

# Thebes at War

Naguib Mahfouz



*Translated by Humphrey Davies*

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## Translator's & Introduction

**T***hebes at War* is one of a small number of works by Naguib Mahfouz set in ancient Egypt that have remained little known to readers in the West. Mahfouz's interest in the period during his early years as a writer was, however, intense: his first published work, appearing around 1932, was a translation from English of a young reader's guide to ancient Egypt, while his first three published novels, of which *Thebes at War* is the last, all had pharaonic themes. The first of these, *Khubfu's Wisdom* (originally entitled *Hikmat Khufu* but published under the title *'Abath al-Aqdar*, 'The Mockery of the Fates') was written between 1935 and 1936 and published in 1939, the second, *Rhadopis of Nubia* (in Arabic, *Radubis*) was written between 1936 and 1937, while *Thebes at War* (*Kifab Tiba*, 'Thebes' Struggle') was written between 1937 and 1938.<sup>1</sup> Between the mid-1930s and the mid-1940s, Mahfouz also wrote five short stories set in the pharaonic period.<sup>2</sup>

Though Mahfouz, on completing *Thebes at War*, abandoned his original plan to cover the whole of ancient Egyptian history in a series of forty novels and switched to writing novels with modern settings, these early works, and particularly *Thebes at War*, played an important role in the growth of his recognition as a writer. In 1940, *Rhadopis of Nubia* shared the first prize in a literary contest. Encouraged by this success, Mahfouz entered *Thebes at War* in a competition organized by the Ministry of Education the following year, where it again shared the first prize (with two other novels), leading to the foundation by an admirer of a publishing venture intended, initially, to publicize the works of the young prize-winners. Thus it was that *Rhadopis of Nubia* saw the light of

day in 1943, while *Thebes at War* appeared in 1944. A laudatory review of the latter by the young Sayyid Qutb that appeared in the same year launched Mahfouz's reputation among the broader Egyptian reading public. Qutb, who was later to lead the Muslim Brotherhood and was executed by Nasser in 1966, but who at that stage of his life was best known as a literary critic, hailed *Thebes at War* as filling the need for "historical works that can teach young people true love for their country."<sup>3</sup>

*Thebes at War* treats of what Mahfouz considers "the greatest moment in all of ancient Egypt's three thousand years,"<sup>4</sup> namely, that at which the last pharaohs of the native Seventeenth Dynasty rose up against the domination of the Hyksos, Asiatic foreigners who had dominated northern Egypt from roughly 1640 to 1532 BC (there is debate over whether the Hyksos were an entire people or merely a line of foreign rulers; Mahfouz treats them as the former). This novel is more solidly grounded in historical fact than the two that preceded it, and the novelist bases most of his main characters on real people. Seqenenra, Kamose, and Ahmose, the three pharaohs who succeed one another in *Thebes at War* were, respectively, the two last pharaohs of the Seventeenth Dynasty and the first of the Eighteenth (although recent scholarship would make Ahmose the brother, rather than the son, of Kamose); Tetisheri, the 'Sacred Mother' of Seqenenra and, symbolically, of the Egyptian people, existed and was "venerated by later generations as a powerful influence on the fortunes of the dynasty and of the country";<sup>5</sup> Apophis, their foe, was the last king of the Hyksos, and the remains of his citadel of Avaris may be seen at Tell al-Dab'a in the eastern Delta; and Ahmose Ebana, commander of King Ahmose's fleet, takes his name from an Egyptian officer whose autobiography, carved on a pillar of his tomb, is "the only contemporary account extant of the final defeat of the Hyksos."<sup>6</sup> Seqenenra's mutilated corpse, which may be seen today at the Egyptian Museum in Cairo, is credited with having inspired Mahfouz to write the novel.<sup>7</sup> Similarly, historical events, such as the letter sent by Apophis to Seqenenra that precipitates the outbreak of war, are incorporated into the narrative. Even the green heart pendant that plays a vital role in the

romantic sub-plot of *Thebes At War* may well be the "green-stone heart scarab set in gold and inscribed . . . for Sobekemsaf [a successor to Ahmose] [that] is now in the British Museum,"<sup>8</sup> spotted by Mahfouz's keen eye and transformed.

Occasional errors do occur. When Kamose says, "In the past, chariots were not instruments of war that the Herdsmen used," (p. 33), he and Mahfouz are mistaken, since it was the Hyksos who introduced the chariot to Egypt. The length of Hyksos rule in Egypt is most often given in the novel as the conventional two hundred years, but in two places as only "a hundred years or more." Queen Tetisheri is said at one point to be sixty years of age; at another, it is stated that she was born in the north before the occupation, in which case she would be anything from "a hundred years or more" to two hundred years in age. These discrepancies have been left as is in this translation. A couple of small errors, however, have been corrected: when an Egyptian border guard is reported as urging villagers to flee north to avoid an expected battle, he would seem to be sending them toward the oncoming Hyksos army; in the translation he advises them to go south (p. 31). Likewise, the sum paid by Isfinis to ransom Lady Ebana is given first as fifty, then elsewhere as fifty thousand, pieces of gold; the translation has made these all fifty.

The general accuracy of Mahfouz's account of the history of the period should not be taken to imply, however, that the work is simply a fictionalized historical narrative. Rather, the author has used the historical elements that suit his purposes as a novelist, while eliminating those that do not. For example, the historical Ahmose, with his commander, Ahmose Ebana, pursued the Hyksos beyond the borders of Egypt and into Palestine. Mahfouz, however, in order no doubt to bring a satisfying closure to the story, gives the impression that the Egyptian campaign ended with the expulsion of the Hyksos from Egyptian soil.

*Thebes at War* is not just about ancient Egypt. When Mahfouz was writing it, Egypt had been under foreign tutelage, if not outright occupation, for over sixty years. While it is true that the British had unilaterally declared independence in 1922, severe restrictions on Egypt's sov-

ereignty, including the occupation of a part of Egyptian territory (the Suez Canal zone), remained. At another level, as political discourse had evolved from the pan-nationalism of the Ottoman Empire to that of single-state nationalism during the nineteenth century, so Egypt's own largely Turkish-speaking upper class had come to be seen by many as foreigners. Which of the two groups Mahfouz intended the reader to identify with the Hyksos (if indeed either group was more specifically his target than the other) may remain a moot point. What is clear is that this is a profoundly political novel, whose ringing patriotism and passionate call to Egyptians to defend their country against any outsider who would seek to dominate it continues to resonate today. Unsurprisingly, *Thebes at War* is a set text in modern Egypt's elementary and intermediate school curricula (thus fulfilling the hope Sayyid Qutb expressed in his review, that "the ministry of education should place [the work] in the hands of every student").<sup>9</sup> It has also been turned into a play by Abd al-Rahman al-Abnudi, one of Egypt's leading poets and is slated to be made into the first Egyptian full-length animated film for children.<sup>10</sup>

