SOFTWARE & TECH

Copper Sun Chapter Summaries

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Introduction to Copper Sun and Its Chapter Summaries

Sharon Draper's historical novel **Copper Sun** is a powerful and deeply moving story set in the 18th century. It follows the harrowing journey of Amari, a fifteen-year-old girl from a peaceful village in Ghana, who is captured by slave traders and thrust into the brutal world of the American colonies. The narrative weaves her story with that of Polly, a young indentured servant, as they navigate unimaginable hardships and ultimately strive for freedom. For students, educators, and literature enthusiasts, having a clear grasp of the **Copper Sun chapter summaries** is essential to understanding the novel's layered themes of resilience, identity, and humanity. This article provides a comprehensive, chapter-by-chapter breakdown of the book, highlighting key events and character developments while maintaining a natural, reader-friendly flow.

Below, we explore each chapter summary in a structured format that makes it easy to follow the plot's progression. Whether you are studying the book for a class or revisiting it for personal enrichment, these summaries will serve as a valuable companion to the full text.

Part One: The Destruction of a World (Chapters 1–10)

This opening section establishes Amari's idyllic life in Ziavi, Ghana, before her world is shattered by the arrival of slave traders. The **Copper Sun chapter summaries** for Part One focus on the stark contrast between Amari's joyful existence and the unimaginable brutality she endures during the Middle Passage.

Chapter 1: A Life of Joy

Amari wakes to the sounds of her village. She is excited about her upcoming marriage to Besa, a handsome young man. The chapter paints a vibrant picture of her family, traditions, and the deep sense of community. This normalcy makes the coming tragedy even more devastating.

Chapter 2: The Attack

The village is invaded by white slave traders and African collaborators. Amari witnesses the murder of her parents and the brutal kidnapping of her brother, Kwasi. Besa is taken too. Amari is shackled and forced onto a ship, her life forever altered.

Chapter 3: The Middle Passage Begins

The horrific conditions of the slave ship are described in vivid detail. Amari is packed into the hold with other captives, surrounded by filth, disease, and despair. She meets Afi, a strong woman from a neighboring village who becomes a mentor and source of strength.

Chapter 4: The Ship's Horrors

Amari endures the whip, starvation, and the constant threat of death. Some captives try to rebel, but they are brutally suppressed. Besa attempts to protect Amari from the crew, but he is powerless. The theme of resistance against dehumanization emerges.

Chapter 5: Arrival in the Colonies

The ship lands in Charleston, South Carolina. Amari is taken to a slave market where she is examined and sold.

She feels stripped of her identity, reduced to a piece of property. Polly, a white indentured servant, is also being sold at the same auction.

Chapter 6: The Derby Plantation

Amari is purchased by Mr. Derby, a wealthy plantation owner. She is taken to the plantation and introduced to the strict hierarchy of enslaved labor. She is given the name “Mari” and told to work in the big house.

Chapter 7: Learning the Rules

Amari struggles to understand English and the cruel customs of slavery. She is assigned to work with Polly, the indentured girl. Their initial interaction is marked by hostility, as Polly sees Amari as a threat to her own precarious status.

Chapter 8: The Kitchen and the Whip

Amari is taught how to cook and clean by Teeny, an older enslaved woman. She also experiences the full force of the overseer’s whip for a minor mistake. Polly watches, feeling a mix of fear and pity.

Chapter 9: A Glimpse of Hope

Amari discovers a hidden talent for storytelling, which she uses to comfort the enslaved children on the plantation. She also learns about the existence of the Underground Railroad from another enslaved man named Tidbit.

Chapter 10: Brutality Escalates

When Mr. Derby’s son, Clay, tries to assault Amari, she fights back. In retaliation, she is severely beaten and thrown into a shed. Polly, moved by Amari’s courage, brings her food and water, forging the first bond of friendship between them.

Part Two: The Journey to Freedom (Chapters 11–20)

The middle section of the novel shifts from the static horror of plantation life to a perilous escape. The **Copper Sun chapter summaries**for these chapters highlight the growing alliance between Amari and Polly as they flee toward Fort Mose, a Spanish settlement that offers freedom to escaped slaves.

Chapter 11: The Plan

Amari decides to run away after learning that she is to be sold to a notoriously cruel planter. Polly, having completed her indenture, agrees to flee with her. They take Tidbit, a young boy, with them.

Chapter 12: Into the Swamp

The trio escapes into the dangerous South Carolina swamps. They face alligators, snakes, and the constant fear of being captured. Amari uses her knowledge of the land and her resourcefulness to survive.

