Chapter One

Southern Sudan, 2008: Nya, who is eleven, is walking with a large container. She will walk half the morning.

Southern Sudan, 1985: Salva, a Dinka, is in school. He only attends for part of the year because his family moves away during the dry season. His father is considered successful in their village. Salva has three brothers and two sisters. His sisters are not allowed to attend school and instead learn how to keep house from their mother. Before Salva was old enough to attend school he would care for the family’s cattle with other young boys. It was a very happy time. While in school Salva hears gunfire and is told by the teacher to run away from the village, to run away. There has been a war going on for two years. Rebels from southern Sudan have been fighting against the government. The government wanted everyone in Sudan to practice the religion Islam but not everyone in Sudan wanted this religion. As Salva runs from the school into the bush he sees many people running for their lives.

Chapter Two

Southern Sudan, 2008: Nya has to stop her walk to remove a large thorn from her foot.

Southern Sudan, 1985: Salva continued to run away all day and night. There were many people, including some from his village, but he could not find his family. The people walk until they reach a rebel camp. There they are asked to sort themselves into two groups: men, and women and children. Salva joins the men but is then sent back with the children. The men are forced to go with the rebels but the women and children leave. They fall asleep in a barn but when Salva wakes up he realizes he has been left behind.

Chapter Three

Southern Sudan, 2008: Nya reaches the pond where many others have also come to fill their containers with water. She fills her container, and then places it on her head for the long walk back home.

Southern Sudan, 1985: Salva knows he has been left because he was a child. He sees a woman outside the barn and recognizes that she is from his tribe because she has the Dinka scar pattern on her face. The woman feeds him and lets him stay in her barn. He can hear fighting in the distance. After a few days the women tells Salva she is leaving to be closer to water and he may not go with her, as it would be more dangerous for her. He is very scared and upset. Suddenly, more Dinkas arrive.

Chapter Four

Southern Sudan, 2008: Nya returns home to empty the water into other containers and eat lunch. Now she must return to the pond a second time. Her mother makes her bring her 5 year old sister along so she can learn what to do. Nya must make this trip twice a day every day for 7 months a year.

Southern Sudan, 1985: The woman arranges for Salva to join the group of Dinkas who are trying to stay away from the war. The group walks for days with little rest or food. More people continue to join their group. He starts walking with another boy who is not Dinka, but Jur-chol, whose name is Buksa. Buksa hears a noise and discovers a beehive with honey for the group to eat.
Chapter Five

Southern Sudan, 2008: There is a big lake three days walk from Nya’s village. Her family moves there during the dry season when the pond dries up. They cannot live there all year because the different tribes fight over who owns the land. Nya is a Nuer and they fight with the Dinkas. Both groups must live there during the dry season, but try not to fight too much because they are just struggling to survive. Even the lake starts to dry up during the dry season. Nya must dig into the mud to find water. The water is very dirty and takes a long time to gather.

Southern Sudan, 1985: Salva’s group has many bee stings but they are happy and full from the honey! As their walking continues, even more people join the group. Salva makes friends with another boy, Marial, who also is without his family. Marial tells Salva that they are walking to Ethiopia. Salva is worried that his family will never find him. He hears someone calling his name....

Chapter Six

Southern Sudan, 2008: Nya likes being at the lake because she does not have to spend the entire day walking. However, Nya realizes her mother dislikes their time at the lake. Her mother worries when her father and brother go hunting that they will run into and end up fighting the Dinkas.

Southern Sudan, 1985: Salva has been found by his Uncle Jewiir, who is in the army. Uncle joined the group and immediately became a leader. He uses his gun to help get food for the group. Many people get sick because they eat too much food after not eating for a long time. As they walk, the group starts to have a hard time finding water. One morning when Salva awakens he hears crying.

Chapter Seven

Southern Sudan, 2008: Nya’s little sister, Akeer, is very sick. She has a very bad stomachache, diarrhea, and fever. Nya knows this illness happens to many people. The elderly and young children often die from it. There is a medical clinic but it is a few days walk away. Nya’s family is not sure what to do.

Southern Sudan, 1985: In the night, Salva’s friend Marial was taken away and killed by a lion. Salva is very upset and scared. His uncle tries to make him feel better and keeps an extra close eye on the group. The group reaches the Nile River and must build a boat to cross the water. It takes several days of hard work until they are ready to cross the wide river.

