

Side 2

START >>>

MOSES STEPS FORWARD, HIS STAFF CLICKING ON THE FLOOR.

020 **MOSES**

You sent for me, Pharaoh. Again.

021 **MERNEPTAH**

I did. By now I imagine you know what I am going to ask you for.

022 **MOSES**

I can pray to my god, yes, to relieve your lands of this disaster. But that is the decision of the Most High. He sent me. He holds all in his hands. What you or I ask can only be a request.

023 **MERNEPTAH**

(spiteful)

Well? Do you not have his ear?!

024 **MOSES**

He is more interested in your heart, Pharaoh. He desires that you repent, and hear his people's groans. Release them once and for all from their sufferings.

025 **MERNEPTAH**

What do you want of me, nephew? Have you come back as from the dead only to torment me?! Our lands were unbothered before you returned! Even your kinsfolk lived in peace!

026 **MOSES**

They lived in slavery, even if they had grown accustomed to it. But no longer. Are you deaf to the cries? Has your heart grown so hardened as to drown out your fellow man?

027 **MERNEPTAH**

(in disgust)

Fellow man? I am a son of Egypt!

028 **MOSES**

Yes, **Merneptah, son and Pharaoh.**
But still you are a man! A man who
enslaves other men - enslaves the
chosen people of the Most High! And
you think he will not punish you in
return?

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(MORE)

MOSES (CONT'D)

He will protect his children, the heirs of his promise!

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029 **MERNEPTAH**

Is this your revenge, is that it?
Stored up anger from our youth?

(desperate)

Do you wish me to beg, is that it?
I beg of you, Moses! Yes, the
pharaoh himself begs! Have your god
send these monstrous locusts away.
Remove this death from our land!
lift this burden from my people.

030 **MOSES**

"Burden"? Now you know something of
the shackles you have put on mine.

031 **MERNEPTAH**

Think of the families! Think of the
people you once called your own.
Whole cities will starve. We are
emptying the storehouses as I
speak, and even now I can barely
keep them fed, from here to the
mouth waters of the Nile!!

A PREGNANT PAUSE. THE BUZZING OUTSIDE.

032 **MOSES**

(considering)

If I do this -- if I pray to the
Most High -- you will set His
people free? You will let us go?

033 **MERNEPTAH**

You would barter at a time like
this?! So much for your mercy...

034 **MOSES**

It is not I who have brought these
woes upon the land! Look to
yourself, uncle. Look to the backs
and blood that your kingdom has
been built off. Repent of your
sin, and save two peoples with a
wave of your hand!

MERNEPTAH GROWLS IN ANGER.

035 MERNEPTAH

Leave me then! Go back to Goshen.
If you will not help your former
kin, at least get out of my sight!

036 AARON

Moses... Perhaps we should listen
to him, just this once. You could
ask the Lord to stop this plague.
On behalf of the Egyptian people...

MOSES SIGHS ALOUD.

037 **MOSES**

Very well, Pharaoh. I will pray to
the Lord. Perhaps he will have
mercy on you and your people. But
know this! He sees your inmost
heart. He will know if you have
truly repented. And if not... I
fear only more calamity shall
befall this land. It is up to you.
This choice is between you and God.
Come, Aaron. This is up to **Pharaoh**
to decide. We leave him to it...

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HIS CLOAK SWEEPS AS HE TURNS AND WALKS AWAY, HIS
STAFF AND SANDALS CLICKING AGAINST THE FLOOR.

038 AARON

Hey, Moses, wait for me!

THEY BOTH LEAVE. THE HUGE PALACE DOORS CLOSE.

OUTSIDE, A STRONG WIND BLOWS.

THE LOCUST BUZZING SLOWLY FADES.

A MESSENGER RUNS IN, BREATHLESS --

039 EGYPTIAN NOBLE 1

My lord, the locusts are dying! A
strong wind has come up from the
west! Even now it blows their
bodies by the thousands, away from
our land, right into the Red Sea!

040 MERNEPTAH

So soon?

041 EGYPTIAN NOBLE 1

Yes, exalted one! The plague has
been lifted! We are free!