The novel's political character is not limited, moreover, to the struggle to regain lost territory and expel the aggressor: other politically charged themes emerge, though not all of these are so explicit or consciously acknowledged by the author. Nubia, the land to the south to which the Egyptian leadership flees to escape the Hyksos' onslaught, clearly does service for modern Sudan, a country that, when Mahfouz was writing, was ruled by Egypt and Britain together in a 'condominium' in which Egypt was, humiliatingly, the junior partner. King Ahmose's departing words to the governor of Nubia—"From this day on let us not deny to southern Egypt anything that we desire for ourselves and let us shield it from whatever we would not wish for ourselves" (p. 205)—constitute a clear reference to the importance of the unity of the Nile Valley for the country as a whole. The Nubians themselves, however—and this in no way clashes with the preceding—appear in the novel in a minimal role, as loyal, unspeaking, extras. (Ironically, recent discoveries show that, far from applauding the Seventeenth Dynasty's attempts to drive

out the Hyksos, the Nubians in fact seized the opportunity to attack Egypt, in what has been described as "a pincer movement."<sup>11</sup>)

At a less explicit level, the novel manifests a clear stratification of races by color. The Egyptians, who are "golden-brown," or "coppery," are clearly and unsurprisingly the ideal of beauty and wholesomeness. They are flanked, as it were, by the "long-bearded Herdsmen with their white skins that the sun will never cleanse," as Kamose puts it (p. 14), and the pygmies, "intensely black in color," who live "in the furthest forests of Nubia, where the divine Nile has its source" (p.65); the first are grotesque and evil, the second grotesque and comic. Not all that is other, however, is ugly: the Hyksos princess Amenridis, whose "golden hair stray[s] over her shining forehead" (p. 112), has a disorienting effect on the young Ahmose, and the dynamism of their relationship propels the novel into realms beyond those of national myth and politics alone.

The biggest challenge the text poses the translator may be its highly consistent formality of register; in *Thebes at War*, there is none of the underlying colloquiality that is said to characterize the dialogue, at least, of Mahfouz's later novels, even among the jolly drunks of the scene at the inn, and the work is peppered with the equivalents of words such as "doughty" and "stalwart." While the modern ear may be unaccustomed to these, it should become obvious that, through his masterful use of such language, Mahfouz is able to forge both fine heroic passages appropriate to his message of national glory and tender, lyrical scenes appropriate to his story of love and self-denial.

In representing the names of persons and places, Mahfouz has followed the conventions obtaining among European-language Egyptologists of the time as reproduced in Arabic. However, given the limitations of hieroglyphs (vowels are not represented, and the order in which the syllables were pronounced is not fixed beyond doubt), and given that the scholarly consensus evolves, these conventions have never been either consistent or static. This translation uses the forms most familiar to today's readers (for example, Ahmose for Ahmus), though where more than one form is possible, that which corresponds more closely to the Arabic ver-

sion has been followed (Amenridis for Amenirdis). I am indebted to Dr. Fayza Haikal and Dr. Salima Ikram, both of the American University in Cairo, for guidance through this tricky field, though any *faux pas* are of course my own. Mahfouz also tended to follow the Egyptological convention of using the classical forms of place names, even though Greek and Latin did not come into use in Egypt for twelve hundred years or more after the period in which the novel is set. Thus, he refers, for example, to Apollonopolis Magna, rather than Edfu.

Not all the places (or people) referred to in the novel can be identified. The map on page 2, on which identifiable places have been plotted, will allow the curious reader to follow the progress of the Egyptian army as described in the narrative.

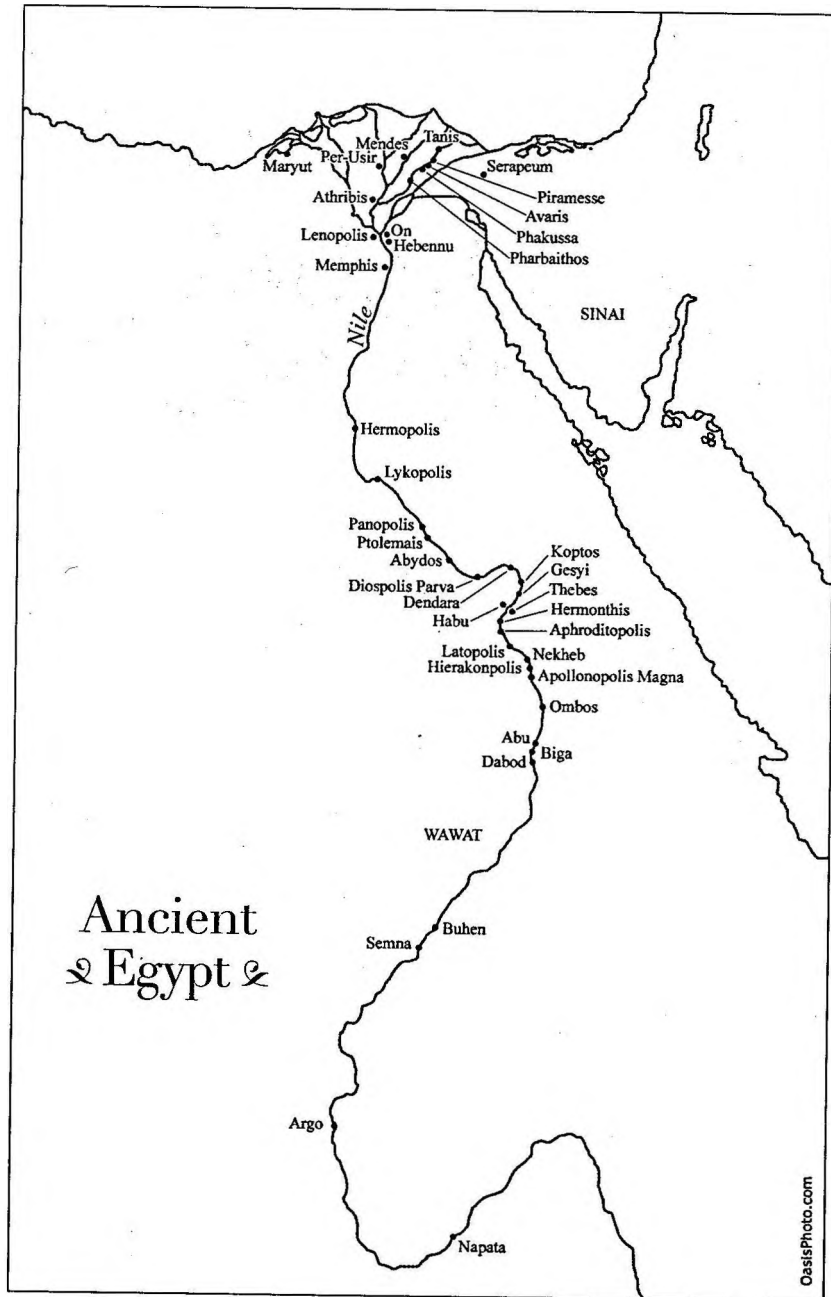
This translation is dedicated to Phyllis Teresa Mabel Davies, née Corbett.

