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NEW KINGDOM

A THESIS

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WITH EMPHASIS IN CREATIVE WRITING

By

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NEW KINGDOM

A THESIS

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ABSTRACT OF THESIS

AUTHOR: Sarah Stringfield

TITLE: New Kingdom

DIRECTOR OF THESIS: Dr. J. David Macey, Jr.

PAGES: 161

New Kingdom occurs in ancient Egypt and is loosely based upon historical figures and events involving the rulers Hatshepsut and Tuthmosis III *circa* 1480-1479 B.C. Prince Tuthmosis returns to Thebes and threatens the regency of Queen Hatshepsut, who is unwilling to let her stepson gain his rightful role as Pharaoh. She uses her considerable influence with the people, councils, and various deities to assert her power. Two teenagers, Djoser and Tahemet, from the artisan village of Deir el-Medina, embark on a journey to Thebes to fulfill their dreams and find themselves entangled in the political power struggle.

In Episode I, "Alliances," Prince Tuthmosis furthers his plans for a private army and for ridding himself of the troublesome Queen. Meanwhile, Queen Hatshepsut continues to conspire with the Goddess Bast to eliminate the Prince and his supporters.

"NEW KINGDOM"

FADE IN:

TEASER

INT. EGYPTIAN TEMPLE -- EARLY MORNING

A large statue of **BAST**, female Goddess with the figure of a woman and the head of a cat, dressed in cloth of gold and decorated with ornate jewels, dominates the back wall.

Behind her, a mural of the rising sun. At her feet, bowls of smoking incense, perfume jars, and various glittering trinkets and offerings. Several live cats lounge around the shrine.

The beautiful Queen **HATSHEPSUT**, tall and regal, slowly glides into the room carrying a bowl and pitcher. She wears a lot of gold jewelry, fine linen clothing, and a gold circlet with a snake-head rests on her forehead.

HATSHEPSUT
(kneels in front of
statue)

Hear me, O Divine Bast. It is I, Queen
Hatshepsut, who kneels before you now.

She sets the bowl on a step above the other offerings.

HATSHEPSUT (CONT'D)

Accept these humble offerings from
your sister. O Perfumed Protector,
Patron of Women, Goddess of the Sun.

She pours milk into the bowl from the pitcher, sets the pitcher down, and raises her arms to the statue.

HATSHEPSUT (CONT'D)

O Daughter of Ra. Divine bringer of...

A figure steps out of the statue. It is the Goddess herself, in the flesh. She appears mostly human, but with some cat-like attributes.

BAST
Yeah, fine. Enough of that. I know who
I am.

Bast waves away Hatshepsut's words with her hand, showing off her long, sharp fingernails. She leans over Hatshepsut's offering and swishes her fluffy tail.

BAST (CONT'D)
So, what'd you bring me?

END OF TEASER

FIRST COMMERCIAL BREAK

OPENING CREDITS

ACT ONE

EXT. ARTISAN VILLAGE OF DEIR EL-MEDINA -- SAME MORNING

A low wall surrounds the village, which nestles in a barren pocket at the bottom of fertile mountains. Painted buildings group together like an apartment complex.

TAHEMET and **NEFARI**, late teens, stand in a long line of women holding large pottery jars at the community well. Tahemet has long curly black hair. Nefari has a short black pageboy hairdo.

The **VIZIER**, a tall man with a long nose, struts by and leers at Tahemet. A third teenage girl, his daughter **ISET**, walks haughtily at his side. She smirks at Tahemet. Tahemet nods back. After they pass, Tahemet turns to her friend.

TAHEMET
Nefari, did you see that bracelet Iset was wearing yesterday?

NEFARI
Oh, yeah. She claims Pahmu bought it for her in Thebes.

TAHEMET
(rolls her eyes)
She's such a dust-puppy. I can't believe he's courting her.

NEFARI
Well, she's the Vizier's daughter. Pahmu may not be smart, but he is ambitious.

The girls move slowly up the line toward the well.

TAHEMET

(makes a sour face)

I wouldn't be in such a hurry to join that family if I were him. Bad enough to wake up to Iset every morning, but I wouldn't want the Vizier poking his long nose in my business all the time.

NEFARI

Like he doesn't already?

TAHEMET

I know. It's getting harder to avoid him with his wife about to deliver.

The girls reach the front of the line and fill their jars with water.

NEFARI

Are you going to Iset's birthday party?

TAHEMET

No, thank the Gods. I've already promised to go to a concert with Djoser tomorrow. Tepemkau is playing in the courtyard.

NEFARI

Ooh, I love them!

They finish drawing water and leave the line of women behind them.

NEFARI (CONT'D)

I couldn't think of a good excuse, so I told her I'd come. What kind of gift do you give the girl who has everything?

TAHEMET

Got an extra heart? She seems to be short one of those.

The girls head back into the village through the broad central street lined with houses on both sides. Women, girls, and very young boys bustle around, calling to each other, busy with household chores.

NEFARI
Speaking of hearts, when are you and
Djoser going to get married?

TAHEMET
(smiles shyly and
shrugs)
Nefari! You know Djoser and I are just
friends.

NEFARI
Oh come on, Tia. Everyone sees how your
eyes light up when the men come home
from work, and when they go out again,
you just wilt.

TAHEMET
Well, ten days is a long time. I miss
him a lot. Besides, you know the whole
marriage-and-babies thing isn't for
me. I'm not sure Djoser wants that
either.

The girls stop in front of a house with a red-painted doorframe
and a white door with hieroglyphics painted across it. A plant
in a hand-woven basket sits by the front step.

Tahemet steps up to the door and turns to talk to her friend.

NEFARI
You can still be a Healer, Tia, even
if you're married. One doesn't exclude
the other. Plenty of physicians do
both.

TAHEMET
(sadly)
Not in Medina, they don't.

INT. EGYPTIAN TEMPLE -- MOMENTS LATER

Queen Hatshepsut, still kneeling, looks up impatiently at Bast.

HATSHEPSUT
What good are all these rituals if you
always interrupt me?

BAST
Ooh, somebody has their fur all
rumped this morning!

Bast picks up the bowl, sniffs it, and purrs loudly.

BAST (CONT'D)
Mmmm, I love the cream of a Queen.

She drinks some milk, licks her lips, and looks around.

BAST (CONT'D)
(petulantly)
What? No mice?

Bast sets the bowl down as if no longer interested. A couple
of cats run over to drink from it.

HATSHEPSUT
There wasn't time. I need to speak to
you.

BAST
What's so urgent that the Ruler of
Egypt can't handle it herself?

HATSHEPSUT
I received word that my stepson
arrives at the Palace today.

BAST
A mere child threatens the Queen?

HATSHEPSUT
(stands)
He's hardly a child any longer. That
is what I fear. Soon, he'll be crowned
Pharoah, and my kingdom will be taken
from me.

Bast flicks her tail impatiently and examines her sharp
fingernails.

BAST
Oh, come now. Such things are easily
taken care of. Just slip a little
poison into his beer or an asp in his
bed.

HATSHEPSUT

(scoffs cynically)

If only it were that easy. I've tried everything in the past six years. Poison. Assassins. Arrows. Prince Tuthmosis is extremely lucky and extremely clever.

BAST

Clever enough to earn a kingdom?

HATSHEPSUT

He doesn't have to earn it. Even though his mother doesn't have royal blood, my Husband-Brother named Tuthmosis as his successor before he died.

BAST

And now that he's all grown up...

HATSHEPSUT

My days as Queen Regent are numbered.

BAST

Hmm, let me think on it. Bring me something shiny when you return.

EXT. DESERT OUTSIDE OF THEBES -- SAME MORNING

A small group of men, riding horses, cross the desert and approach the city of Thebes. Two young men, **PRINCE TUTHMOSIS** and his first officer, **SETI**, ride side by side. Prince Tuthmosis is very muscular and completely bald.

SETI

Are you sorry to be leaving Dendera, Prince Tuthmosis?

TUTHMOSIS

No, Seti. I'm glad to be done with training. I'm ready to be home.

SETI

Anxious to put all your military strategy to the test?

TUTHMOSIS

It's not like I'm going to declare war or anything.

SETI
Not even on your mother?

TUTHMOSIS
Step-mother. And no, I don't think
it'll come to that. She knows I'm going
to be Pharoah soon.

SETI
Does she? I hear the people love her.
Perhaps she plans to rule forever.

TUTHMOSIS
No one rules forever. Her time too
shall end.

SETI
Perhaps...but she does have the ear of
the priests at the Temple of Karnak.

TUTHMOSIS
Soon, they will listen to me.

SETI
You'll have to act quickly and get
their attention.

TUTHMOSIS
I'm content to wait. For now.

INT. VILLAGE OF DEIR EL-MEDINA -- SAME MORNING

Tahemet and her mother sit at a stone table weaving baskets out of strips of flax. A young boy runs in the room excitedly. His head is shaved except for one long side-lock. He's Tahemet's little brother, **KET**.

KET
The men are coming! They're almost
here!

Tahemet and her mother silently exchange a look and then both smile. They jump up from the table and run outside with Ket.

EXT. VILLAGE OF DEIR EL-MEDINA -- MOMENTS LATER

A long line of men winds down the side of the closest mountain to the village. The men vary in age and all are carrying the tools of their trade, such as picks, paints, and brushes.

Tahemet's father and a young man, **DJOSER**, greet Tahemet, Ket, and Mom. Djoser, big and muscular, stands out from the other artisans.

TAHEMET

Hi, Poppi. Welcome home!

She hugs her father and goes to greet Djoser.

TAHEMET (CONT'D)

Hey, Djo!

She starts to hug Djoser, but stops and gives him a little playful punch on the arm instead. Behind her, her father scoops up Ket and greets his wife with a long kiss.

TAHEMET (CONT'D)

You said you'd write to me while you were gone. What's up?

DJOSER

(looks down, shuffles
his feet)

I kind of got into it with my Dad,
again. I didn't feel like writing it
all down.

Tahemet takes him by the arm and waves to her family.

TAHEMET

See you later!

TAHEMET (CONT'D)

(to Djoser)

Come on. Let's go have a talk.

Tahemet and Djoser walk off together.

INT. EGYPTIAN TEMPLE -- SAME MORNING

Bast picks up a jeweled bracelet and examines it. She decides she likes it and puts it on.

BAST

So, you need help holding onto your crown, and you came to me.
How...sweet!

HATSHEPSUT

You are the cleverest and most cunning of all your sisters. I could not think of going to anyone else.

BAST

(points one claw at Hatshepsut)
Hmmm. You do have a point.

BAST (CONT'D)

(pauses and thinks for a moment)
Prince Tuthmosis is a warrior, right?

HATSHEPSUT

(nods)
He is most skilled.

BAST

Well, I happen to know where a band of thieves are camped outside of the city. Let's just say we "do business" together occasionally.

HATSHEPSUT

All right...

BAST

When the Prince arrives, you'll tell him you need his big, strong help rounding up the outlaws.

HATSHEPSUT

(offended)
I'd rather swallow my own tongue than utter such nonsense.

Bast picks up a perfume jar, lifts the lid, and sniffs. She draws back in disgust, hisses at the jar, and puts it back down quickly.

BAST

Yes, but you see, the Prince will rush out to prove himself. Unfortunately for him, the thieves will have been forewarned and will be ready for his attack.

HATSHEPSUT

Ahhh! I do see.

BAST

With any luck, your problems will be over by the week's end.

HATSHEPSUT

(bows)

You will have the gratitude of a Queen.

BAST

Oh, yes. I expect so. Just get the Prince to agree. I'll send Amun-Min and he'll take care of the rest.

HATSHEPSUT

Amun-Min? The God of sexual...uh.

BAST

(giggles)

He's also the patron of desert travelers. And he owes me a little "favor," if you know what I mean.

Swishing her fluffy tail, Bast returns to her statue.

BAST (CONT'D)

Next time bring some mice.

Bast fades back into her statue and is gone.

EXT. VILLAGE OF DEIR EL-MEDINA -- MOMENTS LATER

Tahemet and Djoser sit close together in the VILLAGE COURTYARD. Benches and potted-plants surround the white-tiled pavilion. Hieroglyphics decorate nearly every surface. A statue of Queen Hatshepsut dominates one wall.

TAHEMET

This argument with your dad, was it bad?

DJOSER
Worst one ever. He just doesn't understand.

TAHEMET
He's an artist, Djo. He feels passionate about his craft.

DJOSER
Well, I'm not an artist . . . and I understand about passion.

TAHEMET
Did you ask him about going to Thebes?

DJOSER
Yeah.

TAHEMET
What did he say?

DJOSER
(mimicking his dad)
He said, "No son of mine is going off to be a soldier. Period."

TAHEMET
Doesn't leave a lot of room for argument, does it?

DJOSER
(shakes his head sadly)
I think I'm going to go to Thebes anyway.

TAHEMET
Djo! If you leave without his permission--

DJOSER
--I'm old enough to choose my own path!

TAHEMET
But you'll have to travel it alone, without your family's support.

DJOSER
I don't care. I don't want to decorate tombs all my life.

TAHEMET

You'd rather send people to their own tombs?

DJOSER

Spoken like a true Healer. You probably don't understand me, either.

TAHEMET

(puts her hand on his)

I do. I'd like nothing better than to run off with you. To Thebes, I mean.

Djoser gives her a questioning look.

TAHEMET (CONT'D)

(nervously)

I'm just saying, in Thebes I could get the training I need to be a real physician.

DJOSER

Aren't you already?

TAHEMET

(waves her hand dismissively)

Oh, anyone can deliver babies . . . Can I tell you a secret?

DJOSER

(acts shocked)

You keep secrets from me?

TAHEMET

(laughs)

Shut up! I'm serious.

DJOSER

Okay. Go ahead.

TAHEMET

(quietly)

I want to be a surgeon.

DJOSER

Can you do that?

TAHEMET
(fiddles with her
bracelet)
If I get special permission . . . from
the Queen.

Djoser sits for a minute in stunned silence.

DJOSER
Let me get this straight. You want to
leave your family to live alone in
Thebes?

TAHEMET
Not alone! My mother's sister is a
Priestess at the Temple of Karnak. I
think I could stay with her.

DJOSER
Then you want to get an audience with
the Queen and beg her to let you train
for a man's position?

TAHEMET
(sadly)
Yeah, if you put it like that it does
seem impossible.

SCENE 7

INT. PHAROAH'S PALACE IN THEBES -- AFTERNOON

Hatshepsut sits on her throne dressed in full royal attire. Her
guards and royal entourage stand at attention all about her.

Prince Tuthmosis enters the throne room with his own entourage
following. They stop in front of the steps leading up to the
throne and **ALL** bow down, except for the Queen.

TUTHMOSIS
Greetings, She Who Must Be Obeyed.

HATSHEPSUT
Hail, Crown Prince. Light of Egypt.

Tuthmosis and others rise.

HATSHEPSUT

It has been a long time.

TUTHMOSIS

But with you here to rule for me,
Mother, it's as if I've never really
left.

HATSHEPSUT

(smiles coldly)

You have changed much my Nephew-Son.

TUTHMOSIS

(returns the cold
smile)

And I'll bet you have changed very
little.

HATSHEPSUT

I do hope you find your accommodations
at the Temple of Karnak to be
agreeable.

TUTHMOSIS

More than. I hope you don't mind if I
don't take my rightful place here at
the Palace with you.

HATSHEPSUT

Not at all.

TUTHMOSIS

It was so kind of you to arrange for
my quarters there. I have many plans
to implement and it will be so much
easier to begin at the Temple.

HATSHEPSUT

(uneasy)

If there is anything I can assist you
with, you have only to *ask*.

TUTHMOSIS

I assure you, that will not be
necessary. If that is all...?

HATSHEPSUT

Oh, please. Do come dine with me soon.
I'm afraid we hardly know each other
at all.

TUTHMOSIS

(bows)

As you command it, it shall be done.

Tuthmosis and entourage turn to leave.

SENMUT, a high-ranking official and Hatshepsut's lover, leans in and whispers into the Queen's ear.

HATSHEPSUT

Oh! Tuthmosis!

TUTHMOSIS

(turns back to Queen)

Yes?

HATSHEPSUT

Senmut has just reminded me. There *is* one small matter I need your help with.

TUTHMOSIS

Of course, My Queen.

HATSHEPSUT

It seems a band of outlaws has set up just south of the city. Their nightly raids have become a bit of a nuisance.

TUTHMOSIS

Have you sent the guards after them?

HATSHEPSUT

Yes, but...well the thieves have proven themselves somewhat crafty in eluding our guards.

The guards standing along the wall exchange confused looks. Clearly, they don't know about this gang of thieves.

HATSHEPSUT (CONT'D)

They always escape through the city gates before we can catch them.

TUTHMOSIS

We must capture these men where they sleep.

HATSHEPSUT

If it wouldn't be too much trouble for you and a couple of your men to go out there?

TUTHMOSIS

(considers for a
moment)

My men and I will take care of this
matter. We are more than a match for
a band of rogues.

HATSHEPSUT

Eternal thanks, my Son. You will have
earned my gratitude.

TUTHMOSIS

I assure you, that is not necessary.
The people of Thebes are *my*
responsibility as much as yours.

Tuthmosis and crew bow again and turn to leave.

TUTHMOSIS (CONT'D)

(calls over his
shoulder)

The thieves will be routed tonight.

ACT TWO

EXT. DESERT JUST SOUTH OF THEBES -- NIGHT

SFX: A LOW RHYTHMIC DRUM BEAT

Prince Tuthmosis, Seti, and several men, dressed in dark
clothes, crouch behind a pavilion. Tuthmosis wears an Ankh
pendant against his bare chest; otherwise he could be a common
soldier.

TUTHMOSIS

(whispers)

All clear?

Several men nod their heads silently at him.

Tuthmosis draws a curve-bladed dagger (khopesh) and punctures
the tent with the knife tip. He puts one eye to the hole and
looks through.

Tuthmosis's P.O.V.:

Against both side walls inside the tent stand stacks of loot
and plunder. The front tent-flaps are thrown open to the night.
Along the back wall, in front of Tuthmosis, thieves sit eating
and drinking.

They watch some WOMEN belly-dance for them in the center of the pavilion. The women dance and clang their finger cymbals together to the beat of a lone DRUMMER.

THIEF #1
Ha Ha! What a night, Men! That caravan
never saw us coming!

The thieves laugh and appear relaxed.

OPPOSITE TUTHMOSIS'S P.O.V.: Tuthmosis's eye looking through the tent-hole.

Audience can see several armed thieves hiding behind the stacks of loot.

BACK TO SCENE :

Tuthmosis pulls back from his spy-hole and makes a few hand gestures to his men. They line up across the back of the tent and silently brandish their weapons.

At Tuthmosis' signal, the soldiers cut a large square in the back of the tent, rush in, and attack the thieves.

BELLYDANCER #1
(screams)
AAAHHHHGHH!

BELLYDANCER #2
Run!

The bellydancers run from the tent.

The lone drummer, immersed in his song, stays seated and keeps playing as if unaware of the mayhem around him.

TUTHMOSIS
Round them up, Men!

Thief #1 attacks Tuthmosis. Tuthmosis ducks and fish-hooks thief in the gut. Thief #1 falls.

Thief #2 attacks, Tuthmosis deflects the blow with his curved-blade, punches thief with his left hand. He brings his blade around and cuts thief #2's throat.

Tuthmosis and his men appear to be winning the fight. They force the thieves into the center of the pavilion. Their leader, **BOZ**, gives a command.

BOZ
Attack!

The drum beat escalates.

The second bunch of thieves pour out from hiding behind the stacks of loot and join the melee. Fighting escalates. Tuthmosis' men get cut down left and right.

A new FIGURE appears walking slowly around the thrashing men, **AMUN-MIN** weaves his way closer to Tuthmosis, staring intently. The God wears a large codpiece, and a Pharaoh's headcloth; a blue aura surrounds him. No one attacks him, as if they can't see him.

Tuthmosis kills Thief #3 and Boz delivers a blow to Tuthmosis' unprotected ribs.

Tuthmosis drops his weapon and falls. Boz steps up and prepares to deliver a death blow to Tuthmosis' chest.

Amun-Min waves his hand and utters an ancient word.

AMUN-MIN

Khohere!

EVERYONE freezes except Amun-Min.

SFX: No sounds of drums or fighting-no sound at all.

Amun-Min approaches Tuthmosis, picks up the ankh pendant around Tuthmosis' neck, and nods his head. Amun-Min walks around Boz, whispering into his ears.

AMUN-MIN (CONT'D)

Look at him. He's no common soldier.

AMUN-MIN (CONT'D)

He's obviously of royal blood, maybe worth a King's ransom.

AMUN-MIN (CONT'D)

Spare him and ransom him off.

Amun-Min fades away as he waves his hand and utters an Egyptian word.

AMUN-MIN (CONT'D)

Arhay!

SFX: Resume sounds of drumming and fighting.

Resume fighting. Boz pulls back and withholds his death blow. He yells to his men.

BOZ
Take prisoners! Take prisoners!

One by one, what is left of Tuthmosis' group are thrown to the ground next to him, bloody, weaponless, and surrounded by thieves. Seti and Tuthmosis share a disgusted look.

EXT. VILLAGE OF DEIR EL-MEDINA -- SAME NIGHT

SFX: Drum sound from previous scene continues into current scene. Gradually, more instruments add sound to the drums.

We are at the Tepemkau concert in the VILLAGE COURTYARD. A crowd of young people, including Tahemet and Djoser, dance to the music.

Nefari pushes her way through the crowd. She sees Tahemet and Djoser, makes her way to them.

NEFARI
(yelling)
There you are, Tia! Come quick!

Nefari pulls Tahemet away from the crowd. Djoser follows.

TAHEMET
I thought you were at Iset's birthday celebration. What's wrong?

NEFARI
Iset's mother went into labor. Her water broke at the party and she's not doing well.

TAHEMET
She's not due for another month!
(turns to Djoser)
I'm sorry. I have to go.

