WHERE DOES YOUR FAMILY COME FROM?
Africa.

WHAT PART OF AFRICA?
Sudan.

IN THE SUDAN. HOW LONG DID YOU LIVE IN THE SUDAN FOR?
(pause) Like six years.

SIX YEARS. WERE YOU BORN IN THE SUDAN? IS THAT WHERE YOU WERE BORN?
Yeah.

WHAT LANGUAGE IS SPOKEN THERE?
There's like a lot.

THERE'S A LOT OF LANGUAGES. WHAT LANGUAGE DOES YOUR FAMILY SPEAK?
Nuer(?).

NUER? HOW DO YOU, HOW DO YOU SPELL THAT? DO YOU KNOW?
Ah, I don't know. (smile)

YEAH. UM, IS THAT THE LANGUAGE YOU SPEAK AT HOME?
Yeah.

SAY IT AGAIN?
Nuer.
NUER.
Yeah.

OK, NUER. UM, WHAT PART OF SUDAN DID YOU LIVE IN? NORTH, SOUTH…
I don't know. I don't know.

YOU DON'T KNOW. DO YOU KNOW THE NAME OF THE VILLAGE THAT YOU LIVED IN?
Hum um. (no)

NO. WHAT DO YOU REMEMBER ABOUT THE SUDAN?
It was fun.

IT WAS FUN. WHAT WAS FUN ABOUT IT?
There was no, uh, curfew. I can go to school whenever I want. I could go anything.

REALLY. (yeah) UM, HOW BIG WAS YOUR TOWN?
Just like a small village.

JUST A LITTLE VILLAGE. WHAT WAS YOUR HOUSE LIKE?
A hut.

IT WAS A HUT. HOW MANY FAMILY MEMBERS LIVED IN THE TOWN?
I don't know that.

UM, DID… WHAT FAMILY MEMBERS LIVED THERE?
In my town, my grandma, my cousin, my aunt, my other aunt, and my mom’s grandma.

DID YOU PLAY WITH YOUR COUSIN A LOT?
Yeah.

HOW MANY BROTHERS AND SISTERS DO YOU HAVE, DID YOU HAVE THEN? Including me? (UM HUM) They, we had this one dude, he just lived with us. So now if he came to, uh, with us we would have, uh, we would have at least nine brothers and sisters or something.
Wow, that's a lot. Where do you fall?
Me? I'm like in the middle. I'm the second oldest.

Second oldest? So you have six younger than you or seven?
No, if the other dude came, then it would be seven. (SEVEN YOUNGER THAN YOU)
But now there is my younger brother who is like 11, and there is my sister who is 8, gonna turn 9, there is my sister who just turned 7, and my little brother who is three and my little, my baby sister who is one.

Wow. That's a big family. Um, what do you remember about the transportation? How did you get from place to place?
It was fun. First we went on a truck for like six or 17 hours. We drove. Like after that we came to, um, it's like a different part of or a different country. Then we lived there for like a month and we got on a plane to New York. We lived in New York six, six months, then we went to Texas. After... We lived in Texas like three or two, two or three years, and Nebraska where I lived in Norfolk three years, and then I came here.

Oh. That's a lot of moving. What were some of the fun things that you'd do in Sudan with your cousins?
Play. (OR, OR YOUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS) Um, go, I don't know, hunt. Uh, get fruit. Run around, play, go swimming. Anything.

What would you hunt for?
I don't know, like deer, uh, there was deer, there was this kinda bird, I don't know what it is. There is little fish. That's a fun, that's the only funnest thing you can do there, fishing. (YEAH) They got like a big lake. No snakes cause it's like hot in the lake so the snake go there, they would just die or dry up or something. (YEAH) It's fun to play there cause there is like, there is dangers but they don't come around like a lot.

What dangers?
Giant cats. Maybe a bear or something... Not a bear, a guerrilla. And other, mostly giant cats. (LIKE LIONS AND...) Tigers and cougar, not cougars, uh, cheetahs.

