic death of Kunyant's baby—a poignant reminder of life's fragility in her community. Dressed in a new green school dress and neatly fitted leather sandals, she experiences a mixture of pride and anticipation. Accompanied by her friend Kehko, they both look forward to the opportunities that schooling promises, hinting at a significant transition from childhood innocence to academic pursuit.

Initially, the school operates on a half-day schedule, allowing the children to return home to assist with household chores. However, by the second year, the introduction of a full-day schedule alters family dynamics and responsibilities. The school itself stands out among the village's mud huts, built of stone, symbolizing not just education but also a shift towards modernity. Inside, the basic amenities—a classroom adorned with wooden desks and a blackboard—contrast sharply with the children's rural setting. They endure the hardship of a rudimentary pit toilet, which they prefer to avoid due to its unpleasant conditions.

The educators are exclusively Arab, with the headmaster Osman

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demonstrating a genuine investment in the students' well-being. The curriculum is heavily weighted towards the Arabic language and the Koran during the first year, reflecting both educational and cultural imperatives of the Arab authorities. Though attendance comes without formal fees, the expectation that families contribute financially places a burden on the narrator's household, illustrating the socioeconomic disparities prevalent within the community.

Despite these challenges, the narrator's determination shines through as she excels academically, securing second place in her class—a remarkable feat for someone from a modest background. Her achievement is celebrated during a school assembly, where she translates her report card for her parents, who struggle with literacy. This moment not only elevates her confidence but also amplifies her sense of pride in transcending her circumstances.

However, the joy of academic achievement is shadowed by cultural suppression within the school environment. Students face repercussions for speaking their native Nuba language, indicating a systematic erasure of their identity, compounded by the forced adoption of Arabic names. This dynamic creates tension between the narrator and her classmate Mohamed, who enforces these cultural norms as a self-appointed class policeman. Yet, through this conflict, the narrator begins to empathize with his position, realizing that he, too, is a victim of the oppressive system.

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As the narrator delves deeper into her studies, the curriculum expands to incorporate geography, history, and science, the latter becoming her favorite subject. Yet alongside her academic enthusiasm, she grapples with the biases exhibited by her Arab teachers. This growing awareness of prejudice reinforces her discomfort with the cultural divide, prompting a reflection on her place within this complex educational landscape. The chapter highlights her journey towards self-awareness and the realization that her identity is not solely defined by her academic performance but also by the socio-cultural context she navigates daily.

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Chapter 5 Summary: 5 Of Snakes and Spirits

Chapter 5 Summary: Of Snakes and Spirits

The chapter unfolds against the backdrop of the Nuba people's deep-rooted traditions, which instill a sense of pride and bravery within the community. In this society, men are revered as warriors, while women, typically seen wielding axes for collecting resources, are expected to rely on their male counterparts for protection against dangers, including venomous snakes—a recurring threat in their environment.

The story takes a poignant turn as the protagonist recalls a distressing episode involving her mother and her Aunt Nhe, who fails to return from the forest after they had agreed to meet. The family is engulfed in panic, fearing that Nhe has encountered a perilous situation: a snakebite or an ambush by the Militia, a feared group known for raiding their village.

Tragedy strikes when Nhe is discovered suffering from a snakebite. Despite the father's desperate attempts to heal her using traditional remedies, her condition spirals downward, ultimately leading to her untimely death. The village comes together to mourn the loss of Nhe, engaging in traditional rituals that underscore the significance of their cultural practices in times of grief.

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Amidst the mourning, the chapter also delves into the spiritual landscape of the village, where Islamic practices coexist with indigenous beliefs. Daily prayers and significant festivals like Eid are staples of the community's life, yet there remains a palpable tension between the old customs centered around the Kujur, a village shaman who serves as a spiritual guide and healer, and the newer Islamic faith.

This interplay of faiths is poignantly illustrated through the protagonist's father, who, despite lacking formal education, articulates a profound understanding of coexistence between the two belief systems. He asserts that even the Kujur's healing abilities are ultimately answerable to Allah, symbolizing the complexity and richness of their spiritual lives.

Through a blend of personal experiences, familial bonds, and cultural reflections, the chapter poignantly addresses themes of tradition, faith, loss, and resilience, emphasizing the strength of the Nuba people in navigating their intertwined spiritual and everyday realities.

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Chapter 6 Summary: 6 The Wrestling Time

Summary of Chapter 6: The Wrestling Time

The chapter opens with the narrator's reflections on the vibrant harvest season, a time when the Nuba tribes eagerly anticipate the long-standing tradition of wrestling matches, which are organized by the Kujur, the tribe's spiritual leader. The date of the event is selected based on celestial phenomena, imbued with cultural significance. This year, the Karko tribe, the narrator's own tribe, has the honor of hosting the matches, prompting extensive preparations, including the making of sweet rice—a festive treat meant to delight the guests.

At just nine years old, the narrator is filled with excitement as she prepares to witness her first wrestling event. Her mother plays a significant role in her preparation, not only by oiling her skin to ensure she shines but also by adorning her with colorful beads that symbolize their cultural heritage. This emphasis on appearance underscores the importance of tradition in their community.

The narrator's family dynamics add depth to the story, particularly through the contrasting attitudes of her two brothers. Kwandsharan, who harbors a dislike for wrestling, represents a more reserved perspective, while Babo

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eagerly anticipates his first official match, embodying the competitive spirit that is celebrated among Nuba boys. Babo's dedication is evident as he undergoes vigorous training, preparing to make a mark in the tribe's wrestling tradition.

As the day of the wrestling arrives, the atmosphere is electric with anticipation. The chapter paints a vivid picture of the event, replete with the sounds of the crowd and the vibrant sights of traditional attire worn by the wrestlers, enhancing the sense of cultural pride pervading the arena.

Babo steps into the spotlight during the matches, astonishing spectators with his remarkable skill and strength as he throws down his opponents, asserting his prowess. Although the narrator experiences a moment of concern when he faces a larger competitor, Babo's determination shines through, ultimately leading him to victory. His triumph is met with cheers and admiration, solidifying his status in the community.

As celebrations unfold, Babo is hailed as a champion, and the community revels in the warmth of friendship and shared joy, gathering for meals and interactions that reinforce their bonds. However, amidst the festivities, the narrator overhears serious discussions about war and tensions affecting neighboring tribes. This stark contrast serves as a sobering reminder of the precariousness of peace, leaving her with an understanding of the complexities of life within her vibrant yet challenging world.

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Themes of community, tradition, family dynamics, and personal growth are interwoven throughout the chapter, evoking a rich tapestry of emotions. The celebratory nature of the wrestling matches juxtaposed against the weighty conversations about conflict highlights the dualities that shape the narrator's experiences and understanding of her environment.

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Chapter 7 Summary: 7 The Cutting Time

Chapter 7: The Cutting Time

In this poignant chapter, Mende Nazer shares her harrowing ordeal surrounding female circumcision, a deeply entrenched cultural practice in her community that marks the transition from childhood to adulthood. At the tender age of eleven, Mende is informed that she will soon undergo this painful ritual, instilling within her a profound sense of dread. Despite her protests and overwhelming fear, her parents reassure her that the procedure is crucial for her health and future prospects in marriage.

As the date of the circumcision draws near, Mende's anxiety worsens, fueled by chilling accounts from older girls who describe their own traumatic experiences. Her mother's assurances that the procedure will be relatively bearable do little to quell her trepidation. When the circumcision woman finally arrives, Mende's worst fears are realized. The experience is agonizing, filled with physical pain and profound humiliation, leaving her feeling betrayed by her family who supported this cultural norm.