DJOSER
This always happens, Tia.

TAHEMET
I know. I'm sorry. We'll talk later, all right?

Tia and Nefari rush off, leaving Djoser behind. Nefari carries a small basket under her arm.

NEFARI
I stopped by my house and got some supplies.

TAHEMET
Did you notify Old Nettie?

NEFARI
No, she's in Thebes.

TAHEMET
(stops walking)
What? What about the other midwives?

NEFARI
Everyone is scattered. It's festival
night.

Nefari walks back to Tia, takes her by the arm, and urges her forward.

NEFARI (CONT'D)
Come on. We're on our own.

INT. THE VIZIER'S HOUSEHOLD -- MOMENTS LATER

A sweaty, pregnant woman, **PATRA**, squats on a brick birthing chair. She screams in agony as Tia and Nefari rush into the room.

TAHEMET
Okay, Patra. We're here. Everything is
going to be fine.

Tahemet picks up a cloth from a bowl next to the chair and wipes Patra's forehead, calming her down a little.

Nefari walks to a small table across the room and pulls some items from her basket.

Tall statues of various Goddesses line the walls of the room.

ISET, 16 years old, enters the room with a large pitcher of steaming water. She slams the pitcher down next to Nefari.

ISET
My party is ruined! Everyone has left.

NEFARI
We don't have time for that now, Iset.
Pour some water in this bowl.

Nefari puts a bowl in front of Iset. Iset scowls at it, then pours some water. She carries the bowl over and drops it on the floor at her mother's feet.

PATRA
(weakly)
Iset. I'm so sorry.

ISET
You always ruin everything for me.

PATRA
I'm sorry about your party.

ISET
Just shut up! I hate you.

TAHEMET
Enough, Iset. Help or get out.

ISET
I don't have to--

Patra wails as another contraction hits. Iset looks at her mother, wide-eyed and shocked. She backs up against the wall and stands, staring.

Tahemet and Nefari hold Patra's arms until the contraction stops. Then they ceremoniously wash their hands and bow down before a statue of a pregnant Hippo Goddess to pray.

TAHEMET
Mighty Taweret! Make the heart of the deliverer strong.

NEFARI
Blessed Taweret! Keep alive the One-that-is-coming.

They turn to a statue of Bes, a dwarf-goddess, whose long scary arms are thrown open wide.

TAHEMET
Protector Bes! Make She-who-is-Giving-Birth better than she was, as if she had already delivered.

NEFARI
Look, Hathor will lay her hand on your amulet of health.

Nefari takes an amulet from around Bes' throat and places it on Patra's forehead.

NEFARI (CONT'D)

O Bes, make the heart of the deliverer
strong!

Tahemet lifts a crescent-shaped ivory wand from the foot of Bes' statue. She places the carved wand across Patra's belly.

TAHEMET

Sister Bes, keep alive the
One-that-is-coming.

Patra continues to pant and moan, but she is calmer now. She grips the arms of the birthing chair tight.

Nefari holds Patra's hand as Tahemet briefly examines her.

Tahemet and Nefari walk to the table and gather oils and herbs. They turn their backs to Patra and talk as they mix ingredients into little bowls.

NEFARI

How bad is it?

TAHEMET

The baby is turned the wrong way. We
can't save her.

NEFARI

We have to do something!

TAHEMET

We'll do what we can. Our only hope is
to try to get the baby out.

Patra screams again, but not as loudly this time. She is losing strength.

Tahemet and Nefari bring the bowls to Patra's side.

Tahemet kneels between Patra's legs and dips her hand into the oily substance in the bowl.

Nefari takes Patra in her arms and nods at Tahemet.

Tahemet reaches upward.

Patra screams loudly.

ISET

You're killing her! You're killing my
mother!

TAHEMET
We're trying to help, Iset.

ISET
Stop it! Stop what you're doing.

Iset comes forward and tries to stop Tahemet. Nefari releases Patra, grabs Iset, and throws her to the ground.

NEFARI
I told you to help or get out!

Iset, crying, runs from the room.

TAHEMET
Okay, Patra. You're doing fine.

PATRA
Let me die! I'm ready to go to the next world. Just let me die!

TAHEMET
Not yet, Patra. Just hold on.

With one last scream, Patra goes limp.

Nefari and Tahemet look at each other. Tia shakes her head. She stands up. Her arms and front appear splattered with blood.

Nefari closes Patra's eyes and starts crying.

Tahemet spreads a white cloth over Patra's body.

Iset reenters the room, leading the **VIZIER** by the arm.

ISET
See, Father! They're hurting her. I told you.

The Vizier sees his wife covered with the cloth and stops walking.

ISET (CONT'D)
We're too late! They killed her!

The Vizier turns a burning glare at Tahemet.

VIZIER
What have you done!

TAHEMET

We're helping! The baby was turned--

VIZIER

--You dare stand there covered in my wife's blood and tell me you're "helping"?

TAHEMET

We tried to save her. We did everything we could!

VIZIER

You'll pay for this insult to me! I will see that you pay dearly.

The Vizier grabs Tahemet by the arms and shakes her.

VIZIER (CONT'D)

Iset, call for a priest.
(to Tia)

I had a wife when you entered this room and the Gods-be-damned if I won't have one before you leave!

INT. THIEVES TENT -- SAME NIGHT

Prince Tuthmosis and his men remain tied up on the ground with guards over them. Boz talks to Thief #4.

THIEF #4

But the plan was to kill them all!
Isn't that what you said?

BOZ

Where is the profit in killing them?
These are no common soldiers. Look at them.

THIEF #4

(looks at the men,
shrugs)
I'm not very impressed.

BOZ

Look, whoever wanted them dead will have to pay for it. We're businessmen, after all.

THIEF #4

What makes you think they're worth any money?

Boz walks over to Tuthmosis and points at him.

BOZ

My friends, don't you recognize a prince when you see one?

The men, alarmed at this news, begin to shift and grumble.

THIEF #4

(excitedly)

We'll probably get a million in coin!

TUTHMOSIS

The Queen will send an army and crush you all before she'll pay good coin for me!

BOZ

Well, then, we won't ask that much. Let's see, how about 5,000 silver? That's an amount we can all live with, yes?

THIEF #4

That's an insult!

BOZ

To the Prince? Or to you?

Thief #4, disgusted, flops down on a fluffy cushion.

THIEF #4

To both of us.

Boz ignores the man's grumbling and points at Seti.

BOZ

You! You alone will carry our terms to the Queen. And I assure you, I will kill your precious Prince long before any army can approach us, so no tricks. Return alone with the money and I will let you all go free.

Seti and Tuthmosis exchange a disbelieving look, but Tuthmosis reluctantly nods his head at Seti.

INT. THE VIZIER'S HOUSEHOLD -- CONTINUOUS

Tahemet pulls out of the Vizier's grasp. She stands up to him.

TAHEMET

How dare you? You strut all over town,
flaunting your money and power. But
you hold no power over me. I refuse to
marry you!

Nefari looks awed by Tahemet's defiance. Iset, shocked even more, drops her jaw at Tahemet's words.

TAHEMET (CONT'D)

(indignantly)

After I tried to save Patra and your
child...The Gods chose to bring them
into the underworld. Would you defy
the Gods their right to claim what they
wish?

Tahemet takes Nefari by the arm and steers her toward the door.

TAHEMET (CONT'D)

I will have no part of it!
(whispers to Nefari)
Get out of here now!

Tahemet turns to distract the Vizier as Nefari slips out the door.

TAHEMET (CONT'D)

Who are you to tell the Gods what they
can do, anyway?

VIZIER

(makes another grab at
Tia)

The Gods can have what they want, and
I will take what I want!

Tahemet narrowly sidesteps him and hedges toward the door, trying to find an excuse. She indicates her bloody clothes.

TAHEMET

Surely you don't expect me to marry you
covered in your last wife's blood?

The Vizier seems taken aback at Tahemet's words. He listens.

TAHEMET

Without my family present?

Tahemet eyes Iset whose party clothes stand in marked contrast to her own blood-soaked garments. Iset, in shock, ignores them and stares at her mother's covered body.

TAHEMET (CONT'D)

Without my mother to weave flowers in my hair? Patra wouldn't have wanted that.

VIZIER

Fine. Enough! I will allow my wife a proper burial. But you take this time to prepare for our marriage.

Tahemet doesn't answer, but takes a small step towards the door.

VIZIER (CONT'D)

And mark me well, Woman, I won't wait long. I look forward to taming your wicked mouth.

Tahemet runs out the door.

INT. PHARAOH'S PALACE IN THEBES -- EARLY MORNING

Seti arrives at the Queen's Court. He staggers past the crowd of people waiting to air their grievances to the Queen. Covered in blood and dust, he falls to his knees in front of the throne.

Queen Hatshepsut sits on her throne, decked out in her royal attire and surrounded, once again, by her entourage and guards. She exchanges a smug look with her lover, Senmut. Expectantly, she addresses Seti.

HATSHEPSUT

Why, Seti? What news?

SETI

My Queen, it was a trap. The thieves were forewarned.

HATSHEPSUT

(acts shocked)

And the Prince has been killed?

SETI

No, the outlaws lay in wait for us. The Prince and others have been taken prisoner. The outlaws want 5,000 silver coin in exchange for them.

Angry, Hatshepsut rises.

HATSHEPSUT

What? But the Prince still lives!

SETI

I assure you, he was alive and well when I last saw him, my Queen.

HATSHEPSUT

(tries to look
relieved)

Well, that is good news.

SETI

I am to return with the ransom and they promise to set us free.

Hatshepsut gestures to some women nearby.

HATSHEPSUT

Come, see to Seti's comfort.

(To the crowd)

I will return shortly.

INT. HATSHEPSUT'S PRIVATE CHAMBER -- CONTINUOUS

Hatshepsut sweeps out of the audience chamber into her nearby chambers. Senmut follows on her heels. She enters her room in a tizzy, smashing things to the floor.

HATSHEPSUT

How? How does that boy manage to keep on living? Gods curse him!

SENMUT

My Queen, please don't become so vexed by the Prince. He is no real threat to you.

HATSHEPSUT

I should refuse to pay!

SENMUT

But you cannot refuse now. Everyone in the court heard the terms, besides the amount is not so much as could be refused.

HATSHEPSUT

I don't care if everyone heard! I do not wish to part with one coin for that conniving little upstart!

SENMUT

Just think, my Love, if you play this right, you can win more favor with the people than ever.

HATSHEPSUT

How so?

SENMUT

A humiliated Prince is almost as good as a dead one.

HATSHEPSUT

Humiliated?

SENMUT

Completely crushed and indebted to you. Perhaps groveling at your feet.

. . .

HATSHEPSUT

It's a start.

INT. THE QUEEN'S THRONE ROOM IN THEBES -- CONTINUOUS

Queen Hatshepsut returns to her audience chamber. Seti is brought back in, somewhat cleaner. He bows before her throne.

HATSHEPSUT

I was overcome with emotion at your news. But I promise that will not happen again. Whoever betrayed my son to the thieves will be found and punished severely.

Hatshepsut snaps her fingers and an official places a velvet bag of coin in Seti's hand.

SETI

Thank you for your kindness, my Queen.

HATSHEPSUT

I would have paid this trifling sum for the lowest of my subjects. My only concern is for Prince Tuthmosis. For him, I would have expected to pay much more.

SETI

The thieves were hoping not to rouse your armies against them. I alone must bring the ransom.

HATSHEPSUT

Yes, retrieve our precious Prince, Seti. But I must ask that you return to my court immediately. I will wait here until I can see the Prince with my own eyes.

Seti bows to the Queen.

SETI

As you command it, it shall be done.

EXT. DESERT JUST OUTSIDE THEBES -- LATER THAT MORNING

Several thieves riding camels ride up with prisoners tied behind them. The prisoners are dumped to the ground, bound and gagged. Just as the thieves ride away, one of them tosses a dagger at Tuthmosis' feet and laughs.

INT. PHARAOH'S PALACE IN THEBES -- LATER

Prince Tuthmosis and his men, all bloody and dirty, enter the Queen's Court. The crowd inside has grown and the people are dismayed by the Prince's appearance. They mutter loudly and drop to their knees as he passes by.

Hatshepsut, pleased at the sight of them brought so low, smiles.

HATSHEPSUT

How glad I am to see you safe back in my court, Prince Tuthmosis.

TUTHMOSIS

Indeed, *Mother*. I suspect you thought never to see me again.

HATSHEPSUT

I never thought that you would be overcome by such an inferior band of thieves. Isn't that what all your training in Dendera was for?

TUTHMOSIS

You should have sent your army to trample them.

HATSHEPSUT

And risk harming you in the process? I could never have lived with myself.

TUTHMOSIS

You need not worry yourself about my further safety.

HATSHEPSUT

Oh, but I am always thinking of you, my son. Your well-being is my number one concern. I hope you learned a lesson?

TUTHMOSIS

I've learned quite a few lessons this night. Some I will never forget.

HATSHEPSUT

You may go now and get cleaned up, my *child*. It's time to put this whole mess behind you.

Tuthmosis and his men bow to the Queen and leave. As they walk out of the room the people begin murmuring again. Queen Hatshepsut smiles wickedly as they slink off.

EXT. PHAROAH'S PALACE IN THEBES -- MOMENTS LATER

Tuthmosis dismisses his men and descends the Palace steps with Seti. They talk as they head for the Temple of Karnak, across town.

TUTHMOSIS

I hope I can live this humiliation
down, Seti.

SETI

Well, we were hoping to get the
people's attention, weren't we?

TUTHMOSIS

I did not plan on getting kidnapped my
first night in town. However, I had a
long night of captivity to devise a
plan of action.

SETI

I hope it's a good one.

TUTHMOSIS

I plan to call any young men who wish
to volunteer to come to the Temple of
Karnak. There we will share with the
men the military knowledge we acquired
at Dendara.

SETI

A volunteer army?

TUTHMOSIS

Volunteers, but they will be paid a
yearly stipend if they stay on.

SETI

It is a good plan. If you have your own
army, then something like this will
not happen again.

TUTHMOSIS

And if it should ever come down to open
war, I would have an army loyal only
to me.

Act THREE

INT. VILLAGE OF DEIR EL-MEDINA -- SAME MORNING

Tahemet and Nefari meet on the roof of Tahemet's house. They
have cleaned up and changed clothes since last night.

NEFARI

Oh, Tia! What are you going to do?

TAHEMET

I've been up all night thinking about it. There is no way I'm going to marry that brute. He can't make me do it.

NEFARI

He has ways of getting what he wants.

TAHEMET

He'll probably try to force me by coming down on my parents. He can make their life a living hell.

NEFARI

You could tell your parents what happened. Maybe they would help.

TAHEMET

Are you kidding me? That won't do any good. They'd be thrilled to see me married to such a high-ranking official.

NEFARI

But he's horrible!

TAHEMET

I've turned down a few offers already, Nefari, and my mother keeps telling me I'm not getting any younger. The Vizier would be the ideal man to them.

NEFARI

It makes me sad to think of you suffering as his wife. We have to think of something.

TAHEMET

I plan to talk to Djoser about it.

NEFARI

That's a good idea! Djoser will protect you.

TAHEMET

Surely he'll offer to marry me. I'll beg him if I have to. There's no other way.

FULL SHOT. TEMPLE OF KARNAK- THEBES -- SAME MORNING

The Temple of Karnak sprawls for several square miles along the river Nile. The compound, more of a small city within the city of Thebes, houses thousands of people, including clergy of several different dieties.

INT. ARCHWAY OF AMUN-RA -- CONTINUOUS

Prince Tuthmosis, cleaned up from his ordeal, walks along a stone pathway accompanied by a priest. The old priest, **BROTHER AVARET**, wears a yellow robe and walks with his hands clasped behind his back, listening intently to Tuthmosis.

Every twenty feet or so, sunshine gleams in from under an open box-like arch. Carved hieroglyphs of the sun-god Ra decorate the columns. The long hall is empty except for the two men.

TUTHMOSIS

You see, Brother Avaret, I knew I could come to you with my plans. You were ever my father's favorite.

BROTHER AVARET

Not true, my son. You were always your father's favorite. If only he hadn't been called to the next world. But we must all follow our own paths.

The men stop in a shaft of sunlight. The bright sun sparkles off the old man's bald head. He opens his arms and raises them to the sunshine.

BROTHER AVARET (CONT'D)

Amun-Ra is the wisest of the Gods. It is not for us to question his wisdom. We must strive to do his will. Daily. Bravely. Regardless of the peril.

Brother Avaret lowers his arms and they continue walking.

BROTHER AVARET

And there will be great peril. The proposition of a private army will not sit well with the High Council.

TUTHMOSIS

(relieved)

You have decided to support me then?

BROTHER AVARET

You have my support. But I will not lie to you, my advice is rarely heeded by the Council these days. Too many of us are swayed by the Queen's charm . . . and her coin.

TUTHMOSIS

How soon can I speak to the Council?

BROTHER AVARET

We meet this afternoon. Would you be ready?

TUTHMOSIS

The sooner the better. I cannot allow my Stepmother any time to interfere.

The men stop in the sunlight once more. They both turn to the sunshine, lift their heads and close their eyes against the glare.

TUTHMOSIS (CONT'D)

Besides I have already sent an official proclamation to outlying areas to allow the men time to travel here.

Brother Avaret smiles and shakes his head slightly without opening his eyes.

EXT. VILLAGE OF DEIR EL-MEDINA -- DAY

Tahemet knocks on the door of Djoser's house. The house is painted a bright blue and appears cheery. Sounds from inside the house do not reflect this appearance.

DJOSER (O.S.)
You always do this! I'm sick of it!

MALE VOICE (O.S.)
If you don't like it, you know what you
can do about it!

Tahemet hesitates, then knocks again, but no one inside hears her.

DJOSER (O.S.)
One of these days I will!

SFX: The sound of a jar smashing against the door.

Tahemet jumps away from the door. A moment later, it flies open and Djoser storms through and slams it behind him. He doesn't notice Tahemet as he heads down the street in the opposite direction. She follows.

TAHEMET
Djoser! Djoser, wait up!

She finally catches up to him in the VILLAGE COURTYARD. Djoser paces back and forth, fuming about his father.

TAHEMET (CONT'D)
Djo! I know you're busy right now, but
I have to talk to you.

DJOSER
He doesn't even listen to me! It's like
I'm talking, but he doesn't hear my
words.

TAHEMET
I'm truly sorry about that, Djo, but
something really bad has happened and
I need--

DJOSER
I'm just sick of it! I wish I knew what
to do!

TAHEMET
--to talk to you. Djoser, I need your
help.

DJOSER
If only the Gods would send me a sign,
you know?

A messenger boy runs up behind them and hammers a papyrus notice onto a community bulletin board. The board is covered with various notices written in Egyptian hieroglyphics. The boy runs off.

Djoser stares at the paper in disbelief. He snatches it off the board and reads:

DJOSER

"Be all the Gods' want you to be--in Prince Tuthmosis's Army! Join now at the Temple of Karnak--free room and board while training--Earn your own salary and see the world."

Excited, Djoser turns and waves the poster at Tahemet.

DJOSER (CONT'D)

This is it! I'm going, Tia!

TAHEMET

But!

Djoser grabs Tahemet, swings her around and kisses her on the lips. He sets her down and runs back to his house. Tahemet is left there stunned, staring after him.

TAHEMET (CONT'D)

Djoser!

INT. TEMPLE OF KARNAK- COUNCIL ROOM -- AFTERNOON

Twelve robed men sit around a semi-circular table. Tuthmosis stands in the center. Seti stands near the closed door. Brother Avaret is one of the twelve priests, he smiles kindly at Tuthmosis.

TUTHMOSIS

Thank you for seeing me on such short notice. The Council be praised on its loyalty to the Crown.

PRIEST #1

The Council is always pleased to be of assistance to the Light of Egypt.

Tuthmosis nods to Priest #1.

PRIEST #2

I'm not sure exactly what the *Light* of Egypt thinks this Council could do to assist him.

Tuthomis shoots a look at Brother Avaret. Brother Avaret shakes his head almost imperceptibly. Clearly, Priest #2 is loyal to Queen Hatshepsut.

TUTHMOSIS

I am sure you've all heard about last night's events?

Several priests mumble and nod their heads.

TUTHMOSIS (CONT'D)

It has come to my attention that Egypt has many enemies. Desert thieves are a trifling matter compared to the Water Peoples of the North. The Palace Army is woefully unprepared to face a truly powerful enemy.

PRIEST #3

The Temple rarely has anything to do with such matters.

TUTHMOSIS

The protection of Egypt's population has everything to do with the Temple, wouldn't you agree, Brother Dayzar?

BROTHER DAYZAR

Absolutely.

TUTHMOSIS

Good. I require lodging and training space for up to 10,000 men.

BROTHER AVARET

Amun-Ra extends his welcome to the armies of the Crown. I speak the will of Amun-Ra.

Tuthmosis bows slightly in the direction of Brother Avaret as the other priests mumble to themselves at this open declaration of favor.

PRIEST #2

I require more time for prayer and reflection before casting my vote.

Two or three others nod their heads.

BROTHER AVARET

There is nothing to reflect upon, my brothers. The Light of Egypt requests nothing more than a place to house an army. For the good of Egypt, I say let the vote begin!

BROTHER DAYZAR

I second!

BROTHER AVARET

Let a show of hands be raised in support of the request.

Brother Avaret raises his hand. One by one each priest raises their hand except for Priest #2 and two others.

BROTHER DAYZAR

The request is granted, Prince Tuthmosis! I'm sure I speak for all on the Council when I welcome you home once again!

PRIEST #2

(clearly displeased)

Oh yes, may you walk in the light of Ra all the days of your life!

Priest #2 glares at Brother Avaret, stands and sweeps out of the council room, followed by the other two dissenters.

Tuthmosis and Seti approach Brother Avaret.

TUTHMOSIS

Thank you, Brother Avaret. You seem to have much more influence with the council than you thought.