Chapter 13: The Old Woman in the Woods

They encounter a mysterious elderly woman named Mama B., who lives alone in a cabin. Mama B. offers them shelter, food, and advice. She tells them about the path to Fort Mose, but warns of the journey’s dangers.

Chapter 14: Healing and Learning

During their stay with Mama B., Amari and Polly recover physically. Mama B. teaches Amari about medicinal herbs and the history of maroon communities. Polly begins to see Amari as an equal, shedding her racial prejudices.

Chapter 15: Leaving the Cabin

After a few days, they must move on. Mama B. gives them supplies and a crude map. Amari is deeply grateful for

the kindness of this stranger, who reminds her of the goodness that still exists in the world.

Chapter 16: The River Crossing

The group reaches a wide river. They build a makeshift raft and cross, but Tidbit nearly drowns. Amari saves him, reinforcing her role as a protector. They are exhausted but determined.

Chapter 17: White Men and Dogs

Slave catchers and their hounds pick up their scent. A harrowing chase ensues. Polly uses her whiteness to confuse the men, pretending they have seen nothing. This clever deception buys them time.

Chapter 18: The Kindness of Strangers

They stumble upon a Quaker settlement. The Quakers offer aid, hiding them in a wagon and providing directions to the next safe house. This act of solidarity underscores the theme of shared humanity across racial lines.

Chapter 19: The Forest at Night

Traveling only at night becomes necessary. Amari and Polly share stories of their pasts. Amari tells Polly about Besa, her family, and the copper sun of her homeland—the beautiful copper-colored sunset that symbolizes lost freedom.

Chapter 20: Near Discovery

They almost get caught by a patrol. Tidbit hides in a hollow log while Amari and Polly play dead in a ditch. The tension is palpable, and their survival skills are pushed to the limit.

Part Three: A New Horizon (Chapters 21–30)

The final part of the novel brings the journey to a climax as the trio approaches Fort Mose. These **Copper Sun chapter summaries** explore their ultimate confrontation with the past and the promise of a new beginning.

Chapter 21: The Wounded Traveler

They meet an escaped slave named Jake, who has been shot in the leg. Amari tends to his wound using the herbs she learned from Mama B. Jake tells them that Fort Mose is real and that freedom awaits there.

Chapter 22: The Storm

A violent thunderstorm breaks, forcing them to take shelter in a cave. They are cold, wet, and hungry. Amari's memories of the Middle Passage are triggered, but she pushes through with the support of Polly and Tidbit.

Chapter 23: The Last Leg

They reach the St. Johns River in Florida. On the other side lies Fort Mose. However, they are spotted by a group of slave catchers who have been tracking them. A desperate plan is formed.

Chapter 24: The Confrontation

Clay Derby, the son of the plantation owner, appears with armed men. He demands Amari back. Polly bravely confronts him, using her knowledge of the law to claim that she is a free woman and that Amari is under her protection. Clay hesitates.

Chapter 25: The Fight

Clay tries to seize Amari by force. A struggle ensues. Tidbit throws sand in the men's eyes, and Amari uses a sharp rock to wound Clay. The attackers are driven off, but Amari is shaken by the violence.

Chapter 26: The River Crossing

With the coast clear, they finally cross the river into Spanish territory. The sight of the fort fills them with hope. Spanish soldiers greet them, and Amari is officially declared free under Spanish law.

Chapter 27: Fort Mose

They are welcomed into the community of Fort Mose, a settlement of free black people and Native Americans. Amari is overwhelmed by the sense of belonging. She meets new friends and begins to heal.

Chapter 28: The Copper Sun Returns

One evening, Amari watches the sun set over the fort. The sky turns a brilliant copper color—the same copper sun she remembered from her village in Ghana. She realizes that her spirit, though battered, remains unbroken.

Chapter 29: A New Family

Polly decides to stay at Fort Mose as well, rejecting the white colonial society that had once held her. She and Amari become sisters in spirit. Tidbit finds a new home. Amari feels the stirring of hope for the future.

Chapter 30: The Promise

Amari vows never to forget her past, but she also commits to building a new life. She begins to teach the children of Fort Mose about her African heritage. The novel ends with Amari holding a small child, a symbol of continuity and resilience.

Epilogue: A Glimpse Ahead

The epilogue jumps forward several years. Amari is a respected member of the Fort Mose community, running a small school. She receives news that Besa is still alive and working on a ship in the Caribbean. She decides to search for him, but she knows that whatever happens, her life has meaning.

Conclusion

These **Copper Sun chapter summaries**provide a roadmap through Sharon Draper's unforgettable tale of suffering, courage, and liberation. By breaking down each chapter,

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