In the aftermath of the circumcision, Mende endures intense suffering in silence. As she grapples with her trauma, she draws uncomfortable parallels between circumcision and marriage, recognizing the societal pressures that

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bound her to both experiences. Her emotional turmoil is compounded by complex feelings of resentment toward her parents and the circumciser woman who carried out the procedure. The recovery process is arduous, and Mende resists having her stitches removed, insisting that her mother do it instead, a manifestation of her confusion and anger.

Through her reflections, Mende confronts the dangerous implications of the ritual—not only the immediate physical health risks but also the societal expectations that compel women to conform to these traditions. As she gradually heals, a struggle within her begins to emerge: an attempt to reconcile her pain and the familial love that, albeit rooted in societal pressure, shaped her upbringing. Ultimately, this chapter delves into themes of suffering, betrayal, and the weight of cultural expectations, highlighting Mende’s painful journey toward understanding and acceptance of her identity amidst oppressive societal norms.

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Chapter 8: 8 My Dream

In Chapter 8, titled "My Dream," the narrative introduces an eleven-year-old boy who is excelling academically and deeply inspired to become a doctor. His ambition is rooted in a personal tragedy when his brother, Babo, fell seriously ill, and no medical professionals were available in their village. This critical moment illuminated the severe lack of healthcare in his community, setting the stage for his future aspirations.

The chapter unfolds with Babo's unexpected illness, which prompts a desperate and treacherous journey to the town of Dilling for medical help. The family faces numerous challenges, including harsh weather conditions and difficult river crossings. Despite these hurdles, the protagonist insists on accompanying their father, showcasing a blend of bravery and determination fueled by love and concern for his brother's well-being.

Upon arriving in Dilling, they encounter another setback: the protagonist is initially barred from entering the hospital due to financial constraints. However, through determination and pleading, he gains access to see Babo, who is gravely ill yet somehow begins to recover. This experience not only cements the urgency for medical assistance in their village but also sharpens the protagonist's resolve to pursue a career in medicine.

Inspired by Babo's recovery and bolstered by his father's support, the young



boy commits to his education. As he advances in sixth grade, he excels in multiple subjects and shares the top spot in exams with a friend, fully understanding that education is the key to realizing his dream of becoming a doctor. Yet, an unsettling change looms on the horizon, hinting at challenges that may test his commitment and the stability of his aspirations in the months to come.

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Chapter 9 Summary: 9 Allahu Akhbar!

Summary of Chapter 9 from "Slave" by Mende Nazer

The chapter unfolds in a serene African village nearing the end of the dry season, where twelve-year-old Mende enjoys her sixth year of school. Her daily routine is filled with academic subjects like gymnastics, Arabic, and English, culminating in joyful moments spent playing with her friend Kehko on their way home.

Upon returning home, Mende helps with household chores, including milking the goats, relishing the frothy milk before dinner. The evening is a time for family bonding around the fire, where Mende's father shares traditional stories, nurturing a sense of warmth and community before they settle in for the night.

However, tranquility turns to terror when, in the dead of night, chaos erupts. The village is violently attacked by Arab raiders known as the Mujahedin. Mende's father, filled with urgency, tries to alert others and flee with his family, but fear grips them, leading to a frantic separation amidst the turmoil.

In the ensuing panic, Mende loses sight of her mother and is ultimately

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knocked down by a herd of stampeding cattle. Just as she faces the brink of despair, a raider captures her under the pretense of offering help. This marks a turning point in Mende's life, thrusting her into a harrowing reality.

Taken to a nearby forest, Mende encounters other children from her village, all expressing their grief and terror at the loss of their families during the raid. As dawn breaks, the sight of armed raiders with bloodied hands heightens Mende's confusion and dread, their chilling chants of "Allahu Akhbar" underscoring the violence that has engulfed her world.

The chapter reaches its climax as the raiders begin to seize the children from the village, including Mende's dear friend Sharan. Paralyzed by fear and the horrifying realization of the raiders' violent intentions, Mende grapples with a profound sense of helplessness, leaving her future uncertain and fraught with danger.

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Chapter 10 Summary: 10 The Dark Forest

In Chapter 10, titled "The Dark Forest," we are introduced to Mende, a twelve-year-old girl who has been captured by a man who initially instills fear in her heart. Torn from her village, Mende reluctantly shares her name with her captor as he forces her onto a horse, beginning a harrowing journey through an oppressive, dense forest. Despite her confusion and terror, she finds herself at the mercy of a man who claims that his violent actions are for her own safety.

As their ride continues, Mende endures psychological and physical torment that stretches for hours until they finally stop, allowing her a moment to relieve herself. Unfortunately, this brief reprieve quickly escalates into another episode of brutal assault, heightening her trauma as she witnesses the cruel indifference of other raiders who pass by without a second glance. After the man is finished, he carelessly brushes himself off, and their grim journey resumes, reminding Mende of her helplessness in a world turned upside down.

Upon reaching a clearing, Mende discovers that she is not alone; she joins other girls who have similarly suffered horrific attacks. Separated from the boys, they are given scant food but are unable to eat, laden with the heavy realization that they may never see their families again. Conversations reveal the shared trauma among the girls, highlighting the scale of the violence they

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face.

Days blend together as the girls remain isolated in their tent, receiving minimal consolation from a sympathetic guard who seems to be a glimmer of kindness amidst their suffering. However, their grim reality worsens with the knowledge that some girls may be selected to leave the camp, possibly for fates even worse than the ones they have already endured. Mende's bond with her young friend Sharan deepens as they both grapple with their fears, and Mende tries to provide comfort despite her own despair.

When the girls are finally given a moment to clean up, it offers a fleeting sense of relief. However, it becomes evident that this is merely a preparation for their uncertain futures, as they are soon chosen by Arab men and expected to follow them, leaving behind their soldier's attire in a move that symbolizes further loss of their identities and autonomy.

This chapter poignantly captures Mende's harrowing experience in the dark forest, illustrating not only the brutality of her captors but also the profound impact of shared trauma among the girls, leaving a stark imprint on the reader's understanding of their plight.

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Chapter 11 Summary: 11 To Khartoum

In Chapter 11, titled "To Khartoum," the narrator and four other girls embark on a precarious journey toward the bustling city of Khartoum, facilitated by an Arab man driving a pick-up truck. As they travel along the rough, dusty roads, the narrator reflects on her past in Dilling, where she was last seen with her family before being uprooted by conflict. The girls are gripped by fear and uncertainty about their fate in this unfamiliar environment.

Despite her growing anxiety, the narrator tries to formulate an escape plan, but their hopes are swiftly dashed when the driver becomes suspicious of their intentions. The journey is physically grueling, marked by oppressive heat during the day and biting cold at night, which exacerbates their discomfort and pain from previous mistreatment.

As fate would have it, they stop for food at a roadside café. Here, amidst their dire circumstances, the girls share a meal, clinging to their values of solidarity and communal support, which offers a brief respite from their grim reality.

As they near Khartoum, the narrator is captivated by the city lights, signaling a stark contrast to the rugged terrain of the Nuba Mountains. The girls, filled with a mix of awe and anxiety, take in the vibrant, chaotic life of the city, characterized by bustling streets and towering buildings, as they

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grapple with the complexities and challenges of urban existence.