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Notes:

- 1 I am indebted for these facts, as well as for much of the other information contained in this introduction, to 'A Mummy Awakens: The Pharaonic Fiction of Naguib Mahfouz,' a doctoral dissertation-in-progress by Raymond Stock of the Department of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies of the University of Pennsylvania (draft dated January 2, 2003). Also useful has been *Nagib Mahfuz – al-Tariq wal-Sada* by Ali Shalash (Cairo: Dar al-Adab, 1990).
- 2 On these, see *Voices from the Other World: Ancient Egyptian Tales*, translated by Raymond Stock (Cairo: The American University in Cairo Press, 2002).
- 3 *Arrisalab* [= *al-Risala*] magazine (Cairo), October 2, 1944, pp. 889–92; the review is reprinted in Shalash, pp. 152–58.
- 4 Stock, 'A Mummy Awakens,' p. 81.
- 5 Anthony and Rosalie David, *A Biographical Dictionary of Ancient Egypt* (London: Seaby, 1999), p. 130.
- 6 Peter A. Clayton, *Chronicles of the Pharaohs* (London: Routledge, 1999), p. 97.
- 7 Stock, 'A Mummy Awakens,' p. 83.
- 8 Clayton, p. 97.
- 9 Shalash, p. 152.
- 10 Stock, 'A Mummy Awakens,' p. 89.
- 11 Nevine El-Aref, "Elkab's Hidden Treasure," *Al-Abram Weekly*, 31 July–6 August, 2003.

# Thebes at War



## Seqenenra

1

The ship made its way up the sacred river, its lotus-crowned prow cleaving the quiet, stately waves that since ancient days had pressed upon each other's heels like episodes in the endless stream of Time. On either side, villages dotted the landscape, palms sprouted singly and in clusters, and greenery extended to the east and the west. The sun, high in the sky, sent out beams of light that quivered where they drenched the vegetation and sparkled where they touched the water, whose surface was empty but for a few fishing boats that made way for the big ship, their owners staring questioningly and mistrustfully at the image of the lotus, symbol of the North.

To the front of the cabin on the deck, sat a short, stout man with round face, long beard, and white skin, dressed in a flowing robe, a thick stick with a gold handle grasped in his right hand. Before him sat two others as stout as he and dressed in the same fashion—three men united by a single outlook. The master gazed fixedly to the south, his dark eyes consumed with boredom and fatigue, and he glared balefully at the fishermen. As though oppressed by the silence, he turned to his men and asked, "I wonder, tomorrow will the trumpet sound and will the heavy silence that now reigns over the southern regions be broken? Will the peace of these tranquil houses be shattered and will the vulture of war hover in these secure skies? Ah, how I wish these people knew what a warning this ship brings them and their master!"

The two men nodded in agreement with their leader's words. "Let it be war, Lord Chamberlain," said one of them, "so long as this man whom

our lord has permitted to govern the South insists on placing a king's crown on his head, builds palaces like the pharaohs, and walks cheerfully about Thebes without a care in the world!"

The chamberlain ground his teeth and jabbed with his stick at the deck before him with a movement that betrayed anger and exasperation. "There is no Egyptian governor except for this, of the region of Thebes," he said. "Once rid of him, Egypt will be ours forever and the mind of our lord the king will be set at rest, having no man's rebelliousness left to fear."

The second man, who lived in the hope of one day becoming governor of a great city, fervently replied, "These Egyptians hate us."

The chamberlain uttered an amen to that and said in violent tones, "So they do, so they do. Even the people of Memphis, capital of our lord's kingdom, make a show of obedience while concealing hatred in their hearts. Every stratagem has been tried and nothing now is left but the whip and the sword."

For the first time, the two men smiled and the second said, "May your counsel be blessed, wise chamberlain! The whip is the only thing these Egyptians understand."

The three men relapsed for a while into silence and nothing was to be heard but the slap of the oars on the surface of the water. Then one of them happened to notice a fishing boat in whose waist stood a young man with sinewy forearms, wearing nothing but a kilt at his waist, his skin burned by the sun. In amazement he said, "These southerners look as though they had sprung from their own soil!"

"Wonder not!" the chamberlain responded sarcastically, "Some of their poets even sing the beauties of a dark complexion!"

"Indeed! Next to ours, their coloring is like mud next to the glorious rays of the sun."

The chamberlain replied, "One of our men was telling me about these southerners and he said, 'Despite their color and their nakedness, they are full of conceit and pride. They claim they are descended from the loins of the gods and that their country is the wellspring of

the true pharaohs.' Dear God! I know the cure for all that. All it will take is for us to reach out our arm to the borders of their country."

No sooner had the chamberlain ceased speaking than he heard one of his men saying, pointing to the east, "Look! Can that be Thebes? It is Thebes!"

They all looked where the man was pointing and beheld a large city surrounded by a great wall, behind which the heads of the obelisks soared like pillars supporting the celestial vault. On its northern side, the towering walls of the temple of Amun, Divine Lord of the South, could be seen, appearing to the eye like a mighty giant climbing toward the sky. The men were shaken and the high chamberlain knitted his brows and muttered, "Yes. That is Thebes. I have been granted a sight of it before and time has only increased my desire that it submit to our lord the king and that I see his victory procession making its way through its streets."

One of the men added, "And that our god Seth be worshipped there."

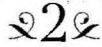
The ship slowed and proceeded little by little to draw in to the shore, passing luxuriant gardens whose lush terraces descended to drink from the sacred river. Behind them, proud palaces could be seen, while to the west of the farther shore crouched the City of Eternity, where the immortals slept in pyramids, mastabas, and graves, all enveloped in the forlornness of death.

The ship turned toward the port of Thebes, making its way among the fishing smacks and traders' ships, its size and beauty, and the image of the lotus that embellished its prow, attracting all eyes. Finally, it drew up alongside the quay and threw down its huge anchor. Guards approached and an officer, wearing a jacket of white linen above his kilt, was brought out to it and asked one of the crew, "Where is this ship coming from? And is it carrying goods for trade?"

The man greeted him, said, "Follow me!" and accompanied him to the cabin, where the officer found himself standing before a high chamberlain of the Northern Palace—the palace of the king of the Herdsmen, as they called him in the South. He bowed respectfully and presented a military salute. With patent arrogance, the chamberlain raised his hand to return the salute and said, in condescending tones, "I am the envoy of Our Master

Apophis, Pharaoh, King of the North and the South, Son of Lord Seth, and I am sent to the governor of Thebes, Prince Seqenenra, to convey to him the proclamation that I bear."

The officer listened to the envoy attentively, saluted once more, and left.