Cheetahs. But they, did you see them? (pause) You've seen them. I've seen like most of the animals. Zebras, uh, what is it, giraffes, antelope, deer, uh, what they are, like water birds. I've seen lions from far, like about outside to here.
SO THAT’S PROBABLY LIKE 100 YARDS, 200 YARDS. (yeah) WOW, THAT’S STILL CLOSER THAN I’D LIKE TO GET. DID YOU SELL ELEPHANTS? Yeah. (THAT’S SO COOL) Big, hairy. They’re like hairy cause they got thick hair. They got little hair pointing out of their skin.

I’VE ONLY SEEN THAT STUFF ON TV. THAT WOULD BE, UH, THAT WOULD BE FUN TO SEE. Or scary.

DID YOU PLAY ANY SPORTS? Soccer.

SOCcer. Yeah.

DID YOU GUYS HAVE A SOCCER BALL? Yeah. We didn’t know there was a game called basketball, baseball, foot-, or football. Cause there we called football soccer. (UM HUM) And so that’s all we did. That’s all we did at school.

WAS PLAY SOCCER. DO YOU STILL PLAY SOCCER NOW? Yeah, sometimes.

YEAH. DO YOUR PARENTS TELL YOU THINGS ABOUT THE SUDAN? (yeah) LIKE WHAT IT WAS LIKE WHEN THEY WERE GROWING UP AND STUFF LIKE THAT? WHAT ARE SOME THINGS THAT THEY TELL YOU? It wasn’t easy for them. Like since I’m in America now, it was harder for them to grow up and go to school. Cause here school is easier than there back there. The math they teach in here they are probably teaching fifth graders back there.

REALLY? Yeah. It’s like harder.

AND SO YOUR PARENTS THINK THAT YOU HAVE IT EASIER HERE? Yeah.
WHAT, WHAT ARE SOME OTHER STORIES THAT THEY TELL YOU?
I don’t remember that much. Like…

WHEN THEY TELL YOU STORIES ARE THEY MAINLY POSITIVE OR NEGATIVE
ABOUT SUDAN?
Some of them are positive, but most of them are negative.

MOST OF THEM ARE NEGATIVE? WHAT’S AN EXAMPLE OF A NEGATIVE ONE?
Sudan, you could get killed by a lion if you do something. Or hippo.

UM, THAT WOULD BE, THAT WOULD BE NEGATIVE. DID THEY EVER DAY THAT
THEY LOST A FAMILY MEMBER?

WHY?
I don’t know. I was like a little kid. I didn’t even know I had a grandpa. But…

DID THEY TELL YOU HOW HE DIED?
No.

THAT’S TOO BAD. I’M SORRY. UM, HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT SUDAN WHEN
THEY TELL YOU STORIES AND WHAT YOU, WHAT YOU REMEMBER?
Still fun.

YEAH. YOU’D STILL LIKE TO GO BACK.
Yeah. I might like in when I'm 20 or 18 for just, for like a year. And then I'll come back.

YEAH? UM, WHAT HAVE THEY TOLD YOU ABOUT WHY YOU GUYS CAME TO
AMERICA?
Cause of the war I think. Yeah, it was the war.

THERE WAS THE WAR. THEY CAME BECAUSE OF THE WAR? (yeah) UM, WAS
YOUR VILLAGE INVOLVED WITH THE WAR?
Well, they could attack it any time they want to, something…
YEAH. SO THAT’S KINDA DANGEROUS. HAVE ANY OF YOUR FAMILY MEMBERS FOUGHT IN THE WAR?  
There is my uncle the general.

HE’S A GENERAL?  
Yeah.

YOUR UNCLE IS THE GENERAL?  
Uh, uh, I think last time we heard he like got snake bite, he had been in, got bitten in the leg by a snake. It was poisonous.

DID HE LIVE?  
I don’t know. I think he did. Yeah.

YEAH? KINDA YOU’RE IN A WAR WHERE PEOPLE ARE TRYING TO KILL YOU AND YOU SURVIVE THAT, BUT THEN A SNAKE BITES YOU. THAT KINDA STINKS. SO WHAT DID YOU KNOW ABOUT AMERICA BEFORE YOU CAME HERE?  
Nothing.

NOTHING.  
No.

DID YOU READ ANY BOOKS OR DID THE TEACHERS TELL YOU ANYTHING?  
Oh, they taught us the A B Cs, but that’s like the African A B Cs. They still the same alphabet but they say them different there.

YEAH. HUH. UM, HOW DID YOU FEEL ABOUT COMING HERE?  
I was like excited because we got to do like a lot of fun things to come here.