Upon arriving at a large house, they are greeted by a Nuba man who appears friendly yet is clearly under the control of their driver. The chapter closes with the girls being led inside, their hearts heavy with a blend of hope and trepidation about what awaits them in this new and daunting chapter of their lives. This transitional moment encapsulates their vulnerabilities and the looming uncertainties of their future, setting the stage for the trials they will soon face.

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Chapter 12: 12 The Slave Traders

Chapter 12: The Slave Traders

In this chapter, Mende and the other girls are transported to the opulent residence of Abdul Azzim, an Arab man whose luxurious abode initially strikes them as a magical palace. However, their sense of wonder quickly fades when they discover they have been brought to the basement of the house, a stark contrast to the grandeur above. There, they meet Asha, a woman from their Nuba heritage, who serves as both a guide and a source of comfort in this new, frightening environment.

As they adjust to their surroundings, the reality of their situation becomes painfully clear. Abdul Azzim's wife, Joahir, derogatorily calls them "abeed," a term that signifies their status as slaves. The girls confide in one another, expressing their fears and confusion about their captivity, while Asha endeavors to provide solace and practical advice.

Life in the basement quickly becomes arduous. Asha teaches the girls how to use utensils for eating, a skill they struggle with at first as they adapt to their new roles. Despite the grim circumstances, the girls form a bond through shared experiences, finding solace in Asha's kindness.

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As they settle into their routine, the girls are assigned various chores, such as peeling onions for an impending Ramadan celebration. These tasks serve as a harsh reminder of their new identities as laborers rather than individuals, deepening Mende's sense of despair about their bleak future, which likely includes being sold into servitude.

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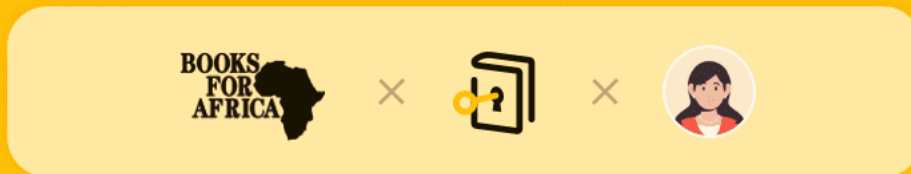




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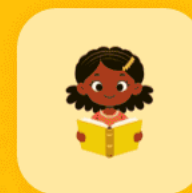
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Chapter 13 Summary: 13 Sold

In Chapter 13, titled "Sold," Mende faces the grim reality of her potential sale to a new owner, having been chosen by a woman who visited her household. This news comes to light when Asha, a compassionate caretaker and close friend to Mende, accidentally overhears discussions about Mende's skills and education making her a desirable candidate for this new life.

Initially, Mende resists the idea of leaving the only home she has ever known, but as conversations unfold, she is forced to confront the sobering truth that this separation may be permanent, isolating her from Asha and the other girls who have become her family. Asha, recognizing Mende's fear and sadness, attempts to offer comfort and mentally prepares her for the departure that looms ahead.

As the day progresses, emotions run high with the arrival of the women tasked with taking Mende away, heightening the tension and prompting heartfelt goodbyes from her friends. Despite Asha's efforts to soothe her and encourage her to hide her distress, Mende is engulfed by sorrow, realizing that she is stepping into an uncertain future under a new master.

The chapter culminates in a poignant moment as Mende departs in a car, feeling forsaken—neither of her past masters acknowledging her farewell, amplifying her sense of abandonment and despair as she bids farewell to her



old life. This chapter poignantly illustrates Mende's emotional struggle and foreshadows the challenges she will face in her new reality.

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Chapter 14 Summary: 14 Master Rahab

Summary of Chapter 14: Master Rahab

In this chapter, we delve into Mende's unsettling new reality in Khartoum, where she feels invisible amid the whispers of Arab ladies who derogatorily refer to her and her peers as "abeed," meaning "slaves." Mende is introduced to her new life when Rahab, her captor, brings her to her home and relegates her to the kitchen as she mingles with her husband, Mustafa, leaving Mende feeling discarded and isolated.

Mende's living conditions are grim; she is shown a dilapidated shed that serves as her sleeping quarters, further deepening her feelings of loneliness and nostalgia for her family and previous life. Her routine quickly settles into a harsh normalcy, as each morning Rahab assigns her tedious household chores, including cleaning, caring for Rahab's two daughters, and laundering their clothes. Rahab's treatment of Mende is anything but kind, using derogatory language and instilling a deep-seated sense of inferiority in both Mende and the young girls, whom she instructs to maintain an air of superiority over her.

As Mende navigates her daily tasks, she grapples with emotional turmoil, harboring a strong desire for affection and a sense of belonging. However,

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her attempts to connect with the daughters are met with scorn, reinforced by Rahab's intolerant demeanor. The stark contrast to the loving discipline Mende once knew is painfully evident in her interactions.

The chapter escalates dramatically when a mishap occurs during Mende's cleaning—she accidentally breaks a vase. Rahab's violent reaction is swift and brutal, marking a traumatic moment for Mende. The punishment that follows starkly contrasts with the nurturing discipline of her family, showcasing the brutality of her existence in servitude.

In conclusion, Chapter 14 powerfully illustrates Mende's traumatic transition from a love-filled life to one of despair and cruelty under Rahab's authority. The chapter captivates the reader by highlighting Mende's profound sense of loss, isolation, and the harsh realities of her enslavement, setting the stage for her ongoing struggle for dignity and humanity amidst dehumanizing conditions.

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Chapter 15 Summary: 15 No Escape

Chapter 15: No Escape

In this chapter, the protagonist grapples with her bleak reality as a slave in Khartoum, where the longing for freedom feels increasingly distant. While engaged in the monotonous task of emptying wastewater, she discovers a broken chair and contemplates the possibility of escaping to the garden wall. However, the harsh reality of her situation sets in: fleeing alone would be futile, and she recognizes the stark necessity for assistance to achieve her freedom.

A glimmer of hope emerges through her connection with the gardener, known as the janiney. Summoning her courage, the protagonist strikes up a conversation, expressing her wish to play with his daughter. This fleeting moment of camaraderie provides a temporary respite from her suffering. However, this small act of rebellion triggers Rahab, her cruel master, who intervenes violently. Rahab's anger culminates in physical and verbal abuse, as she derogatorily labels the protagonist an "abda" or slave, harshly reinforcing her lack of rights and freedom. This brutal confrontation serves as a painful reminder of the traumatic history endured by her people, further entrenching her feelings of despair.

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As tensions escalate, Rahab orders the gardener to leave his duties, stripping the protagonist of yet another source of connection and hope. This dismissive act deepens her isolation, compelling her to adopt a strategy of invisibility to appease Rahab and avoid further punishment. In an environment devoid of freedom, survival becomes her primary objective.

The chapter highlights the objectification inherent in her existence as Rahab entertains friends, displaying the protagonist like a trophy of servitude. The visitors' casual remarks about her status underscore the profound disregard for her humanity, while Rahab takes pride in claiming that her slave receives neither pay nor time off. Through this chilling portrayal, the protagonist's reality as an unyielding piece of property becomes painfully clear, echoing the broader historical context of slavery and its dehumanizing effects.