An hour passed. Then a man of great dignity, somewhat short and lean, with a prominent brow, arrived at the ship. Bowing with dignity to the envoy, he said in a quiet voice, "He who has the honor of receiving you is Hur, chamberlain of the Southern Palace."

The other inclined his stately head and said in his rough voice, "And I am Khayan, high chamberlain of the Palace of the Pharaoh."

Hur said, "Our master will be happy to receive you immediately."

The envoy made a move to rise and said, "Let us go." Chamberlain Hur led the way, the man following him with unhurried steps, supporting his obese body on his stick, while the other two bowed to him reverently. Khayan had taken offense and was asking himself, "Should not Seqenenra have come himself to receive the envoy of Apophis?" It annoyed him excessively that the former should receive him as though he were a king. Khayan left the ship between two rows of soldiers and officers, and saw a royal cavalcade awaiting him on the shore headed by a war chariot and with more chariots behind. The soldiers saluted him and he returned their salute haughtily and got into his chariot, Hur at his side. Then the small procession moved off toward the palace of the governor of the South. Khayan's eyes swiveled right and left, observing the temples and obelisks, statues and palaces, the markets and the unending streams of people of all classes: the common people with their almost naked bodies, the officers with their elegant cloaks, the priests with their long robes, the nobles with their flowing mantles, and the beautifully dressed women. Everything seemed to bear witness to the mightiness of the city and to its rivalry of Memphis, the capital of Apophis. From the first instant, Khayan was aware that his procession was attracting looks everywhere, and that the people were gathering

along the way to watch, though coldly and stolidly, their black eyes examining his white face and long beard with surprise, distaste, and resentment. He boiled with anger that the mighty Apophis should be subjected to such a cold welcome in the person of his envoy and it vexed him that he should appear as a stranger in Thebes two hundred years after his people had descended on the land of Egypt and seated themselves on its throne. It angered and exasperated him that his people should have ruled for two hundred years, during which the south of Egypt had preserved its identity, character, and independence—for not a single man of the Hyksos resided there.

The procession reached the square in front of the palace. It was broad, with far-flung corners, government buildings, ministries, and the army headquarters lining its sides. In its center stood the venerable palace, its imposing sight dazzling the eyes—a mighty palace, like that of Memphis itself, with guardsmen topping its walls and lined up in two rows at the main gate. The band struck up a salutatory anthem as the envoy's procession passed, and as the procession crossed the courtyard Khayan wondered to himself, "Will Seqenenra meet me with the White Crown on his head? He lives as a king and observes their etiquette and he governs as kings govern. Will he then wear the crown of the South in front of me? Will he do what his forebears and his own father, Seneqnenra, refrained from doing?" He dismounted at the entrance to the long colonnade and found the palace chamberlain, the head of the royal guard, and the higher officers waiting to receive him. All saluted and they proceeded before him to the royal reception hall. The antechamber leading to the doorway of the hall was decorated on both sides with sphinxes, and in its corners stood giant officers chosen from among the mighty men of Habu. The men bowed to the envoy, making way for him, and Chamberlain Hur walked ahead of him into the interior of the hall. Following, Khayan beheld, at some distance from the entrance and dominating the space, a royal throne on which sat a man crowned with the crown of the South, the scepter and the crook in his hand, while two men sat to the right of his throne and two to the left. Hur, followed by the envoy, reached the throne and bowed to his lord in veneration, saying in his gentle voice, "My lord, I present to



Your Highness, High Chamberlain Khayan, envoy of King Apophis."

At this the envoy bowed in greeting and the king returned his greeting and gestured to him to sit on a chair in front of the throne, while Hur stood to the right of the throne. The king wished to present his courtiers to the envoy, so he pointed with his scepter to the man closest to him on his right and said, "This is User-Amun, chief minister." Then he pointed to the man next to him and said, "Nofer-Amun, high priest of Amun." Next he turned to his left and indicated the man next to him. "Kaf, commander of the fleet." He pointed to the man next to him and said, "Pepi, commander of the army." With the introductions completed, the king turned his gaze on the envoy and said in a voice whose tones indicated natural nobility and rank, "You have come to a place that welcomes both you and him who has entrusted you with his confidence."

The envoy replied, "May the Lord preserve you, respected governor. I am indeed happy to have been chosen for this embassy to your beautiful country, of historic repute."

The king's ears did not fail to note the words 'respected governor' or their significance, but no sign of his inner perturbation showed on his face. At the same moment, Khayan shot a quick scrutinizing glance from his bulging eyes and found the Egyptian governor to be a truly impressive man, tall of stature, with an oval, beautiful face, extremely dark, his features distinguished by the protrusion of his upper teeth. He judged him to be in his fourth decade. The king imagined that the envoy of Apophis had come for the same reason that had brought earlier missions from the North, namely, to ask for stone and grain, which the kings of the Herdsmen considered tribute, while the kings of Thebes saw them as a bribe with which they protected themselves against the evil of the invaders.

The king said quietly and with dignity, "It is my pleasure to listen to you, envoy of mighty Apophis."

The envoy moved in his seat as though about to jump up and fight. In his rough voice he said, "For two hundred years, the envoys of the North have never ceased to visit the South, each time returning satisfied."

The king said, "I hope that this beautiful custom may continue."

Khayan said, "Governor, I bring you three requests from Pharaoh. The first concerns the person of my lord Pharaoh; the second, his god, Seth; and the third, the ties of affection between North and South."

The king now gave him his full attention and concern showed on his face. The man went on to say, "In recent days, my lord the king has complained of terrible pains that have wracked his nerves by night and of abominable noises that have assaulted his noble ears, rendering him prey to sleeplessness and ill health. He summoned his physicians and described to them his nocturnal sufferings and they examined him with care, but all went away again puzzled and none the wiser. In the opinion of them all, the king was in good health and well. When my lord despaired, he finally consulted the prophet of the temple of Seth and this wise man grasped the nature of his sickness and said, 'The source of all his pains is the roaring of the hippopotami penned up in the South, which has infiltrated his heart.' And he assured him that there could be no cure for him unless they were killed."

The envoy knew that the hippopotami kept in the lake of Thebes were sacred, so he stole a glance at the governor's face to gauge the effect of his words, but found it stony and hard, though it had reddened. He waited for him to make some comment but the man uttered not a word and appeared to be listening and waiting. So, the envoy said, "While my lord was sick, he dreamed he saw our god Seth in all his dazzling majesty visit him and rebuke him, saying, 'Is it right that there should not be a single temple in the whole of the South in which my name is mentioned?' So my lord swore that he would ask of his friend, the governor of the South, that he build a temple to Seth in Thebes, next to the temple of Amun."

The envoy fell silent, but Seqenenra continued to say nothing, though he now appeared as one taken aback and surprised by something that had never before occurred to him. Khayan, however, was unconcerned by the king's darkening mood and may even have been driven by a desire to provoke him. Chamberlain Hur, grasping the danger of the demands, bent over his lord's ear, whispering, "It would be better if my lord did not engage the envoy in discussion now."