BROTHER AVARET

Surprising, I must say. No telling when we last decided an issue without coins exchanging hands.

TUTHMOSIS

Thank you for your help. This means a lot to me. Someday, it could mean a lot for the people of Egypt.

BROTHER AVARET

My pleasure. I'm an old man, my son,
it's not often I get to tweak the noses
of my enemies. I enjoyed it.

SETI

The men should begin arriving tomorrow
night. We have much to prepare for
their arrival.

BROTHER AVARET

Let me know if there's any more
tweaking I can do.

TUTHMOSIS

Of course.

Prince Tuthmosis and Seti turn and leave.

INT. EGYPTIAN TEMPLE -- AFTERNOON

Amun-Min stands in Bast's Temple. His aura glows a fierce blue
and he looks extremely angry.

AMUN-MIN

BAST! I said come forth, now!

Bast steps from her statue, daintily swishing her long, fluffy
tail.

BAST

Who calls? Oh, Amun-Min, it's you. Did
you miss me?

AMUN-MIN

You know why I'm angry, don't you?

Bast does not seem affected. She scoops up a kitten and purrs
at it; the kitten purrs back.

BAST

You're always mad about something.

AMUN-MIN

What meddling plans have you been
hatching with the humans?

BAST
(innocently)
I have no idea what you mean, Min.

AMUN-MIN
You used me! You tried to use me to have
the Prince murdered! Don't think I
can't see your paw-prints all over
this business!

Bast sets the kitten down and approaches Amun-Min. She traces
one long fingernail across Amun-Min's bare chest.

BAST
You didn't mind where I left my
paw-prints the other night.

Amun-Min grabs her wrist and stops her.

AMUN-MIN
This isn't funny, Bast. Do you have any
idea what Hathor would do to me if your
little plan had worked?

BAST
How do you know this isn't exactly what
the Mother Goddess wants?

Amun-Min seems taken aback at her words. He thinks about it for
a moment.

BAST (CONT'D)
Perhaps it is Hathor's wish to send
Prince Perfect to his next life?

Amun-Min releases Bast's wrist as he considers what she says.

BAST (CONT'D)
Now, don't be angry with me, darling.
I just do exactly what I'm told.

Bast resumes rubbing Amun-Min's chest suggestively.

BAST (CONT'D)
Right now, I might do exactly what you
tell me to do.

Amun-Min smiles at Bast, pulls her toward her statue, and
embraces her as they fall back into it and disappear.

INT. PHAROAH'S PALACE IN THEBES -- AFTERNOON

Queen Hatshepsut reclines on a chaise while Priest #2 paces back and forth in front of her, reciting what happened at the Council meeting.

PRIEST #2

Truly, My Lady, I would have come to you before calling for a vote, but that Brother Avaret beat me to it.

HATSHEPSUT

Brother Avaret, the High Priest of Amun-Ra?

PRIEST #2

The very one, your Highness. I swear, he barely considered the proposal before agreeing to it whole-heartedly. I would venture to guess that he knew about it already.

HATSHEPSUT

No doubt. My stepson has been busy. He has a powerful ally in Brother Avaret.

PRIEST #2

What do you wish me to do, your Majesty?

Queen Hatshepsut rises and walks to a table, she picks up an ornamental flail and slaps it lightly on one palm.

HATSHEPSUT

Wasn't Brother Avaret in my court several times recently?

PRIEST #2

I believe so, why?

Hatshepsut walks to her window, lightly tapping her leg with the flail.

HATSHEPSUT

Take Senmut and several guards with you to the Temple. I want Brother Avaret arrested and brought to my throne room immediately.

EXT. VILLAGE OF DEIR EL-MEDINA -- EVENING

Djoser waits at the end of a caravan of full wagons. The wagons contain woven blankets, hand-made baskets, rugs, and other goods headed to the Theban Markets.

Djoser stays behind looking around until the last camel-drawn wagon pulls out. Alone, he picks up his bag, swings it over his shoulder and follows the caravan away from the village.

INT. PHAROAH'S PALACE IN THEBES -- NIGHT

Queen Hatshepsut sits on her throne as before. A large crowd of people gather in the audience chamber, curious about the excitement.

Senmut enters with guards clutching Brother Avaret by the arms. Brother Avaret doesn't fight them.

Prince Tuthmosis and his men rush into the courtroom behind them. The crowd is so enthralled at what is going on that many don't bow to Prince Tuthmosis.

HATSHEPSUT
Bring the traitor forth!

Brother Avaret is pushed to his knees in front of the throne.

HATSHEPSUT (CONT'D)
Are you the one called Brother Avaret,
High Priest of Amun-Ra?

BROTHER AVARET
It is so, your Highness.

HATSHEPSUT
You were in my presence when Prince
Tuthmosis arrived home yesterday?

BROTHER AVARET
It is so.

HATSHEPSUT
Were you not also present in my court
this morning?

BROTHER AVARET
There was no time for me yesterday, I
returned this morning like many
others.

HATSHEPSUT

But unlike many others, you wield great power at the Temple of Karnak and you have reason not to wish the Crown happiness.

BROTHER AVARET

That is not so, your Majesty. I am ever loyal to the Crown!

HATSHEPSUT

People of Egypt! This man is denounced as a traitor to the Crown! He set the Prince to be captured! He wanted the Prince to be killed!

The crowd screams and yells at Brother Avaret.

TUTHMOSIS

No!

Senmut and the guards prevent Tuthmosis from reaching Brother Avaret.

TUTHMOSIS (CONT'D)

It isn't true!

The crowd roars louder and Tuthmosis's protests go unheard.

HATSHEPSUT

Death to the traitor!

The guards pull Brother Avaret to his feet and turn to take him outside.

TUTHMOSIS

Brother Avaret! I know it wasn't you!

BROTHER AVARET

Follow your path, my son!

Brother Avaret and the guards get pushed outside by the bloodthirsty crowd. Tuthmosis and Queen Hatshepsut are almost alone in the throne room. Tuthmosis angrily approaches the Queen.

TUTHMOSIS

You know he is innocent!

HATSHEPSUT

We are none of us innocent.

TUTHMOSIS

He did not do what you said! He did not betray me.

HATSHEPSUT

Oh really? I suppose you should call in your army to save him then.

TUTHMOSIS

(glares at her)

That is what this is all about? Because he was supporting me?

HATSHEPSUT

I promised my people that the traitor would be caught and severely punished. I always follow through on my promises, Tuthmosis.

TUTHMOSIS

I will never forgive you for this.

HATSHEPSUT

I do not require your forgiveness. I demand your loyalty.

TUTHMOSIS

At any cost?

HATSHEPSUT

I promise.

ACT FOUR

EXT. DESERT -- NIGHT

The caravan wagons circle up and make camp. Djoser rolls out a blanket near a fire and walks around a wagon to urinate. As he assumes the position, Tahemet sneaks up behind him and leans against him in the darkness.

TAHEMET

I was going to offer you my hand, but I see that you can manage just fine without me.

DJOSER

(startled)

Tia!

Djoser grabs Tahemet and bear-hugs her.

DJOSER (CONT'D)

I thought you were angry at me when you didn't come to see me off.

TAHEMET

Of course not!

DJOSER

I really hated to leave you like that. I came close to changing my mind. But what are you doing here?

TAHEMET

I'm going to Thebes with you. I hid out in a carpet wagon.

DJOSER

Tia, I'm going to be a soldier!

TAHEMET

Soldiers need doctors, don't they?

DJOSER

(smiles, flexes his muscles)

They will when I'm through with them.

TAHEMET

I couldn't stay, Djo. I just couldn't.

DJOSER

I can't believe your parents gave you permission . . .they didn't, did they?

TAHEMET

(shrugs)

We all have our own path to follow.

Djoser hugs Tahemet as she breaks down and cries.

TAHEMET (CONT'D)

Nefari said she'd tell my parents everything in the morning. But I know my mother will be worried.

DJOSER

Okay, we'll get ourselves to the Temple of Karnak. You'll find your aunt and I'll join the army. We're going to be fine, Tia.

On the far side of camp, a loud horn blows.

SFX: The sound of pounding hooves and a horn blows briefly, then gets cut off.

Djoser pulls Tahemet to the ground.

DJOSER
That's the watchman! Stay down. I'll
go see what's going on.

TAHEMET
Djoser! Don't go!

Tahemet crouches behind the wagon wheel, peering around it.

TAHEMET'S P.O.V.: through the wagon wheel.

A GROUP OF MEN ON CAMELS barrel into the campsite, flashing swords and cutting down the travelers. We recognize this particular band of thieves as Boz and his men.

Djoser grabs a spear from one of the caravan guards. He stabs one of the thieves riding a camel. Djoser breaks the spear tip off in the man and uses the splintered shaft to knock another thief to the ground.

A bellowing camel tramples across the man.

A third bandit on the ground swings at Djoser. Unarmed, Djoser ducks and grabs a dead man's sword. He blocks the bandit's next swing, twirls around and cuts the bandit's throat.

A horseman collides into Djoser's back and knocks him to the ground.

TAHEMET (O.S.)

Djoser!

BACK TO SCENE

TAHEMET
Djoser! Get up!

Tahemet leaves the relative safety of her hiding place. She tries to run across the campsite to Djoser. A horseman nearly grabs her. She ducks back and loses sight of Djoser. She crouches behind another wagon full of rolled up carpets.

Two men fight on the rolls of carpet above Tahemet. They run back and forth on the teetering pile as their swords flash. Tahemet doesn't look up; she looks to find Djoser in the mass of fighting people.

A large rug falls from above, knocking Tahemet unconscious. As she falls to the ground, the rug covers her.

SFX: Sounds of bellowing camels, shouting men and clashing swords fades to silence.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. DESERT -- EARLY MORNING

The remains of the campsite are strewn with various bits of scattered debris. Dead men and camels sprawl out on the ground. No wagons remain. A few carpets and pots lie scattered on the ground.

Tahemet coughs and lifts the edge of her carpet. She squints in the glaring sunlight.

TAHEMET

Djoser?

Tahemet crawls out from under the carpet, staggers to her feet, and over to the fallen men.

Three men lie in a pile, the one on the bottom is Djoser. Tahemet rolls the dead men off.

TAHEMET (CONT'D)

Oh no! No!

Djoser lies still on the ground. Tahemet examines him for wounds.

TAHEMET (CONT'D)

Don't be dead! Please, don't be dead.

Tahemet finds a wineskin on one of the dead men, pulls it off and pours water on Djoser's face. He stirs and groans.

TAHEMET (CONT'D)

Oh, thank the Gods!

DJOSER

Thank them yourself.

TAHEMET

Are you injured? How do you feel?

DJOSER

Like a herd of elephants sat on me.
What happened?

TAHEMET (CONT'D)

We were attacked. Everyone's dead.

Tenderly, Djoser puts a hand to his ribs and sits up. He looks at the carnage around him. He stands with Tahemet's help.

DJOSER

Is there any more water?

She hands him the wineskin. He shakes it and pours out a few drops on his tongue.

TAHEMET

I'll look for more.

She checks the other bodies and finds one half-empty wineskin.

TAHEMET (CONT'D)

This looks like the only one.

Djoser puts one hand over his eyes and squints at the horizon. Slowly he turns around in a circle.

TAHEMET (CONT'D)

What is it?

DJOSER

We're at least a day's travel from home. Maybe a day and a half from Thebes on foot. We're going to need more water than that.

TAHEMET

Which way is home?

DJOSER

I don't know for sure. If we choose the wrong way we'll wander in the desert until we die.

TAHEMET

What if the thieves come back?

DJOSER
You might want to pray that they do.

BIRD'S EYE VIEW: DESERT -- MORNING

Tahemet and Djoser stand embracing, alone in the vast expanse of white desert.

EXT. TEMPLE OF KARNAK- THEBES -- EARLY MORNING

Prince Tuthmosis and Seti enter a dark holding-cell where Brother Avaret awaits sentencing. The priest, on his knees, prays to a small statue in the corner.

TUTHMOSIS
A thousand pardons for disturbing you,
Brother Avaret.

BROTHER AVARET
(turning)
You heard the sentence?

TUTHMOSIS
The Council has agreed on a *fitting*
death. I am most disgusted by all this.

BROTHER AVARET
I will die with my face to the sun.
Amun-Ra will soon welcome me into his
brilliant embrace.

SETI
Your heart will be weighed against
Ma'at's feather and you will be judged
worthy of Heaven. Of that, I have no
doubt.

BROTHER AVARET
I have accepted the sentence, Light of
Egypt. You, too, must accept.

TUTHMOSIS
You have a lighter heart than I do, my
friend.

BROTHER AVARET

My only consolation is that I was spared until Amun-Ra lifts his golden head into the sky. I cannot tell, is it almost time?

TUTHMOSIS

I have come to escort you to the Pavilion.

BROTHER AVARET

So, it is to be done in front of everyone?

TUTHMOSIS

I entreated the Council, but they would not be moved. Your *assassination* will be made public.

BROTHER AVARET

I am ready.

TUTHMOSIS

I will not forget you or the loyalty you have shown. You will be enshrined within my personal tomb in the Valley of the Kings.

BROTHER AVARET

But the sentence of shame. . .My name shall be erased from all memory.

TUTHMOSIS

I do not accept, nor will I forget.

BROTHER AVARET

You do me great honor, Your Majesty. Lead on. I am ready.

EXT. DESERT -- EARLY MORNING

Two injured men come staggering over a sand dune back into the campsite, one leaning heavily on the other. At the sight of Tahemet and Djoser, the healthier one shrieks with relief.

TRAVELER

Amun-Min be praised! He has spared us from the plight of our brothers!

He helps the other traveler lie down on a carpet and speaks to Tahemet and Djoser as they approach.

TRAVELER (CONT'D)

We barely escaped with our lives. All is lost otherwise, I see.

TAHEMET

May I examine your friend?

DJOSER

It's okay, she's a healer.

TRAVELER

Of course. He took quite a beating. I fear deeply for his health.

Tahemet kneels beside the injured man and begins to open his shirt. The man has a bleeding, open wound across his chest.

TAHEMET

I'd give anything for my supply kit. Djoser, see if you can find a white cloth anywhere. I'll give you a kiss if you can find me any herbs or honey.

TRAVELER

My brother will be all right, yes?

TAHEMET

His wounds are very serious, but I promise I will do all I can. Do you have any water?

The traveler pulls his wineskin from one hip and hands it to Tahemet.

TRAVELER

I'm afraid all I have is white beer.

Tahemet takes the wineskin and shakes it to see how much remains.

TAHEMET

This is even better. The cleansing alcohol is most effective.

Tahemet looks over at Djoser, who is rifling through the scattered baggage. She uncaps the wineskin and prepares to pour the liquid on the man's wound.

TAHEMET

Uhm, do me a favor and don't tell
Djoser about this.

TRAVELER

I understand. Some men cannot stand to
waste good beer.

TAHEMET

You'd better take your brother's
shoulders and help me hold him down.
He's not going to like this very much.

The traveler puts his arms around his brother's shoulders and
whispers comforting sounds into his ear. Tahemet takes a deep
breath and pours the beer across the man's chest.

TRAVELER #2

AAAHHHHHHH! AAAHHHHHHH! AAAHHHHHHHHHH!

Traveler #2 mercifully passes out.

Djoser runs back to the group with a white cloth clutched in
his hand.

DJOSER

What happened?

TRAVELER

My brother is suffering from the
effects of alcohol.

DJOSER

Oh, I'm sorry to hear that.

Tahemet hides the now empty wineskin under the carpet and takes
the white cloth from Djoser.

TAHEMET

Did you find any herbs?

DJOSER

Sorry, no honey either. But I did find
two more water bags. That should be
enough for the four of us, if we're
careful.

TRAVELER
(looking at the pile
of bodies)
Are there only four of us left? How
many are dead?

DJOSER
There are twelve here and no telling
if anyone else is outside of camp. We
should get going soon. Can your
brother walk?

Tahemet binds the man's wound the best she can with the cloth.

TAHEMET
We'll have to see when he wakes up.

TRAVELER
I'll carry him if I have to.

DJOSER
Which way do we need to go to get to
Thebes?

TRAVELER
(pointing)
This way.

DJOSER
Are you absolutely sure?

TRAVELER
Aren't you?

EXT. PAVILION IN THEBES -- MOMENTS LATER

Brother Avaret, led by Prince Tuthmosis and Seti, walks up a
set of stairs of a public platform.

The Council members are all lined up and the Queen and her
entourage have a makeshift court set up on stage. Surrounding
the platform spectators boo, hiss, and call for Brother Avaret's
execution.

PRIEST #2
Brother Avaret, High Priest of
Amun-Ra! You have been found guilty by
She-Who-Is-Always-Just. The sentence
for your crime is Death.

BROTHER AVARET
May Osiris hear my Negative Confession
in the great Hall of Judgment and
decide my fate!

Priest #2 snaps his fingers and two servants approach. One carries a wicker basket, the other a wooden case.

PRIEST #2
The council allows you to decide the
manner of your death.

Priest #2 snaps his fingers at the servants again. The one with the wooden case opens the lid. Inside is a long, wicked looking dagger.

The crowd screams its pleasure at the sight of the blade. Brother Avaret looks pale and sick.

PRIEST #2 (CONT'D)
You may choose either the blade. . .

Priest #2 gestures at the servant with the wicker basket. The servant lifts the lid. A cobra lifts its hooded head up out of the basket and fixes a sharp glare on Brother Avaret.

The crowd gasps and falls silent.

PRIEST #2 (CONT'D)
. . .or the serpent.

BROTHER AVARET
I am not a man who lives by the blade,
and therefore, I will not die by it.

Brother Avaret rips his robes open exposing his bare chest, reaches out, pulls the hissing snake from the basket and slams it to his heart. The startled snake bites Brother Avaret and poisons him.

Brother Avaret drops the snake and falls into Prince Tuthmosis' waiting arms. The priest begins to convulse and froth at the mouth.

Behind them, a servant quickly scoops the angry snake into a basket.

Prince Tuthmosis directs a meaningful glare at Queen Hatshepsut while his friend dies in his arms.

EXT. DESERT -- DAY

Tahemet, Djoser, and the two travelers stagger across the hot desert. They carry weapons and waterskins they've salvaged. The wounded traveler leans heavily on his brother.

TAHEMET
Can we stop for a minute?

DJOSER
Are you okay?

TAHEMET
I'm fine, but I feel like I should check his wounds again.

DJOSER
Tia, there's nothing more you can do for him. You know that, don't you?

TAHEMET
I know. I've been having a lot of bad luck lately with my patients. Did you hear that Iset's mother and babe died?

DJOSER
No, I didn't know. I'm sure that you and Nefari did all that you could to save her, though.

TAHEMET
I need more training, or else I need to just give this up. I can't continue watching people die and feeling so helpless to stop it.

DJOSER
You'll talk to the Queen and get permission to train. Don't give up now.

The wounded traveler lets out a low moan and falls to the ground, pulling his brother down with him. The two men roll down a sand dune. Tahemet and Djoser hurry down to them.

Djoser helps the traveler to his feet. Tahemet rolls the wounded traveler over.

TAHEMET
He's unconscious! Give me some water.

Djoser pours a little water on a cloth and Tahemet wipes the man's face with it. The man has turned a pale gray color.

TAHEMET (CONT'D)
He doesn't look too good.

Tahemet and Djoser look at each other over the wounded man.

At the top of the next rise, a creature appears behind Tahemet. Bigger than a horse, the creature has a tawny lion body, great falcon wings, and the head of a female human. It is a **SPHINX**.

SPHINX
Well, well, well. Look what the cat
dragged in.

TRAVELER
(pulling his weapon
and pointing)
Sphinx!

SPHINX
You really don't want to do that,
mortal.

Djoser pulls Tahemet over the wounded man and stands in front of her. He also pulls his sword.

The Sphinx steps casually down the dune toward the group.

SPHINX (CONT'D)
I see that you've brought me an
offering. And just in time for lunch.

TRAVELER
Stay away from my brother, monster!

SPHINX
Such names, such names. You venture
into *my* domain and make demands, do
you?

DJOSER
We were unaware these were your lands.
We simply want to pass through.

The Sphinx circles lion-like around the wounded man. She stops in front of Tahemet and sits down on her haunches.

SPHINX

No one passes through my domain
without my permission.

Tahemet stares at the Sphinx thoughtfully. She gestures to the two men to lower their weapons.

TAHEMET

Mighty Sphinx. Would you grant
permission to pass to four lost
travelers?

SPHINX

Clever girl. I will consider your
request.

The Sphinx closes her emerald green eyes and sits very still. Finally, she opens her eyes again.

SPHINX (CONT'D)

First you will each answer me a riddle.
If your answer is correct, you will
pass unharmed.

TAHEMET

And if we're wrong?

SPHINX

Oh, then I will eat you.

The Sphinx stretches her jaws wide, revealing sharp lion-like teeth. Her emerald eyes glow. She closes her mouth and giggles child-like.

Tahemet turns to Djoser and the traveler, silently seeking their agreement. Both men nod to her reluctantly.

TAHEMET

We accept. I will go first.

SPHINX

Your riddle is this: If you break me,
I do not stop working. If you touch me,
I may be snared. If you lose me,
nothing will matter. What am I?

TAHEMET

If you break me, I do not stop working.
If you touch me, I may be snared. If
you lose me, nothing will matter. What
am I?

SPHINX

Think hard, clever one. Your next speech will be your answer.

Tahemet looks to Djoser, thinking hard.

The traveler tugs on Djoser's arm. Djoser looks at him.

TRAVELER

My brother cannot answer for himself.

DJOSER

I didn't think of that.

TRAVELER

What am I going to do?

Tahemet looks at both of the men, then turns to the Sphinx.

TAHEMET

The answer is: the heart.

SPHINX

Very good. You are correct and you have my permission to pass through my domain unharmed.