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Chapter 16: 16 Blood Rites

In Chapter 16, titled "Blood Rites," the narrator reflects on her time spent in Rahab's household, a setting she has grown accustomed to over the past six months. This chapter marks a pivotal moment in her journey toward maturity as she experiences her first menstrual period. Struggling with confusion and fear due to a lack of understanding about this natural bodily function, she initially attempts to manage the bleeding in isolation.

When Rahab discovers what is happening, her first reaction is one of shock, followed by a mix of disdain for the narrator's ignorance. However, after a moment of frustration, Rahab shifts into a more nurturing role, taking the opportunity to educate her about menstruation. She explains how to properly use cotton wool for management, showcasing their evolving relationship. This witty exchange lightens an otherwise awkward situation, fostering a sense of connection between the two women.

As days pass, the narrator learns to navigate her menstruation with greater ease, noting the decrease in both blood and pain, which suggests her body is adjusting to this new phase of her life. A crucial turning point occurs when she overhears Rahab candidly discussing her own menstrual experiences with her husband. This intimate conversation reveals the commonality of menstruation among women, providing the narrator with reassurance and a sense of normalcy. The realization that she is not alone in her struggles

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marks an important step in her understanding of womanhood, ultimately embracing her growth as part of a shared human experience.

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Chapter 17 Summary: 17 Death Threats

Chapter 17 Summary: Death Threats

In this poignant chapter, the protagonist grapples with the relentless abuse she endures at the hands of Rahab, a cruel figure in her life whose violent tendencies have become a grim routine. The physical assaults she suffers are erratic and unpredictable, leaving her in a constant state of confusion and dread. This cycle of torment escalates dramatically when, following a moment of nostalgic reverie, Rahab brutally attacks her with a hosepipe, revealing the depth of her brutality.

As the protagonist goes about her chores, specifically hosing down the patio, she allows herself a fleeting escape into happy memories from her childhood in the Nuba Mountains. In this brief interlude of joy, she sings a traditional rain song, reflecting the warmth of family and a sense of belonging. However, this small glimpse of happiness is shattered by Rahab's cruel interruption, starkly illustrating the chasm between her cherished past and her harsh present.

The chapter takes a darker turn when the protagonist experiences a humiliating incident while serving tea to Rahab's guests. An accidental spill results in verbal and physical punishment, as Rahab, driven by the laughter



of her friends, mercilessly beats the protagonist. This episode underscores the twisted pleasure Rahab and her companions derive from her suffering, further deepening the protagonist's isolation.

As she cleans up the spilled tea and broken china, the protagonist reflects on the stark contrast between her previous life and her current existence. In a space devoid of compassion or allies, she is met only with cruelty and derision. Yet, amid this pervasive despair, a flicker of resilience ignites within her. She resolves to escape Rahab's abusive grasp and reclaim her identity and spirit, forming a glimmer of hope for a life beyond her torment. This determination to seek a brighter future reveals her inner strength against the oppressive darkness surrounding her.

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Chapter 18 Summary: 18 Identity Crisis

Chapter 18: Identity Crisis

In this pivotal chapter, the protagonist grapples with the dual pressures of oppression and the yearning for freedom. Under the domineering control of Rahab, her captor, she faces both verbal belittlement and threats against her family if she dares to dream of escape. This oppressive atmosphere amplifies her feelings of inferiority, intensified by the shared Muslim identity that should unite them but instead highlights the segregation she experiences at the hands of her oppressors.

Amidst this turmoil, the protagonist clings to her faith, secretly practicing her prayers despite Rahab's scorn for her religious devotion. These acts of prayer become a lifeline, fortifying her identity and resilience, even as she confronts the alarming hypocrisy of those who claim to be devout Muslims while perpetuating her suffering. This internal conflict reveals the complex realities of faith when juxtaposed against the cruelty of her situation.

As she forms a bond with Rahab's children, memories of her own childhood surface, starkly contrasting with her current state of enslavement. A small teddy bear, a remnant of her lost childhood, becomes a poignant symbol of her past and a psychological refuge; she imagines conversations with it as a

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way to cope with the emotional toll of her environment.

To navigate the dangers of her captivity, the protagonist devises strategies to protect herself from punishment, often sacrificing parts of her cultural identity. The memory of her days as a Nuba feels increasingly distant as she strategically conceals her heritage from her captors. A significant incident involving her cherished beads further illustrates their intent to obliterate her identity, underlining the dehumanizing tactics employed against her.

Despite the bleak reality of her enslavement, moments of warmth arise as she nurtures a bond with Rahab's children. This affection offers a fleeting reprieve from her stark existence, yet she remains acutely aware of the unbreakable chain of slavery that binds her.

Parallel to these emotional struggles, the protagonist battles physical illness, specifically malaria. The stark contrast between the nurturing care of her mother during her childhood illnesses and Rahab's callous neglect adds another layer of suffering. Rahab's indifference to her health becomes emblematic of the broader emotional and physical abuse she endures, further complicating her dreams of recovery and escape. The chapter closes with an overwhelming sense of despair, highlighting the protagonist's fight against both her external oppressors and her internal struggles for identity and survival.

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Chapter 19 Summary: 19 Hospital Horrors

Chapter 19: Hospital Horrors

Dinner Party Chaos

The chapter begins with Mende recalling her hectic day preparing for a dinner party at Rahab's residence. Tasked with cooking and managing the unruly behavior of the guests' children, Mende finds herself overwhelmed as chaos unfolds in the kitchen. Her attempts to maintain order are futile, culminating in a tragic incident where Rahab's youngest child, Usra, tumbles and injures herself. This accident sets off a chain of dramatic events that significantly impacts Mende's life.

Rahab's Fury

Upon discovering Usra's injury, Rahab's reaction is explosive. Fueled by anger, she blames Mende for the accident and violently assaults her, leaving Mende with a severe leg injury that sends her into unconsciousness. This incident starkly highlights the power dynamics in their relationship, with Rahab's aggressive behavior underscoring her domineering nature.

Hospital Experience

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Mende awakens in a hospital, disoriented and astonished by Rahab's apparent concern for her well-being, which feels contradictory to their tumultuous relationship. As she begins to heal, memories of her mother and her childhood surface, starkly contrasting with the abuse she endures under Rahab's roof. Rahab's insistence that Mende lies about how she sustained her injury reveals a need to maintain control over their narrative and hide the truth of their relationship.

Nurse Nungha

In the hospital, Mende encounters Nurse Nungha, a compassionate caregiver whose warmth provides a striking contrast to Rahab's cruelty. Their interactions serve as a refuge for Mende, who feels a sense of kinship with Nungha, particularly as both are black women navigating a society fraught with racial and class divisions. Nungha's genuine concern for Mende's welfare deepens their bond, illustrating the importance of kindness amidst her bleak reality.

Conflict Between Rahab and Nungha

As Mende's recovery progresses, Rahab attempts to discharge her against medical advice, igniting a confrontation with Nungha. The nurse stands her ground, prioritizing Mende's health over Rahab's demands, which places

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Mende in a precarious position. Torn between the nurturing care of Nungha and the fear instilled by Rahab, Mende is left grappling with her complex feelings towards both women.

Discharge from Hospital

Despite two weeks in rehabilitation, Mende is released and thrust back into Rahab's oppressive environment. The return to Rahab's home marks a harsh transition where Mende is compelled to resume her duties, stifling her memories of a freer, happier past.

Fading Memories

As time passes, Mende finds herself increasingly detached from her former identity and family. The grinding routine of servitude leads her to form a reluctant bond with Rahab's children, yet this creates a sense of guilt for abandoning her true self. Gradually, Mende begins to accept her harsh reality as Rahab's slave, showcasing her struggle against the weight of oppression.