The king nodded in agreement, well aware what the chamberlain was driving at. Khayan imagined that the chamberlain was notifying his lord of what he had said, so he waited a little. However, the king merely said, "Have you any other message to convey?"

Khayan replied, "Respected governor, it has reached my lord's notice that you crown yourself with the White Crown of Egypt. This surprises him and he finds it out of keeping with the ties of affection and traditional friendship that bind the family of Pharaoh to your own time-honored family."

Seqenenra exclaimed in astonishment, "But the White Crown is the headdress of the governors of the South!"

The envoy replied with assurance and insistence, "On the contrary, it was the crown of those of them who were kings, and for that reason, your glorious father never thought of wearing it, for he knew that there is only one king in this valley who has the right to wear a crown. I hope, respected governor, that my lord's reference to his sincere desire to strengthen the good relations between the dynasties of Thebes and Memphis will not be lost on you."

Khayan ceased speaking and silence fell once more. Seqenenra was plunged in melancholy reflection, his heart weighed down by the king of the Herdsmen's harsh demands, which attacked the very wellsprings of faith in his heart and of pride in his soul. The impact of these things reflected itself in his pallor and in the stony faces of the courtiers around him. Appreciative of Hur's advice, he volunteered no reply but said in a voice that retained, despite everything, its calm, "Your message, Envoy, involves a delicate matter that touches on our beliefs and traditions. This being so, it seems to me best that I inform you of my opinion on it tomorrow."

Khayan responded, "The best opinion is that on which counsel is taken first."

Seqenenra turned then to Chamberlain Hur and said, "Conduct the envoy to the wing that has been made ready for him."

The envoy raised his huge, short body, bowed, then departed, with a conceited and haughty gait.

The king sent for his crown prince, Kamose, who arrived with a speed that indicated how anxious he was to know what message the chamberlain of Apophis had brought. After he had greeted his father reverently and taken his place on his right, the king turned to him and said, "I have sent for you, Prince, to acquaint you with the communication of the envoy of the North, that you may give us your opinion on it. The matter is indeed serious, so listen to me well."

The king related in clear detail to his crown prince what the envoy Khayan had said, the prince listening to his father with a depth of concern that showed on his handsome countenance, which resembled that of his father in its color and features and the projection of the upper teeth. Then the king turned his eyes to those present and said, "So now you see, gentlemen, that to please Apophis we must take off this crown, slaughter the sacred hippopotami, and erect a temple in which Seth is worshipped next to the temple of Amun. Counsel me as to what must be done!"

The indignation that showed on all their faces revealed the anxiety that churned in their breasts. Chamberlain Hur was the first to speak and he said, "My lord, even more than these demands I reject the spirit that dictated them. It is the spirit of a master dictating to his slave, of a king incriminating his own people. To me, it is simply the ancient conflict between Thebes and Memphis in a new shape. The latter strives to enslave the former, while the former struggles to hold on to its independence by all the means at its disposal. There is no doubt that the Herdsmen and their king resent the survival of a Thebes whose doors are locked against their governors. Perhaps they themselves are unconvinced by their claim that this kingdom is merely an autonomous province, subject to their crown, and they have therefore decided to put an end to the manifestations of its independence and to control its beliefs. Once they have done that, it will be easy for them to destroy it."

Hur was strong and forthright in his speech and the king remembered the Herdsmen's kings' history of meddling with the rulers of

Thebes, and how the latter would deflect their evil with a fair reply, and with gifts and the appearance of submission, in order to preserve the South from their interference and their evil. His family had played a great role in this, so much so that his father, Seneqnenra, had managed to train mighty forces in secret to maintain the independence of his kingdom should stratagems and a show of loyalty in his voice not suffice. Then Commander Kaf spoke, "My lord, I believe we should yield to none of these demands. How can we agree that our lord should remove his crown from his head? Or that we should kill the sacred hippopotami to please one who is an enemy to even the least of our people? And how can we build a temple to that Lord of Evil whom these Herdsmen worship?"

The high priest Nofer-Amun then spoke, "My king, the Lord Amun will not consent that a temple for Seth, the Lord of Evil, be erected next to His, or that His pure land be watered with the blood of the sacred hippopotami, or that the protector of His kingdom forgo his crown, when he is the first governor of the South to crown himself with it, at His command! No, my lord! Amun will never accept that! Indeed, He waits for the one who will lead an army of His sons to liberate the North and unify the nation! Then it will be once more as it was in the days of the first kings."

Ardor now flowed like blood in the veins of Commander Pepi. Standing and revealing his alarming height and broad shoulders, he said in his deep voice, "My lord, our great men have spoken truly. I am certain that these demands are meant as nothing but a test of our mettle and a way of forcing us into humiliation and submission. What does it tell us that this savage who has descended on our valley from the furthest reaches of the barren deserts should demand of our king that he remove his crown and worship the Lord of Evil and slaughter the sacred hippopotami? In the past, the Herdsmen would ask for wealth and we were not stingy to them with our wealth. But now they are greedy for our freedom and our honor. Faced with that, death would seem easy and delightful to us. Our people in the North are slaves who plough the land and writhe in agony under the tongues of the lash. We hope to free them one day from

the torture they suffer, not pass of our own free will into the same wretched state as theirs!"

The king kept silent. He was listening keenly, holding his emotions in check by looking downwards. Prince Kamose had tried to explore his face but was unable. His inclinations were with Commander Pepi and he said violently, "My lord, Apophis greedily eyes our national pride and wants nothing but to reduce the South to submission as he reduced the North. But the South that would not accept humiliation when its enemy was at the height of his powers will never accept it now. Who now would say that we should squander what our forefathers struggled to maintain and care for?"

User-Amun, the chief minister, was of all the people the most moderate and his policy was ever directed to avoiding the anger of the Herdsmen and exposure to their savage forces, so that he might devote himself to developing the wealth of the South, exploiting the resources of Nubia and the Eastern Desert, and training a strong, invincible army. He was frightened of the consequences to which the impetuosity of the crown prince and the commander of the army might lead. Directing his words to the courtiers, he said, "Remember, gentlemen, that the Herdsmen are a people of plunder and pillage. Though they have ruled Egypt for two hundred years, their eyes are still drawn by gold, for which they will do anything and which distracts their attention from nobler goals."

But Commander Pepi shook his head with its shining helmet and said, "Your Excellency, we have lived with these people long enough to know them. They are people who, if they desire something, ask for it frankly, without seeking to use stratagems and concealment. In the past they asked for gold and it was carried to them. But now they are asking for our freedom."

The chief minister said, "We must temporize until our army is complete."

The commander replied, "Our army is capable of repelling the enemy in its present state."