DJOSER

Mighty Sphinx, our fellow traveler cannot answer for himself. Will you allow one of us to answer for him?

The Sphinx closes her emerald eyes once again. She opens them and answers.

SPHINX

His brother may answer for him. One riddle. One answer. Two lives.

Djoser steps protectively in front of Tahemet. The traveler turns to the Sphinx to receive his question.

TRAVELER

I'm ready.

SPHINX

Your riddle is this: I'm the part of the bird that is not in the sky. I can swim in the ocean and yet remain dry. What am I?

TRAVELER

I'm the part of the bird that's not in the sky. I can swim in the ocean and yet remain dry. What am I?

SPHINX

Answer clearly and save both yourself and your brother.

The traveler looks around nervously. He stares at his brother on the ground, turns his eyes to Tahemet and Djoser who both shrug and shake their heads. The traveler begins to sweat heavily.

TRAVELER

The answer is:

The traveler hurls himself at the Sphinx, slashing at it with his sword. The Sphinx dodges, laughing, and swipes the man across the back with her great claw.

TRAVELER (CONT'D)

Auugh!

The Sphinx turns to face the man, her back to Djoser and Tahemet.

SPHINX

Oh yes. I do love to play.

The Sphinx makes a couple of half-hearted strikes at the traveler. He dodges the first strike, but the second catches his hand, causing him to drop his sword. The Sphinx eyes her prey and wickedly whispers at him.

SPHINX (CONT'D)

Run.

The man turns to run. The great cat leaps for him. Djoser throws his spear.

The Sphinx lands on the traveler, all four of her huge claws ripping into his flesh.

Djoser's spear hits its mark, stabbing the creature just below the shoulder. The Sphinx roars.

SFX: Lion Roar

The cat turns and advances on the group while the spear sticks out of her back. Djoser quickly readies his sword and shield.

SPHINX

You think to kill me, foolish mortal?

The Sphinx strikes at Djoser. He blocks the blow with his shield but the force of the blow sends him flying through the air. Djoser lands hard and his sword flies from his hand.

The Sphinx advances on him.

SPHINX (CONT'D)

You pitiful little. . .

The Sphinx stumbles and shakes her head, confused. Djoser leaps to his feet, grabs his sword and charges at the beast.

The wounded Sphinx turns to meet the charge. Djoser buries his blade into the Sphinx's neck and with a powerful jerk rips out her throat.

The Sphinx falls lifeless to the ground.

EXT. PAVILION IN THEBES -- MOMENTS LATER

Servants come and take Brother Avaret's dead body from Prince Tuthmosis.

PRIEST #2

(raising his arms)

Justice has been done here today!

The Council and Royalty (except Tuthmosis) all applaud. The crowds shriek their pleasure. Prince Tuthmosis walks to the edge of the platform and addresses the crowd.

TUTHMOSIS

People of Egypt! You have come here to witness the results of betrayal.

(he shoots a nasty glare at the Queen)

I pray that your hearts will be lightened with the news I share with you now.

The crowd stills and Prince Tuthmosis finally has their full attention.

TUTHMOSIS (CONT'D)

Many of you are aware of the trials the Crown has faced in recent days.

The crowd murmurs and stirs. A few brave souls snicker at the mention of Tuthmosis' kidnapping.

TUTHMOSIS

Indeed, there has been much *activity*
in the courts recently.

Queen Hatshepsut, suddenly interested in Prince Tuthmosis's speech, sits on the edge of her seat.

TUTHMOSIS (CONT'D)

However, many of you may not be aware
that the Council has been most
forthcoming with aid to the Crown, in
this our hour of need.

Queen Hatshepsut rises and walks forward to Prince Tuthmosis' side. She carries a Shepherd's Crook which marks her authority. She bangs the staff on the platform three times.

HATSHEPSUT

Praises be given to the Council!

The Council members rise and the crowd cheers wildly for them. They each bow to the crowd in acknowledgement.

TUTHMOSIS

(whispers to
Hatshepsut)
What do you think you are doing?

HATSHEPSUT

(whispers back
through a fake smile)
Stopping you from making a fool of
yourself, yet again.

Tuthmosis raises his arms to draw the crowd's attention.

TUTHMOSIS

Because of recent events, it has come
to my attention that Thebes is in dire
need of a private army. The Council has
graciously offered to house my new
army at the Temple of Karnak.

Queen Hatshepsut smiles graciously, though she's mad as a hornet.

HATSHEPSUT

What the Prince means to say is that my new army will be *trained* at the Temple of Karnak but, of course, will remain under *Palace authority*.

The crowd, increasingly confused, cheers again.

TUTHMOSIS

As your future Pharaoh, I will train the men with the knowledge I bring from Dendara. *I* will lead these men with the best interests of Thebes in all our hearts!

The crowd cheers wildly once more. Thwarted, Queen Hatshepsut steps back to her throne. Before she sits, she addresses the crowd once again.

HATSHEPSUT

Your Queen declares this day a holiday! Let the Feasts be set and the merriment begin!

SFX: Somewhere a band begins to play upbeat music.

The crowd disperses in high spirits as Tuthmosis smirks at Queen Hatshepsut. She glares daggers back at him. He walks off the platform and disappears into the crowd with his men following.

ACT FIVE

EXT. DESERT -- DAY

Djoser wipes his bloody sword on the Sphinx's dead body.

Tahemet runs to check on the wounded traveler. The man lies on his stomach with long claw marks on each arm and leg. The wounds, ragged and bloody, appear even worse than his brother's wounds.

The man's hands shake as he tries to reach out to Tahemet.

TAHEMET

Oh, you foolish man! What were you thinking?

TRAVELER

Help me, please.

Djoser walks over to them. Tahemet, on her knees next to the traveler, shares a hopeless look with Djoser.

DJOSER
I'll get his brother.

Djoser goes back to the brother and picks him up. The man remains mercifully unconscious. Djoser carries him up to the others and lays him on the ground.

TAHEMET
These men cannot travel.

DJOSER
I see that. Yet, we cannot remain here.

TAHEMET
I agree. You must go and bring back help.

DJOSER
Absolutely not.

Tahemet stands and takes Djoser by the arm. They walk off a short ways.

TAHEMET
I can't just leave them!

DJOSER
Tia! They're going to die. And if I leave you out here, you'll die too.

TAHEMET
Leave us one of the bags of water and take the other for yourself. There should be plenty.

DJOSER
Forget it. I'm not leaving you here.

TAHEMET
Then we will all die.

DJOSER
No. If I have to, I'll kill them.

Tahemet stares at Djoser in shock.

TAHEMET
You wouldn't do that!

DJOSER

I would. For all we know there are more
Sphinxes out here. And you're the
only one who is guaranteed safe
passage.

TAHEMET

(seriously)

Then you should stay here to protect
them and I should bring back help
myself. You're right, that might be
better.

Tahemet turns to leave, but Djoser takes her by the elbow.

DJOSER

Has the sun baked your brain already?
You're not going off alone, Tia!

TAHEMET

Look, I'm not just abandoning them! If
you won't stay, then I will. That's
final.

Tahemet stalks back to the wounded men. Djoser stares at her
in disbelief.

TRAVELER

My brother! I can't see him!

Tahemet puts the men's hands together. This seems to comfort
the wounded traveler a bit.

TAHEMET

Calm down, my friend. All will be well
soon.

Tahemet tears a piece of white cloth from her skirt, wets it
with water and places it on the traveler's forehead. She makes
gentle shushing sounds to him.

Djoser walks back to the group.

DJOSER

(to the traveler)

Help will be here soon.

TRAVELER

We cannot go on! You must leave us.

DJOSER
We've already discussed it. Just don't
lose hope, and someone will come soon
with aid.

Tahemet looks to Djoser, both grateful and worried. Djoser picks
up his sword and shield and slings the bag of water over his
shoulder. Tahemet rises and walks to his side.

TAHEMET
Djo, thank you for doing this.

DJOSER
(hugs her)
I hope you can forgive me someday.

TAHEMET
(hugs back)
Of course, I know you're only doing
what you have to do.

DJOSER
(tilts her chin up)
I am.

Tahemet raises her chin and closes her eyes in anticipation of
a kiss from Djoser.

Instead, Djoser knocks her out with one quick punch. He does
not drop her, just scoops her over his other shoulder, and walks
off without looking back at the wounded men.

INT. TEMPLE OF KARNAK- THEBES -- AFTERNOON

A large room inside the Temple has been set up for the ARMY
VOLUNTEERS. Prince Tuthmosis sits behind a large table with Seti
and several other of his officers.

A long line of men wait to sign up for the Army. The men are
a rag-tag bunch. They seem to be from all walks of life, though
most appear to be young men in their twenties. Many carry their
own weapons.

Each man signs several papers, then sits in a cordoned-off
section awaiting instructions.

SETI
(leaning toward
Tuthmosis)
My Lord, the response is overwhelming!

TUTHMOSIS

I'm very pleased, Seti. And this is only the beginning.

SETI

Brother Avaret had more supporters than he realized.

TUTHMOSIS

A good thing, too. Without Brother Dayzar and the others, we'd never have been able to accommodate so many so soon.

SETI

The officers have drawn up a work detail. These men will first be housed inside the Temple. Tomorrow, they will begin working on a barracks to house the others.

TUTHMOSIS

Did Brother Dayzar show you where the training fields will be?

SETI

Yes, and we mapped out the barracks to face the arena.

TUTHMOSIS

Brother Dayzar is in grave danger for helping us.

A tall man, **JET**, 20's, signs his papers and begins to walk away. He stops in front of the Prince and Seti, bows slightly.

TUTHMOSIS (CONT'D)

Welcome, friend.

JET

Future Pharoah, it is a great honor to serve you.

Pleased, Tuthmosis nods at the young man. Jet is extremely muscular and looks like he will make fine soldiering material. He carries a wicked-looking axe slung on his hip.

TUTHMOSIS

You do me a great honor, Son of Egypt.

Jet bows slightly, crosses his right arm over his chest, and touches his bent middle and pointer fingers over his heart. The action resembles a snakebite.

JET
We had mutual friends.

Jet stands upright and walks away to join the other volunteers.

TUTHMOSIS
(to Seti)
What was that?

SETI
Earlier, I saw a man gesture this way to me, but I thought nothing of it. It appears Brother Avaret had many supporters outside of the Council as well.

TUTHMOSIS
(amused)
And here I thought all these people came to support me.

SETI
Oh, they did. Make no mistake about that, my Lord. They did.

EXT. DESERT -- EVENING

Djoser walks across the desert. A few feet behind him, a bruised-jawed Tahemet glares daggers at his back. He climbs to the top of a sand dune and leans back to her, extending one hand to help her up.

Tahemet ignores his offer of help and staggers her way up on her own.

DJOSER
Oh, come on, Tia!

She sulks past him without speaking and stumbles down the hill.

DJOSER (CONT'D)
You know it's getting pretty boring without anyone to talk to.

Tahemet keeps walking.

Djoser sits down at the top of the next rise. He lays out his weapons, pointing the tip of his sword in the direction they were walking in.

The sunset behind him glows a brilliant orange. Djoser drinks a little from the water bag and leisurely pulls out a fist-sized, cloth-wrapped package from his pocket.

Tahemet walks back up the hill to where he sits. She seems to be about to yell at him, until her eyes land on:

A CHUNK OF BREAD AND CHEESE

Djoser smiles up at her and takes a bite.

DJOSER (CONT'D)

Oh, hi.

Tahemet falls to her knees beside him.

TAHEMET

Where? What? How did you...?

DJOSER

Want some?

Tahemet eagerly takes a portion of bread and stuffs it in her mouth. They take turns drinking a little from the water bag.

TAHEMET

A shadow.

DJOSER

What?

TAHEMET

The answer to the Sphinx's question.
It was a shadow.

Djoser silently finishes his bread, wipes his hand on his knee and stretches out on the ground next to his weapons. Reluctantly, Tahemet lies down beside him.

DJOSER

It had to be done, Tia.

TAHEMET

I'm still mad.

DJOSER

I know.

Exhausted, they fall asleep as the sun sets.

LATER, Djoser sits up suddenly. The sky is full dark now, but the stars shine brightly in the clear sky. Unsure of what awakened him, Djoser stands and looks around. Tahemet sleeps on the ground nearby.

Farther down in the desert, we see many lit torches surrounding a few impromptu tents.

SFX: THE FAINT SOUND OF DRUMS AND OTHER MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

In the darkness, a few shadowy figures flit around inside the campsite.

Djoser watches for a bit and looks down at Tahemet, clearly unsure whether he should wake her. He continues to watch the camp. A few figures on camels patrol the area.

Tahemet wakes and joins Djoser. She rubs her bare shoulders.

TAHEMET

It's cold out. What are you doing?

She sees the camp. An expression of joy lights on her face.

TAHEMET (CONT'D)

Look! We're saved!

Djoser stops her from running down the sand dune.

DJOSER

I don't think so.

TAHEMET

What?

DJOSER

Doesn't look like a caravan to me.

TAHEMET

How can you tell? I see some wagons.

DJOSER

Those could be our own caravan's wagons, though.

TAHEMET

Oh, come on, Djo! You're just being paranoid. Look, they're having a party!

DJOSER

Celebrating their victory, most likely.

TAHEMET

They have food! Blankets! Maybe medical supplies. Don't you want to go back and help those men?

DJOSER

I do, Tia. But what if they're the raiders?

TAHEMET

This is a huge desert and the raiders are long gone!

DJOSER

Look, if these people are simple travelers, then that means we aren't far from town.

TAHEMET

So? You want to walk all that way in the morning?

(pointing)

When clearly one of those horses could carry us?

DJOSER

I don't think we should risk it.

Djoser goes back to his sword and looks at it. The tip points right at the spot where the campsite lies.

DJOSER (CONT'D)

We'll just keep going the way we have been.

TAHEMET

I can't believe you!

Djoser lies back down.

DJOSER

If those are the raiders, they'll kill us long before we can talk them into giving us a horse.

TAHEMET

I'm not waiting.

Djoser looks at her, a note of warning enters his voice.

DJOSER

Do I need to *persuade* you like I did earlier?

Point taken, Tahemet slumps to the ground.

TAHEMET

I don't even know you anymore.

Djoser rolls over and closes his eyes.

INT. EGYPTIAN TEMPLE -- NIGHT

Queen Hatshepsut enters the temple, carrying a small flax-basket. Despite the late hour, she wears elaborate garb, and her make-up has been freshly applied. She passes between golden columns that glitter in the torchlight.

The temple walls bear large MIRRORS and her reflection multiplies many times over as she travels through the hall.

The decorations under and around the mirrors contain depictions of: cows, a cow-headed woman, a woman with cow-horns and a sun disk between them, and a woman with cow-ears.

A tall female statue stands on a raised dais at the end of the hall. Hatshepsut kneels in front of it.

HATSHEPSUT

O Beautiful Hathor! Mother Goddess!

Hatshepsut removes small glittering objects from the basket and sets them on the steps of the dais as she speaks.

HATSHEPSUT (CONT'D)

Lady of Malachite! Lady of Turquoise,
Gold, and Copper! Hear me, O Divine
One!

A female voice speaks from the statue.

HATHOR (O.S.)

Who comes at such a late hour?

HATSHEPSUT

My Lady, 'tis I, Queen Hatshepsut.

HATHOR (O.S.)

To disturb my beauty sleep is a great
thing, Queen Regent.

HATSHEPSUT

(meekly)

It is a trespass I most humbly regret,
O Lady of Love, but I have great need
of your counsel.

HATHOR (O.S.)

Very well.

Hathor steps slowly out of her statue. Her feet emerge as cow's hooves but morph into long, shapely female legs.

Her body appears voluptuously female; her straight hair is parted down the middle and flipped up at the ends, crowned by two COW HORNS with a revolving sun disk floating between them.

HATSHEPSUT

Forgive me, Great Mother.

HATHOR

(yawning)

I've been feasting and dancing all day. But then you knew that since you declared the holiday.

HATSHEPSUT

I did. Was it a joyous celebration?

HATHOR

As always. But you did not come to discuss the party, did you?

HATSHEPSUT

(clearly in awe of
Hathor)

No, My Lady. May I have permission to speak my heart?

HATHOR

Speak, my child.

HATSHEPSUT

Tonight, as I lay in my bedchamber sleeping, I was visited with a dream such as I have never experienced before. I know that your powers of interpretation are wondrous, and to you alone I have come to claim meaning.

HATHOR

Most intriguing. Do go on.

HATSHEPSUT

In my dream, the God Amun-Ra took the form of my noble Father. He found my mother sleeping in her room. When the pleasant odors that preceded him announced his presence, she awoke.

HATHOR

And then?

HATSHEPSUT

He gave her his heart and showed himself in his godlike splendour. When he approached her, she wept for joy at his strength and beauty, and he gave her his love. . .

Hathor steps around Hatshepsut and studies her own reflection in the nearest mirror. She smooths her make-up while she debates her advice.

HATHOR

Do you believe this dream was of your conception?

HATSHEPSUT

I know not, Great Mother.

Hathor studies Hatshepsut's reflection in the mirror. The proud Queen still kneels, looking meek and childlike.

HATHOR

Do you realize the implications if it is true?

HATSHEPSUT

It would mean that I am the Daughter of Amun, not my own King-Father's.

Hathor walks over to Hatshepsut, takes her by the hand and raises her to her feet.

HATHOR

You must repeat this vision to the Oracle in the Temple of Amun. Only the Oracle can give you the truth. Speak to no one besides Hapuseneb, the High Priest of Amun. He will direct you to the Oracle.

HATSHEPSUT
(kisses Hathor's
hand)
Thank you, Great Mother.

HATHOR
Anytime, child. I see wondrous things
in your future, but you must hold tight
to your Self and not go wandering in
circles which have no end.

HATSHEPSUT
I shall try. Do you know if the path
I am traveling is the right one for me?

Hathor gently lays one hand on Hatshepsut's tear-stained cheek.

HATHOR
We cannot travel any path that is not
our own. You possess strength, wit,
and courage. And my confidence in you
is boundless.

Reassured, Queen Hatshepsut straightens her shoulders and looks
Hathor in the eyes for the first time.

HATSHEPSUT
Thank you.

INT. TEMPLE OF KARNAK- THEBES -- SAME NIGHT

Prince Tuthmosis, Brother Dayzar, Seti, Jet, and three other
soldiers sit around a circular table in the Prince's chambers.
The men drink out of large pottery mugs and appear to be having
a "wake" of sorts for Brother Avaret.

Jet, the dark Nubian, raises a pitcher and offers the contents
to the soldier next to him.

JET
More beer, Nafti?

NAFTI
(slams his mug in
front of Jet)
Do the Gods have beards, my friend?

JET
(pouring)
Only some of the female ones.

SETI
(to Brother Dayzar)
Brother Avaret will have a glorious
afterlife. Our only fear is that
others will suffer because of this.

BROTHER DAYZAR
Fear not, good son. Fear not. We are
all of us clearly aware of the danger.
And yet. . .
(gesturing to the
others)
. . .we will stand together.

Brother Dayzar stands with his mug held high. The other men
follow suit.

TUTHMOSIS
To Brother Avaret! To
brothers-in-arms! To Egypt!

All toast and drink. Prince Tuthmosis sits down while the others
remain standing.

SETI
My lord, the men and I wanted to show
you something. To show you our
commitment to your cause.

Seti nods to the men and they all pull their shirts open. Each
man has a COBRA-HEAD TATTOO on his chest, directly over the
heart.

Prince Tuthmosis stares at them in shock. They wait patiently
for his reaction. Slowly, he smiles and lifts his mug to them.

TUTHMOSIS
I have got to get one of those.

EXT. DESERT -- SAME NIGHT

Djoser sleeps peacefully on the sand. Tahemet looks at him
briefly, stands and rubs her shoulders for warmth. She looks
down at the CAMPSITE.

The area remains full of activity. Shadowy silhouettes dance
about the campfire to the sound of: BEATING DRUMS and
TAMBOURINES.

Bigger shadows mill about near the tents. The sound of: ANIMALS settling down for the night.

Tahemet seems truly torn between staying there or going down to the camp. She throws one last worried glance at Djoser. Silently, she walks down the dune toward the camp.

ACT SIX

INT. PALACE -- SAME NIGHT

Queen Hatshepsut sweeps into her bedchambers. Senmut, her lover, greets her with a long kiss.

SENMUT

What did Hathor say? Did it work?

HATSHEPSUT

(smiling
victoriously)

Of course. Did you dare to doubt me?

Senmut sweeps her off her feet. Hatshepsut lets out a girlish giggle and they disappear behind her bedcurtains.

INT. TEMPLE OF KARNAK- THEBES -- SAME NIGHT

Prince Tuthmosis downs his mug of beer. The secret society members cluster around as a FEMALE ARTIST busily creates a matching tattoo on Prince Tuthmosis's chest. The men are drunk and rowdy now.

Laughing, Jet sweeps the startled woman into his arms and twirls her about.

JET

You know too much, little woman. I'll have to marry you now to keep you quiet.

Jet sets the servant woman down. Tightening her lips, she ignores the men and returns to her work.

SOLDIER #1

I'll give you my own wife, Jet. Maybe you could keep *her* quiet for awhile.

The men laugh and continue to tease and joke.

EXT. DESERT -- SAME NIGHT

Djoser wakes up alone in the desert. Squinting, he looks around for Tahemet. When he sees her footprints in the sand leading away, he curses.

DJOSER

Damn. ..woman.

He jumps to his feet, grabs his weapons and the waterbag, and stumbles down the hill after her.

EXT. DESERT CAMPSITE -- SAME NIGHT

Tahemet approaches the front of the campsite. She appears apprehensive about walking up to it, but does not go back to Djoser either. She looks back over her shoulder and sees nothing but sand and clear night sky. She walks on.

The bellydancers circle round the campfire with a large audience of cheering, drunken men lounging around.

A DRUNK MAN suddenly catches hold of Tahemet's arm, startling her.

