



Psycho ChickTM

I am Impi

PART 4:
SAN



MATURE READERS

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I am Impi

Part 4: San

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*“Never grab an arrow by its poison head”
~ Khoi San Proverb*

**Surrounded and outnumbered, we are completely
trapped.**

**Disarmed we circle within the circle; how do we
adapt?**

**Someone has bludgeoned Sango hard over the
head.**

**Being unconscious, her twin is deactivated, I hope
she is not dead.**

**The bones foretold this, not in so much detail.
I did not listen, I commanded us to come, now we
ail.**

King Cetshwayo, a cunning old dog, was prepared.

**To come before him we should not have dared!
They can take our weapons but we have tooth and
claw.**

**We will never back down without a fight, hear us
women roar!**



**Gates say a lot about a king and the people
therein.**

**The more formidable the more you wonder what
monsters lie within.**

**A few hours ago, we stood before Cetshwayo's
thorny fence –**

**A daunting structure made of thorn bushes, sharp
stakes, people's skulls – an intimidating defence.
Before entering, our weapons had to be left with
San at the gate.**

**San had to stay for she was no Zulu and the
gatekeeper with discrimination her did berate.
To the King our envoy travel-companions would us
show,**

**For an audience with the King to escape certain
marriage woe.**

**Men who we do not love or even know, we refuse
to betroth.**

**We cast aside these traditions that degrade the
rights of women, we them do loathe.**



**The King – an overfed, towering scoundrel with an
attitude of a god.**

**He is no idiot, cunning in the ways of deception,
for women he has little to no regard.**

**The meeting with him did not go well (as was
expected);**

He laid down his command, one we rejected.

**“My warriors grow old and need to be rewarded by
me,”**

**“They are over forty now and need wives to bear
their warrior seed, you see....”**

**“I tire of your rebellious nature,” he droned, “You
are no Women! You are all a disgrace!”**

**“Your insolence and unsubmitive nature will ruin
our race!”**

**I stand forward, proud: “Oh King, while we
recognise you as our Sovereign and with our
victories, we your name bedeck...”**

**“This string of beads you offer us does not meet
around the neck!”**

He is angry, he says little more.

**“Capture them!” I know, with a sinking feeling, this
is war!**



**Fighting our way out of the middle of enemy
territory is suicide!**

Wait! San! San is outside!

Though little, she is completely fierce!

**Her bow and arrow are her speciality - through any
cowhide with accuracy can pierce.**

Born to the original hunter-gatherer tribes -

**Generations of hunting and tracking her
tremendous skill to her ancestors ascribes.**

The Khoi-San people are wiser than the trees.

**Their land dry, mainly sand but their attitude puts
you at ease.**

**Yes, she will worry soon about us and come up
with a plan.**

**All is not lost, we surrender, while we have our
San!**



**There is a certain clarity, a realisation of being in
the arid night.**

**Flames dancing to songs of their ancestors, the
stars in infinity alight.**

**As clicks reverberate, a chanting melody to a
monotonous, prehistoric beat.**

**The ancient one's hearts must have pounded
differently, you hear it in their stamping feet.**

Smiling, laughing, joking all in click-clicks.

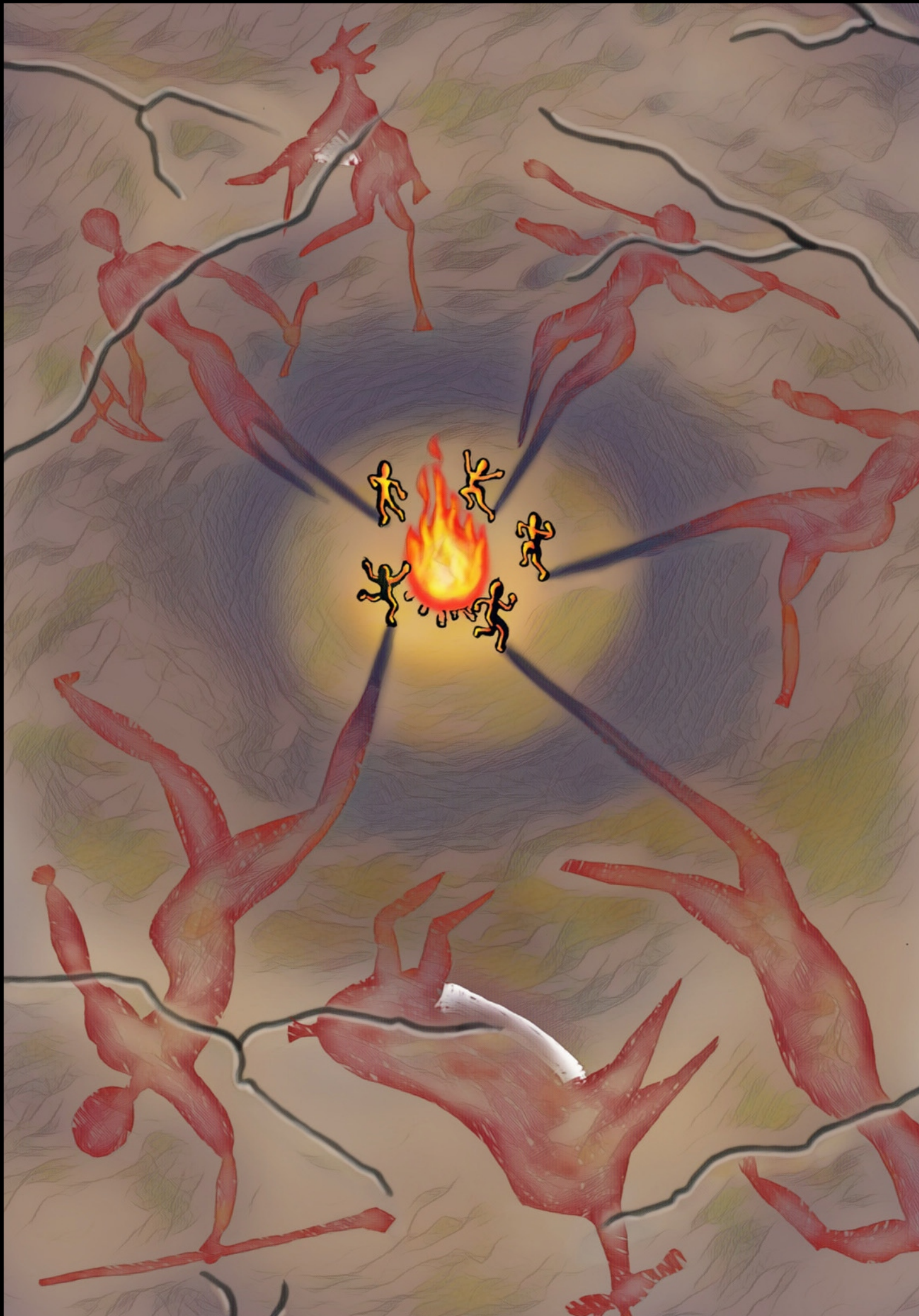
**Ancient souls smile through brown eyes as to the
magic of night they transfix.**

**Twanging instruments – voices of the old ones tell
tales,**

**Taking their people to hunting spots, watering
holes – survival trails.**

**Little bodies of soft leather move trans- like, they
are graceful antelope.**

**Transcended to the cosmos, with their ancestors
the tribe will every night elope.**



**San is not her born-day name.
We gave it to her as our pronunciation of it put us
to shame.
Although not unusual among the stone age people
of the bush;
San, as a female, took to hunting from a young
age, her family never her from these skills did
push.
She learnt eagerly all she could from the wise and
skilled men.
Poisons, trapping, hunting techniques, tracking –
all part of her play pen.
From the women, revered and knowledgeable -
plants, medicine and resourcefulness – was all
part of her early education.
A mighty encyclopaedia of centenarian
knowledge, a true survivor's vocation!
Living a nomadic life, a balance of free and wild.
In harmony with nature, upon them the Gods
smiled.**



**San grew up to be a significant beauty.
Even though the Khoi San were considered more
liberal, women still were expected to perform
their duty.**

**The boys who would tease her for being unlike the
other girl-folk;**

**Who would envy her for her superior skill that
turned their own skills into a joke;**

**Started to notice the smooth honey of her skin,
Lips as pink as the Devil's Claw flower – absolute
sin!**

**As she padded along like a predator – deadly and
small;**

**She felt a sharp sting in her buttocks, who had the
gall?**

**She whipped around pulling an arrow from her
lovely derriere - a suitor was proposing marriage
with this strange ritual, it was very clear San was
not going to have any of this!**

**The love arrow was firmly planted in the suitor's
eye, it would have been better if he did miss!**



This first incident did not deter further wooers.

With their love bows they came, thinking they were the one, only to leave, carried away with eye-skewers.

After the third or fourth love-struck youth was dragged off with eye injuries, the tribe had enough.

They called a meeting of the council; it was time on San to get tough.

Ultimatums were laid down and San was told to compensate for their trauma,

She would have to pick one of the lads to marry and they wanted no more of her drama!

She predictably refused to marry, the tribe was left with no alternative:

She was banished, cast out, for such insolence could only be treated as a cleansing purgative.



**The ghost white-skin people with their eyes of sky
and ice,
Came probably two centuries before on their
wooden hippos with their white wings chasing
spice.
They were like a wildfire engulfing everything in
their paths, they raged.
Land was grabbed, wildlife depleted and
sometimes the stone age people they even caged.
San watched, a little lone figure, as the earth
succumbed to the new wave of these foreign
people's might and will.
Alone she could not stop their march, alone she
could not every one of them kill.
But often sky and ice eyes were found milky,
staring at a vacant morning sky.
Victims of a mysterious venom, an assassin sly.
If she stayed with her tribe, she would never have
become this potent vigilante.
For these settlers she was a phantom, an enemy
who upped the ante!**



**We noticed her after several days, stealthy and
spry.**

**It was only at sunset; I saw her sleight shadow
from the corner of my eye.**

**We were on a training camp far from home -
Out of our comfort zone - eventually thirsty we did
roam.**

**She no doubt watched us as we dried out like a
mud puddle.**

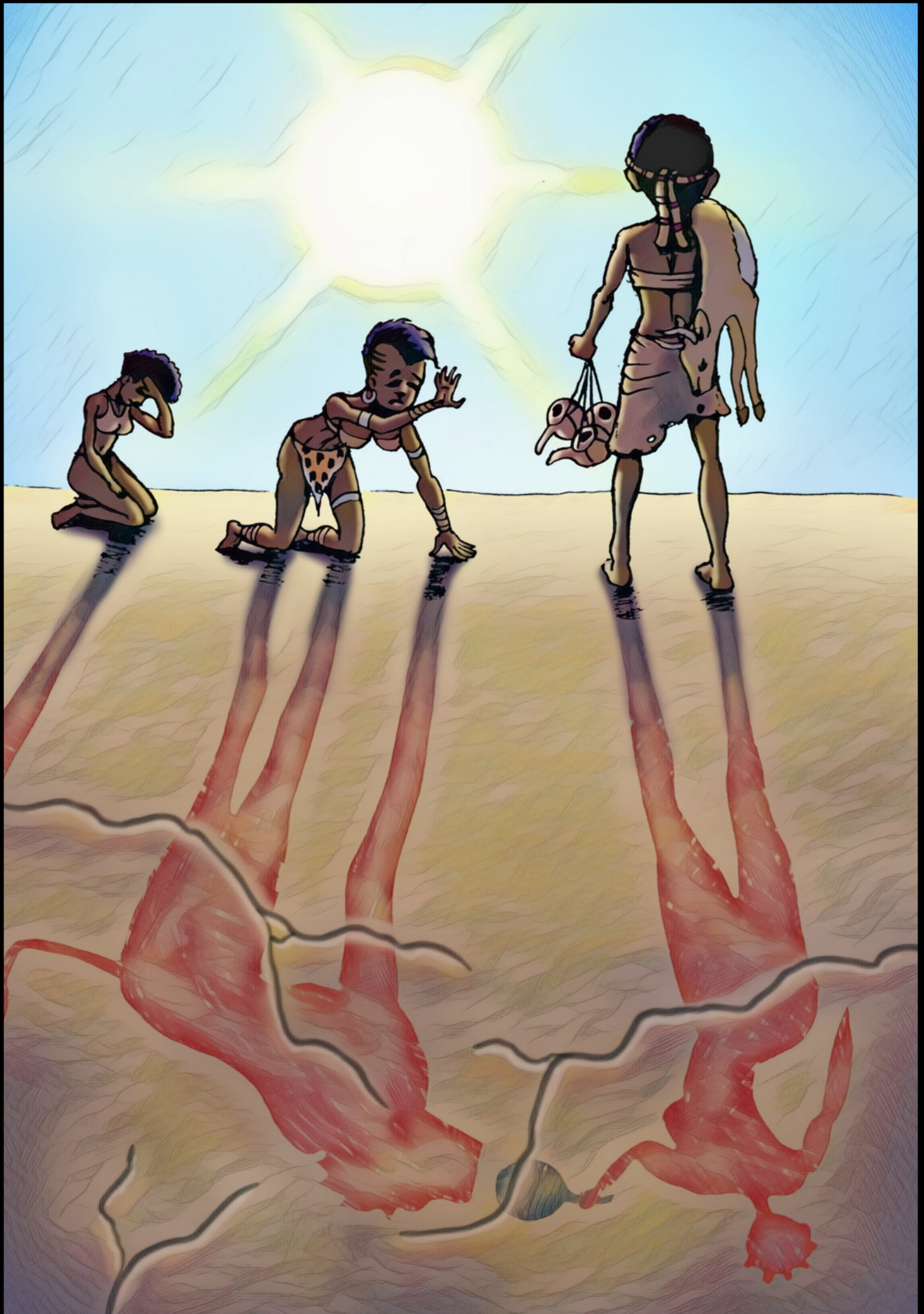
**She eventually came to our camp with calabashes
of water and an antelope, this us did befuddle.**

**Famished and thirsty we rejoiced at San's
generosity.**

**Though still wary of each other, her funny clicks
and laughter had us remove any animosity.**

**From that day forward, San would forever be by
our side.**

**However, we soon realised with her drawings and
gestures that our help was being allied.**



San's tribe was in distress!

Skirmishes had left them in quite a mess!

**The settlers and her indigenous people clashed as
resources were depleted.**

**Thunder sticks against wooden ones left her tribe
defeated.**

**Some escaped but most were captured and made
into the cruellest thing for a Khoi San – a slave!**

**Four walls were no place for them, most from a
broken heart would go to an early grave.**

We had to help free her distraught tribe!

**In the history books, this rescue they would never
transcribe.**

Night we are, silent and deadly.

**Waking up next to a dead comrade, in a locked
room, leaves nerves unsteady.**

Night after night, psychological tactics instil fear.

**Sleep deprived, listening to Zulu war songs, our
voices we make sound like hundreds of soldiers,
very near.**

**Slowly they lost their minds to their own lunacy,
some became completely insane.**

**Running naked into the bush or shooting each
other, we won San's people's freedom on this
rescue campaign.**



**The Khoi San tribe moved further north, to escape
the settlers with their ghost-white skins.**

**East, we went, back home, San followed and her
life with our all-women army begins....**

My thoughts return to our present dire situation.

**Sango is still knocked out, we are locked up,
outside there is an audible agitation!**

**Earlier, we heard armies on the march, yes, long
gone.**

**Then an alarm is sounded, we no longer to our
rescuer had to wait on.**

**Battered and bruised we gather the limp Sango, it
is the first time she has begun to mumble.**

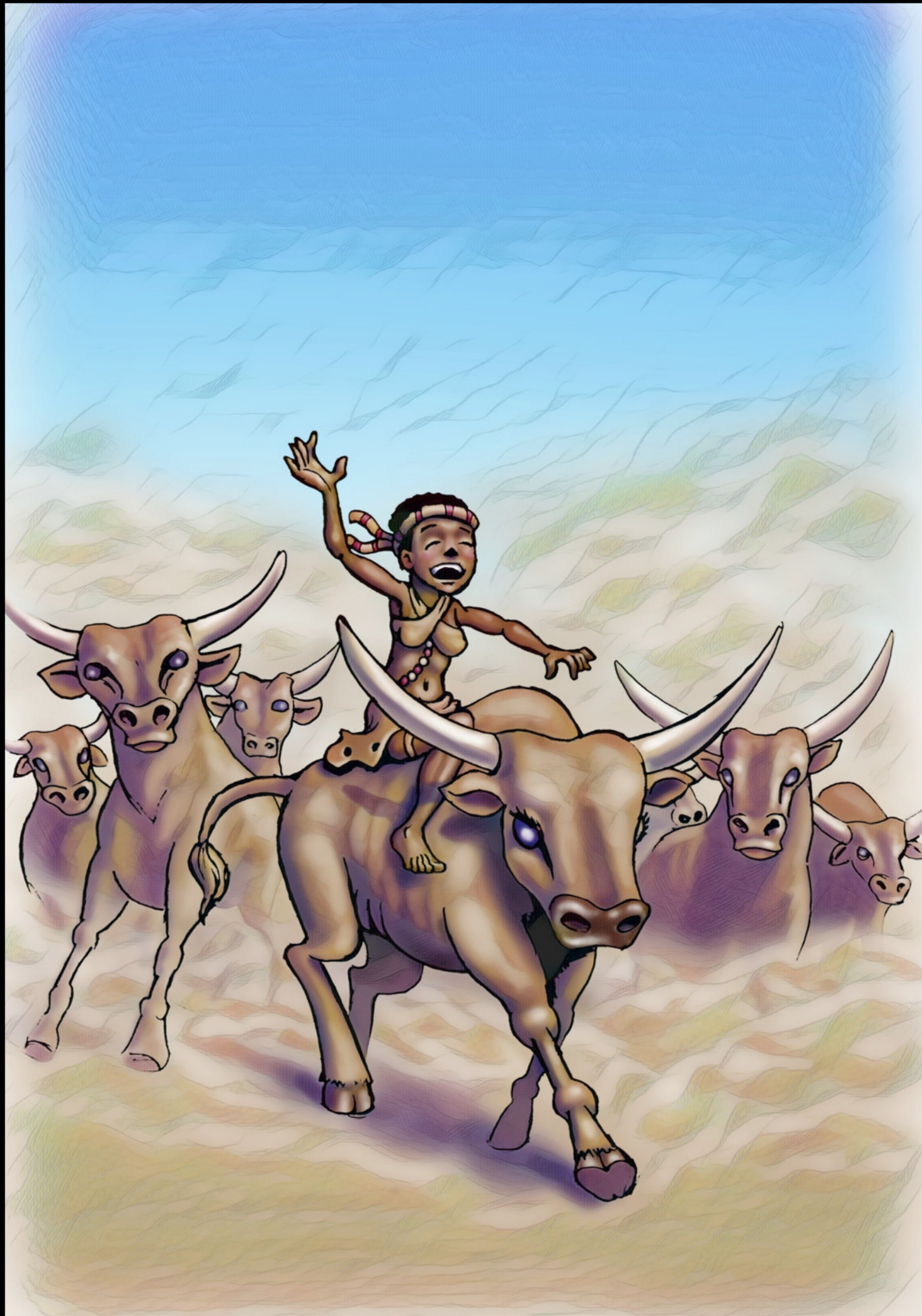
**Our guard's eyes become large as the earth begins
to rumble.**

**"Against that wall!" I shout as beasts bellow - it's a
stampede!**

**Cattle come crashing through the wall where we
just stood, running over the clamouring guards at
bovine speed.**

**As the raucous passes I see San sitting on a large
bull, whooping and yowling!**

**The whole royal kraal in shambles. Men trampled,
their wives over their bodies with grief are
howling!!**



**Who would have thought one small woman could
defeat a whole village with nothing but cows?
As we made our escape, San in her clicks and
broken Zulu, our suspicion further did arouse.
The regiment we were to marry were hours earlier
dispatched.**

**King Cetshwayo was carried ahead of them,
obviously another evil plan of his hatched.
The fact which filled me with crushing despair and
made my wary mind panic;**

**For the first time I didn't know what to do as I
became manic!**

**Sango had gained consciousness by now but was
clearly concussed.**

**My team realized that I into full psycho mode was
about to combust....**

**The knowledge that had me overcome with such
irrational emotion:**

**Cetshwayo and his regiment, our scorned suitors,
had gone in the direction of our barracks, an army
against our women, set in motion!**



**Their army like giant ants in the bushveld carved a
wide path.**

**We carry light, although a day or more ahead, our
speed fuelled by wrath.**

**The tracks don't write a fairy-tale,
They speak blatant cutting words, the truth they
do not fail!**

**Sango quite injured, bleeds from the head but she
is aided by her sister.**

**San runs ahead, faster and more agile, the bush to
her is no resistor.**

**Somahlaya, keeps up with us for a change, she has
no sense of humour, an uncharacteristic mood.**

**Edie, my right hand says nothing, she knows the
urgency, she knows this is not good!**

**I rage between wanting to cry and with utter fury,
while I sprint.**

**Our own is now at risk, it is different from other
times, personal, it feels like our first war stint.**



**We see it on the horizon, San a crumpled
silhouette.**

**The others come to a screeching halt; out of my
mouth a blood curdling demonic scream is let.**

In the distance our worst fears.

**The air sounds like a graveyard. Silent. Not even
tears.**

**Vultures gather like mourners, all dire and black.
Our faces have expressions I've never seen before,
I'm taken aback!**

**A moment standing seems like an eternity, a
lifetime of years.**

Seconds tick, tick, tick into silent hours, silent.

Except for the pounding in my ears!

**There, as we stand on the horizon, from our home,
the barracks smoke billows in the rising sun.**

**Nothing is said. Nothing needs to be said. We just
run!**

