

Side 1  
START >>>

BITHIAH CROSSES TO PHARAOH'S THRONE. TENSE SILENCE.

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132 **MERNEPTAH**

Why have you returned to Egypt, Moses of the Hebrews?

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Moses and Aaron have a brief, hushed exchange.

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133 MOSES

(whispers to Aaron)

Go.

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\*  
\*

134 AARON

Me? After that?

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\*

135 MOSES

Now, Aaron! The Lord will speak through you.

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\*

AARON CLEARS HIS THROAT, STEPS FORWARD, AND ADDRESSES THE CROWD AS A SKILLED ORATOR.

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136 AARON

Mighty Pharaoh. People of Egypt. We come with a message from our God, the God of the Hebrews.

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\*

137 **MERNEPTAH**

You cannot even speak for yourself now, Moses?

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\*

Beat. Aaron continues.

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138 AARON

I have been chosen to speak.

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139 **MERNEPTAH**

And why would we want to listen to a message from the weakest of all the gods? A god so pathetic, they he does not even have a name. They just call him "god."

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WALLA: AKHMED GIGGLES. THE COURT JOINS IN LAUGHTER.

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140 MOSES

(quietly)

Speak for the Lord, Aaron.

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WALLA: CROWD PROGRESSIVELY QUIETS AS AARON SPEAKS WITH COMMAND.

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141 AARON

Our God is the Lord, the one who is called "I AM." He appeared to Moses, and He has a message for Mighty Pharaoh.

WALLA: A HUSHED, AWED QUIET.

142 AARON

This is what the Lord, the God of Israel says: "Let my people go."

HIS FINAL WORDS ECHO IN THE VAST ROOM. EXPECTANT STILLNESS.

143 **MERNEPTAH**

And who is this Lord, that we should listen to him? We know nothing of your god. We will listen to no such command.

144 AARON

The God of the Hebrews has met with us. He is mighty, and he has commanded us to take a three-day journey into the wilderness to offer sacrifices to Him.

(beat)

Great One, let us go, or he will surely strike Egypt.

145 **MERNEPTAH**

Well. We can see why you wanted your brother to speak, Moses.

WALLA: NERVOUS LAUGHTER FROM THE COURT. MANY ARE IN AWE OF AARON.

146 AKHMED

Will their god really do it, Father? Strike them all with plagues if they do not obey?

147 **MERNEPTAH**

Ah, my son. This is why the ruler of Egypt must be wise. These men do not care about their god.

148 AKHMED

They do not?

149 **MERNEPTAH**  
 No. These men are lazy. They are  
 trying to take the people from  
 their work.

150 MOSES  
 (angered)  
 Merneptah--

WALLA: SCANDALIZED MURMURS FROM COURT.

151 PASER  
 You will address the Pharaoh as  
 Great One!

152 **MERNEPTAH**  
 You seek, Akhmed? When we speak the  
 truth, it angers them.

153 MOSES  
 Great One, our Lord has sent us to--

154 **MERNEPTAH**  
 Your Lord has sent you with a  
 clever ruse. A three-day journey  
 into the wilderness? The slaves are  
 asking for a holiday!

WALLA: COURT TITTERS.

155 **MERNEPTAH**  
 Moses, why do you want to take the  
 people away from their labor? Tell  
 your Lord that the king of Egypt  
 has said, "Get back to work."

WALLA: MURMURS OF APPROVAL

156 AARON  
 O Great One, we must appeal to you  
 again. Our Lord--

157 **MERNEPTAH**  
 I will hear no more. Court is  
 dismissed.

**<<< END**

WALLA: COURT CHATTER RISES, COURTIERS FILE OUT.

158 MOSES  
 (trying to call over  
 noise)  
 Great One, please--