Conclusion

Mende's worldview shifts as she becomes more entrenched in the social hierarchy that places Arabs above black individuals. However, the narrative

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hints at an impending change in her perception and circumstances, suggesting that Mende's journey toward self-discovery and liberation may not be entirely over.

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Chapter 20: 20 Revenge

In Chapter 20, titled "Revenge," the narrative unfolds against a backdrop of rising military tension and public sentiment in Sudan. The chapter opens with the narrator's life being punctuated by the rhythmic sound of soldiers' boots near their home, indicative of a nearby military training camp. Young recruits, clad in oversized uniforms, march by while singing patriotic songs, embodying the collective spirit of preparation for war.

On Fridays, the narrator engages with a television program named "Sahad El Fidah," which glorifies the Sudanese army's triumphs over rebel forces. The show is laden with graphic depictions of casualties and narratives steeped in themes of martyrdom, which collectively promote a powerful image of Arab invincibility. This media representation creates a dichotomy between the heroic portrayal of the military and the harsh realities of conflict.

The tension escalates one fateful night when the narrator is jolted awake by the thunderous sounds of incoming U.S. cruise missiles. These strikes target a factory in Khartoum that the U.S. claims is manufacturing weapons for terrorists, a direct retaliation for previous attacks on American embassies in Kenya and Tanzania orchestrated by the notorious terrorist leader Osama bin Laden.

The aftermath of the missile attack sees heated discussions among guests at

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Rahab and Mustafa's home, who express their outrage towards the U.S. military actions and concern for the innocent casualties. Rahab particularly expresses a vehement disdain for Americans, attributing their actions to a fundamental ignorance of divine will.

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Chapter 21 Summary: 21 Rescue Me

Chapter 21: Rescue Me

In this poignant chapter, Mende Nazer embarks on a trip to Kassala with her enslaver, Rahab, and Rahab's children. As they travel through Sudan's varied landscapes, Mende's excitement sharpens into a bittersweet recollection of her past experiences as a slave, contrasting sharply with the privileged lives of others around her.

Upon her arrival in Kassala, Mende is relegated to the servants' quarters. However, when Rahab's mother grants the regular servants a day off, Mende finds herself burdened with all household chores. This situation highlights the inequality between paid servants and Mende, who feels the weight of her enslaved status more acutely during this time.

Mende's struggles are compounded by her tumultuous relationship with Rahab, who responds to perceived inadequacies with physical punishment. During this oppressive environment, Jaimaea, an Eritrean servant girl, emerges as a beacon of hope. She courageously confronts Rahab over her abusive treatment of Mende, asserting that servitude does not justify cruelty. This confrontation illuminates the stark divide between those who are free and those who are not, and serves as a critical reminder of Mende's own

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harrowing plight.

The conflict escalates when Jaimaea's defiance costs her job, leaving Mende grappling with the weight of inaction and regret. As she reflects on the situation, she feels a profound sense of lost opportunity, wishing she had spoken out more firmly. This moment serves as a pivotal point in Mende's understanding of her identity, self-worth, and the relentless grip of her circumstances.

The chapter culminates in Mende's deep emotional turmoil as she returns to Khartoum, feeling trapped and fearful. Despite Jaimaea's encouragement to seek liberation, Mende's sense of entrapment and the scars of her abusive past continue to overshadow her aspirations for freedom.

Through Mende's haunting experiences in Kassala, the chapter poignantly explores themes of oppression, identity, and the longing for autonomy, all while casting a harsh light on the brutal realities faced by those ensnared in slavery.

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Chapter 22 Summary: 22 Of Slavery and Chastity

Chapter 22 Summary: Life as a Slave

In this chapter, the protagonist endures the harsh realities of life as a slave in Khartoum, shedding light on the intricate social dynamics within her oppressive existence. Her master, Rahab, treats her as a possession rather than a person, casually boasting about the cleanliness of her home, which she attributes to the protagonist's diligent work. This moment encapsulates the dehumanization faced by slaves, illustrating how society normalizes and commodifies their existence.

The chapter takes a pivotal turn as the protagonist uncovers her origins, discovering that she was purchased from a man named Abdul Azzim. This revelation shocks her to the core, forcing her to confront the brutal truth of her enslaved status. In her solitude, she seeks solace in prayer, yearning desperately for a chance to escape her life of servitude under Rahab.

Despite yearning for independence, the protagonist's aspirations are continuously thwarted by Rahab's unpredictable outbursts of violence and oppressive control. A distressing incident where she is punished for a cooking error exemplifies the cruelty she faces daily, which includes physical abuse as a constant threat that looms over her.

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The complexities of her situation are further unveiled through an alarming encounter with a male guest. When this man attempts to sexually assault her while she is alone, she musters her courage to stand up against him, threatening to expose his actions to his new wife. This encounter starkly highlights the sexual objectification enslaved women endure and the precarious balance of power that exists within the household.

Despite the relentless abuse from Rahab and the men who seek to exploit her, the protagonist emerges as a figure of resilience. Her ability to navigate through the cruelty and oppression around her signifies her inner strength and determination to survive against the grim backdrop of slavery. The chapter encapsulates her struggle, illustrating the broader themes of resilience in the face of dehumanization and the quest for autonomy amidst overpowering circumstances.

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Chapter 23 Summary: 23 London Bound?

In the chapter titled "London Bound?" we delve into Mende's internal struggles and the profound changes in her life, set against the backdrop of family obligations and emotional ties.

Conversation with Rahab

The chapter opens with Mende receiving an unexpected summons from Rahab, the woman who has employed her for six years. Rahab announces her decision to send Mende to London to assist her sister, Hanan, who has just welcomed twins. This news catches Mende off guard; she feels a mix of surprise and concern about leaving the household she has grown fond of, especially the children she has nurtured.

Responsibilities in London

Rahab reassures Mende that she will retain her responsibilities in Hanan's home, emphasizing that she must respect Hanan just as she does her. Despite understanding the rationale behind Rahab's decision, Mende reluctantly agrees, burdened by anxiety over the implications for her role in the lives of the children she has come to love.

Inner Turmoil

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As Mende goes about her chores, her mind races with worry and self-doubt. She reflects on the reasons for Rahab's choice, questioning her own familial ties back in the Nuba Mountains—ties she has neglected to consider. This realization deepens her turmoil, as she grapples with the emotional consequences of having distanced herself from her true family.

Reflections on Family and Freedom

That night, while lying in her makeshift shed, Mende confronts the stark reality of being moved like property from one family to another. She basks in the warmth of the love she once knew with her biological family, yet fear grips her as she contemplates their well-being and longs for news about them. Mende's reflections illuminate her struggle for identity and freedom, leaving her to ponder the sacrifices and losses she has endured in pursuit of her responsibilities.

This chapter intricately weaves Mende's personal conflicts with themes of family loyalty and the search for belonging, setting the stage for her journey into London and the challenges that await her there.

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Chapter 24: 24 They're Alive!

In Chapter 24, titled "They're Alive!", Mende finds herself consumed with emotion during a chance encounter with her friend Kumal. As she prepares for her wedding to Rahab, her heart skips a beat when she recognizes Kumal in a passing car. The reunion, held within the confines of their current dire circumstances, is bittersweet, charged with urgency as both friends share critical updates about their families.