LIKE THE TRUCK RIDE (yeah) AND THEN RIDING ON A PLANE.  
Saw like a lot of things on the truck.

LIKE WHAT?  
Since we drive for like 17 hours, we saw a lot of animals, towns. I think there was a city we drove through. It was fun.
DID YOU SEE A LOT OF, UH, LIKE THE ANIMALS THAT YOU TOLD ME EARLIER OUT THERE?
Yeah.

UM, WERE YOU EXCITED TO FLY?
No. That’s the first time I test pop or Pepsi. And vegetable or the cut up vegetables, I didn’t know what they were. I didn’t eat em. All I did was drink pop like for two hours before I start tasting vegetables.

WHAT WOULD YOU EAT BACK IN YOUR VILLAGE?
Like (inaud) cooked this one kinda bread, I don’t know what it is, it’s like a flat, really flat bread. (UM HUM) And some soup, like, uh, beef and stew and things. And so we’d be eating like that.

DID YOU EAT A LOT OF FRUITS?
Fruits, yeah.

BUT YOU DIDN’T HAVE MUCH VEGETABLES?
No, no one ate like a lot, except corn. That’s like the only one.

YEAH. UM, SO WHAT DID YOU THINK ABOUT SODA? POP?
It was good.

YOU LIKED IT? DO YOU STILL DRINK IT NOW?
Yeah. (YEAH)

IF YOU MOVED BACK TO SUDAN RIGHT NOW, WOULD YOU MISS DRINKING SODA?
Yeah.

YEAH. UM, DID YOUR PARENTS TELL YOU ANYTHING ABOUT LIVING IN AMERICA?
No.

DID YOU HAVE ANY RELATIVES THAT ALREADY LIVED HERE?
Like 20 of them that live here.
SO YOU HAD QUITE A, QUITE A FEW. DID THEY TELL YOU, TELL YOUR FAMILY ANYTHING ABOUT LIVING IN AMERICA?
No, cause we didn’t know they were here. (OH.) (inaud) like different things.

WHAT WAS SCHOOL LIKE IN SUDAN?
It was hard. Strict.

STRICT?
Yeah. Like, uh, you do something wrong, they like hit your knuckles or something.

HOW FAR AWAY WAS THE SCHOOL?
You could walk there. It was like (Pause) four blocks.

SO IT WASN’T VERY FAR. HOW LONG WERE THE SCHOOL DAY?
School days?

UM HUM. HOW LONG DID YOU GO TO SCHOOL EVERY DAY?
Five days.

FIVE DAYS A WEEK? AND THEN YOU’D GO FROM... LIKE HERE YOU GO FROM 8 IN THE MORNING UNTIL 3. HOW LONG WERE THEY THERE? HOW LONG WERE YOUR SCHOOL DAYS THERE? DO YOU REMEMBER?
I think it was like two or one. I don’t know.

SO YOU’D GO EARLY IN THE MORNING UNTIL TWO? OR YOU’RE START AT TWO?
No, we start, we, I think it’s 8 we start. Then we go until two or one. Then we (inaud) at school.

PLAY SOCCER.
Yeah.

UM, HOW BIG WERE THE CLASSROOMS? HOW MANY KIDS WERE IN THEM?
They’re like, there is this, it’s like kindergarten, but it’s called raytaban(?). It’s hard, you can’t say it, it’s hard. It’s a kindergarten class. And there is the high school, like one and
up. So at kindergarten you start learning your A B Cs first and 1 2 3s. (UM HUM) After that, after you know all that, they put you up to first grade where they teach you how to add, subtract. Then in third grade you learn how to multiply, divide and all that stuff.

SO HOW MANY KIDS PER CLASSROOM?
Ten.

TEN KIDS, SO THEY WERE SMALL. (um) UM, WELL THAT’S KINDA GOOD. UM, THEN HOW DID TEACHERS DISCIPLINE STUDENTS?
Ruler. Whack your knuckles.

WHACK. DID YOU EVER GET YOUR KNUCKLES WHACKED?
Yeah.

DID IT HURT? (pause) YEAH? DID YOU EVER DO THAT AGAIN?
Yeah.

NO. WHAT WAS YOUR FAVORITE SUBJECT?
Probably math.