DRUNK MAN

(slurring)

Whatcher doin' out here for?

TAHEMET

Excuse me?

DRUNK MAN

Yer one of the new one's aren'tcha?

TAHEMET

I came for help. I. . .I need help.

DRUNK MAN

Boz wants all the new ones in his tent.

(pushes her toward the
biggest tent)

Yer not supposed to be wanderin'!

TAHEMET

All right. I'm going.

She walks hurriedly toward the tent and away from the drunk man. Skirting the campfire and the rowdy men, Tahemet pauses outside the tent, wary about her decision. She takes a deep breath and ducks under the flap.

Inside the brightly lit tent, four women huddle together in one corner. They have been crying and appear very frightened. By their dress it appears they are upstanding ladies, not ladies of the night.

Three men cluster around another big man. The big man is lying on his stomach on a heavy table, an arrow protruding from his beefy haunch. We recognize him as Boz from earlier.

BOZ

Just pull it out already! No. Don't yank on it. That hurts!

DOCTOR

I will, Boz. Okay, Boz. Whatever you say.

BOZ

Just leave me alone!

The men back away from the table, quickly. Boz groans loudly. The doctor gestures for the men to come with him. They do not see Tahemet standing at the flap and come closer to her.

DOCTOR

(whispering)

We have to get that arrow out no matter what he says. By tomorrow it will fester and rot.

MAN

Can't you just knock him out or something?

DOCTOR

I have some herbs, some Wolfsbane and Antimony ought to do it. It's tricky, but if I steep it in ground cherry pits it will put him to sleep.

Horrified at what she heard, Tahemet steps forward.

TAHEMET

You can't do that! You'll kill him for sure!

The startled men look at her blankly.

DOCTOR
(pointing to the other
corner)
Get back over there, woman! You have
no right to interfere!

TAHEMET
But if you give him that potion he'll
die!

BOZ
What's that? Plotting my destruction,
ehh? I knew it!

Boz tries to pull himself off the table, grumbling all the while.

BOZ (CONT'D)
Lousy, no good jackels. . .the minute
I show any sign of weakness.

Tahemet ignores the men and rushes to Boz. She gently takes him
by the shoulders and makes him lie back down.

TAHEMET
There now. It's all right, I'm going
to help you.

BOZ
(crying like a baby)
Bunch of cowards! I've been like this
all day.

TAHEMET
I know. Relax now, let me take a look
at it.

The doctor and men stare at her in shock. Tahemet points to the
doctor.

TAHEMET (CONT'D)
You there. Bring honey, gauze, a
needle and some thread.

Tahemet points to the other two men.

TAHEMET (CONT'D)
You two bring a sharp knife and some
strong beer or wine. The strongest you
have.

BOZ
Do what she says! Before I have you
executed!

The men rush out of the tent to do her bidding.

BOZ (CONT'D)
Thank you, blessed girl. I could
really use a drink.

TAHEMET
Unfortunately for you, it's going down
the other end. You just relax now.

Alone in the tent with just Boz and the women, Tahemet looks around at all the treasures inside. She shakes her head at the rolls of fine woven carpet stacked in the corner as if realizing that Djoser was right.

BOZ
Where did you come from?

TAHEMET
I shouldn't be here. I came from the
desert in search of help.

Ripping a clean cloth from a nearby roll of fine linen, Tahemet gently grasps the shaft of the arrow. Pointing at the back of the tent, she shouts.

TAHEMET (CONT'D)
Look over there!

BOZ
(rising to his knees)
What!?

Swiftly, Tahemet yanks the arrow, head and all with a small squishing sound.

BOZ (CONT'D)
Aaaahh! Oh!

She slaps the cloth over the jagged wound as Boz slumps back onto the table.

TAHEMET
Never mind. Feeling any better, yet?

BOZ
Augh! Actually, yes. It still hurts
though.

The men rush into the tent holding the things she'd asked for.

TAHEMET

Yes well, your drink is here.

The doctor sees that the arrow has been removed. He tries to shove past her and regain his position.

DOCTOR

What mischief have you caused here, woman?

BOZ

Don't you dare touch me, you charlatan! You've almost killed me before and I won't let you try it again!

DOCTOR

But Boz, I'm only trying to help you.

BOZ

Help me into my tomb? Get out.

The doctor gives Tahemet a dirty glare and storms out of the tent. The other two turn to follow him.

TAHEMET

Oh, no you don't! Come back here, you two. I need you to hold him still while I stitch this up.

The men hesitate.

BOZ

What are you waiting for? Do what she says, you dust-puppies!

TAHEMET

Here drink this.

She takes a mug of beer from the first man and hands it to Boz. While he downs it, she takes the bottle of wine from the other man and pours it directly on his wound.

BOZ

Curse the Gods, Woman!

Figuring who he is and what he has done this day, Tahemet shows little mercy.

TAHEMET

Sorry. I've heard it helps draw the
poisons out.

Gesturing to the men to take their positions, she threads a
needle and begins to sew.

BOZ

It will be good to have a competent
physician around.

TAHEMET

Oh, I can't stay. I have to be getting
on to Thebes.

BOZ

You'll stay while I have need of you.

Jabbing the needle into his flesh harder than necessary, Tahemet
looks over at the scared women. Secretly, she slips the sharp
dagger into her pocket.

TAHEMET

I'll stay while there is need.

EXT. DESERT CAMPSITE -- MOMENTS LATER

Djoser sneaks through the campsite from the backside. Several
smaller tents dot the area around the big tent. The bonfire
illuminates the center of camp. Djoser sidles up to the big tent,
hiding in its shadows and looks for Tahemet.

The doctor stomps out of the tent and Djoser pulls back.

DOCTOR

Interfering woman! What does she know
about proper medicine?

DJOSER

(nods his head,
whispers)

Tia.

Djoser pulls a dagger and prepares to walk around the front of
the tent. Before he moves, a couple of drunken THIEVES come
around the other corner. Their arms wrapped about each other's
shoulders, they each hold a sloshing mug of alcohol.

THIEVES

(singing, off-key)

Ohhh, she took the boy into her Temple
and he came out again a MAN! mmmhmmhmm
He went so far, it happen'd so fast
mmmmm. . .

One of the men breaks off from the song and points across the campsite.

THIEF #1

HEY! You there!

Djoser peers at what the thief points at, which happens to be one of the men on guard duty.

THIEF #1 (CONT'D)

It's a party! How come you're not singing?

The two drunks stumble off in that direction while the guard scowls at them.

Djoser flattens himself against the tent, but the guard does not notice him. Looking at the area the guard stands in, Djoser's gaze lands on: A MAKESHIFT CAGE.

Made from scrap wood and chariot wheels, the cage has been roped together. Inside are several bound and gagged men, lying on the ground.

Djoser sidles around the campsite to the cage, sticking to the shadows as much as possible. While the guard's attention gets diverted by the drunks, he reaches into the cage and shakes one of the sleeping men by the shoulder.

The PRISONER looks at him fearfully, firelight flickering in his eyes. Djoser leans out, pulls the gag down, then crouches back next to an overturned cart.

PRISONER

(whispering)

Amun-Min be praised! Djoser, is that you?

DJOSER

Yes, it is, Kentar. I survived the caravan attack.

KENTAR

My carpets, they have stolen everything. I am made captive and I fear I shall never see home again.

DJOSER

I'm going to get you all out of here.

Djoser looks at the guard, who still argues with the partyers, trying to get them to go away.

KENTAR

(whispering)

How will you do this?

DJOSER

Turn your back to the side of the cage.

Kentar rolls over, his bound hands behind him. Djoser leans forward and with a jerk of his dagger, cuts the ropes. He presses the dagger into Kentar's hand.

DJOSER (CONT'D)

Take this to free the others, but make no noise yet. I've got a plan.

INT. BOZ'S TENT -- CONTINUOUS

Tahemet washes her hands in a small basin and listens to Boz list off his symptoms and complaints. The big man reclines comfortably on a pile of plush pillows, his bandaged buttock turned up in the air.

BOZ

And then there's my failing eyesight. That charlatan wanted to drip bat's blood in my eyes! Does that sound right to you?

TAHEMET

I should think not. Did you let him do it?

BOZ

Would have, but so far we haven't found a fresh bat.

Tahemet dumps the dirty water, places the surgical implements into the basin, and pours the rest of the alcohol over them.

BOZ (CONT'D)

And then there's this.

Disinterestedly, Tahemet looks to see what he means. She finds Boz pointing inside his mouth with one meaty finger.

TAHEMET

Your mouth?

BOZ

I have a tooth worm.

TAHEMET

I seriously doubt you have a tooth worm. I've never heard of such a thing.

BOZ

Stinks so bad sometimes the whores won't kiss me.

TAHEMET

(shuddering at the thought)

Well, I suppose I could make you some breath pellets. That might help a little.

BOZ

What's that?

TAHEMET

Ground up spices such as myrhh, cinnamon, mint, and willow-bark boiled with honey and shaped into pellets. They'll sweeten your breath and help alleviate some of the pain.

BOZ

(smiling)

Oh, I'll bet the whores will like that.

TAHEMET

I'm sure they would.

EXT. DESERT CAMPSITE -- CONTINUOUS

The guard finally gets the annoying drunks to head back to the bonfire. When they move far enough away, Djoser slaps his hand on the cart and laughs drunkenly. The guard turns his attention to Djoser.

DJOSER
Whoo! What a party!

GUARD
You there! Back off from the
prisoners!

DJOSER
You think you're a big enough man to
make me?

Djoser laughs again and pretends to stumble against the cart.
Hand on his sword, the guard stomps over to the shadows.

GUARD
You damnable drunks!

The instant the guard enters the shadows, Djoser pulls his sword
and runs him through. He grasps the guard and drags him into
the dark. After struggling in the dark a bit, Djoser emerges,
wearing part of the guards' clothing and his floppy wig.

KENTAR
Is that you?

DJOSER
It's me, old friend; cut the others
free. Quietly now.

Djoser takes the guard's former position and mimicks his stance.
Kentar frees the other prisoners and tries to keep them quiet.
One of the prisoners glares at Djoser's back, thinking him the
guard.

PRISONER
Let me out of here. I'm going to kill
that son of a whore!

KENTAR
(whispering)
No!

Kentar tries to placate the prisoner, but before he can explain
anything the prisoner grabs Kentar's dagger and hurls it through
the cage at Djoser's back. The jagged blade sticks in and Djoser
crumples silently to the ground.

INT. PHAROAH'S PALACE IN THEBES -- SAME NIGHT

Hatshepsut, wrapped in her silky bedsheets, lies tangled up with
her lover. She rests her head on his bare shoulder and twirls
one lock of her hair.

HATSHEPSUT

So, then I recounted the dream to her and she advised me to tell the Oracle of Amun about it.

SENMUT

You really had this dream?

Staring at him suspiciously, she answers.

HATSHEPSUT

Well, of course, I did. Perhaps I wasn't actually *asleep* when I had it. But that just makes it a vision instead of a dream, does it not?

SENMUT

(chuckling)

That's what I love about you, not bothered a bit by trivialities.

HATSHEPSUT

What exactly does that mean?

Senmut takes her hair-twirling hand, lifts it to his lips and trails light kisses up her wrist.

SENMUT

It means, my love, that you are single-minded and focused. Nothing you do is without purpose and I feel pity for anyone who does not fall into your agenda.

Hatshepsut narrows her eyes slightly at his words, but as he continues to kiss her up her arm, she smiles and rolls over on him, pinning him to the bed. Seductively rubbing her body against his, she kisses him.

HATSHEPSUT

Right now you are on my agenda.

Senmut runs his hand through her black hair, pulling her head down to his. He whispers against her mouth and devours her lips in a passionate kiss.

SENMUT

Poor, poor me.

(CONT'D)

INT. DESERT CAMPSITE -- MOMENTS LATER

Kentar stares in horror at Djoser's limp form. The other prisoners make short work of the makeshift cage. They lift the heavy structure, slip under it, and most run off into the night.

The prisoner who stabbed Djoser motions for Kentar to follow.

PRISONER

Come, old man. Let us fly!

KENTAR

What have I done? Oh!

Slowly, Kentar ducks under the cage. The prisoner takes off, but Kentar kneels by Djoser's side.

KENTAR (CONT'D)

Djoser, young man? Do you yet live?

Djoser moans deep in his throat. Kentar leans in close.

KENTAR (CONT'D)

I will not leave you here to die alone.
I will stay with you.

Djoser stirs. He opens his eyes and tries to focus on Kentar. He mumbles something.

DJOSER

Mmhh. I don't wish to get up yet,
Father. Tell the others. . .
I'm sorry I left them behind.

KENTAR

You didn't, they've all escaped. We
are free now.

Kentar strokes Djoser's head, knocking the guard's wig askew.

DJOSER

Hurt too bad. . .never make it.

KENTAR

All right, son. Don't think on it. I
will tell your story. Your bravery
will not be forgotten.

Coughing, Djoser jerks and tries to sit up. His eyes fully focus on Kentar.

DJOSER
Am I dead that you stare at me so?

KENTAR
Not yet, young man. Soon, I fear.

Confused, Djoser looks about him. The cage sits empty a few feet away. He looks back at Kentar, more awake than before.

DJOSER
You must flee. Go now, before the other guards come.

KENTAR
Only a coward leaves the injured behind. We will die together.

Djoser looks at Kentar for a long moment, clearly remembering the wounded travelers he left behind earlier.

DJOSER
It is not cowardice to fight for your own life. Go now and I will follow you. But I have something else to do first.

Djoser winces and tries to reach behind himself; he half turns and shows the dagger handle to Kentar.

DJOSER (CONT'D)
What is this?

KENTAR
It is your dagger.

DJOSER
My dagger. . .why did you stab me?

KENTAR
Not I. It was an accident.

Djoser shakes his head to clear it.

DJOSER
Pull it out please.

KENTAR
(hesitantly)
Do you think that is wise?

Djoser thinks about it for a second.

DJOSER
No. You'd better leave it there.

Djoser shakily gets to his feet. Kentar rises next to him.

KENTAR
If you can walk, I'll help you along.

DJOSER
No, I do need you to do something for me, though.

KENTAR
Anything.

DJOSER
(points to desert)
Straight that way are two injured men. Likely, they are already dead. I need you to take their bodies home to Dier el-Medina.

KENTAR
It will be as you say. Perhaps I can be of some assistance to you here.

Eyeing the old man's slight form, Djoser shakes his head.

DJOSER
You will assist me more by getting gone. I won't be long.

KENTAR
(bowing)
If we never meet again, I promise I will tell your story.

Kentar turns and follows the other prisoners into the desert.

Djoser stumbles toward the big tent.

INT. BOZ'S TENT -- CONTINUOUS

Tahemet drowns half-asleep on a pile of cushions while Boz continues to prattle on. The four women in the corner have finally relaxed enough to sleep, though they still huddle together protectively.

BOZ
. . .and though it pains me to say it,
sometimes I do have a little problem
in *that* area. Do you have any
recommendations?

TAHEMET
hmmmmmm?

BOZ
Well, you know. Anything for stamina?

TAHEMET
Try garlic. . .

Exhausted, she rolls over and goes to sleep. Boz, animated now,
goes on.

BOZ
It's such a relief to have someone with
your knowledge around. I have to
always be the strong one. At least, I
know if you poison me, it won't be on
purpose.

He snorts at his own joke, not noticing that Tahemet sleeps.

BOZ (CONT'D)
Everyone here resents me. I can't even
get a good night's sleep without
wondering who might come barreling in
here with a dagger.

At these words, Djoser staggers into the tent, clutches his
back, and falls face first across the table which earlier held
Boz.

BOZ (CONT'D)
(extremely startled)
Good Goddess!

At his scream, Tahemet jerks awake, jumps into a warrior crouch,
and whips the sharp knife from her pocket. Thrusting the blade
before her, she looks around in confusion.

BOZ (CONT'D)
What!?

TAHEMET
What?

White-faced and panting, Boz points to the table.

Tahemet sees the man sprawled out and relaxes a bit.

TAHEMET

Well, he doesn't look like much of a threat. Too much fine wine, likely.

She stows the knife and walks over to the table. As she turns the man's head, she recognizes his face.

TAHEMET (CONT'D)

Djoser!

BOZ

What was that?

TAHEMET

Uhhh, no sir! He's not drunk. He's just been stabbed.

BOZ

Oh.

TAHEMET

(casually)

I'll need to work on him here, if you don't mind.

BOZ

(yawning)

Fine with me, I'm just going to rest awhile. It's been a really long day.

TAHEMET

Tell me about it.

Tahemet pulls the unconscious Djoser firmly onto the table. Grasping the dagger hilt, she pulls it from his shoulderblade. Fresh blood splurts out and she covers her mouth in horror.

Working quickly, she cuts Djoser's coat and shirt, and peels them down to look at the open wound. She grabs the basin with the surgical implements, keeping her back to Boz so he won't see the tears rolling down her face.

Speaking more to herself than the unconscious Djoser.

TAHEMET (CONT'D)

There now, it's not so bad. I'll get you fixed right up.

She holds a clean cloth to the wound and plants a kiss on the back of Djoser's bald head.

TAHEMET (CONT'D)
Everything's going to be fine.

ACT SEVEN

EXT. THEBES-- EARLY MORNING-- A WEEK OR SO LATER

Dawn rises over the city of Thebes, a glorious reddish-yellow light washes over the white buildings and stone pathways.

At the Temple of Karnak, a scattering of priests and priestesses raise their arms in supplication to the Sun-God Ra, their hands, cupped in the form of a triangle, their lips form silent prayers of praise.

On the grounds behind the Temple, a large force of MEN, already organized and busy building the barracks for Prince Tuthmosis' armed forces.

Prince Tuthmosis, Seti, Jet, and another soldier, EMHEB, stand nearby, around a table laden with papyrus drawings, discussing the building plans.

TUTHMOSIS
And here, this spot will do nicely for
the armory. How do you feel about that,
Jet?

Jet, the dark Nubian soldier, rubs his hand lovingly on the shaft of the wicked-looking bronze axe slung across one muscular hip.

JET
As you say, my lord. It will do nicely.

SETI
I must ask where you got such an
impressive weapon. Is it from your
homeland? I've never seen its like.

Jet pulls the axe from its holster, flips it and hands it shaft first to Seti. Seti admires the sheen of it. The others look on, interested.

JET
(obviously pleased to
show it off)
The shaft is made from ordinary Lotus
wood. But the bronze blade is my own
design.

EMHEB
It is not a normal cutting axe, that
I can see.

JET
You're right, Emheb. As you know, a
regular cutting axe has a longer
handle, so as to keep as far from your
opponent as possible. But this axe is
made for closer combat.

EMHEB
(wide-eyed)
Why would you want to get any closer?

JET
(grins maniacally)
I suppose a cutting axe is effective
enough.

JET CONT'D
Very effective if your enemy is naked.
But what about those with body armor?

Jet extends one large, callused hand for the weapon. Seti places
it into his hand.

JET
This is a piercing axe, now. That's
good for banging in your opponent's
head even with a helmet on.

As a demonstration, Jet swings his arm and brings the bronze
blade down on the edge of the table, neatly shearing off a
handsbreadth of rough-hewn wood.

TUTHMOSIS
(Whistles)
Whhoo, I'm listening.

JET
The difference with the cutting blade
is that little power gets exerted, so
the blade can be fixed to the handle
with a groove, then tied fast.

JET (CONT'D)

But this piercing blade is cast with an "O" through which the handle can be inserted. Like so.

Jet demonstrates.

SETI

So, in effect the weapon becomes one large piece, or very nearly.

JET

More likely that you'll bring back an enemies' body part than leave your blade behind.

EMHEB

Can you make more of these weapons? Enough for infantry?

JET

(looking to Prince
Tuthmosis)

The expense will be great.

TUTHMOSIS

Better we keep bows and arrows in the hands of our infantry.

TUTHMOSIS (CONT'D)

Seti and I have been discussing a new form of composite bow. However, as soon as we get the armory set up, I'd like you to get the bronzesmith to start on more of these piercing axes for the Officers.

JET

(bowing slightly)

I would be most honored.

Jet sheathes his axe as Emheb and Seti bow and take their leave, wandering off in the direction of the new structures.

JET (CONT'D)

My Lord, if I may have a minute more of your time?

TUTHMOSIS

Of course, Jet. What can I do for you?

JET

It is a personal matter, my Lord.

Jet fidgets a little, less confident than before.

TUTHMOSIS

Go on.

JET

My brother's family journeyed to Egypt with my own. His wife died on the way. In his grief, my brother lost his will to go on.

TUTHMOSIS

I am sorry, my friend.

JET

When entering Egypt, we came as free men. Soon, my brother found himself in great debt to an estate holder. Unable to pay his debts, my brother entered into servitude. He worked off his debts, but the man refused to free him and his children.

TUTHMOSIS

(shakes his head)

An injustice this man will pay for in his afterlife, assuredly.

JET

I agree. Unfortunately, my brother died before his case could be brought before the Queen. My concern now is for his children.

TUTHMOSIS

What is it that I might do?

JET

I wish to speak with the man. His rights to the children are tenuous, at best. My hopes are to bring them to the Temple. If they must live as slaves, let them serve a God, as is right.

TUTHMOSIS

Agreed. Go to this man. Offer what you have to free the children and bring them here with my blessing. If he deals unfairly with you, I will return the favor to him.

INT. BOZ'S TENT - CONTINUOUS

Boz reclines on his cushions as before. The hostage women move freely about the tent, waiting on him hand and foot. Though not entirely pleased about doing so, they bring him food and wine with resigned expressions on their faces.

Across the tent, to the side, Djoser lies on his stomach on a cot. Tahemet lays wine-soaked cloths on his stitches and whispers occasionally into his ear.

TAHEMET

I heard them talking earlier. They plan to sell the women to a man in Thebes. They're going to move them soon.

DJOSER

Are you sure about that?

TAHEMET

Oh yes, much as *King Buttocks* over there enjoys the attention, he enjoys money even more.