Chapter Eight

Southern Sudan, 2008: Nya and her mother have taken Akeer to the doctor and she is now much better. They are told that Akeer was sick because the water was dirty. They need to boil the water to kill the germs, but if they boil the water for that long all the water will evaporate.

Southern Sudan, 1985: After paddling for hours, the group reaches an island that is a fisherman’s village. They had a lot of food because of their access to water. The villagers give Salva’s uncle food, though Salva doesn’t know if it is because he carries a gun or because he is the leader. The other members of the group have to beg for food. That night, the fishermen go inside mosquito netting while Salva’s group is horribly bitten by the mosquitoes. They are warned to bring lots of water for the next part of their journey: the desert. Some people do not have containers for water and soak pieces of cloth in water instead.

Chapter Nine

Southern Sudan, 2008: Nya’s family has now returned to their village. Visitors in a jeep arrive and talk to the village chief about water. Nya is confused by what there is to discuss about water.
Southern Sudan, 1985: Salva’s group must now cross the Akobo desert, which they think will take three days. Salva’s shoes have been worn through and he must go barefoot. He stubs his toe on a rock and his toenail comes off. He starts to cry and give up, but his uncle urges him to continue. He asks Salva to just walk a little bit further and this is how Salva is able to continue. The next day they come across a group of men lying in the desert. Some have died but others are still alive. Even though they desperately need the water for themselves, some of Salva’s group gives water to the collapsed men.

Chapter Ten

Southern Sudan, 2008: The visitors explore Nya’s village. They choose a spot between two trees and claim they will find water there. Nya is very confused. There was no water there!

Southern Sudan, 1985: Salva tries to give some water to the collapsed men, but his uncle says he must keep it for himself because he was a child. Others in his group gave the men water and they were able to stand and join the group. On their last day in the desert, Uncle tells Salva that he fears no one from Salva’s family is alive. He also tells Salva that he will leave Salva at a refugee camp and then go join the war. As the group ends their journey through the desert, they find a dead bird near a small pool of water and some trees. They build a fire to cook the bird but then men with weapons arrive. They tied up Uncle and made the group give them everything they had, including their clothes. Before they left, they shot and killed Salva’s uncle.

Chapter Eleven

Southern Sudan, 2008: The visitors leave and now the villagers must clear the land where the men said they would find water. The process of clearing the land is long and difficult; however each day as Nya returns from her trips to the pond she notices the progress. She is still doubtful about the visitors’ promise of water.

Southern Sudan and Ethiopia, 1985: The group buries Uncle, and then continues their journey. Salva realizes that although he is filled with grief, he seems stronger and more determined to survive the journey. The other members of the group turn against Salva and do not share their food or help him. The group finally arrives at the refugee camp. Salva is shocked by the thousands of people there. Salva is grouped with other children who lost their families. Salva thinks he sees his mother and runs through the camp after her.

Chapter Twelve

Southern Sudan, 2009: Nya calls the large drill that has arrived in her village an iron giraffe. The women in the village gather rocks that are then pounded into gravel. Nya is still unsure of the purpose, but notices how everyone is working together.

Itang refugee camp, Ethiopia, 1985: Salva realizes the woman he is chasing is not his mother. He reaches a realization that his family is truly gone. He thinks of his uncle who got him through the desert by having him focus on one small goal at a time. He decides this is how he will continue. Six years later Salva is still in the camp when rumors circulate that the camp will be closed. He is now seventeen and the Ethiopian government is about to collapse. Then, men in trucks arrive and tell the people at the camp that they must leave Ethiopia. The men shoot guns and chase them out of the camp toward the Gilo River, a river known for its deadly crocodiles.

Chapter Thirteen

Southern Sudan, 2009: The drilling process is slow and keeps encountering problems. Water is needed to keep the drill running so the drilling crew has to go to the pond several times a day. The bag they use for the water springs multiple leaks and must be patched. The workers become discouraged but their boss keeps them working.
Ethiopia-Sudan-Kenya, 1991-1992: People were jumping into the river as they fled the soldiers. The current was too strong for many and they were swept away. Crocodiles were also attacking people who jumped in the water. The soldiers then started shooting at the people trying to cross the river. Salva jumps in the water and another boy grabs onto him, almost drowning him. The boy lets go because he is shot and killed and Salva realized the boy probably saved his life by forcing him under the water. Salva eventually reaches the other side of the river, but over 1,000 people die trying. Now Salva becomes a leader of orphaned boys who are walking to Kenya, where there are other refugee camps. He often thinks of his family as he guides the boys toward safety. It takes a year and a half to walk to Kenya.