Kumal brings good news: both her family and Mende's are alive, igniting a spark of hope in Mende that she thought was extinguished. She learned of Mende's family through a man named Shadal, underscoring the perilous situation they all face under the oppressive rule of Hallah, who is controlling their lives with an iron fist.

Together, they discuss potential escape routes and how to keep in touch with their loved ones. Mende learns that there is a possibility she might be sent to England by Rahab, which could be a chance for freedom, albeit fraught with its own uncertainties. The conversation brims with cautious optimism as they strategize their next moves and commit to reconnecting.

As the moment draws to a close, their time together is interrupted by Rahab's arrival, prompting a quick exchange of vital information, including a telephone number for future correspondence. As Kumal's car drives away,

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Mende is left with a renewed sense of determination and strength, buoyed by the knowledge of her family's survival and the prospect of escape from her current predicament. This chapter encapsulates a pivotal moment of hope amidst the struggle, reaffirming the bonds of friendship and the resilience of the human spirit.

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Chapter 25 Summary: 25 New Millennium, New Slave

Chapter Summary: New Millennium, New Slave

The narrative unfolds in Khartoum as Mende enters the year 1999, a time she once anticipated might bring her to London. However, as the celebrations around her gain momentum, Mende finds herself trapped in the monotony of labor, overshadowed by a flicker of hope ignited by her relationship with Kumal, a fellow captive who offers a glimmer of connection in her harsh reality.

During a picnic in the park, Mende encounters Katuna, a young girl from the Nunghi tribe, who shares the harrowing tale of her capture during a violent raid. Mende, struck by compassion and a sense of camaraderie, provides comfort and sage advice, reminding both herself and Katuna of the shared trauma that binds them as victims of slavery.

As Mende contemplates their dire existence, she reflects on the multitude of children enduring similar fates. Her introspective moment is bittersweet; following a quiet New Year marked by solitude, Rahab, her current master, departs for London, leaving Mende in the care of Althoma, her kinder sister. This switch ushers in a brief reprieve, offering Mende a taste of familial kindness that momentarily shields her from the harsh realities of her life.

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This semblance of calm is shattered when Rahab returns, bearing an unexpected gift of new underwear and the shocking news of Mende's upcoming transfer to London, an arrangement facilitated by Rahab. This unsettling development becomes clearer with a visit from Abdul Azzim and his wife, who discuss the necessity of finding a replacement for Mende in Khartoum, underscoring the commodification of her existence.

As Mende prepares for her journey, she grapples with the anguish that another girl may soon endure the same abuses she has suffered. In this moment of clarity, she resolves to impart her hard-won wisdom on survival to the next girl destined to take her place, recognizing the cyclical and relentless nature of their plight. Thus, the chapter concludes with Mende's determination to break the cycle of suffering, even if only through the sharing of her knowledge.

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Chapter 26 Summary: 26 Telling Lies

Chapter 26: Telling Lies

Rahab's Control and Jealousy

As Mende transitions from a timid twelve-year-old to a confident nineteen-year-old woman, her relationship with Rahab, who has acted as a mother figure, shifts dramatically. Rahab's jealousy grows as she perceives Mende's blossoming beauty attracting the attention of men, which threatens her own sense of control. In a bid to reassert her dominance over Mende, Rahab decides to send her to London, a move that serves both as an attempt to manage Mende's emerging independence and possibly as a way to rid herself of the competition.

Preparing for London

The journey to London begins with Mende receiving her first passport and applying for a British visa. Under Rahab's influence, Mende is compelled to fabricate details about her life, claiming she is treated well and has access to medical care. She is instructed to state that she will be working for Ali Bashir Gadalla, a figure whose significance she doesn't fully understand. Mende feels a growing sense of unease but finds herself acquiescing to

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Rahab's demands, reflecting her vulnerability in the face of Rahab's authority.

The British Embassy Experience

At the British Embassy, Mende grapples with bureaucratic processes and cultural nuances. Her inexperience becomes evident when she is unable to provide specific information about her job or role in London, repeatedly responding with "I don't know" to probing questions. This elicits laughter from the embassy staff, underscoring the absurdity of her situation and her naivety about the journey she is embarking on.

Final Preparations and Departure

After several visits to finalize her paperwork, Mende secures her visa, a pivotal moment marking her impending departure. As the day approaches, she diligently helps around the house, knowing she will soon leave her familiar life behind. Rahab gifts her an old travel bag, and Mende carefully packs her meager belongings along with items meant for Rahab's sister, Hanan, in London. With her preparations complete, she stands on the brink of an uncertain future, filled with mixed emotions about the journey ahead.

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Chapter 27 Summary: 27 Nanu's Story

Nanu's Story Summary

Arrival of Nanu

One evening, Mende encounters Abdul Azzim and his wife, Joahir, who introduce a young girl named Nanu, a new addition to their household as a replacement slave. Mende feels an immediate connection with Nanu, identifying the fear and confusion in her eyes, mirroring her own past experiences.

Rahab's Commands

Under the stern gaze of Rahab, Mende is assigned the task of preparing a stool for Nanu, signaling the beginning of the girl's demanding life ahead. Rahab lays out expectations of obedience and hard work, while Mende, filled with empathy, notices Nanu's distress and unspoken plea for help.

Nanu's Pain

In a rare moment of privacy, Mende takes Nanu to the bathroom where Nanu reveals her painful ordeal. Mende discovers that the girl has undergone



female circumcision, a traumatic experience that leaves her in distress.

Mende comforts Nanu with warm tea and oil, trying to alleviate her pain both physically and emotionally.

Nanu's Tragic Backstory

Nanu shares the harrowing details of her past: after her father's death, their home was attacked by raiders. In a brave attempt to save her family, Nanu's mother was tragically killed, and Nanu was forced to flee from their burning hut, only to be captured by one of the raiders.

Unfolding Similarities

As Nanu's story unfolds, Mende is struck by the parallels between their experiences of trauma and loss. Mende deeply wishes to shield Nanu from the hardships that await her, recognizing that both are bound to lives of servitude under oppressive circumstances.

Final Goodbyes

Before Mende departs for England, she shares a heartfelt farewell with Nanu, encouraging her to be strong amidst the challenges ahead. Mende's heart aches, knowing the suffering Nanu will endure under Rahab's control.

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Departure to England

At the airport, Mende is reminded of her own journey to London. Rahab emphasizes the importance of obedience as Mende prepares for her flight. As she stands at the gate, Mende takes one last look back at Nanu, feeling a profound sense of sorrow for leaving the girl to face her fate alone, stepping into a new life while leaving Nanu behind in anguish.

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Chapter 28: 28 Fear of Flying

Chapter 28: Fear of Flying

Arrival and Confusion at the Airport

Mende's journey to England begins with confusion as she arrives at what she thought was an airport, only to find passengers boarding a bus that will take them to the plane's departure location. Among the travelers, she meets Fatima, an Arab woman heading to London with her young son. Fatima's warmth and willingness to connect offer Mende some much-needed companionship as she navigates this unfamiliar environment.

Flight Experience

Once aboard the plane, Mende's anxiety escalates during the safety briefing and the plane's ascent. Fatima senses her panic and shares her own fears about flying, which helps ease Mende's distress. As the plane climbs, Mende experiences discomfort in her ears due to the altitude and humorously struggles with the in-flight meal. Her apprehensions grow as she considers the logistics of using the airplane bathroom, reflecting her unease about both the flight and the new life ahead.