DJOSER

I have to admit, I'm enjoying the attention too. But I'm really ready to get off this cot.

Laying her hand on Djoser's arm, Tahemet caresses his skin longer than absolutely necessary.

TAHEMET

Shhh. Your nightly strolls aren't enough exercise for you? Are you sure the fevers aren't returning?

DJOSER

I'm feeling stronger now, Tia. Pretty soon, he's going to realize I'm not one of the usual guards. It's time to go.

TAHEMET

I can't keep *him* reclining much longer either. It was all I could do to convince him he couldn't ride yet. Once he decides he's capable, we'll surely be on the move.

DJOSER

Well, he can't very well see his wounds, can he?

TAHEMET

Thank the Gods, no. I have him half convinced his cheeks are rotting off.

Stifling a giggle, Djoser turns his head and coughs.

BOZ

How goes it over there?

Tahemet rises and goes to Boz's side.

TAHEMET

He fares much better than you do, I fear.

Boz pops an olive in his mouth, corpulent jowls wagging as he chews.

BOZ

Really? I was just saying as how I feel much better thanks to your magnificent hands.

Boz suddenly seizes one of Tahemet's hands and plants oily kisses on it. She extracts it and surreptitiously wipes it on her skirt. She leans down and rips the bandage off his mostly healed wound.

TAHEMET

Oh, it's much too early to be thanking me yet, sir. Your wound is in great need of a treatment of Oxter weed.

One of the nearby hostage women glances at the healing wound and raises a questioning eyebrow at Tahemet. Tahemet shakes her head slightly at the woman, telling her not to say anything. The woman silently returns to her sewing.

BOZ

Oxterwhatsit? I've never heard of that.

TAHEMET

It's a rare plant, indeed. Most
miraculous healing properties.

(shakes her head
sadly)

Such a pity that no one can take me to
Thebes to acquire it.

BOZ

(thinking)

Well, it so happens that some of my men
may be. . . er, traveling to Thebes
quite soon. We'll have them pick up a
cache.

TAHEMET

Oh? Would your men be able to recognize
it, do you think? I mean, it would be
terrible if. . .

BOZ

If what?

TAHEMET

Well, Oxter Weed looks so much like
Demon Root. If they were to choose the
wrong herb the results would be
disastrous.

TAHEMET (CONT'D)

(clicking her tongue
at the wound)

But then we really have no choice.

Tahemet gently places her hand on Boz's pale face.

TAHEMET CONT'D

I'm sorry to tell you this, but without
it, you will die.

BOZ

But I'm feeling much better!

TAHEMET

Oh dear, has delirium already begun to
set in?

Gently, Tahemet checks his forehead for fever.

BOZ

Never mind that. I've decided. You
must go with my men to Thebes.

TAHEMET
(nods, solemnly)
A wise decision, sir.

Before Tahemet can walk away, Boz grabs her hand and clutches it tightly.

BOZ
Promise that you will return?

TAHEMET
I hope to return with exactly what you need.

BOZ
Thank you, blessed healer!

He presses her hand to his sweaty cheek. Disgusted, Tahemet glares down at the top of his head, but speaks very sweetly.

TAHEMET
It will be no more than you deserve.

INT. PHAROAH'S PALACE IN THEBES -- SAME MORNING

Queen Hatshepsut walks briskly through her palace, long golden robes trailing behind her. She smiles, peaceful for once. She stops at an open window and stands with the sun on her face. She closes her eyes and basks in the glow.

Senmut, a SERVANT GIRL, and a GIRL, about 4 years old, approach down the long hallway from behind Hatshepsut. At the sight of the Queen the little girl breaks free from the group and runs squealing with delight toward the Queen.

GIRL
Mommy! Mommy!

Hatshepsut turns and catches the child in her arms. They laugh together, a very similar laugh.

HATSHEPSUT
Darling!

Senmut approaches and kisses Hatshepsut on the cheek. The servant girl remains a respectful distance away, leaning against the wall.

SENMUT
I've brought our daughter to cheer you.

Hatshepsut smiles at the child.

HATSHEPSUT

She always does. Are you happy, Nefi,
my sweet?

GIRL

Yes, mama. I wanted to bring you
flowers from the garden, but Nurse
said they all belong to you anyway.

(she pouts)

I tried to tell her that the flowers
belong to me, too. But she would not
listen.

HATSHEPSUT

You are the only flower I need,
Neferura.

Placated, Neferura throws her arms about Hatshepsut's neck in
a big hug. She notices something outside the window and draws
her parents' attention to it.

NEFERURA

What is that?

Hatshepsut turns with the girl in her arms and glares coldly
at what the child points to: the faraway structures that
Tuthmosis's army have built.

HATSHEPSUT

That, my sweet, is the foolish notion
of my stepson.

NEFERURA

Is he the one I'm to marry someday?
Will I live there? Will I be Queen
there?

Concerned at this line of questioning, Senmut lays his hand on
his daughter's head.

HATSHEPSUT

No, my love, you will not have to live
there. You will live here at the
Palace. And you will NOT be Queen.

Neferura looks at her mother, clearly confused.

HATSHEPSUT (CONT'D)

You will be Pharaoh one day. Just as
I will be.

Neferura ponders this for a moment, then nods her head.

NEFERURA

It shall be as you command.

Hatshepsut lets her daughter slide to the ground and the child runs to tell the servant girl this news. The servant girl takes Neferura by the hand and leads her down the hall, listening intently to the child's chatter.

Senmut takes Hatshepsut's arm and they follow the others.

SENMUT

Has the time come then? To declare yourself?

HATSHEPSUT

(shakes her head slightly)

Soon. Let the rumours fly about through the servants for awhile. Then when the Oracle's pronouncement comes, it will not exactly be a surprise.

SENMUT

(laughs)

Most formidable, my love.

HATSHEPSUT

I will know when the time is right. It won't be long now.

Senmut becomes quiet for a moment, then reluctantly changes the subject.

SENMUT

Prince Tuthmosis grows in favor at the Temple, I hear.

Hatshepsut waves her hand in dismissal.

HATSHEPSUT

Oh, let him have those ratty old robes.

Surprised at her mysteriously happy mood, Senmut raises his eyebrows at her.

SENMUT

You do not fear his army?

HATSHEPSUT

I have a feeling that Tuthmosis will be much too busy seeking glory on the battlefield to interfere with my plans. And with any luck he'll get himself killed out there.

EXT. A LARGE ESTATE IN THEBES -- LATE AFTERNOON

Jet stands just inside the garden gates of a large estate. The NOBLEMAN glares belligerently at him.

NOBLEMAN

Look, when you said this was about some of my slaves, I thought you meant you were bringing me some women. I was expecting them to be here already.

JET

I would sell my soul to a fishmonger before giving any woman to the likes of you.

NOBLEMAN

Oh, yes. I do remember your brother now. You remind me of him.

JET

Good.

(pulls out a small bag
of coins)

Perhaps this will remind you of your love of money? I've come to buy back my brother's children.

NOBLEMAN

I would be well rid of them, even for a paltry sum as this. Unfortunately, they are no longer here.

JET

(growing angrier)

You sold them? My brother has barely arrived in the underworld!

NOBLEMAN

Oh, they've been gone awhile. You didn't expect me to care for a pack of mewling brats too useless to work, did you?

JET
My brother would never have agreed to.
. . .

NOBLEMAN
He didn't, but I managed to get my
money's worth from him before he died
just the same.

Enraged, Jet whips his axe out and prepares to deliver a death
blow to the insolent man. Before he can strike, a large GROUP
of people file through the garden gates.

The group includes: Two actual GUARDS, Djoser dressed as a guard
leading the four hostage women tied together with Tahemet
alongside.

NOBLEMAN (CONT'D)
Save me! I'm being attacked!

Startled at the scene before them, the two guards pull their
short swords and brandish them at Jet.

JET
Stand down. This is none of your
business.

GUARD #1
Our business is with him. We can't let
you just kill him.

JET
You'll regret it, friend.

Guard #2 eyes Jet's upraised axe and swallows hard.

GUARD #2
I already do.

GUARD #1
Just let us get on with our
transaction. We'll take the money and
leave. You can kill anyone you want
after that.

NOBLEMAN
(protesting)
Ayyyyy, now.

JET
Shut up!

Djoser secretly pulls his knife and begins to cut the women's
bonds.

JET (CONT'D)

You're here to sell these women to this mongrel. Are they stolen women?

Unsure how to answer, the guards exchange a nervous look.

Jet needs to hear no more, he whips his axe around and cuts down both men with a flash of his blade. The Estate Owner backs away, wild-eyed, as the guards drop dead at his feet.

Jet points his axe at the Nobleman, menacingly. The Nobleman throws his hands in the air.

JET (CONT'D)

I'm not going to kill you yet, you son of a dog. Prince Tuthmosis will see that you pay for your crimes.

Jet points his axe at the ground and the shaken Nobleman practically throws himself face down and lies there.

Satisfied, Jet turns to the others. Djoser has succeeded in cutting the women free. He stands in front of them protectively, but sheathes his knife deliberately so Jet can see him do it.

JET (CONT'D)

Do I need to kill you or are you going to free these prisoners?

DJOSER

These are no prisoners of mine. They're with me by choice.

JET

(relaxing a little)
Then I suggest you get going.

Djoser hesitates.

DJOSER

Actually, you uh, mentioned the Prince?

JET

(nods)
I am in his service and soon to be in his debt. He will deal with this scum as a personal favor to me.

Disgusted, Jet spits at the Nobleman, who lies prostrate on the ground, moaning.

JET

Do you hear me, Dog? The Prince has promised to deal with you according to your own ways. Better for you if I had killed you.

DJOSER

Excuse me? It sounds like you know the Prince pretty well.

Jet, still angry, fixes his bloodshot eyes on Djoser.

DJOSER (CONT'D)

I was just wondering if you would take us to him?

Djoser, Tahemet, and the frightened women look desperately at Jet and await his response.

EXT./INT. PHAROAH'S PALACE IN THEBES -- NIGHT

A lone male **FIGURE** dressed in BLACK from head to toe scales the palace wall. Though we cannot see the identity of the figure, he's young and fit enough to climb the heights up to the balcony while staying mostly in the shadows.

The figure pulls himself over the balcony wall. A linen curtain billows from an open archway on the balcony. One GUARD stands with his back to the figure, silently looking out across the city.

The figure pulls a long dagger from his side sheath, sneaks behind the guard and kills him quickly. He quietly lays the dead guard down and turns to the open balcony door. He silently enters the moonlit bedchamber of Queen Hatshepsut.

Queen Hatshepsut and Senmut lie sleeping in her bedchamber, tangled in silken bedsheets.

The dark figure enters the room, slinks toward the bed, moonlight glinting off his knife blade. He reaches for the sheer bed curtain and pulls it back.

The motion opens his shirt front a little and the moonlight briefly illuminates a cobra-head tattoo on his chest. He lifts his blade higher and roars:

MALE FIGURE

FOR EGYPT!

Queen Hatshepsut wakes up in shock and throws her hands up for protection.

FADE OUT:

"New Kingdom- Episode I- Alliances"

FADE IN:

Queen Hatshepsut and Senmut lie sleeping in her bedchamber. A male figure slinks up to the bed and raises a dagger. His shirt opens to reveal a cobra-head tattoo.

MALE FIGURE

For Egypt!

Queen Hatshepsut wakes up in shock and throws her hands up for protection.

ROLL INTO TEASER:

HATSHEPSUT

Aahhhh!

HATSHEPSUT rolls over Senmut. The dagger slams into the bed exactly where she was a moment before. She flips off the bed and runs to the door.

SENMUT, awake now, grabs the would-be ASSASSIN by the wrist. They tussle for the knife.

HATSHEPSUT (CONT'D)

Guards!

One nearby GUARD barrels into the room and spots Senmut struggling with the attacker.

GUARD

Halt!

Senmut and the assassin destroy things as they grapple for the knife.

The guard jumps in and tries to help, but he gets stabbed in the throat. Gurgling, he falls to the ground and dies.

Hatshepsut continues to call for help.

HATSHEPSUT

Guards! Help!

Senmut and the man, still wrestling, fall through the open window to the balcony beyond.

Hatshepsut runs out of her bedroom into the hallway. A couple of guards run to her. She points them into her room.

In there!

They run into the Queen's bedchamber. Hatshepsut follows. The room looks a shambles, but there is no sign of Senmut or the attacker. They all step out onto the balcony.

Senmut lies dazed on the balcony. He has a small trickle of blood on his head.

HATSHEPSUT
Did you get him?

She looks over the edge of the balcony. An empty rope dangles.

SENMUT
No. He hit me on the head. He escaped.

Hatshepsut and guards look around, then at Senmut, suspiciously.

End of Teaser

1st commercial break

Roll opening credits

EXT. ARMY TRAINING BASE AT TEMPLE OF KARNAK -- MORNING

TUTHMOSIS stands with a small group of SOLDIERS in front of a table covered in papers.

JET approaches with DJOSER in tow.

JET
Your Highness, I've brought you a new recruit.

Tuthmosis eyes Djoser's muscular frame and nods approvingly.

Djoser bows to Tuthmosis.

JET (CONT'D)
I found him yesterday on his way to see you. I brought him and his women to the Temple.

TUTHMOSIS
His women?

Behind Djoser's back, Jet holds up five fingers and mouths the word.

JET

Five.

Tuthmosis, clearly impressed, nods at Djoser.

TUTHMOSIS

So you wish to join my Army?

DJOSER

I do, my Lord.

TUTHMOSIS

Have you ever done any sparring before?

DJOSER

Not formally.

TUTHMOSIS

Well, let's see what you've got.

A marked sparring circle has been drawn on the ground. Tuthmosis steps into it and raises his fists at Djoser.

DJOSER

I'm sorry. You want me to spar with you?

TUTHMOSIS

Of course.

Shocked, Djoser doesn't know what to do.

DJOSER

But, I can't. ..

Jet and the other men chuckle. Jet encourages Djoser.

JET

Go on then, Djoser! Show him how it's done.

DJOSER

(to Jet)

I can't hit *him*. He's the Prince.

JET

(laughing)

Are you disobeying a direct order already, boy?

Djoser considers this a moment. Finally, he removes his shirt and steps into the ring. The two men face off.

DJOSER
I hope you'll forgive me, your
highness.

TUTHMOSIS
For what?

Taking his advantage, Djoser steps in and punches the Prince repeatedly. The fresh scars on Djoser's back stand out as he swings.

The crowd of cheering soldiers grows as the two men put up a good fight, rolling around in the dirt. Djoser fights hard, but it's clear that the Prince has more experience.

Finally, the Prince steps back and Djoser lies on the ground, out of breath.

TAHEMET comes flying out of nowhere, pushing through the crowd of men.

TAHEMET
Djoser! What is going on here!

Djoser pants and holds his sides. Out of breath, he can't answer her. Tahemet turns on Prince Tuthmosis.

TAHEMET (CONT'D)
What do you think you're doing? This man has injuries. He's here to join the army, not to be beaten to a bloody pulp by it!

Clearly, Tahemet has no idea whom she's yelling at. The Prince stares at her, enthralled by her anger.

TAHEMET (CONT'D)
And Djoser! We've only just gotten here. Do I have to watch you every minute?

Djoser tries to speak as she helps him to his feet. But Tahemet stops him.

TAHEMET (CONT'D)
Shush! What would the Prince say if he found you rutting on the ground with another soldier?

The crowd teases and whistles at him as she leads him away.

TAHEMET
Shame on all of you!
(pointing at Jet)
Help me get him back to the Temple!
Now!

Practically choking, Jet suppresses laughter and obeys.

JET
Yes, ma'am.

As the trio walk away, a chariot pulls up to the crowd. Queen Hatshepsut stands in the carriage. She appears extremely angry. She exits the vehicle and stomps over to the disheveled prince.

HATSHEPSUT
(to the crowd)
Disperse!

The men look to Tuthmosis immediately and, at his nod, walk away, leaving them alone. This hesitation infuriates Hatshepsut even more.

HATSHEPSUT (CONT'D)
I see you've been playing with your
trained dogs.

TUTHMOSIS
Good morning, *Mother*. It's good to see
you looking so well.

HATSHEPSUT
(eyeing the dirt on
him)
I can't say the same to you. I've come
to tell you that while you're playing
soldier, I'm not even safe in the
Palace. Two more of the royal guard
left their positions to join your
little team.

TUTHMOSIS
Yes, well, my *little team* is growing
by the hour.

HATSHEPSUT
Have you not heard that I was brutally
attacked last night?

Tuthmosis looks her up and down.

TUTHMOSIS
Really? You look unscathed to me.

HATSHEPSUT
A man entered my chamber and tried to kill me, "For Egypt."

TUTHMOSIS
Did your guards kill him?

HATSHEPSUT
No, they're still looking for him.

TUTHMOSIS
That is terrible news.

HATSHEPSUT
And yet, you don't seem very surprised by it.

TUTHMOSIS
Someone is always trying to kill one of us.

Hatshepsut gives him a glare.

HATSHEPSUT
Do not enlist any more of the Royal Guard.

TUTHMOSIS
I've no plans to turn away any volunteers. However, since the situation is so dire, I offer some of my very best men to act as a private guard for you.

HATSHEPSUT
I cannot allow that.

TUTHMOSIS
Really, I insist. I'll send them over this afternoon.

Tuthmosis bows formally and walks away.

Hatshepsut returns to her chariot and takes off, cracking her whip harder than necessary.

INT. CHAMBER IN THE TEMPLE OF KARNAK -- DAY

Djoser and Tahemet sit together in the infirmary. Tahemet tends to Djoser's wounds.

DJOSER

And then you come screaming at me in front of the Prince.

TAHEMET

(dabbing at his cuts)
Really, Djoser, I had no idea who he was.

DJOSER

Tia! You can't recognize a prince when you see one?

TAHEMET

Well, no. He was all covered in dirt. How was I supposed to know?

DJOSER

I probably won't be allowed in the army after this. We'll be lucky if we aren't both put to death.

Tuthmosis enters the room as Djoser says this. He has cleaned up and appears dressed in his royal finery.

TUTHMOSIS

I seldom put people to death before lunch.

Startled, Tahemet turns and drops the cloth and bowl. She practically throws herself at the prince's feet.

TUTHMOSIS (CONT'D)

(amused)
Ah! So, now you know who I am.

DJOSER

Your Majesty!

Djoser struggles to get off the cot.

TUTHMOSIS

No, no. Don't get up. I feel somewhat responsible for putting you there. I have come to check on you.

DJOSER
(lying back)
I'm all right, really.

Tuthmosis takes Tahemet's hand and raises her to her feet. He does not let go of her hand.

TUTHMOSIS
And this lovely lady is one of your
wives, I presume?

DJOSER
Oh no, that's just Tia! She's only my
friend.

Tahemet throws a glare at Djoser. She turns to the prince.

TAHEMET
Your Highness, I am so sorry. Please
don't be angry at Djoser.

TUTHMOSIS
As far as Djoser's concerned, all is
forgiven. You, on the other hand, are
a mighty concern to me.

Tahemet looks nervously at Djoser, then back to the prince.

TAHEMET
I hope you will forgive my earlier
behavior.

Still light-hearted, Tuthmosis considers her request.

TUTHMOSIS
I need to figure out a proper
punishment for you. You will come to
my chambers this evening for your .
.sentencing.

Tuthmosis finally takes his eyes off Tahemet and looks at
Djoser.

TUTHMOSIS (CONT'D)
As for you, Djoser, you will remain at
rest. I will make my decision about you
soon.

Jet enters the infirmary.

JET

I'm sorry to interrupt, My Lord. But the prisoner is ready when you are.

Tuthmosis nods at Jet. Then, he formally raises Tahemet's hand to his forehead and bows slightly at her.

TUTHMOSIS

I will deal with you later, Just Tia.

Jet and Tuthmosis leave.

Tahemet flies to Djoser's side and buries her face in his shoulder.

TAHEMET

I wish you could go with me.

DJOSER

(kindly)

He's not so bad, I think.

TAHEMET

What do you think he's going to do?

DJOSER

If he was really mad, he would have imprisoned you immediately.

TAHEMET

Are you trying to make me feel better?

Djoser pats Tahemet's shoulder and shrugs.

DJOSER

I'm just saying. His men seem to genuinely like him, so he must be a fair ruler.

TAHEMET

Great. So, I'm to expect a fair method of execution?

DJOSER

I really doubt it. Just don't go yelling at him anymore, okay?

Tahemet sits up and wipes her eyes.

TAHEMET

I promise I won't make him mad. I owe
you that much.

DJOSER

Yes, you do.

PRINCE'S QUARTERS AT TEMPLE OF KARNAK-- MOMENTS LATER

The bedchamber and outer room have elaborate decoration;
furnishings fit for a King. A large bed with silk curtains can
be glimpsed through an inner doorway. The outer room has big
couches and an ornate chair that resembles a throne.

Tuthmosis and Jet walk into the room, talking.

TUTHMOSIS

This man refuses to return your
brother's children?

JET

It is as I feared. The dog has sold them
and scattered them about the city.

Tuthmosis turns and puts one hand on Jet's shoulder.

TUTHMOSIS

It will be dealt with as promised.

Jet bows formally.

JET

I will be most grateful, Your
Highness.

Tuthmosis takes his "throne." Jet turns to leave. Tuthmosis
stops him.

TUTHMOSIS

Jet, take your place at my side. Let
the prisoner face his accuser.

Jet stands at Tuthmosis' right hand.

INT. CHAMBER IN THE TEMPLE OF KARNAK -- DAY

Djoser sleeps on a cot.

Tahemet sits in the open window, lost in thought, staring down at the bustling city.

A woman, 40ish, dressed in formal white robes, enters the chamber. She looks like an older version of Tahemet.

TAHEMET

Aunt Hetti!

For the first time today, we see Tahemet look truly happy. She throws herself into her aunt's waiting arms.