**Chapter Fourteen**

Southern Sudan, 2009: After days of drilling, water starts to come out of the hole! People begin to cheer and celebrate but Nya becomes concerned: the water is brown and dirty.

Ifo refugee camp, Kenya, 1992-1996: Salva is now 22 years old and has been in Kenyan refugee camps for 5 years. Some of the people at the camps were families, but most were orphaned boys and young men. Life in the camps was difficult. There was little food and much sickness. Salva makes friends with Michael, an aid worker, who starts to teach him English. Michael also teaches Salva to play volleyball! Salva hears a rumor that some boys will be sent to the United States. One day, Salva’s name finally appears on a list saying that he will be going to Rochester, New York.

**Chapter Fifteen**

Southern Sudan, 2009: Nya’s brother explains to her that the reason the water is muddy is because it is mixed with the water from the pond. He tells Nya that they will keep drilling and eventually will get to clean water. Then they will have to put pipes and gravel in the ground, pour cement and wait for the cement to dry. Nya is disappointed that she will have several more days of hauling water from the pond.

Nairobi, Kenya-Rochester, New York, 1996: Salva learns that the Americans are calling the boys who are now orphaned from the war the Lost Boys. Salva has to undergo a lengthy process to prepare for his trip to America. One exciting moment is when Salva receives new clothes and is told about winter in America. On the plane, Salva is served a coke and recalls drinking one with his family. He has to take three planes to get to Rochester. When he arrives he meets his new family: Chris, Louise, and four siblings! The family gives him even more clothes before they leave the airport. Salva struggles to understand his new family since they speak English. He bravely walks into the cold and into his new life in America.

**Chapter Sixteen**

Southern Sudan, 2009: Now men are clearing even more land. Nya asks her father why they are doing this and he tells her they are getting ready to build.

Rochester, New York, 1996-2003: Salva is amazed at life in America. So much is different from his experiences in Sudan. He is learning English and is grateful for his patient, kind adoptive family. Six years pass and Salva is in college, studying business. He knows he one day wants to help people in Sudan. Then, he receives an email from a distant cousin saying his father is alive and about to undergo surgery. Salva is very excited and immediately starts planning a trip to see his father. It takes several months to arrange the travel, but he finally arrives back in Sudan.

**Chapter Seventeen**

Southern Sudan, 2009: Nya learns that they are building a school where all the children can go to learn, even the girls! Nya is very excited. Finally, she will learn to read and write!
Sudan and Rochester, New York, 2003-2007: Salva is reunited with his father, who is shocked to learn that Salva is alive and well. His father says he never gave up hope that Salva was alive. Salva also learns that his mother, sisters, and one brother are also alive. His two other brothers were killed in the war. Salva’s father is in the hospital because he is sick from drinking unclean water over many years. As Salva heads back to America, he thinks about how he can help the people of Sudan. He began to talk to groups of people and tell his story while raising money for a project in Sudan.

Chapter Eighteen

Southern Sudan, 2009: The well is finally finished and Nya no longer has to spend her days walking to fetch unclean water. She learns that a school in America raised the money to build the well. Soon the new village school will also be finished. There is talk of a new marketplace and even a clinic. The building of the well is causing all of these wonderful things to happen. Nya’s brother tells her that the crew leader is a Dinka who has built many wells for his people, but this year decided to build one for the Nuer. Nya is shocked that a Dinka would do this and goes to thank him. She introduces herself to Salva.

A message from Salva Dut

Salva thanks those who have contributed to his project, Water for Sudan, Inc. He offers advice to young people: Stay calm when things are hard or not going right with you. You will get through it when you persevere instead of quitting. Quitting leads to much less happiness in life than perseverance and hope.

Author’s Note

Salva has seen his family twice more. He even met with the cousins of his uncle who helped him survive. He has also been reunited with several of the boys that he led to Kenya. His organization has dozens of wells in southern Sudan.