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Descent Into London

When the plane lands at Heathrow Airport, Mende is staggered by the sheer size and complexity of the terminal. Fatima helps her navigate through the bustling crowd, but Mende's worries intensify when she realizes no one is there to greet her. She recalls Rahab's comforting words about a family waiting for her and feels a sense of isolation among a throng of strangers.

Panic and Connection

As Mende anxiously waits alone, a kindly woman approaches her, offering words of comfort that bolster Mende's hope for a familiar face. Just as despair starts to take hold, Peter, who was sent by Hanan to collect her, appears. Mende's emotions shift from fear to excitement and nervous anticipation as she exits the airport with Peter and two other Sudanese individuals.

First Impressions of England

Driving away from the airport, Mende is immediately struck by the chilly weather, a stark contrast to her warm homeland of Sudan. As she gazes at the green landscapes and well-structured roads, she finds herself in awe of the country's beauty, while simultaneously feeling the weight of its unfamiliarity. Her initial encounters with the local culture evoke mixed

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feelings, stirring both wonder and an unsettling silence within her. As they approach a grand residence, Mende realizes that this marks the beginning of her transformative journey in England, filled with both possibility and uncertainty.

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Chapter 29 Summary: 29 False Hopes

Summary of Chapter 29: False Hopes

In Chapter 29, Mende transitions to the home of Hanan, the sister of her previous owner, Rahab. As she arrives, she is enveloped in apprehension, burdened by the fear of further mistreatment and disappointment. However, to her surprise, Hanan extends a warm welcome, temporarily lifting Mende's spirits and instilling a flicker of hope about her new environment.

Hanan's initial kindness, which includes allowing Mende to join the family during meals and drink from the same glasses as the guests, offers a façade of respect that contrasts sharply with Mende's previous experiences. Despite this seemingly positive treatment, Mende's past weighs heavily on her; she recalls the lessons Rahab instilled in her about the perils of complacency. Although Hanan provides Mende with a small room that, while humble, includes a proper bed, Mende struggles with unease and memories of servitude.

As she begins her household duties, Mende grapples with the challenges of adapting to modern conveniences, such as washing machines and vacuum cleaners, which she finds daunting. Despite Hanan's friendly demeanor, Mende feels increasingly trapped in her servant role. The warmth from



Hanan starts to wane when Mende expresses a desire to contact a friend from her Nuba community in England. Hanan's suspicious reaction marks a turning point in their relationship, revealing a more domineering and hostile side to her character.

Mende's sense of isolation grows as she reflects on the bonds she shared with Rahab's children, intensifying her yearning for familial love. Hanan's severe warnings about the dangers of London amplify Mende's despair, especially as she learns of a former servant who mysteriously disappeared. These stories stifle her dreams of escape, as she grapples with the dire reality of being ensnared in her circumstances.

As the chapter progresses, Mende's bleak outlook mirrors the story of Asha, another woman she encountered who faced a lifetime of slavery. The chapter culminates in Mende's stark realization of her grim reality, underscoring the loneliness and hopelessness that accompany her servitude in Hanan's home. This poignant exploration of Mende's emotional turmoil and her struggle for freedom serves as a powerful commentary on the enduring scars of slavery and the human desire for connection and dignity.

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Chapter 30 Summary: 30 Death Wish

Chapter 30: Death Wish Summary

In this poignant chapter, Mende Nazer delves deep into her psyche, battling feelings of despair and hopelessness as an enslaved individual. The narrative explores her contemplation of suicide, her cherished childhood memories, and her ongoing struggle against the oppressive circumstances that define her life.

Mende describes her existence as ghost-like, feeling trapped in a state of anguish where even tears seem foreign. As she grapples with the darkness within her, thoughts of ending her life emerge. The kitchen knives, tools of preparation for meals, morph into symbols of her potential escape, while her memories of brutal violence from the raid on her village haunt her, magnifying her sense of helplessness.

Amidst this turmoil, Mende retreats into memories of her childhood in the Nuba Mountains, a time filled with joy and innocence. She vividly recollects her engagement to Juba, a symbol of love and hope, represented by a treasured string of beads. This brief moment of reflection offers a contrast to her current anguish, illuminating her longing for a life that once promised happiness and security.

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Despite her bleak thoughts, a flicker of hope emerges when Hanan, a figure of support in her life, promises to take her back to Sudan to reunite with her family. This prospect rekindles Mende's will to survive, even as her health declines and her emotional wounds deepen.

However, as preparations for the journey unfold, Mende's anxiety intensifies upon learning that she will be left alone with Hanan's husband. Aware of Islamic values that caution against such situations for unmarried women, Mende's fears surface, invoking her vulnerability. Hanan's dismissive response, which attempts to rationalize the situation, only exacerbates Mende's distress, leaving her feelings of anxiety unaddressed.

The tension climaxes as Mende realizes that the situation is escalating into a betrayal. Memories of her father, who once provided her with safety and comfort, momentarily transport her away from the harsh reality she faces, underscoring her desperation for security and connection. Yet, the inescapable threat of being alone with a man looms ominously over her, creating a suffocating atmosphere of fear.

In the chapter's conclusion, Mende comes to the painful realization that Hanan is abandoning her to a precarious fate. This harsh truth heightens her internal conflict between the flickering hope of family reunification and the engulfing despair of her circumstances. Through Mende's struggles, the



chapter captures the intricate landscape of her emotions, painting a vivid picture of her relentless fight for survival amidst overwhelming odds.

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Chapter 31 Summary: 31 Salvation

Chapter 31: Salvation

Departure and Arrival

After a week of preparation, Al Koronky embarked on a journey to Sudan, leaving Mende in the care of Hanan's friends, Omer and Madina, in London. Hanan advised Mende to remain inside their home to assist with household chores while they were away, ensuring her safety amid a new environment.

A Warm Welcome

Upon arrival, Mende was greeted with warmth by Omer and Madina, who provided her a comfortable room and included her in their daily routines, such as sharing breakfast and taking walks in the park. This nurturing atmosphere gradually made Mende feel at ease, contrasting with Hanan's earlier warnings about London, which initially filled her with apprehension.

Change in Routine

Every Saturday, Omer returned Mende to the Al Koronkys' house for cleaning, yet he treated her with kindness rather than as a servant, which

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helped boost her self-esteem. Through watching television and participating in family activities, Mende began to grasp aspects of life in England, recognizing how it starkly diverged from her previous experiences of enslavement.

Emotional Turmoil

Despite the kindness shown to her, Mende often found herself plagued by sadness, haunted by memories of her past and feelings of isolation. Omer, sensing her distress, grew curious about her working conditions, expressing disbelief that she labored without pay. However, Mende guarded her history, fearing the consequences of disclosing the truth.

Recognition of Reality

Through her interactions with Omer, Mende began to recognize her inherent right to freedom, awakening a sense of empowerment within her. This newfound strength inspired her to contemplate the idea of escaping and reuniting with her family back in Sudan.

Searching for Help

Mende actively sought ways to secure assistance beyond her immediate surroundings. During outings, she attempted to connect with other Sudanese

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individuals to seek help but struggled with language barriers and the paralyzing fear of her situation.

Finding a Connection

In her quest for connection, Mende met Aluan, a South Sudanese man, who introduced her to another Nuba individual, Babo. Over the phone, Mende disclosed her circumstances to Babo, leading to the formulation of a plan for her escape.

The Escape Plan

On September 11th, Mende readied herself for the escape, maintaining a facade of normalcy. Taking her chance, she fled with a garbage bag hastily packed and successfully rendezvoused with Babo outside. He, along with Monir, drove her away to safety in a vehicle, marking the beginning of her new journey.

A New Beginning

Despite the fear and trauma she carried, Mende was reassured by Babo and Monir that she had entered a realm of safety and freedom. The chapter concludes with Mende contemplating her new life, filled with hope for the future away from the chains of slavery.

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Chapter 32: 32 Fear of Freedom

Chapter 32: Fear of Freedom

My New Life in London

After enduring the horrors of enslavement in Sudan, London emerged as a beacon of hope and the backdrop for my newfound freedom over the next two years. For many in the West, freedom may seem a mundane part of life, but for someone like me, it is priceless and profound. Yet, this liberation is fraught with its own daunting challenges, laying the groundwork for a complex journey of adaptation.

The Struggles of Adapting

Transitioning into my new life in London was overwhelming, especially given my deprived upbringing, which left me with little knowledge of life skills and social dynamics. The pressures of making decisions, handling finances, and even cooking felt insurmountable. Building friendships was particularly difficult, as my previous experiences were marred by relationships rooted in control and fear. I had to unlearn these dynamics and began to grasp the simplest social conventions, bolstered by flickers of trust as I slowly navigated this foreign terrain.

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Cultural Adjustments

Navigating even mundane activities became a learning experience. Dining in restaurants, a seemingly simple pleasure, felt completely alien to me.

Everyday tasks like crossing the street required an appreciation of the new safety rules that governed my surroundings. Old fears surfaced, especially a deep-seated anxiety about authority figures like the police—instilled from traumatic memories of my past in Sudan. The journey toward assimilation involved comprehensive learning; I had to familiarize myself with London’s public transport, develop interpersonal skills, and face the challenges of interacting with others in scenarios free from fear.

Ongoing Fears and Family Ties

One of the most significant struggles was the dread of being recaptured by my enslavers. Over time, with the help of a compassionate British journalist named Damien Lewis, who provided me a safe haven, I began to confront these fears. However, unsettling communications from Sudan disrupted my sense of security, bringing with them the weight of family burdens, as loved ones were misled about the realities of my escape.

Bittersweet Connections

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Reconnecting with my family for the first time after years apart was an emotional rollercoaster, blending joy with underlying sorrow. They expressed profound concern for my safety, shaped by distorted stories that had circulated in my absence. As I reassured them about my freedom, I was simultaneously gripped by anxiety for their well-being in Sudan, grappling

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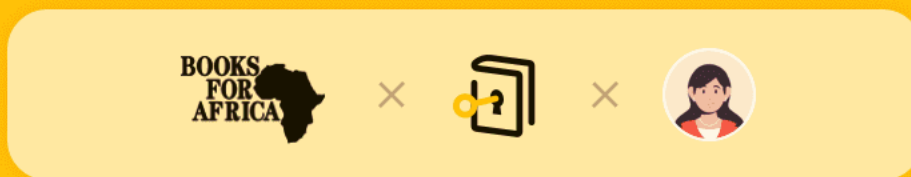




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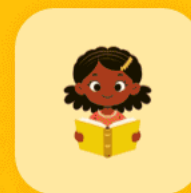
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Chapter 33 Summary: 33 Desperately Seeking Asylum

Summary of Chapter 33: Desperately Seeking Asylum

In this pivotal chapter, Mende Nazer's journey takes a dire turn as she grapples with the harsh realities of seeking asylum in the UK. Initially, Mende escapes from Sudan with the hope of returning after earning enough money, unaware of the complexities of asylum processes. Her friend Monir informs her that returning home might not be a viable option for a long time, stirring anxiety about her uncertain future.

Two years into her stay, Mende receives devastating news from Damien, a compassionate journalist who has been supporting her—her asylum application has been denied. The fear of deportation looms large, as she believes returning to Sudan would put her life at grave risk due to her past experiences there.

In response to this setback, Damien swiftly mobilizes Mende's network of allies, including her lawyer and various human rights organizations, to mount an appeal against the Home Office's unjust decision. Mende musters her courage to articulate her plight, detailing the traumas she has endured and challenging the validity of the rejection.

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The news of her asylum refusal creates a media storm, resulting in public outcry and protests advocating for Mende's cause. Celebrities and influential organizations, including Amnesty International, raise awareness and rally support, amplifying Mende's message and letting her know she is not alone in her fight.

Amid this surge of public support, Mende internally battles her fears. A conversation with a fellow asylum seeker highlights the often-lonely struggle faced by many, making Mende recognize the importance of the backing she has received. With her lawyer Alison's belief in the potential for a successful appeal, Mende begins to find a glimmer of hope amidst the chaos and fear.

As her situation continues to unfold, Mende's lawyer directly engages with the head of the asylum section, leading to renewed optimism regarding her case. Mende is encouraged to remain resilient while she navigates this daunting journey, holding on to the belief that justice can ultimately prevail.

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Chapter 34 Summary: 34 Sanctuary

Chapter 34 Summary: Sanctuary

Empowerment Through Support

The chapter begins with Mende Nazer, a former slave, as she faces a critical battle for asylum in the UK. Her struggle garnered significant backing from an array of supporters, most notably Baroness Cox, a dedicated antislavery activist. The situation escalated when, after the Home Office initially denied Nazer's asylum application, Baroness Cox threatened a hunger strike. This bold move ignited widespread public outrage, prompting a flood of letters and advocacy from political and religious figures alike, highlighting the vital human rights issue surrounding Nazer's plight.

Turning Point

On November 11, 2002, a pivotal moment arrived when the Home Office minister announced a re-evaluation of Nazer's asylum situation, leading to the decision to withdraw the initial refusal. Although her asylum status was not yet secured, this marked a significant step towards protecting her from deportation back to Sudan. The weeks that followed were filled with a sense of anticipation and renewed determination, as support for Nazer surged,

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further highlighted by her receiving an award from the Spanish Coalition Against Racism, which underscored her status as a symbol of resilience against oppression.

Granting of Asylum

Nazer's perseverance came to fruition on December 23, 2002, when the Home Office officially granted her asylum. This decision recognized the grave dangers she would face if returned to Sudan, particularly given her harrowing experiences as a victim of racial and slavery-related persecution. The acknowledgment of her situation brought attention to her impactful memoir, which resonated with audiences, especially in Germany. Nazer's lawyer celebrated this decision as a monumental affirmation of human rights and the necessity of protection from discrimination.

New Beginnings

With her asylum secured, Nazer embarked on a new chapter, receiving numerous invitations to share her powerful story with the world. Her speaking engagement at the International Labour Organisation in Geneva marked a transformative opportunity as she evolved into a passionate advocate for human rights and awareness of modern slavery. Audiences were captivated by her personal narrative, which encapsulated both her suffering and her resilience.

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Personal Reflections and Dreams

Amidst her newfound freedom, Nazer reflected on her yearning to reunite with the family she had been separated from for far too long. She dreamt of facilitating a pilgrimage for her parents, hoping to bring them to safety and fulfillment. Despite the challenges of defining her identity and roots, Nazer embraced the opportunities that lay ahead, including education, friendships, and aspirations for her future family. Ultimately, she views her journey as one of profound transformation—from a life of slavery to one of freedom—fueling her hope for a brighter, promising future. Insha' Allah—God willing.

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