HETTI

Tia! Finally, I've found you! I've been searching all over.

TAHEMET

I sent word when we arrived. Oh, I've missed you so much!

Aunt Hetti looks to the sleeping Djoser.

HETTI

Who's this?

TAHEMET

You remember Djoser, don't you?

HETTI

That's little Djoser? I don't remember his looking quite so. . . grown up.

Tahemet chuckles at her Aunt's look of admiration.

TAHEMET

There's so much to tell you!

INT. PRINCE TUTHMOSIS'S QUARTERS AT TEMPLE OF KARNAK--
CONTINUOUS

TUTHMOSIS

Guards! Bring in the accused.

Two GUARDS half-drag in the NOBLEMAN. The nobleman looks like he's seen better days. They throw the nobleman at the Prince's feet, where he lays prostrate.

GUARD 1
Your Highness, I took care of
"examining" the prisoner.

Guard 2 lifts the wooden baton at his side.

GUARD 2
Would you like us to examine him in
your presence?

TUTHMOSIS
Thank you, that will do for now.

The guards bow and withdraw to either side of the doorway.

TUTHMOSIS (CONT'D)
(to the prisoner)
Have you confessed your sins to the
Gods?

NOBLEMAN
Aye, my Lord.

TUTHMOSIS
And you have been informed of the
charges against you?

NOBLEMAN
Some say I have misused my rights as
a slave-holder.

JET
Some say? *I say it is so!*

The nobleman hears Jet's voice and looks up for the first time.
He does not appear happy to see Jet at the Prince's side.

NOBLEMAN
Aye, my Lord. This man brings the
charges against me.

TUTHMOSIS
Did you not grasp the hand of this
man's brother?

NOBLEMAN
I did. He was unable to pay his debts
to me. We came to a mutual agreement.

TUTHMOSIS
Indenture terms were set forth? Proper
documents filed?

NOBLEMAN
uhm...Aye, my Lord.

TUTHMOSIS
Excellent. Then I expect this
information to be produced at my
command. As well as documents
pertaining to the slave's death.

NOBLEMAN
At your command, my Lord.

INT. TEMPLE HALLWAY -- CONTINUOUS

Tahemet and Hetti stroll arm-in-arm down a long hallway. Great
archways let in sunlight.

HETTI
. . .It was a terrible thing that
happened to Brother Avaret.

Tahemet looks a little green at the news of Brother Avaret's
execution.

TAHEMET
And you say there was no evidence
against him?

HETTI
None. No witnesses to the crime,
either.

Tahemet looks even worse at this news.

TAHEMET
I think I need to sit down.

HETTI
Tia, darling. Are you well? Do you need
some wine or something?

Tahemet stops at one of the archways, leans against the pillar
and slides to the ground.

TAHEMET
I need a miracle.

INT. PRINCE TUTHMOSIS'S QUARTERS AT TEMPLE OF KARNAK--
CONTINUOUS

TUTHMOSIS

Now comes the matter of the slave's property. You realize that you had no claim to that.

NOBLEMAN

Aye, my Lord. But the children. . .

TUTHMOSIS

Yes, especially, the children. You will produce the offspring at once.

NOBLEMAN

I can't!

TUTHMOSIS

You can and you will, so says your future Pharaoh.

The nobleman rises to his knees and raises his hands in supplication.

NOBLEMAN

My Lord! It has been some time, I am unsure where they are.

TUTHMOSIS

You have three days. In that time you will use every resource at your disposal. In fact, nothing matters to you as much as this task, do you understand?

NOBLEMAN

Aye.

TUTHMOSIS

Three days. You will appear before me with every child, happy and well. They will be dressed as befits a nobleman's child. Each child will possess a purse filled with a year's salary.

NOBLEMAN

As you command it, your Highness. If I cannot. . .?

TUTHMOSIS

Then you will be stripped of all your titles, your property will return to the crown, and yourself will be commanded to a life of servitude.

NOBLEMAN

But I'm nobility! I can't be expected to work as a commoner!

Tuthmosis smiles coldly at the nobleman.

TUTHMOSIS

Oh, no common work for you, you miserable wretch. You will be the *personal* slave of my friend, Jet.

Jet curls his lip at the nobleman. The nobleman looks scared at this prospect.

NOBLEMAN

It will be as you command, Your Highness.

The nobleman grovels at the Prince's feet for a second, then rises and flees the room.

Tuthmosis looks to Jet.

TUTHMOSIS

I trust that met with your approval, my friend.

Jet bows formally to Tuthmosis.

JET

My family is yours to command, My Prince. I swear every breath within me shall only be to your purpose, Praise the Gods!

INT. TEMPLE HALLWAY -- CONTINUOUS

A concerned Hetti holds Tahemet's hand and listens to her confession.

TAHEMET

Djoser says not to worry, but I can't help it! I mean, I yelled in the Prince's face and there were so many witnesses who saw me do it!

HETTI

Oh sweet girl! The Prince isn't one to make snap judgments. I trust this won't turn out so bad.

TAHEMET

Easy for you to say! He had one of his most trusted friends publicly executed for far less!

HETTI

Well, now, most of us know that was the Queen's doing, not Prince Tuthmosis.

TAHEMET

Oh, I'm sick with worrying about it. I almost wish it were over!

Tahemet rolls her head to the side miserably. She looks out onto the common grounds and narrows her eyes at something she sees.

TAHEMET (CONT'D)

Aunt Hetti! I know that man!

Hetti looks, but does not appear to recognize who Tahemet points at. It is a small cluster of men, unrecognizable at a distance except for a large, fat man in the middle.

TAHEMET (CONT'D)

What is Boz doing here?

HETTI

Who?

TAHEMET

They're some of the desert thieves I told you about. In disguise, I guess, but I'd recognize that physique anywhere.

HETTI

Do they have business at the Temple, do you think?

TAHEMET

None that I can think of. They're not the praying type.

Tahemet jumps up and grabs her aunt's hand.

TAHEMET (CONT'D)

Come on! We've got to tell Djoser.

INT. PRINCE TUTHMOSIS' QUARTERS AT TEMPLE OF KARNAK-- DAY

Tuthmosis sits in a large, ornate chair behind a sturdy wood desk.

MENES, 25, shaved head, one of the Prince's soldiers, enters. Menes drops to his knees, bowing low before the prince.

MENES

I apologize, Your Highness. The business we expected last night did not go as planned.

TUTHMOSIS

I am aware. The subject of our endeavor has already visited me this morning.

MENES

I would have come straight away to inform you, except for the fear that I had been followed.

TUTHMOSIS

You are a brave and loyal subject, Menes.

MENES

I only wish for a second opportunity to prove my loyalty.

TUTHMOSIS

You will have one. These new orders I have written for you will ensure you have ample opportunities.

Tuthmosis pushes a scroll across the table. Menes picks it up and reads it.

MENES

Yes, Your Highness. I accept.

TUTHMOSIS

Excellent. Pick some men who will not be opposed to our goal.

MENES

It shall be done!

Menes bows and his shirt falls open, revealing the cobra-head tattoo on his chest.

INT. CHAMBER IN THE TEMPLE OF KARNAK -- AFTERNOON

Djoser sits on a cot with one hand holding his bruised ribs. Tahemet stands at the window and talks to him.

TAHEMET

I don't see him now. But Djoser, I swear it was them. Do you think they know where we are?

DJOSER

Not likely. But he must have come looking for us when we didn't return last night.

TAHEMET

We can't hide out here forever. What are we going to do?

DJOSER

What we intended to do in the first place. Tell the Prince.

Seti, the Prince's advisor and friend, stands in the doorway.

SETI

Please, forgive the intrusion. I would have knocked, but the door was already open. . .

Djoser and Tahemet both stand at Seti's arrival. Djoser bows, painfully.

DJOSER

Sir, it's no intrusion.

SETI

I could not help overhearing the last part of your conversation.

SETI

I just want you to know that the Prince is always willing to listen to his subjects, whatever ails them.

DJOSER

Thank you, sir. We did intend to tell the Prince of some desert thieves we had a run-in with before we arrived in Thebes. However, there hasn't been time.

TAHEMET

But they're here now. I saw one of them not an hour ago and it's likely they're looking for us.

SETI

Desert thieves, eh? Interesting. What did the leader look like? Did you get a good look at him?

TAHEMET

(shuddering)

More than you know.

DJOSER

Their boss is a large, sweaty man.

SETI

Djoser, I think the Prince would be highly interested in this information. Since I was sent to bring you to him, now would be a good time to bring it up.

DJOSER

Yes. I'm ready.

INT. PRINCE TUTHMOSIS'S QUARTERS AT TEMPLE OF KARNAK--
CONTINUOUS

Seti and Djoser enter the Prince's chambers. Inside, Djoser sits at his desk and Jet stands in front of the desk.

TUTHMOSIS

Oh, our new recruit still lives.

DJOSER

Yes, Your Majesty.

(rubs his sore ribs)

Though it was a debatable issue for awhile.

SETI

Your Highness, young Djoser has some news to share with you that may be of consequence. It involves a certain band of desert thieves.

TUTHMOSIS

Do tell.

DJOSER

Tahemet and I accidentally found ourselves with a band of rogues outside of the city. It wasn't easy, but we managed to escape them. She swears she saw their fat leader in town this afternoon.

Prince Tuthmosis and Seti share a pointed look at the mention of the fat leader.

TUTHMOSIS

Did the other thieves refer to this man as "Boz"?

DJOSER

Yes, they did. And if it was him Tia saw, I have a pretty good idea where he was going.

TUTHMOSIS

That would be?

DJOSER

A nobleman's estate.

(to Jet)

The place we met, in fact. We were to sell a few women to the nobleman and return with Boz's money. But things turned out differently, thank the Gods.

TUTHMOSIS

Jet, you know the place. Seti, you know the man. Take Djoser and go look for him. I wish to speak with this Boz.

EXT. NOBLEMAN'S ESTATE -- AFTERNOON

Boz and a few of his men stand in the Nobleman's house. The Nobleman looks frustrated.

NOBLEMAN

I'm telling you I do not have time for this!

BOZ

I'm telling you, either hand over the slaves or the money. One is the same as the other to me.

NOBLEMAN

But I keep saying, I don't have them! A giant Nubian took them!

Boz shares a chuckle with his men.

BOZ

It's always a giant Nubian with you people.

NOBLEMAN

I don't know what you're talking about! Kindly get out!

BOZ

Not until I get what I came for.

NOBLEMAN

Your men were slain by the Nubian and then he took the others! He took me prisoner, too.

BOZ

Took you, too? Why aren't you imprisoned then?

NOBLEMAN

I don't have time to discuss it with you. I have things I have to attend to.

Boz nods at one of his men. Quick as a flash, the thief holds a knife to the nobleman's throat.

BOZ

You'd best attend to me. Give me my money or give me my slaves.

The nobleman spies Djoser, Seti, and Jet through the window.

NOBLEMAN

There's the Nubian dog! I'll bet he
still has your women.

Boz goes and peers through the window.

BOZ

Perhaps you're right. He certainly
seems to have my man.

INT. PHAROAH'S PALACE- QUEEN HATSHEPSUT'S CHAMBER-- CONTINUOUS

Queen Hatshepsut rages at Senmut in her private chamber. She
sweeps about the room while Senmut sits in a chair by her desk.

HATSHEPSUT

Tuthmosis is behind this, I swear it!
And now he's schemed his guards right
into the palace!

SENMUT

But, my Love, it certainly cannot hurt
to allow them to help.

HATSHEPSUT

Are you saying our own guards are
incompetent? You're in charge of them!
What does that make you?

Senmut rises angrily to his feet.

SENMUT

There's no need to. . .

HATSHEPSUT

(interrupts)

Apparently, there *is* a need. I trusted
you.

SENMUT

Your trust is not misplaced. I swear
to you, I will not rest until the
assassin is found.

INT. CHAMBER IN THE TEMPLE OF KARNAK -- CONTINUOUS

Tahemet and Aunt Hetti sit at a small table in Hetti's chambers.
They drink tea and talk.

TAHEMET

All my plans revolved around getting here. Now that I am, I'm not sure what to do next.

HETTI

Well, you have a gift, my child. Have you considered devoting your life to a deity?

TAHEMET

I appreciate the suggestion, but I can feel my destiny tugging at me. I don't think I can settle myself in the Temple for the rest of my life.

Hetti pats Tahemet's hand.

HETTI

I'm not offended you choose a path different from my own, Tia.

TAHEMET

(relieved)

Thank you, Auntie. I know what I want to do, but. . .I'm scared.

Hetti chuckles at Tahemet's serious tone.

HETTI

Fearless Tia? Scared of what?

TAHEMET

What if I'm not allowed to train with the other surgeons?

HETTI

You can always go home to Deir El-Medina.

Tahemet looks horrified.

TAHEMET

I can't do that!

HETTI

Sure you could. You could find a good man, settle down, and have five or six kids. . .

Hetti smiles behind her tea cup at Tahemet's crestfallen face.

HETTI (CONT'D)

Why, you could spend the rest of your life delivering babies and binding wounds.

TAHEMET

Uh huh. Uhm, Auntie, I can't really go home. Not for awhile.

HETTI

Well, I suppose you could always marry someone in Thebes.

Hetti pretends not to notice Tahemet's hesitation.

HETTI (CONT'D)

I think my friend Cazi has several handsome sons. Of course, they'd be a lot older than you. He'd probably want you to stay home to raise the kids.

TAHEMET

Aunt Hetti, no! I don't want to get married. I'm just afraid of being denied entrance to medical school.

HETTI

And so, what if you are? Let me ask you this: If your request is denied, will that stop you from practicing medicine?

TAHEMET

Of course not! I'll just find another way. There has to be something else.

Tahemet storms from the table into the next room. Hetti smiles smugly to herself and picks up her teacup.

HETTI

That's my girl.

EXT. NOBLEMAN'S ESTATE -- CONTINUOUS

Djoser, Seti, and Jet approach the nobleman's house.

JET

I'm not thrilled at seeing him again so soon. I'm not sure I will refrain from killing him. Perhaps it would be best for me to wait outside.

SETI

Suit yourself.

DJOSER

If Boz is in there, he'll recognize me immediately.

SETI

Me, too.

Djoser stops walking. The other two stop.

DJOSER

Do you know of him?

SETI

We've met.

DJOSER

Then you know the pompous ass won't come to the Temple willingly.

Seti puts his hand on his sword.

SETI

I hope not.

The three men walk up to the gate.

DJOSER

We should have brought more men with us. For all we know he's got half his gang in there.

SETI

Or he might not be here at all.

JET

Well, let's go find out.

They walk through the gate into the front garden.

Seti moves to the front.

SETI

Let me do the talking. All right?

No answer. Seti turns back and sees a large club flying at his face. Seti gets knocked out.

(CONT'D)

INT. TEMPLE HALLWAY -- AFTERNOON

Tahemet walks down a corridor alone. Worried, she seems lost in thought. She leans against a column and watches a few PRIESTS out on the grounds perform a ritual.

BROTHER DAYZAR approaches and notices her.

BROTHER DAYZAR

Child, I can tell you have a very heavy heart.

Tahemet looks at the priest and bows slightly.

TAHEMET

It cannot be denied. I have so many concerns my mind won't settle, Holy One.

BROTHER DAYZAR

Brother Dayzar, please. Are you hungry?

TAHEMET

Pardon?

BROTHER DAYZAR

When I'm feeling troubled I find it relaxing to prepare a meal with my own hands.

TAHEMET

I know what you mean. At home, I'd pound herbs for hours. But here I have no medicines to make.

BROTHER DAYZAR

Ah, you're a healer then.

TAHEMET

At times.

BROTHER DAYZAR

Perhaps it was more than coincidence that I chose this hall for my daily walk.

TAHEMET
More than coincidence?

BROTHER DAYZAR
I mean, I happen to be a priest of *She Who Is Powerful* in the Temple of Sekhmet and I know a particular herb garden in need of attention.

Brother Dayzar offers his arm to Tahemet

BROTHER DAYZAR (CONT'D)
Interested?

INT. PHAROAH'S PALACE-GREAT HALL -- AFTERNOON

A contingent of GUARDS, led by Menes, enters the Great Hall.
Senmut stands in the middle of the hall and waits for the men to approach.

SENMUT
Gentleman, matters of state required the Queen's attendance, but I welcome you on her behalf.

MENES
Thank you. I brought our orders from the Prince.

Menes hands over a scroll to Senmut. Once again, his shirt flashes open and we get a glimpse of the cobra-head tattoo on his chest.

SENMUT
I have provided quarters and assignments for your men with the other guards. They will remain under your command unless I see a need to take control, understood?

MENES
Agreed. My men already have their orders.
(to his men)
Proceed.

The men march off in unison.

SENMUT

It is with great reluctance that the Queen has agreed to this arrangement.

MENES

It is an unfortunate necessity.

SENMUT

Yes, well. These are dangerous times we live in. However, it is always good to see you, Little Brother.

Menes drops his military stance for the first time, smiles, and bear-hugs Senmut affectionately.

MENES

You too, Big Brother.

INT. PHAROAH'S PALACE- QUEEN'S RECEPTION ROOM -- AFTERNOON

Queen Hatshepsut sits in her reception room with a foreign AMBASSADOR and several SERVANTS. The Ambassador has presented a pile of gifts with more ceremony than necessary. The Queen appears bored and unimpressed with the whole thing.

AMBASSADOR

(simpering)

The Chief of Punt sends his servant bearing goods and goodwill toward our neighbors. I present to you this panther skin.

HATSHEPSUT

Egypt welcomes our neighbors and thanks the chief wholeheartedly. Er, is there something specif. . .

Intent upon his ceremonies, the Ambassador interrupts her.

AMBASSADOR

The Chief of Punt sends his servant bearing goods and goodwill toward our neighbors. I present to Your Highness, cinnamon wood, khesyt wood, and two kinds of incense.

The ambassador lays the offerings on the large pile at Hatshepsut's feet.

HATSHEPSUT

Thank you. Did you wish to discuss
re-opening trade routes?

The Ambassador does not take the hint, but continues his
mindless gift-giving.

AMBASSADOR

The Chief of Punt sends his servant.

. .

Giving up, Hatshepsut ignores him and gestures one of her
handmaids to her and whispers in the girl's ear.

HATSHEPSUT

Get me out of here! Set fire to
something if you have to.

She smiles at the Ambassador as he reverently places a large
exotic fruit on the pile.

INT. GARDEN IN THE TEMPLE OF KARNAK -- AFTERNOON

Tahemet and Brother Dayzar kneel in the garden and work the
ground. A basketful of picked herbs sits between them. They work
in silence a second. Then Tahemet sits back and wipes a muddy
hand across her forehead.

TAHEMET

I needed this. It's been forever since
I had any peace and quiet to think.

BROTHER DAYZAR

Sometimes we merely need to get out of
our own way and let things simmer. I
hope it helped.

TAHEMET

Very much. Thank you, Brother Dayzar.

BROTHER DAYZAR

Anytime, Little Sister. Anytime.

TAHEMET

I'm afraid I have to go now. I have.
. .an appointment I must keep.

Brother Dayzar rises with Tahemet and turns her to face him.

BROTHER DAYZAR

If there is anything I can do to help.
. .?

TAHEMET

I can't think of anything. Unless,
you'll put in a good word for me with
your Goddess.

BROTHER DAYZAR

It shall be done. But she's here and
you could put in your own word, if you
like.

TAHEMET

What?

Brother Dayzar, smiling, points across the garden. Through the
tall reeds a female form, barely visible, can be glimpsed.

BROTHER DAYZAR

She's been watching you for more than
an hour.

TAHEMET

But. . . Why didn't you say anything?

Brother Dayzar turns Tahemet in the Goddess' direction.

BROTHER DAYZAR

Because she was waiting for you to come
to *her*.

Tahemet hesitantly approaches Sekhmet.

The lion-headed GODDESS sits on a bench, eyes-closed, basking
in the afternoon sunlight. Her body appears female/human but
she glows all over with a yellowish light. Her long, yellow hair
gently blows in a non-existent wind.

Sekhmet's leonine nostrils flicker as Tahemet kneels before
her. She opens her large, amber eyes and fixes them on Tahemet.
The Goddess smiles, revealing her sharp, sharp teeth.

SEKHMET

At last. It really is you.

INT. NOBLEMAN'S ESTATE -- AFTERNOON

A servant enters the Nobleman's office and sees his master on the ground, bound and gagged. The Nobleman struggles with his bonds.

SERVANT

Oh, my Lord! What has happened?

The servant unties him.

NOBLEMAN

Get my chariot! I have to get to the Temple.

SERVANT

Right away, sir!

The servant runs off. The Nobleman stands up too fast and passes out on the ground.

INT. PRINCE TUTHMOSIS'S QUARTERS AT TEMPLE OF KARNAK-- EVENING

Prince Tuthmosis lies on his stomach on a stone table. A servant woman pours oil on his back and continues giving him a massage.

Tuthmosis speaks to a male servant without raising his head.

TUTHMOSIS

Have my men returned to the Temple yet, Hotep?

HOTEP

Not since I last checked, My Lord. I will inquire again.

TUTHMOSIS

Please do.

Hotep opens the door to leave and Tahemet stands before him.

HOTEP

Excuse me, are you lost?

TAHEMET

I don't know. Are these Prince Tuthmosis' chambers?

Tuthmosis, hearing Tahemet's voice, finally lifts his head.

TUTHMOSIS

You may enter.

Tuthmosis pulls himself off the table, oily muscles rippling. He's dressed in a mere scrap of linen draped around his hips.

He dismisses his female servant with a "Not tonight, but better luck next time" grin. She blushes and glares at Tahemet as she leaves.

Tuthmosis drops into his "throne" and Tahemet bows before him, awaiting his displeasure.

TAHEMET

Your Highness.

TUTHMOSIS

Just Tia. I've been entertaining myself with the various ways I could punish you. Have you had any ideas?

TAHEMET

I've thought of little else, Your Majesty. I can only think to beg for your mercy.