WHAT SUBJECTS DID YOU HAVE?
There was writing, reading, and math.

MATH. DID YOU HAVE ART CLASS?
No.

DID YOU HAVE MUSIC CLASS?
No.

WHAT WERE SOME, WHAT ARE SOME OF THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THIS SCHOOL AND SCHOOL IN SUDAN?
The school there is shorter and there is not like there, there is no cafeteria there. There is cafeteria here. (UM HUM) And…
WHERE WOULD YOU GO TO EAT LUNCH?
We don’t eat lunch. You like eat breakfast. Cause it ends at two. So you go home, then you eat lunch. Then you get, go anywhere you want.

THAT’S KINDA NICE. WHAT’S SOME OTHER DIFFERENCES?
There is like sidewalks here, there is no sidewalks there. It’s all dirt roads. Trucks still come by, but it’s just like to chop off trees or something.

YEAH. HOW DID YOU FEEL YOU WERE TREATED WHEN YOU FIRST CAME HERE, WHEN YOU CAME TO DALLAS? OR WAS IT DALLAS, TEXAS THAT YOU WENT TO?
Yeah. It was like hard cause I didn’t know any English. They would say something and I wouldn’t know what they said so I’d get mad. Just hit somebody or something. It’s like that, uh, what’s his name? Uh, uh, what’s his, I forgot his name. Adal’s(?) little brother. (KAK?) Yeah. But he knows English, I didn’t know English. So if somebody said something, I just get mad at them.

YEAH, SO IT WAS REALLY HARD. (yeah) IT WAS HARD TO ADJUST. I CAN’T IMAGINE GOING SOMEWHERE AND NOT BEING ABLE TO LIKE TALK TO THEM.
It’s like two years later then I learned how to speak English. That’s when we moved here.

WOW, THAT’S GOTTA BE HARD. UM, WHAT ARE, WHAT ARE SOME THINGS YOU HAD TO CHANGE WHEN YOU MOVED TO AMERICA?
Not a lot. Just how we went around. Cause there were cars here. There, we didn’t own a car back then. We just own a horse or a cow.

DID YOUR PARENTS LEARN HOW TO DRIVE?
Yeah, my dad. Crashed his first car. It was like a red Honda. It was a nice one, like a sport car, and it’s dead. (LAUGH)

THAT STINKS. UM, WHAT ARE SOME HOLIDAYS THAT YOU CELEBRATED? DO YOU REMEMBER CELEBRATING HOLIDAYS IN SUDAN?
It was like the only, the only holiday we celebrated was Christmas.

CHRISTMAS?! WHAT DID YOU GUYS DO FOR CHRISTMAS?
Slept at the church until morning. Then we have like a feat or festival, I forgot.
YEAH. UM, WHAT HOLIDAYS DO YOU CELEBRATE NOW?
Halloween, Christmas, Easter, and Fourth of July.

YOU LIGHT OFF SOME FIREWORKS ON THE FOURTH OF JULY?
Yeah.

DO YOU LIKE THOSE HOLIDAYS?
Mostly the Fourth of July. We do like a lot of fun things. (YEAH) Fire cracker fight, some other things.

HAVE YOU EVER HAD TO TRANSLATE FOR FAMILY MEMBERS?
(inaud) like in Texas. My mom wanted to go to an English language learning school. She didn’t know how to speak English. I had to translate for the teacher so my mom understand what she was saying, what she, the teacher was saying.

WAS IT HARD?
No. Cause I knew English.

DO YOU LIKE TRANSLATING?
No.

NO?! WHY NOT?
They'll look at you like you know everything, because when you come up to a word you don’t know, your mom, they will probably tell you what does that mean, you're like “I don’t know” then why are you something else. I forgot.

YEAH. SO THEY EXPECT YOU TO KNOW EVERYTHING.
Yeah.

YOU’RE LIKE I DON’T, I DON’T KNOW, I DON’T KNOW. DO YOU SOMETIMES FEEL LIKE YOU LEAD A DOUBLE LIFE? LIKE YOU ARE SUDANESE AT HOME AND YOU’RE AMERICAN AT SCHOOL? DO YOU EVER FEEL LIKE THAT?
No.

