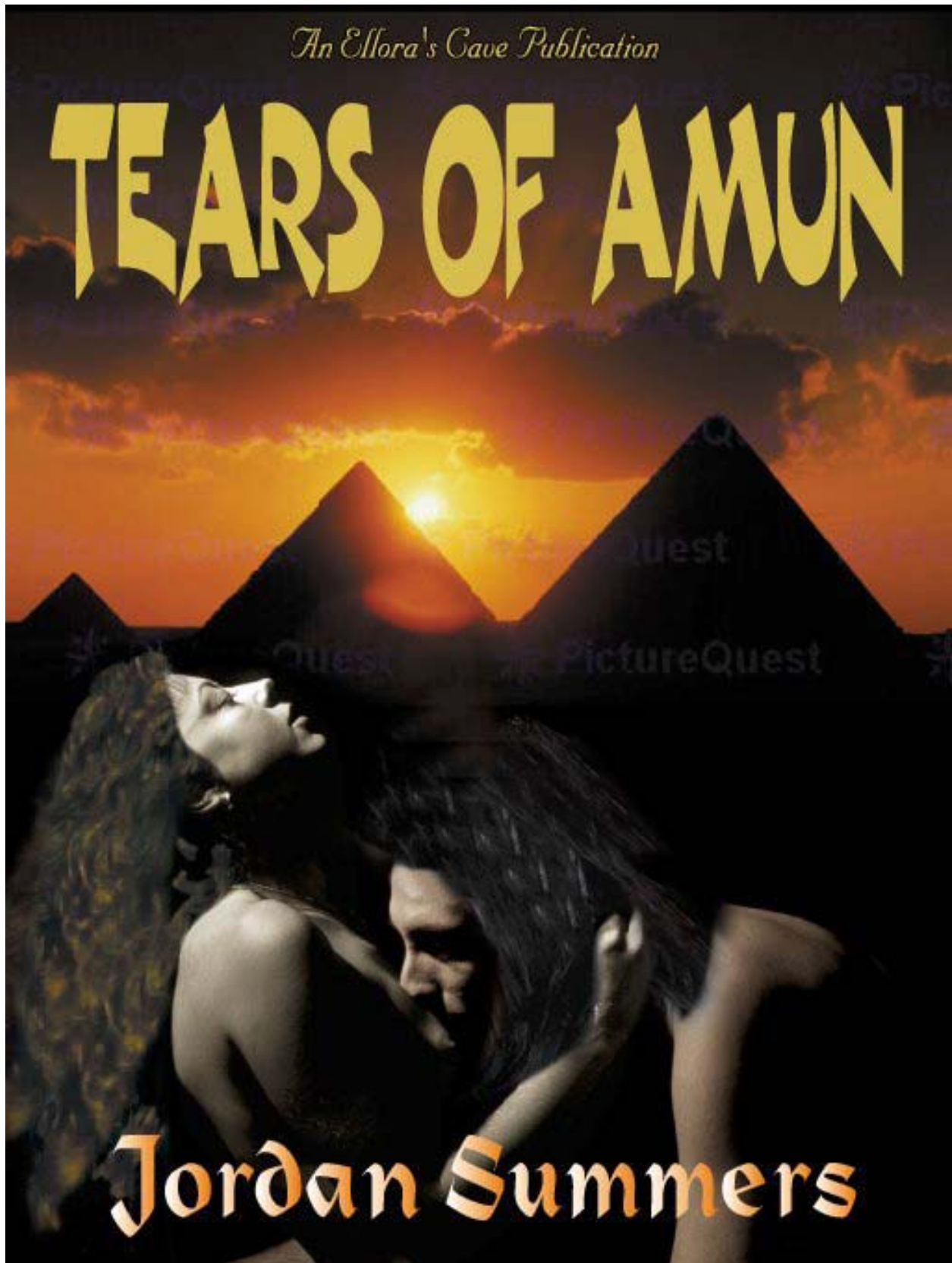




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Jordan Summers

TEARS OF AMUN

An Ellora's Cave publication written by

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Warning:

The following material contains strong sexual content meant for mature readers. TEARS OF AMUN has been rated BORDERLINE NC17, erotic, by three individual reviewers. We strongly suggest storing this electronic file in a place where young readers not meant to view this ebook are unlikely to happen upon it. That said, enjoy...