Prince Kamose looked at his father and found that his eyes were still downcast. Passionately, he said, "What is the use of talk? Our army may need some men and equipment, but Apophis will not wait while we

ready our gear. He has presented us with demands which, if we concede them, will condemn us to collapse and obliteration. There is not a man in the South who prefers surrender to death, so let us refuse these demands with disdain and raise our heads before those long-bearded Herdsmen with their white skins that the sun will never cleanse!"

The enthusiasm of the young prince had its impact on the people. Determination and anger showed in their faces and it seemed as though they had had enough of talk and were wanting to take a resolute decision, when the king raised his head and, gazing intently at his crown prince, asked, in his sublimely noble voice, "Do you think that we should reject the demands of Apophis, Prince?"

Kamose replied confidently and vehemently, "Resolutely and disdainfully, my lord!"

"And what if this rejection drags us into war?"

Kamose replied, "Then let us fight, my lord."

Commander Pepi said with enthusiasm no less than that of the prince, "Let us fight until we have pushed the enemy back from our borders and, if my lord so wills, let us fight till we have liberated the North and driven the last of the white Herdsmen with their long, dirty beards from the land of the Nile!"

Next the king turned to Nofer-Amun, the high priest, and asked him, "And you, Your Holiness, what do you think?"

The venerable old man replied, "I think, my lord, that whoever tries to extinguish this holy burning brand is an infidel!"

Then King Seqenenra smiled in consent and turning to his chief minister, User-Amun, said to him, "You are the only one left, Minister."

The man hurriedly said, "My lord, I do not counsel delay out of dislike for war or fear of it. But let us complete the equipment of the army, which I hope will realize the goal of my lord's glorious family, which is the liberation of the Nile Valley from the Herdsmen's iron grip. Yet if Apophis truly should have his sights set on our freedom, then I will be the first to call for war."

Seqenenra looked into the faces of his men and said in a voice that

spoke of resolve and strength, "Men of the South, I share your emotions and I believe that Apophis is picking a quarrel with us and seeks to rule us, either by fear or by war. But we are a people that do not surrender to fear and welcome war. The North has been the Herdsmen's prey for two hundred years. They have sucked up the wealth of its soil and humiliated its men. As for the South, for two hundred years it has struggled, never losing sight of its higher goal, which is the liberation of the whole of the valley. Is it to back down at the first threat, squander its right, and throw its freedom at the feet of that insatiable glutton for him to look after? No, men of the South! I shall refuse Apophis's demeaning demands and await his answer, however he may respond. If it be peace, then let it be peace, and if it be war, then let it be war!"

The king rose to his feet and the men stood as one and bowed in respect. Then he slowly left the hall, Prince Kamose and the high chamberlain behind him.

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The king made his way to Queen Ahotep's wing. As soon as the woman saw him coming toward her in his ceremonial dress, she realized that the envoy of the North had brought weighty business. Concern sketched itself upon her lovely, dark-complexioned face and she arose so that she might meet him with her tall, slender body and raised questioning eyes to him. Quietly he told her, "Ahotep, it seems to me that war is on the horizon."

Her black eyes showed consternation and she muttered in astonishment, "War, my lord?"

He inclined his head to indicate assent, and related to her what the envoy Khayan had said, the opinion of his men, and what he had resolved to do. As he spoke, his eyes never left her face, in whose surface he read the pity, hope, and submission to the inevitable that burned within her.

She told him, "You have chosen the only path that one such as yourself could choose."

He smiled and patted her shoulder. Then he said to her, "Let us go to our sacred mother."

They walked together side by side to the wing belonging to the queen mother, Tetisheri, wife of the former king, Seneqnenra, and found her in her retiring chamber reading, as was her wont.

Queen Tetisheri was in her sixties. Nobility, grandeur, and dignity distinguished her countenance. Her vivacity was irrepressible and her energy overcame her age, from whose effects she had suffered nothing but a few white hairs that wreathed her temples and a slight fading of her cheeks. Her eyes were as bright as ever and her body as charming and as slender. She shared with all members of the family of Thebes the protrusion of her upper teeth, that protrusion that the people of the South found so attractive and which they all adored. On the death of her husband, the queen had abandoned any role in governing, as the law required, leaving the reins of Thebes in the hands of her son and his spouse. Hers, however, was still the opinion to which recourse was had in times of difficulty, and the heart that inspired hope and struggle. In her retirement she had turned to reading, and constantly perused the Books of Khufu and Kagemni, the Books of the Dead, and the history of the glorious ages as immortalized in the proverbs of Mina, Khufu, and Amenhotep. The queen mother was famed throughout the South, where there was not a man or a woman who did not know her and love her and swear by her dear name, for she had instilled in those around her, and foremost among them her son Seqenenra and her grandson Kamose, a love of Egypt, both South and North, and a hatred of the rapacious Herdsmen who had brought the days of glory to so evil an end. She had taught them all that the sublime goal to whose realization they must dedicate themselves was the liberation of the Nile Valley from the grip of the tyrannous Herdsmen, and she urged the priests of all classes, whether keepers of temples or teachers in the schools, to constantly remind the people of the ravaged North and their rapacious foe, and of the crimes by which they humiliated and enslaved the people and plundered their land, enriching themselves with their wealth and reducing them to the level of the animals that labored in the fields. If there was in

the South a single ember of the sacred fire burning in their hearts and keeping hope alive, then hers was the credit for fanning it with her patriotism and her wisdom. Thus, the whole South thought of her as hallowed, calling her 'Sacred Mother Tetisheri,' just as believers did Isis, and seeking refuge in her name from the evil of despair and defeat.

Such was the woman to whom Seqenenra and Ahotep made their way. She was expecting their visit, for she had learned of the coming of the envoy of the king of the Herdsmen and she remembered the envoys that these had sent to her late husband, seeking gold, grain, and stone, which they demanded as tribute to be paid by the subject to his overlord. Her husband would send well-loaded ships to escape the power of those savage people and double his secret activities in forming the army that was his most precious bequest to his son Seqenenra and his descendants. She thought of these things as she waited for the king and when he arrived with his spouse, she opened her thin arms to them. They kissed her hands and the king seated himself on her right and the queen on her left. Then she asked her son, with a gentle smile, "What does Apophis want?"

He answered her in accents full of rage, "He wants Thebes, Mother, and all that is of it. Nay, more than that, he would bargain with us this time for our honor."

She turned her head from one to the other, alarmed, and said in a voice that retained its calm despite everything, "His predecessors, for all their greed, were satisfied with granite and gold."

Queen Ahotep said, "But he, Mother, wants us to kill the sacred hippopotami, whose voices disturb his slumbers, and to erect a temple to his god Seth next to the temple of Amun, and that our lord take off the White Crown."

Seqenenra confirmed what Ahotep had said, and told his mother all the news of the envoy and his message. Disgust appeared on her venerable face and the twisting of her lips revealed her exasperation and annoyance. She asked the king, "What answer did you give, my son?"

"I have yet to inform him of my answer."

