

A LONG WALK TO WATER

BOOK CLUB

8 October 2025

Chapters 7&8

60-SECOND SUMMARIZER

MARIA

Chapter 7: Nya continued to take care of her little sister she could barely move because of the stomach pains cramps, she knew many people who had those symptoms and they recover but for elderly and children it was different, it could be very dangerous. AKeer's uncle recommended taking her to the doctor, there two options stay in the camp or find help in another place.

Salva is terrified and clings like a baby in this uncle's arms, thinking about his friend Marial how he disappeared, He thought one thing, the lion had attacked him and now he was dead, because they saw blood on the road. He felt calm because his uncle was there. So is time to continue walking and reach the Nile River. Salva brought them loads of reeds to build the canoes. He discovered that work helped him feel better. In two days, they are finishing the raffs, and they are testing it so they don't sink.

60-SECOND SUMMARIZER

MARIA

Chapter 8: Nya: Finally, they decided to take Akeer to the doctor, after two doses of medicine she felt better, the nurse told them that the girl was sick, because of the water, they explain that they had to boil the water.

Salva: Finally they were able to sail and reach the island. When they arrived, Salva could see abundant food and they had many crops. They grew sugarcane and many other plants because it was close to the river. The sugarcane juice calmed Salva's hunger, when he lived with his family he had all kind of food. He remembered when his father brought them mangoes. That night, they couldn't sleep because of the mosquitoes bit him, so next morning they boarded the boat and went to the banks of the Nile River.

The fisherman warned them to bring plenty of water. Salva had his gourd of water, some didn't have any, other tore strips of their clothes and soaked them with water. Now the desert awaits them.

60-SECOND SUMMARIZER

CRISTY

Nya was worried because she saw her sister very weak, with a lot of stomach pain and she knew that many people got sick like that and that they got diarrhea, and that it was difficult to recover from that illness. Her uncle told them that she could walk to the Doctor, but it was a long way. Nya's father decided to take Akeer to the Doctor, (she was a white Doctor) she told them that she had to boil the water so that Akeer could drink it. Her mother was worried because she knew that if they boiled the water there would be very little left to drink. Nya was worried about the following trips to the pond. Akeer recovered a little with the medicine.

Salva was sad and very attached to his uncle after Marial's death. However, his uncle looked after him and talked to him to make him feel better. He explained that they were going to cross the Nile River. Afterward, they would walk a long way through the desert to reach Ethiopia. When they reached the Nile, it took them a few days to build canoes to cross. On the other side of the river, there was a fishing village with lots of food. They gave their uncle sugarcane and fish because they were afraid he had weapons. When Salva ate the sugarcane, he remembered when he lived with his family and ate mangoes. When evening came, the entire fishing village went to their tents. Salva didn't know why until he saw thousands of mosquitoes coming out of the Nile. They didn't sleep that night because of the mosquitoes. In the morning, they began their journey to the desert.

CRITICAL THINKING QUESTIONS

Scarification in Sudanese Culture

1. Why did many Sudanese tribes practice scarification?
2. How could scarification be both helpful and dangerous? asked, moved, lived

Chapter 7

1. What does the family's difficult choice — risk the long walk or stay in camp — tell us about the access to health care in Sudan and the challenges of survival?
2. How does this chapter show the connection between water, health, and life in Nya's village?
3. What does Marial's disappearance reveal about how fragile life is during the journey?
3. What does Uncle's care for Salva show about the strength of extended family ties and responsibility in South Sudanese culture?
4. Why might building the reed boats help Salva feel a little better, even while he is still sad and afraid?

CRITICAL THINKING QUESTIONS

Chapter 8

1. How does the nurse's warning about dirty water highlight the long-term struggles Nya's family faces?
2. Why does Nya worry about the future, even while she feels happy to see Akeer laughing again?
3. What does Salva's memory of mangoes show us about the power of food to connect people to home and family?
4. Why do you think Uncle shares his food with Salva, and what does this teach us about generosity in hard times?
5. How do the mosquitoes show that survival is not only about big dangers but also about small, constant challenges?