NO. YOU’RE AMERICAN BOTH OR YOU’RE SUDANESE BOTH?
I’m Sudanese both.
SUDANESE: WHAT ARE SOME AMERICAN THINGS THAT YOU DO AT HOME?
Eat Chicken. Watch TV.

YOU WATCH TV? (yeah) WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE SHOW?
I just, mostly I watch MTV.

OH YEAH. SO ANYTHING ON MTV. DO YOU LIKE REALITY TV SHOWS ON MTV?
Yeah. There is that one show called Making the Band. I don't know was it... (YEAH)
That was funny.

UM, SO YOU, YOU DO DO SOME AMERICAN THINGS AT HOME. (yeah) DO YOU
DRINK SODA AT HOME?
Yeah.

YEAH. UM, HOW DO YOU STAY IN TOUCH WITH PEOPLE IN SUDAN?
We have, we go to like this one store, we buy cards that we can talk to our relatives
over there, and then send money if they need money.

HOW OFTEN DO YOU GET TO TALK TO FAMILY MEMBERS?
Like twice a month. Something like that.

UM, DO THEY EVER ASK YOU ABOUT WHAT IT'S LIKE TO LIVE IN AMERICA?
Yeah. They, and they think it's easy here. It's harder here than it is there. Cause there
are like a lot of things; taxes, and some other things... Getting a job and all the other
stuff. It's boring here.

IT'S BORING HERE!
Yeah.

DO YOU TELL THEM IT'S BORING HERE?
Yeah.

IT'S NOT AS FUN HERE. CAUSE YOU GET TO PLAY ALL THE TIME THERE,
RIGHT?
Mess around anywhere. I could go anywhere I want there. If I was ten I could have like left home for like a day and come back the other day.

AND THAT WAS OK?
Yeah.

WOULDN'T THEY WORRY ABOUT YOU?
No. Cause the, I would probably have somebody older with me or me and my older brother.

HUH.
It was fun.

ONE TIME WHEN I WAS 18 I WAS GONNA, WAS GONNA STAY OVER NIGHT OUT OF TOWN. WE WENT DOWN OUT OF TOWN. AND MY MOM CALLED US THAT NIGHT TO MAKE SURE THAT WE WERE OK, CAUSE SHE WAS SO WORRIED. I SAID "MOM, STOP".
When I, when I'm done with school, I'll probably like save up $4,000 and go around the world.

YEAH?
Yeah.

THAT WOULD BE A LOT OF FUN. UM, WHAT OTHER STORIES CAN YOU TELL ME ABOUT SUDAN?
Hum… I don’t know. They’d like tell weird stories about animals that can talk or there is like folk tales like where animals talk or some transformation and magic stuff.

SO THERE’S LOTS OF STORIES (yeah) LOTS OF STORIES BACK THERE. UM, WHAT OTHER MEMORIES DO YOU HAVE ABOUT SUDAN THAT YOU CAN TELL ME?
It’s mostly some, it’s always, it’s always shining down the sun and wherever you went it’s fun, it’s always green or grass or there is a plant. Then like in the springtime we would go and pick mangos off the trees. They’re like tall so you have to learn how to climb em. It’s fun.
UM, WHAT DID YOU THINK ABOUT SNOW WHEN YOU CAME HERE?
Cold. I hated it. (SMILE) Uh, first time I touched snow I thought it was something good. My hand started freezing up. I toss it on the ground. I thought I got, I got a frost bite. It’s messed up. (LAUGH) I hate shoveling snow off the side walks. Slip and fall. I thought it was like something that happens once in a lifetime or something. I didn’t want it to happen again cause I hated snow. (SMILE)

THAT’S FUNNY. CAUSE I GREW UP WITH SNOW ALL MY LIFE AND I HATED SHOVELING IT. BUT SOMETIMES I LIKE IT AND… DO YOU PLAY IN SNOW NOW? Now? Sometimes.

DO YOU LIKE BUILD SNOWMEN AND HAVE SNOWBALL FIGHTS?
Snowball fights, yeah.

YEAH. SNOW IS NOT ALL BAD.
Um, yeah, it is. (SMILE)

SO HOW WOULD YOU CLIMB THESE TREES? WHAT’S THE TECHNIQUE YOU HAD TO LEARN?
You gotta learn how to climb like grab like the hardest part that you can grab, and then pull yourself up, then grab a branch, keep on going until you just where you want to go.

WOULD YOU DO THAT?
Yeah.

EVEN AS A LITTLE KID.
Yeah. I was like five when I did that.

NO KIDDING. HOW WOULD YOU, UH, KILL ANIMALS WHEN YOU’D GO HUNTING?
My brother showed me how to make a bow and arrow with a stick and a, just a sharp needle or something. We would poke a, we would poke the, the needle into the stick hard so we could get the rope through it. Then tie this needle to it. Then that’s how we would make bow and arrows. Just my brother was good at it cause he, you know the sling shots? (UH HUH) Yeah, he’s good at that one. He can, he, I don’t know how he’s good though. He can like shoot a bird in mid-air. He, He, uh, when he was, uh, six or seven, we went, we were going hunting. He saw a bird that he wanted or he wanted as a pet. He try to knock it like on the leg to it’ll fall down. He accidentally went too hard, it
hit on the wing. And he kept that bird as a pet for like in two, two months. Then it died cause it had a broken wing and it couldn’t fly.

UM, SO HE, IS HE STILL REALLY GOOD WITH THE SLING SHOT?
I don’t know. Uh, eh don’t have no sling shot no more.

NO. THAT’S TOO BAD. UM, DID YOU GET GOOD WITH THE BOW AND ARROW?
No. I was five. I couldn’t shoot it straight.

HAVE YOU PRACTICED WITH THE BOW AND ARROW ANYMORE? (pause) NO?
WE ACTUALLY DO, WE ACTUALLY DID….
The lacrosse(?)…

YEAH, WE ACTUALLY DID, UH, WE WENT ON A FIELD TRIP AND EVERYBODY GOT A CHANCE TO DO IT.
Do a bow and arrow?

UM HUM.
I still know how to hold it and (inaud) but I haven’t been in it for, for seven years.

YEAH. UM, IF FAMILY MEMBERS WERE COMING OVER HERE TO AMERICA, LIKE YOUR COUSINS….
Oh, my cousin already did.

SO…
You know that..

SAY SOME OTHER FAMILY MEMBER WHO IS STILL IN SUDAN. WHAT WOULD YOU TELL THEM ABOUT, ABOUT AMERICA?
It’s cold. There is a lot of loud noises. There is giant buildings. There are probably like no, there is, they think it’s like a small village or something like that. And when they come to this, it’s big. Uh, it’s giant. (YEAH)

WELL, IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE THAT YOU CAN TELL ME?
I don’t…
ABOUT EITHER LIVING IN THE SUDAN OR COMING OVER HERE, WHAT IT WAS LIKE?
It was like hard for like the first month because we didn’t know anything. We didn’t know how to work anything cause we try to touch something, we might press wrong thing and break it. Like after three months we learn how to work everything, even the TV and the microwave and all the numbers and stuff. We started to go to like Burger King, that’s a first restaurant we went to. I thought, I thought I did something wrong cause they put out the meat and some bread and stuff. I didn’t like it the first time, till I got to, to six or seven, then I started liking Burger King.

SO YOU GUYS WOULDN’T EVEN USE LIKE MICROWAVES OR TVs BECAUSE YOU, YOU WERE AFRAID…
We, yeah, we were like what are they or something. They, they still had TVs in Africa, they sell em, but the TVs here are like different cause we have the knobs and stuff. They have buttons and so yeah.

BUT YOU CAN USE THE TV NOW. (yeah) NOW YOU WATCH LOTS OF IT.
And the remotes.

UM, SO WHEN YOU GROW UP, WOULD YOU LIKE TO LIVE HERE OR THERE?
Probably in the middle, in Australia.

LIVE IN THE MIDDLE. SECRET OPTION C.
Yeah.

WHY AUSTRALIA?
It is both American and, uh, Sudan. It is hot there, there is bigger buildings, build-, big buildings there. So I could like live in a part and go to see around, go to the general’s and stuff. (YEAH) It’s fun.

WELL WHAT ELSE WOULD YOU LIKE TO TELL ME?
I don’t know.

IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE?
NO.
THAT’S IT?
Yeah.

ALRIGHT HATH, THANK YOU FOR DOING THIS INTERVIEW WITH ME.