TUTHMOSIS

Hmmm, I like the idea of you "begging for mercy." I wonder what it would take to get you to do that.

Disgusted, Tahemet tries to hide her face.

TUTHMOSIS (CONT'D)

Why do you look away, Just Tia? Am I repulsive to you?

Enjoying her discomfort, Tuthmosis indicates his very near nakedness. He looks like a slippery, oily young God.

TAHEMET

I am just deeply ashamed.

TUTHMOSIS

Come closer, Tia.

Tahemet scoots forward a little, still looking down.

TUTHMOSIS (CONT'D)

Surely, you know why I asked you to come here.

TAHEMET

To punish me.

TUTHMOSIS

Well, I'm not opposed to a little spanking, but you act like I am about to have you beheaded!

TAHEMET

I have no idea what you'll do.

TUTHMOSIS

For impertinence?

TAHEMET

My life is in your hands.

TUTHMOSIS

That's not exactly what I had in mind.

Tuthmosis rises and takes Tia's hand. He raises her to her feet.

TUTHMOSIS (CONT'D)

I'd rather punish your mouth with kisses.

TAHEMET

What?

Tuthmosis kisses her roughly. Tahemet pushes away from him.

TUTHMOSIS

I thought you understood!

TAHEMET

That's what you had in mind? You're trying to seduce me?

Tahemet laughs aloud with relief. Tuthmosis appears taken aback at her reaction.

TUTHMOSIS

Well, forgive me if I'm clumsy at it. I'm used to women throwing themselves at me quite willingly!

TAHEMET

I'm sorry, but when you acted so angry.
. . I thought. . .

TUTHMOSIS

What kind of monster do you think I am?

Unsure how to answer, Tahemet simply doesn't.

TUTHMOSIS (CONT'D)

Well?

TAHEMET

(hesitantly)

Are you the kind who would force an
unwilling woman?

TUTHMOSIS

(truly shocked)

You mean, you do not want to?

TAHEMET

I must beg your forgiveness once
again, My Lord. I know it is in your
power to command it of me, but. . .my
heart wouldn't be in it.

TUTHMOSIS

You truly are innocent.

Tuthmosis looks at her again as if he's seeing her for the first
time. Finally, he takes her hand and kisses it gently.

TUTHMOSIS (CONT'D)

Very well, Just Tia. I am content to
wait. . .until your heart is in it.

TAHEMET

(relieved)

Oh, thank you.

TUTHMOSIS

I promise not to advance upon you
again.

Tuthmosis walks over to a large brass tub filled with steaming
water, steps in and proudly whips off his loin-cloth before
sitting down. Tahemet (not the audience) gets treated to a full
visual.

TUTHMOSIS (CONT'D)

The next time we kiss will be up to you.
You may bathe me now.

INT. PHAROAH'S PALACE- QUEEN HATSHEPSUT'S CHAMBER -- EVENING

Queen Hatshepsut reclines on a chaise in her chamber,
complaining loudly to Senmut.

HATSHEPSUT

And he wouldn't shut up!

SENMUT

But, Darling, you love receiving
gifts. . .

HATSHEPSUT

Normally, yes. Really, I hate putting
up with all these rubes! It is the
worst part of holding power.

SENMUT

The Chief of Punt did send many lovely
things.

HATSHEPSUT

I suppose we'll have to go there this
summer, after all. Re-opening trade
routes would be such a coup.

Eyeing Senmut playfully, Hatshepsut crosses her arms.

HATSHEPSUT CONT'D

I'll have to keep a close eye on you,
though. The Chief's wife is quite
plump, I hear!

Sitting next to Hatshepsut, Senmut takes her hand and laces it
with kisses.

SENMUT

You know I only want your plump parts.

HATSHEPSUT

I know. And what am I going to do about
Tuthmosis when we go?

SENMUT

(hesitantly)

Perhaps you should let him try running
things while we're gone?

HATSHEPSUT

Oh, that would be brilliant! Let Prince Problem get wooed by the runty little foreign dignitaries for awhile.

SENMUT

I'm serious, though.

Sitting up, Hatshepsut fixes him with an icy glare.

HATSHEPSUT

Well, I'm not. I can't let him gain actual power! Have you even been listening to me?

SENMUT

Yes, and that's precisely my point. There's a lot of pressure being in charge. A lot of details the boy hasn't considered. He's young and active. It's very possible he'll decide he doesn't want to rule just yet.

HATSHEPSUT

Huh,
(lying back slowly)
I never thought of that.

SENMUT

Your problem might just take care of itself.

Hatshepsut eyes Senmut suspiciously.

HATSHEPSUT

You've been thinking about things like that?

SENMUT

Like what?

HATSHEPSUT

Never mind.

SENMUT

What?

HATSHEPSUT

Nothing. Sometimes you just remind me how alone I really am.

Senmut starts to kiss Hatshepsut's hand again, but she pushes him off the chaise.

HATSHEPSUT

Forget it. I'm not in the mood anymore.

INT. OUTSIDE PRINCE TUTHMOSIS'S QUARTERS AT TEMPLE OF KARNAK--
MOMENTS LATER

The Nobleman stands in front of a double guard blocking his path. The guards eye the Nobleman, who looks the worse for wear after his double beating today.

NOBLEMAN

I'm telling you I have important information to tell the Prince!

GUARD

Who let you in here?

NOBLEMAN

That's beside the point. Are you going to tell the Prince I'm here or not?

GUARD

Not. The Prince has company just now. He's not to be disturbed.

NOBLEMAN

He'll want to know what I have to say, trust me!

The guard doesn't look like he trusts the Nobleman as far as he could throw him.

GUARD

We have our orders, sir!

NOBLEMAN

Look, if the Prince gets angry at being disturbed that will be on my head, not yours.

The guard thinks through this a minute.

GUARD

Wait here.

The guard knocks on the door, then opens it at the Prince's command.

GUARD
Your Highness, there's a man out here insisting he must see you immediately.

TUTHMOSIS (O.S.)
Send him in.

GUARD
(shrugs)
It's your afterlife.

NOBLEMAN
Fine.

The Nobleman pushes past the guards and enters Tuthmosis' Chamber.

The Nobleman spies Tuthmosis being bathed by Tahemet and throws himself before the brass tub.

NOBLEMAN (CONT'D)
Your Highness, I tried to stop them!
I knew you'd want to know and I came
as soon as I was freed.

TUTHMOSIS
You again! This better not be about
Jet!

NOBLEMAN
Not exactly, My Prince.

TUTHMOSIS
Well?

NOBLEMAN
Some of your men came to my home while
I had some, uh, business partners
there. I do not really know what to say
except they took them!

Sitting up in the tub, Tuthmosis pays closer attention.

TUTHMOSIS
Who took who?

NOBLEMAN

My business partner took that Nubian giant of yours and the other two. Then he tied me up and threatened my life if I did not give him some money, which is unfair because I did not get the merchandise. . .

TUTHMOSIS

(interrupting)

Enough! Are you saying that Boz took Seti and Djoser, too?

TAHEMET

Djoser!?

TUTHMOSIS

I'll explain later.

(to the nobleman)

How long ago?

TAHEMET

Boz has Djoser? Oh, he'll kill him!

TUTHMOSIS

Not if I can help it. Get my clothes.

EXT. BOZ THIEF'S DESERT CAMP -- NIGHT

Jet, Seti, and Djoser sit tied up in a make-shift jail.

A flurry of activity surrounds them as Boz's men and slaves pack up camp.

Boz scurries by and Djoser calls to him.

DJOSER

Sir! Why are you keeping me with the others?

BOZ

Because I'm not sure I can trust you.

DJOSER

But I'm one of your men!

BOZ
(eyes Djoser
suspiciously)
Can anyone vouch for you?

DJOSER
What about that female doctor of
yours? Is she here?

BOZ
No. You lost her with the others! Good
a reason as any to sell you with the
rest. Bah! I don't have time for this.

Boz stomps off.

Djoser leans over to Seti. Jet is either knocked out or
pretending to be.

DJOSER
Tia's not here. They didn't find her
at least.

SETI
Do not fret, young man. The Prince will
come for us.

DJOSER
Will he get here in time? The sands
will swallow our tracks.

SETI
He will come.

EXT. GATES OF THE TEMPLE OF KARNAK -- CONTINUOUS

Tuthmosis and several of his men mount horses.

Tahemet, carrying a small basket, runs out to them. She stops
Tuthmosis from riding off by holding onto his horse's bridle.

TAHEMET
Wait! I'm coming with you!

TUTHMOSIS
I forbid it.

TAHEMET

I'm going. They might need medical attention.

TUTHMOSIS

You may attend them on our return.

TAHEMET

I'm the only one who knows where the camp is. I can take you there.

TUTHMOSIS

(hesitates)

It will be dangerous.

TAHEMET

I'll stay out of the way. I promise.

TUTHMOSIS

Somehow, I doubt that.

TAHEMET

It'll save time. I can't stay here and worry when I can do something to help.

TUTHMOSIS

I am not used to being disobeyed, Tia. You're trying my patience.

TAHEMET

I have many lessons to learn.

Tuthmosis swings Tahemet behind him on the horse.

TUTHMOSIS

I've heard I'm a good teacher.

Tuthmosis leads his men out of the city, while Tahemet clings to his back.

INT. PHAROAH'S PALACE- QUEEN HATSHEPSUT'S CHAMBER-- CONTINUOUS

Hatshepsut sits at her desk reading a scroll. Bored, she flops it down and walks about the room. She goes to the door and calls to the guard in the hall.

HATSHEPSUT

Guard! Oh, you're one of them.

Hatshepsut scowls at the unfamiliar guard.

HATSHEPSUT
When Senmut returns tell him I've gone
to Bast's Temple. I'll return shortly.

GUARD
As you command, Your Majesty.

HATSHEPSUT
Yes. As I command.

Hatshepsut sweeps away down the hall.

EXT. BOZ THIEF'S DESERT CAMP -- CONTINUOUS

Jet slowly comes around. Seti leans over.

SETI
How is your head?

Jet bends over and retches miserably, groaning.

SETI (CONT'D)
That is what I figured.

Djoser leans in.

DJOSER
I'm tired of waiting. We can't just sit
here and not do anything!

SETI
What would you like us to do?

DJOSER
I don't know. We could try to lure
someone close and get their weapon.

SETI
I can't get loose. I've tried.

Jet sits up and eyes a passing GUARD. The guard has Jet's axe
slung on his hip. Jet glares at him.

JET
That one.

SETI
What?

JET
I'm going to kill that one.

DJOSER
With what?

JET
Hey you! Son of a Dog!

Jet gets the guard's attention. The guard approaches the cage warily.

GUARD
What?

Jet stands and hobbles over to him.

JET
(indicating the axe)
You know how to use that?

The guard looks down at the axe. Jet bites the guard's neck.

GUARD
GAHH!

Djoser turns green at the sound of flesh tearing.

JET
Nasty son of a . . .

SETI
. . .ugh!

The guard drops dead at the edge of the cage. The axe underneath his body, hopelessly out of reach.

Jet spits and sits down again. His dark face shines wetly in the moonlight.

Seti and Djoser exchange a grossed-out look.

Jet grins, his teeth appear bloody.

SETI (CONT'D)
Well, that helped.

INT. BAST'S TEMPLE -- NIGHT

Hatshepsut waits while BAST drinks milk from a bowl. The Cat-headed Goddess licks her lips, purrs loudly and begins to wash her face.

HATSHEPSUT

I wish we all were so easily pleased.

BAST

Humans are too busy rushing through their short lives to appreciate the finer things.

HATSHEPSUT

Yes. Well, some lives are shorter than others.

BAST

And some not short enough? When will you stop worrying?

HATSHEPSUT

I just hate feeling so. . . defenseless!

BAST

It's not always a bad thing to have your enemies close to you. It's easier to keep an eye on them.

Bast scoops up a temple-kitty and strokes it. The animal purrs.

BAST (CONT'D)

(to the kitty)

Yes, I love you, too.

HATSHEPSUT

Are you listening to me?

BAST

Of course. However, one must remember the littlest of one's subjects.

HATSHEPSUT

What's that got to do with anything?

BAST

You're thinking too grand. What you need is a lowly subject to help you with your problem.

HATSHEPSUT

Lowly?

BAST
Find someone who can slip around
unnoticed. Who can help sniff out your
prey.

Bast points the kitty's paw at Hatshepsut.

BAST (CONT'D)
Sometimes the smallest claws sting the
sharpest.

Bast's kitty suddenly hisses and spits in Hatshepsut's
direction. Bast laughs.

EXT. JUST OUTSIDE BOZ THIEF'S DESERT CAMP -- CONTINUOUS

Tuthmosis and his men crouch behind a sand dune and survey the
camp below them. Behind them, Tahemet holds the horses' reins.

TUTHMOSIS
There are seven of us, and I count .
. .at least eighteen of them, not
including Boz or the servant women.

SOLDIER 1
If we can get Seti and the others free,
they may still be able to fight.

SOLDIER 2
We've had worse odds than that, sir.

TUTHMOSIS
We also have the woman.

SOLDIER 2
I told her my horse is skittish.

TUTHMOSIS
That's absurd.

SOLDIER 2
I know. I said the others would follow
it if it ran off and we'd have to carry
the injured back to Thebes. She swore
to stand there and not to let go of the
reins.

TUTHMOSIS
Good job, soldier. If she listens,
I'll give you a bottle of my finest
beer.

SOLDIER 2
Deal.

TUTHMOSIS
Let's move out.

Tuthmosis' men silently spread out and surround the campsite.
At his signal, they move in.

EXT. JUST OUTSIDE BAST'S TEMPLE -- CONTINUOUS

A male figure skulks outside Bast's Temple door. He hides in
the shadows.

Hatshepsut exits the Temple. She hesitates, stops, then looks
around.

The male figure sneaks up behind her, a glittering statuette
of Bast in his upraised hand.

EXT. BOZ THIEF'S DESERT CAMP -- CONTINUOUS

Djoser, Seti, and Jet sit miserably in the cage. Djoser lifts
his head.

DJOSER
Did you hear that?

JET
I think it's the pounding in my head.

DJOSER
No. I swear I heard something like a
loud grunt.

SETI
It's the Prince. I told you he would
come in time.

From the far side of camp, a shout goes up and a skirmish begins.
Tuthmosis and his soldiers begin cutting down the thieves.

Boz, thieves, and screaming women come running out of his tent. Boz, quickly out of breath, gets left behind. He stops near the cage.

JET
You! Come here.

Boz eyes Jet fearfully. He thinks better of it and runs the other direction.

BOZ
(to no one in
particular)
Get me a camel!

Soldier 1 runs to the cage and opens the gate. He cuts Djoser's binds.

DJOSER
We need weapons!

Soldier 1 gives Djoser a long dagger from his hip-sheath.

SOLDIER 1
That's all I've got.

Soldier 1 fights a thief at the entrance, while Djoser cuts the others free. They all exit and join the fray.

Jet stops to get his axe from the dead man.

SFX: Screaming women. Yelling men. Frightened livestock bellowing.

DJOSER
Boz! Gods curse you, where are you?

Djoser runs off in the direction Boz took.

Tuthmosis fights with a thief.

Thief swipes at Tuthmosis with his knife. Tuthmosis dodges, punches thief in the stomach, flips him around and stabs him with a sword. Thief falls dead. Tuthmosis moves on to the next.

Seti jumps from a cart full of stolen goods onto the back of another thief and stabs him.

Jet swings his axe and fights two thieves. The fierce blade flashes in the moonlight and the thieves fall dead at his feet.

All over the camp, wounded lie on the ground. The fighting slows and Tuthmosis surveys the scene. He counts his men.

TUTHMOSIS
One missing. Djoser.

Tuthmosis turns to Seti, who has just finished a fight.

TUTHMOSIS (CONT'D)
Have you seen Djoser?

SETI
He went looking for Boz. That way, I think.

Tuthmosis runs into the shadows and returns shortly with Djoser's semi-unconscious body.

DJOSER
He's gone.

TUTHMOSIS
I know. It's okay, though. We won.

SETI
Round up the men. Let's go!

EXT. JUST OUTSIDE BAST'S TEMPLE -- CONTINUOUS

The statuette of Bast descends, a loud thud, and Hatshepsut crumples to the ground.

The shadowy figure raises the statuette again.

Through the darkness, another male figure comes running toward them, yelling.

SENMUT
NO!! My Queen!

The attacker hesitates then runs away.

Senmut stops to check Hatshepsut. She's unconscious. He chases after the would-be assassin.

The attacker runs through the darkness, slightly ahead of Senmut, leaping recklessly over low stone walls and dodging potted plants.

Senmut gauges the distance and takes a shortcut. He emerges paces away from the attacker. Senmut pile-drives into the attacker and tackles him to the ground.

The attacker rolls over and Senmut comes face to face with Menes. Panting and shocked, Senmut blurts out:

SENMUT
Little brother!

EXT. JUST OUTSIDE BOZ THIEF'S DESERT CAMP -- CONTINUOUS

Tuthmosis and his men come staggering over the sand dune. Some of them appear to be walking wounded. Djoser, fully unconscious now, must be carried.

They emerge to find their horses milling around, untended.

Tahemet is nowhere in sight, her little basket of herbs has spilled out on the ground.

TUTHMOSIS
Damn it!

Tuthmosis looks around for signs of Tahemet and Boz. Nothing but darkness surrounds them.

EXT. CITY OF THEBES -- CONTINUOUS

MENES
Oh, do not act so surprised.

Senmut smacks Menes in the face. He pulls his fist back to beat Menes, but stops himself. He straddles Menes and holds him to the ground, yelling in his face.

SENMUT
Why would I suspect anything? How could you do this to me?

MENES
I did it for Egypt! For you.

SENMUT
What? I love her.

MENES

Because you love her. Because you could not do it.

SENMUT

You damned fool! If she dies, then all is lost. Do you understand that?

MENES

Plans change.

SENMUT

No. People change. I never would have thought you'd betray me like this. Who got to you?

Menes clams up. He is not going to talk.

Senmut narrows his eyes and glares at Menes.

MENES

What are you going to do?

Senmut stands and roughly jerks Menes to his feet. Senmut strong-arms Menes ahead of him. They walk toward the Palace.

SENMUT

I should kill you now.

EXT. DESERT -- NIGHT

Tahemet argues with Boz as they ride in the night. Her hands appear to be tied to his camel.

TAHEMET

You're never going to get away with this, Boz.

BOZ

Why not? I always do.

TAHEMET

No, you don't. You should just let me go now.

BOZ

And let you wander off in the desert alone?

(laughs)

You'll die without me.

TAHEMET

I have very powerful friends now. They will come looking for me.

BOZ

You mean the Prince? I've held him captive before. He doesn't scare me.

TAHEMET

He scares me. And he should scare you, especially now that your men aren't around to protect you.

BOZ

Let him come. We'll be safe in Deir el-Medina by morning.

Clearly alarmed by this news, Tahemet works at the knot of ropes binding her wrists.

TAHEMET

I doubt that.

EXT. DESERT OUTSIDE BOZ'S CAMP -- NIGHT

Tuthmosis and his men split up. Some join the search for Boz.

TUTHMOSIS

Seti, take Djoser and those who need medical attention back to the Temple.

SETI

Yes, Your Majesty. What should I tell Djoser when he wakes?

TUTHMOSIS

Tell him to stay put. I will bring Tia back.

SETI

He won't take that easily, sir.

TUTHMOSIS

Remind him that my soldiers always follow orders.

SETI

As you command.

Seti walks off giving orders to gather the wounded and prepare them for the journey.

Jet approaches Prince Tuthmosis. The big, dark man's skin shimmers with sweat and blood in the moonlight.

JET
I'm with you, sir.

TUTHMOSIS
Jet, as much as I'd like to have your help. I need you to go back to the Temple and deliver a message for me.

JET
It shall be as you command.

TUTHMOSIS
Find Brother Dayzar and tell him I will not be able to appear in front of the Council tomorrow as planned. Ask him to stall for more time and I will return as soon as possible. And Jet, do not share this information with anyone else.

JET
Of course. . .but cannot Seti do this task? I do not like sending you off alone.

TUTHMOSIS
I've got good men to accompany me. Besides, I need to get going. Make sure you have your head wound tended.

Tuthmosis and four soldiers mount horses.

TUTHMOSIS (CONT'D)
I've grown impatient with this desert menace. He's going to wish he'd stayed around to die tonight.

Tuthmosis and his men take off after Boz and Tahemet.

INT. PHAROAH'S PALACE -- NIGHT

Four male servants carry Hatshepsut's still unconscious body on a stretcher into a surgery/infirmary. Several white-robed priests descend upon her and begin assessing her injuries.

A worried Senmut watches the flurry of activity. He posts two guards at the entrance and slips out the door.

(CONT'D)

INT. PHAROAH'S PALACE-HALLWAY -- CONTINUOUS

Senmut stalks angrily down the wide hall and down a long set of backstairs. He stops in front of a set of large double doors, then flings them wide and inside we see:

INT. PHAROAH'S PALACE- TORTURE CHAMBER -- CONTINUOUS

A cavernous room filled with shadowy corners. Lurking from all sides are several torturous contraptions crafted to effectively inspire terror.

In the middle of the room, Menes slumps, roped to a chair. He appears to be drenched in some kind of liquid. Behind him looms a large, impassive TORTURER.

Senmut approaches his brother.

SENMUT
How long has he been out?

TORTURER
He'll be around soon. The pain will
bring him back.

Senmut eyes his brother. Other than being a bit wet, he is hardly bloody.

SENMUT
The pain? What did you do to him?

TORTURER
He wouldn't talk, so I coated him.

SENMUT
Coated him? With what?

TORTURER
Acid.

Senmut looks horrified. As he watches, Menes' shirtless upper body starts to redden and blister. Senmut's face turns gravely ill as Menes begins to stir and moan.

ROLL END CREDITS:

FADE OUT:

