

THE STORY OF AN UNLIKELY SAVIOR

— *Sheree Whitelock*

MANY PEOPLE DO NOT RECALL MY NAME, BUT I HAVE ONE. When I come in contact with them they go about their lives and think that I am nothing but a beast, not realizing how much I understand – how much I remember. It seems silly that I can not get credit for all my efforts, but the people are ignorant. They don't understand. How could they possibly understand my story?

The cool air licked my face that morning as I drank the bitter water from my trough. The others were still lollygagging from the back of the paddock; I was always the first one up. Maybe it's because I'm smarter than them. The rest are as ignorant as those humans that feed us, wishing for nothing but to continue their lives as slaves – just for a bit of sweet oat and molasses at night. Something was in the air that morning, I could sense it. It was different. It was bitter. I could tell today was my day for escape.

To my surprise, old Abraham came out and fetched me. I'm assuming he was just too lazy to wait for Sampson, the strongest of our kind, who was slowly making his way up from the rear. Abraham was in a hurry, I could tell he believed he was being talked to again.

Abraham always acts peculiar when he hears the voice from the sky. Always careful about what he does, how his people act around him. It's quiet funny to watch him quiver in fear at times. I don't think the voice from the sky actually talks to Abraham though, because the voice only talks to me among my kind – so why would the voice feel like he needed to talk to a human? People are inherently evil. They kill, they steal, they lie, and continue to live in this word that I often hear Abraham say, "sin".

Sin seems to be a rather dirty word among the people. Always repenting, whatever that means. They say they repent and then they continue to do these sins – so I'm not sure what repent actually means. I think it's a word they

use to make themselves feel better, when they do terrible things. The voice in the sky laughs at me when I ask what these words mean. It says, “do not worry about those words. They mean nothing for your kind”, so I believe.

As Abraham led me towards the barn, I could sense the fear on his breath and feel it through his grip on my halter. Of course, I had tried to escape before – maybe he was just preparing for me to bolt, but I knew that I had to be wise about my flee, and not the fleas about my skin that bit and itched either.

He saddled me up rather hurriedly, the girth loose about my belly, and sat his son in the seat and instructed two younger ones to carry wood and rope. I was thankful for this, because Isaac did not weigh much and the journey was long. Something changed in Abraham, he grew more anxious with every step and there was sadness in his voice every time he spoke. I tried to become more alert and figure out what was going on when the voice from the sky told me not to fear. Everything the voice from the sky had ever told me was true, so I relaxed. People are peculiar creatures, so it’s best not to bother figuring them out.

Once we got to the mountain, Abraham left me with the two boys. They were causing a big disturbance and not paying attention to me at all, so I knew that

this would be my moment to run. I began to wander slightly off when their laughter suddenly stopped. I paused to see if they were on to me, but instead I heard the one say, “Abraham didn’t have a sacrifice. Isn’t that what he was doing?” And the other replied, “Has the old man gone insane? Is he going to kill Isaac?”

At the mention of this, I realized the boys were right. Abraham must be going mad from the voice he hears and was going to kill Isaac as a sacrifice to stop the voice. I knew I was taking a risk, but I couldn’t let Isaac die. He was a nice boy that always brought me carrots and apples. He told me he hated the taste of them, and I appreciated that he always gave them to me over the others. We had many times where he would sit on the fence line and shuck me his fruits while telling me about his hopes and fears. He was the only person I truly cared for. I couldn’t let him be killed.

My thoughts were interrupted by the first boy saying, “of course, Abraham is probably going to sacrifice that stupid donkey that’s always trying to get away.” Infuriated, I knew I was not stupid – but then shock and worry set in, Abraham was going to sacrifice me. Of course, how could I not see that? All this time I was worrying about Isaac and it was really me that Abraham was intending to kill. And what would Isaac do? Noth-

ing, he would not go against his father.

I heard the voice from the sky say, “run for the meadow”, so I bolted there to take refuge. A flock of sheep were grazing about the meadow as I flew past. And then, brilliance struck me. It was like the voice in the sky gave me a thought that I would have never thought myself. Skidding to a stop, I turned towards a great ram in the flock. Pinning my ears, I bared my teeth and chased him towards the mountain. As he reached the top, he got caught in a thicket about his horns not too far from Abraham. I made a good ruckus to catch Abraham’s attention and saw little Isaac strapped to the wood as if he were a young lamb to be given to the voice in the sky. Recognizing my error in thought, I fled from the scene. I heard Abraham struggling with the ram, so I knew Isaac was safe.

I saved Isaac that day. I didn’t realize what I was doing at the time, but I was happy knowing the boy would live. The voice in the sky still talks to me and gives me instructions, but my life out here in the wilderness is much easier when I have the voice so near to me. The grass is tender here, the water more pure. The voice tells me of a man named Balaam that I must go to. I hope that this task will be quick, because I’d hate to be away from this paradise for too long. My life has been wonderful, and I have the voice from the sky to thank for that.