"Have you come to a conclusion?"

"Yes. To reject his demands completely."

"He who makes these demands will not take no for an answer!"

"And he who is able to refuse them completely should not fear the consequences of his refusal."

"What if he declares war on you?"

"I shall give him war for war."

The mention of war rang strangely in her ears, awakening ancient memories in her heart. She remembered times like these when her husband would not know which way to turn in his distress and he would complain to her of his sorrow and anxiety, yearning to own a strong army with which to repel his enemy's covetousness. Now her son could speak of war with courage, resolution, and confidence, for times had changed and hope had revived. She stole a glance at the queen's face and found it drawn, and she realized that she was confused, the hope of a queen and the apprehension of a wife pulling her mercilessly back and forth. She too was a queen, and a mother, but she could not find it within herself to say anything other than what the teacher of the people and their Sacred Mother must say. She asked him, "Are you ready for war, my lord?"

Firmly he replied, "Yes, Mother. I have a valiant army."

"Can this army free Egypt from its shackles?"

"At the least, it can drive back the aggression of the Herdsmen from the South."

Then he shrugged his shoulders contemptuously and said furiously, "Mother, we have humored these Herdsmen year after year, but this has not succeeded in putting an end to their greed and still they eye our kingdom covetously. Now destiny has intervened and I believe that courage has a better claim on us than delaying tactics and appeasement. I shall take this step and see what follows."

Then Tetisheri smiled and said proudly, "Amun bless this high and lofty-minded soul!"

"So what say you, Mother?"

"I say, my son, 'Follow your chosen path, and may the Lord protect you and my prayers bring you blessing!' That is our goal, and that is what

the youth whom Amun has chosen to realize Thebes' immortal hopes must do!"

Seqenenra was filled with joy and his face shone. He bent over the head of Tetisheri to kiss her brow and she kissed his left cheek and Ahotep's right and blessed them both and they returned, happy and rejoicing.

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It was announced to the envoy Khayan that Seqenenra would receive him on the morning of the following day, and at the appointed time the king went to the reception hall followed by his senior chamberlains. There he found the chief minister, the high priest, and the commanders of the army and navy waiting for him about the throne. They rose to receive him and bowed before him and he took his seat upon the throne and gave them permission to sit. Then the chamberlain of the door shouted to announce the arrival of the envoy Khayan, who entered with his fat, short body and long beard, walking haughtily and asking himself, "What lies, I wonder, behind this council? Peace or war?" When he reached the throne, he bowed in greeting to the one seated there and the king returned the greeting and gave him permission to be seated, saying, "I hope you passed a pleasant night?"

"It was a pleasant night, thanks to your generous hospitality."

He glanced quickly at the king's head and, seeing upon it the White Crown of Egypt, his heart sank and he blazed with fury, feeling that it was intolerable for the governor of the South to challenge him thus. The king, for his part, went to no lengths to be polite to the envoy, for he was not unaware of what his refusal of the demands meant. Wishing to state his opinion baldly, decisively, and straightforwardly, he said, "Envoy Khayan, I have studied the demands that you have so faithfully conveyed to us and I have consulted the men of my kingdom about them. It is the opinion of us all that we should refuse them."

Khayan had not been expecting this abrupt, frank refusal. He was struck dumb and overcome with astonishment. He looked at Seqenenra

in amazement and disbelief, and his face turned as red as coral. The king went on, "I find that these demands violate our beliefs and our honor, and we will permit no one to violate even a single belief of ours, or our honor."

Khayan recovered from his astonishment and said quietly and haughtily, as though he had not heard what the king had said, "If my lord asks me, 'Why does the governor of the South refuse to construct a temple to Seth?' what shall I say to him?"

"Say to him that the people of the South worship Amun alone."

"And if he asks me, 'Why do they not kill the hippopotami that rob me of my sleep?'"

"Tell him that the people of the South hold them sacred."

"Amazing! Is not Pharaoh more sacred than the hippopotami?"

Seqenenra hung his head for a moment, as though thinking of a reply. Then he said in resolute tones, "Apophis is sacred to you. These hippopotami are sacred to us."

A wave of relief passed through the courtiers at this vehement reply. Khayan, on the other hand, was furious, though he did not allow his anger to get the better of him and held himself back, saying quietly, "Respected Governor, your father was governor of the South and did not wear this crown. Do you think that you have greater rights than your father claimed for himself?"

"I inherited from him the South and this has been its crown from ancient times. It is my right to wear it as such."

"Yet in Memphis there is another man who wears the double crown of Egypt and calls himself Pharaoh of Egypt. What do you think of his claims?"

"I think that he and his forebears have usurped the kingdom."

Khayan's patience now was exhausted and he said furiously and with contempt, "Governor, do not think that by wearing the crown you are raised to the rank of king. For a king is first and foremost strength and power. I find nothing in your words but contempt for the good relations that tied your fathers and your ancestors to our kings and a striving for a challenge whose results you cannot guarantee."

Anger appeared on the faces of the retinue but the king preserved his calm and said affably, "Envoy, we do not run officiously after evil. But should any man impugn our honor, we shall neither concede nor favor the safe course. It is one of our virtues that we do not exaggerate in evaluating our strength, so do not expect to hear me boast and vaunt. But know that my fathers and my forefathers preserved what they could of the independence of this kingdom and that I will never squander what the Lord and the people have undertaken to preserve."

A sarcastic smile spread over Khayan's thin lips, concealing his bitter hatred. In an insinuating tone he said, "As you wish, Governor. My role is merely that of messenger and it is you that shall bear the consequences of your words."

The king bowed his head and said nothing. Then he stood, signaling the end of the audience. All rose to do him honor and remained standing until he was hidden from their eyes by the door.

## 26

The king, aware of the danger of the situation, wished to visit the temple of Amun to pray to the Lord and to announce the struggle in its sacred courtyard. He made his wish known to his minister and courtiers, and these set off in their groups, ministers, commanders, chamberlains, and high officials, to the temple of Amun to be ready to receive the king. Thebes, unknowing, took note of what was going on behind its proud palace walls, many whispering to one another that the envoy of the North had arrived in high state and departed in anger. Word spread among the Thebans that Seqenenra was to visit the temple of Amun to seek His guidance and ask Him for help. Large crowds of men, women, and children went to the temple, where they were joined by yet more, who surrounded the temple and spilled out into the streets that led to it. With solemn, worried, and curious faces they questioned one another in eager tones, each interpreting the matter as they saw fit. The royal escort arrived, preceded by a squadron of guards and followed by the king's chariot and by