To Si:

The love of my life.

Acknowledgment:

Many thanks to mom for her futuristic loan. Dad, my family, a, and friends for listening to me ramble about writing. And thanks to my critique partner, chey. I'd also like to thank grandma and edna who always believed in me. I wish you guys were here to see this moment. And last, but not least, to d.m. for being the best creative writing teacher a high school student could ever ask for.

Chapter One

Egypt, 1925

“Hurry up, Charlotte. Don’t dawdle.” Frustration pinched Victoria Witherspoon’s voice until it squeaked.

“Coming, Mother,” Charlotte Witherspoon called out, hastening her step, hoping to avoid her mother’s ire.

Charlotte closed her eyes and gritted her teeth, as she pushed down her vexation. This same haunting scenario had been happening every day for as long as she could remember with little variation. Victoria nitpicked her, continuously chipping away at her self-esteem until it lay like rubble upon the ground. Unable to deal with the pain, Charlotte squelched the hurt that twisted her insides. There was no sense dwelling on it.

Balancing her bag in one hand, Charlotte picked up her skirt to step over the fallen rubble that once was the great temple of Karnak. She’d made it a few yards further when her ankle wedged between two rocks and she tripped, the sack flying out of her hands as she tumbled forward. It was at that precise moment that her mother chose to glance back. Charlotte felt heat rise to her face.

“For pity’s sake, Charlotte, do pick up your feet like a graceful young lady should.” Her mother’s hands went to her hips and she shook her head in disapproval. “How many times must I tell you?”

“Sorry, Mother.” She pushed herself up off the ground, ignoring the diggers’ curious stares. *It’s not like I did it on purpose*, Charlotte wanted to say, but didn’t dare speak her mind. It would only make matters worse with her mother, the perfect Victoria Witherspoon, who never did anything untoward. Her mother’s manners were impeccable, her taste enviable, and she expected nothing less from her only daughter;

which made it unfortunate since Charlotte took after her father Henry, a self-professed, slightly clumsy bookworm. Despite being eighteen, a fact her mother refused to acknowledge, Victoria had a way of making Charlotte feel like an inadequate, somewhat dim child.

She brushed her hands on her skirt and picked up the sack she'd dropped. Charlotte opened the bag, taking a quick inventory of the contents. The book she'd borrowed from the lending library in London was still there, along with her brushes. She held her breath as she examined the brushes, looking for any sign of cracks or breaks. She let out a sigh of relief. Thank goodness the brushes were intact. Charlotte didn't want to receive another lecture on carelessness. Assured she hadn't lost anything she closed the sack and continued on.

Her parents had already slipped into one of the chambers leaving Charlotte standing at the entrance breathing stale air. Their minds were one-track when they were on-site. They probably hadn't even noticed she was missing, not that the oversight was something new. Charlotte was quite used to being considered a nuisance. Instead of allowing her to stay home, curled up with a good book, her mother insisted she be at the dig.

Instead of following, she stepped back into the sunlight, blinking against the glare. Her parents would be in there for the rest of the day and probably into the night, making traces. Charlotte expelled a heavy breath, knowing she should follow them but unable to bring herself to do so. She was itching to get at the book in her sack.

She spun on her heel and made her way around the ruins to a spot near some newly uncovered stairs. Huge sand piles hugged the sides of the staircase, like a giant hourglass that had been tipped on end, lending itself as the perfect hideaway. Charlotte sat on the highest step, drawing out the book. She cracked open the cover, a musty smell indicative of an old tomb wafting from the pages. Charlotte leaned forward and inhaled deeply, closing her eyes for a second in delight. There were few things on Earth that struck her as close to the soul as a good book.

Methodically she thumbed through the satiny sheets until she'd found her favorite spot. Pictures of the pharaohs gliding across the cool waters of the Nile came to life before her eyes, their bronze skin glowing against the white linen of their embroidered kilts. Charlotte's gaze caressed the figures, focusing on one man in particular. His chest was bare and unusually broad for an Egyptian. His arms appeared strong, bulging with muscles. The man's kohl-lined black eyes seemed to penetrate the very pages, demanding her attention, drawing her nearer.