VOCABULARY BUILDER

LISA

Whimper

(Verb) - cry softly with a low, broken voice

Ex.: The puppy began to whimper as the storm intensified.

(Noun) - soft sound showing pain, fear, or gentle complaint.

Ex.: I could hear the puppy's whimpers.

Staggered

(Adj.) - Arranged in a way that is not in line

Ex.: The chairs were staggered to create more space in the room.

Gauge

(Verb) - check how much or how strong something is with a measuring tool

Ex.: He gauged the fuel level in the tank

(Noun) - instrument for measuring dimensions or capacity

Ex.: The fuel gauge showed the tank was full

Soothed

(Adj.) – calmed or comforted

Ex.: The baby looked soothed after being rocked to sleep.

Gripped

(Adj.) – held tightly

Ex.: The climber's hands were gripped on the rope.

Nibble

(Verb) – eat with small, quick bites

Ex.: She nibbled on the cheese during the party.

(Noun) – small bite taken gently

Ex.: She gave a nibble on her cookie to taste it.

Swatted

(Adj.) – hit or struck with a quick motion

Ex.: The swatted mosquito fell to the ground.

VOCABULARY BUILDER / SOUND SPOTTER

ESMERALDA

stag·ger /'stagər/ (verb) / past tense: staggered; past participle: staggered

Definition: walk or move unsteadily, as if about to fall.

Example: "he staggered to his feet, swaying a little"

gath·er /'gɑːHər/ verb / past tense: gathered; past participle: gathered

Definition: come together; assemble or accumulate.

Example: "a crowd gathered in the square"

por·ridge /'pôrij/ noun BRITISH ENGLISH

Definition a dish consisting of oatmeal or another meal or cereal boiled in water or milk.

swat /swät/ verb

Definition: hit (someone) with a sharp blow.

Example: "she swatted him over the head with a rolled-up magazine"

past tense: swatted; past participle: swatted

Example: "I swatted a mosquito that had landed on my wrist" fly swatter

soaked /sōkt/ adjective

Definition: extremely wet; saturated.

Example: "he got absolutely soaked in the rain"

VOCABULARY BUILDER / SOUND SPOTTER

ESMERALDA

Awkward is an adjective describing something that is lacking in skill, grace, or ease, leading to clumsiness, difficulty in handling, or social discomfort

Stubbornly is an adverb that means in a way that shows a determined refusal to change one's mind or action despite pressure to do so.

Netting refers to a mesh fabric, often hung across a playing area like in tennis or volleyball, or as a security measure on buildings and bridges.

Hung describes something that has been suspended or placed over something else, such as a "hung" net across a court. Therefore, "netting hung" likely describes a net that has been suspended, often for a game or safety purpose.

SOUND SPOTTER

MARIANA

1. **whining** (whi-ning) – making a high, annoying sound.

Example: The whining of mosquitoes made it hard for Nya to sleep.

2. **elderly** (el-der-ly) – a polite word for old.

Example: An elderly woman gave the boys food at the beginning of their walk.

3. **clung** (clu-ng, tricky final sound) – held on tightly (past tense of cling) static cling

Example: Salva clung to his friend's hand when he felt afraid.

4. **shirrtail** (shirt-tail)– the bottom part of a shirt, usually hangs below the waist.

Example: He held onto his uncle's shirrtail while walking through the group.

5. **throughout** (throo-out, silent "gh") – during all of a time or in every part of a place. threw out

Example: The group walked throughout the hot day without stopping. "orange juice was throughout the refrigerator, so I threw out the orange juice."

6. **awkward** (awk-ward, "w" is silent) – uncomfortable or difficult to do **ak-word**.

Example: It was awkward to carry water in such heavy containers.

7. **paddled** (pad-dled, double "d" sound) – moved through water using hands or a stick (paddle).

Example: The boys paddled in the river to cool down.

8. **scratched** (skrat-cht, tricky "tch + ed") – rubbed your skin with nails because it itched.

Example: He scratched his arms after being bitten by insects.