others bearing the queen and the princes and princesses of the royal house. As a wave of excitement and joy swept over the people, they waved to their sovereign, cheering and exulting. Seqenenra smiled at them and waved to them with his scepter. It escaped no one's notice that the king was wearing his battle dress with its shining shield, and the people's eagerness to hear the news grew. The king entered the courtyard of the temple, the men and women of his family walking behind him. The priests of the temple, the ministers, and the commanders received them prostrate, while Nofer-Amun cried out in a loud voice, "God keep the king's life forever and preserve the kingdom of Thebes!" the people enthusiastically repeating his cry over and over and the king greeting them with a gesture of his hand to his head and a smile from his broad mouth. Then the whole group moved into the Hall of the Altar, where the soldiers immediately offered an ox as a sacrifice to the Lord. All then circumambulated the altar and the Hall of the Columns, where they formed two lines and the king gave his scepter to crown prince Kamose and proceeded to the sacred stairway, which he ascended to the Holy of Holies, crossing the sacred threshold with submissive steps and closing the door behind him. Twilight seemed to envelope him and he bowed his head, removed his crown out of reverence for the purity of the place, and advanced, on legs trembling in awe, toward the niche in which resided the Lord God. There he prostrated himself at His feet, kissed them, and was silent for a while until his agitated breathing could quiet itself. Then he said in a low voice, as though in intimate conversation, "Lord God, Lord of glorious Thebes, Lord of the lords of the Nile, grant me your mercy and strength, for today I face a grave responsibility, before which, without your aid, I shall find myself helpless! It is the defense of Thebes and the fight against your enemy and ours, that enemy who fell upon us from the deserts of the north in savage bands that laid waste to our houses, humiliated our people, closed the doors of your temples, and usurped our throne. Grant me your aid in repelling their armies, driving out their divisions, and cleansing the valley of their brutal power, so that none may rule there but your brown-skinned sons and no name be mentioned there but yours!"

The king fell silent, waited for a moment, then plunged once more into an ardent and lengthy prayer, his brow resting upon the statue's feet. Then he raised his head in holy dread until he was looking at the god's noble face, enshrouded in majesty and silence, as though it were the curtain of the future behind which Fate lay hidden.



The king, who had replaced the White Crown on his sweat-banded forehead, emerged before his people, who prostrated themselves to him as one. Prince Kamose presented him with his scepter and, taking it in his right hand, he said in a stentorian voice: "Men of glorious Thebes! It may be that our enemy is assembling his army on the borders of our kingdom as I speak, to invade our lands. Prepare yourselves then for the struggle! Let each one's battle cry be to expend his greatest efforts in his work, that our army be strengthened for steadfastness and combat. I have prayed to the Lord and sought His aid and the Lord will not forget His country and His people!"

With a voice that shook the walls of the temple, all cried out, "God aid our king Seqenenra!" and the king turned to leave. However, the high priest of Amun approached and said, "Can my lord wait a little so that I may present him with a small gift?"

The king replied, smiling, "As Your Holiness wishes."

The high priest made a sign to two other priests, who went to the treasure chamber and returned carrying a small box of gold, to which all eyes turned. Nofer-Amun approached them and opened the box carefully and gently. The watchers beheld inside a royal crown—the double crown of Egypt. Eyes widened in astonishment and glances were exchanged. Nofer-Amun bowed his head to his lord and said in a voice that shook, "This, my lord, is the crown of King Timayus!"

Some of those present cried out to one another, "The crown of King Timayus!" and Nofer-Amun said with ardor and in a strong voice, "Indeed, my lord! This is the crown of King Timayus, the last pharaoh to rule united Egypt and Nubia before the Herdsmen's invasion of our land."



The Lord in His wisdom took retribution on our country during his era and this noble crown fell from his head, after he had suffered greatly in defending it. Thus, it lost the throne and its master, but kept its honor. For this reason, our ancestors removed it to this temple, to take its place among our sacred heirlooms. Its owner died a hero and martyr, so it is worthy of a mighty head. I crown you with it, King Seqenenra, son of Sacred Mother Tetisheri, and proclaim you king of Upper and Lower Egypt and of Nubia, and I call on you, in the name of Lord Amun, the memory of Timayus, and the people of the South, to rise up, combat your enemy, and liberate the pure, beloved valley of the Nile!"

The high priest approached the king and removed the White Crown of Egypt from his head and handed it to one of the priests. Then he raised Egypt's double crown amidst shouts of joy and praise to God, placed it on his curly hair, and shouted aloud: "Long live Seqenenra, Pharaoh of Egypt!"

The people took up the call and a priest hurried outside the temple and acclaimed Seqenenra as pharaoh of Egypt, the Thebans repeating the call with wild enthusiasm. Then he called for men to fight the Herdsmen, and the people responded with voices like thunder, certain now of what they had doubted before.

Pharaoh saluted the priests, then made his way toward the door of the temple, followed by his family, the men of his palace, and the great ones of the southern kingdom.

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As soon as Pharaoh returned to his palace, he called his chief minister, high priest, chief palace chamberlain, and the commanders of the army and navy to a meeting and told them, "Khayan's ship is bearing him swiftly northwards. We shall be invaded as soon as he crosses the southern borders, so we must not lose an hour of our time."

Turning to Kaf, commander of the fleet, he said, "I hope that you will find your task on the water easy, for the Herdsmen are our pupils in naval combat. Prepare your ships for war and set sail for the North!"

Commander Kaf saluted his lord and quickly left the place. The king then turned to Commander Pepi and said, "Commander Pepi, the main force of our army is encamped at Thebes. Move with it to the north and I will catch up with you with a force of my stalwart guard. I pray the Lord that my troops prove themselves worthy of the task that has been placed upon their shoulders. Do not forget, Commander, to send a messenger to Panopolis, on our northern borders, to alert the garrison there to the danger that surrounds it, so that it is not taken by surprise."

The commander saluted his lord and departed. The king looked in the faces of the chief minister, the high priest, and the head chamberlain and then said to them, "Gentlemen, the duty of defending our army's rear will be thrown on your shoulders. Let each of you do his duty with the efficiency and dedication that I know are yours!"

They replied with one voice, "We stand ready to lay down our lives for the king and for Thebes!"

Seqenenra said, "Nofer-Amun, send your men to the villages and the towns to urge my people to fight! And you, User-Amun, summon the governors of the provinces and instruct them to conscript the strong and the able among my people; while to you, Hur, I entrust the people of my house. Be to my son Kamose as you are to me."

The king saluted his men and left the place, making his way to his private wing to bid farewell to his family before setting off. He sent for them all, and Queen Ahotep came and Queen Tetisheri, and Prince Kamose, and his wife Setkimus with their son Ahmose and their little daughter, Princess Nefertari. He received them lovingly and sat them around him. Tenderness filled his breast as he looked into the eyes of the faces dearest to his heart, seeing, it seemed to him, but one face repeated without any differences but those of age. Tetisheri was in her sixties and Ahotep, like her husband, in her forties, while Kamose and Setkimus were twenty-five. Ahmose was not yet ten and his sister Nefertari was two years younger. In every one of their faces, however, shone the same black eyes, in every one was the same mouth with its slight upper protrusion, and the same golden-brown complexion that lent the counte-