CONNECTION MAKER

FATEMEH

Not yet submitted

CONNECTION MAKER

YULIANNA

In the chapter when all the refugees arrived on the island where everyone lived the same kind of life, we see how Salva experienced her life. In peaceful times, they lived calmly and with comfort. This reminded me of a pain that I had long buried deep in my heart. Many years ago, my family had to choose whether to stay or leave—but it was unclear where we would go. We left everything behind and tried to get back on our feet. All these changes affected my parents greatly. I often cried because I longed to go back to the past—when I received gifts, my mother laughed, we lived comfortably, and my father was healthy. But we had to start life anew. God does not give us trials greater than we can bear.

EMOTIONS EXPLORER

ANA

Not yet submitted

EMOTIONS EXPLORER

LILY S.

Not yet submitted

WORD ARTIST

IRA

Lion. A large, dangerous predator with a huge, thick, flowing mane and sharp teeth that mercilessly tear the flesh of its victims. Long, sharp, bent, rending claws on its soft-padded paws allow it to sneak up on its prey almost unnoticed.

A lion had been hungry enough to approach the group of people that kept walking for ten hours, into the night and through the night, suffering from a parching thirst and eventually were so exhausted that they fell into a deep, all-consuming sleep, not moving and not hearing anything around them.

A few man had been keeping watch, but in the dark of starry night, when the sky was all strewn with bright stars like dark silk embroidered with beads with a stunningly beautiful pattern, with the wind rippling through an endless sea of the long grass, with waves running across the surface, the lion could easily have crept close without seeing. It had sought out prey that was defenseless, small, weak and motionless: Marial, sleeping like a log.

WORD ARTIST

YARIELA

When they arrived to the island they can hear the rundown of the birds, feel the sea breeze and see the fishermen working.

Its smells like fresh fish. There is a lot of vegetation, green trees and palms. The birds next to the boats are waiting to grab a piece of fish.

White sand makes Salva feels comfortable and welcome.

The food was great, a delicious fish after several days of hunger. Unfortunately at night a cloud of mosquitoes didn't let them sleep, but next day they are ready to continue traveling.

FACT FINDER

FLAVIA

The traditional food of South Sudan is simple but full of flavor. The staple dish is “Kisra”, a thin pancake like bread made from fermented sorghum. Another popular dish is “Asida, ” a porridge like meal made from maize or sorghum. Most families eat these foods everyday especially in rural areas. They are simple to prepare, filling, and made from local grains that are easy to grow. People usually eat them with vegetable stew, beans or sometimes meat or fish when available. “Kisra” and “Asida” are served daily or in special celebrations, in this case with richer sauces, more meat or special spices.

In South Sudan, people enjoy a variety of fruits that grow naturally in the warm climate. Fruits like mangoes, bananas, guavas, papayas and watermelons. These fruits are often eaten fresh or in desserts.

People often cook together and shared in groups. Also they eat with their hands! Yes, in South Sudan, people usually eat with their hands, especially when eating those traditional foods. They use the right hand to take a small piece of the porridge or bread and dip it into the stew or sauce. This way of eating is not considered rude, it’s a sign of tradition and community. Sharing food from the same bowl shows respect, unity and friendship. In some towns or modern families, people may also use spoons or plates, especially in restaurants, but eating with the hand is very common in everyday life.



FACT FINDER

MONICA

Papyrus Reed plants are very versatile. It started as papyrus (paper) from 3200–2900BCE by Ancient Egyptians, and then are used to build boats for fishermen and baskets. To make papyrus cut and peel the plant stalk, slice the soft inner pith into thin strips that are then soaked in water for several days to soften and become sticky with the natural glue. The strips are arranged in two layers one horizontal and one vertical, overlapping at right angles, then pressed under heavy weight for a week to bond them in to a strong, flexible papyrus.

To make boats, gather and bundle large quantities of dried reeds, tie them tightly with ropes made from the reeds themselves to create large buoyant columns. These columns are shaped and clinched together to form the hull of the boat often with the end of the bundles curved upwards. The boats vary in size from small skiffs to large vessels.

Reed baskets are made with harvest papyrus, then dry and strip the stems into thin pliable pieces, you will then use these strips in a technique called splint weaving by weaving them over and under each other to form a strong basket.