Charlotte ran her fingers over the image. Goosebumps immediately rose on her arms. She knew she was being silly but for some reason couldn't bring herself to stop returning to him over and over. She'd loved this man since she was fifteen years old, if it were even possible to fall in love with an image.

She'd even gone so far as to imagine their life together, what it would feel like if he held her in his arms, pressed his lips to hers. Would his lips be firm or soft? Wet or dry? Charlotte knew if she'd mentioned her infatuation with the picture, her mother would remind her that she needed to get her head out of the clouds and meet a nice young man to settle down with.

That would take all your fanciful notions away tout suite. Really Charlotte, sometimes I wonder where your head is...

Her mother didn't need to be standing in front of her for Charlotte to be able to hear her admonishing voice clearly in her mind. Charlotte harrumphed. She knew there wasn't much chance of meeting someone suitable on a dig site in Thebes. All the eligible men she'd considered taking a shine to had been far too wrapped up in trying to make the next big discovery to even notice she was there. Not that Charlotte cared. She wasn't interested in anyone but the commanding man in the picture.

"If only you were real," she muttered under her breath, running her fingers over his still form.

She glanced down at the byline under the papyrus. The Egyptologist who'd written the book had believed the figure in the depiction was King Amasis, but had put a side note at the bottom explaining his lack of evidence and all around uncertainty.

"Little help you are," she spoke to the picture, laughing.

Ever since Charlotte had learned his name, she'd had a vague sense of *dèjà vu*, but couldn't understand why. Once again she could almost hear her mother *tsking* in disapproval. Charlotte closed the book and put it aside, picking up her brush in its stead. It was time to get to work. At least if her mother wandered by she'd appear to be busy. The air settled around her, hot and oppressive, as she dusted away debris from the half-exposed step with a swish from the brush in her hand.

It had been three years since Mr. Carter and Lord Carnarvon had uncovered the find of the century, Tutankhamen's tomb. She'd been relegated to this small area of Karnak along with her parents, lesser known explorers who strived for one thing only: the preservation of Egyptian history. While the *true* Egyptologists were free to delve into the Valley of the Kings.

She stopped, laying the brush down at her side. It wasn't fair. Her parents had been here just as long as Howard Carter, if not longer. They should have been the ones to stumble upon such a great find as Tutankhamen.

Charlotte sighed and went back to work, toiling deeper into the sand, pushing thoughts of treasure from her mind. She had made three more swipes when her hand struck something hard beneath the sand. Her breath seized and her heart thudded wildly in her chest. Her vision narrowed to where her hand lay still against the hidden item. With trembling fingers, Charlotte carefully cleared the area. The sounds around her muted as she uncovered a small wooden case.

At first glance, it didn't look like much. Perhaps a toy left behind by a child, or a worker's tool kit, long buried in the unforgiving sand. Upon closer inspection, Charlotte changed her mind. She leaned back and glanced around the pile of sand to make sure

none of the nearby diggers had observed her making the discovery. All eyes were upon the tasks at hand as they rhythmically worked with picks and shovels.

Charlotte stood, wiping the dust from her hands. She slid the item, along with her brush and book into her sack and made her way to the sacred lake of Karnak. In the late morning the area tended to be deserted. She'd be able to examine her find before taking it to her parents. Perhaps it would be good enough to garner them the recognition they deserved and get them moved to a more prestigious area to dig. Surely if Charlotte accomplished that, her mother would finally see her worth and begin to love her. She sighed. But first she needed to confirm its authenticity or her mother would never let her live it down.

Walking over the fallen stones, Charlotte rounded the columns along the path, her heels clattering over the rocks. She stared at the ruins for a moment, wishing it were possible to see the temple at Karnak in its full glory. The sun, golden in the sky, shined brightly on the water ahead, twinkling and radiant. It was the perfect spot to uncover her treasure. Charlotte glanced at the glass-like surface, shielding her eyes, so that she wouldn't misstep. The area was empty, except for an occasional goose or two that called the Nile valley home. She found a cleared spot near the water's edge and sat.

Sweat trickled down her neck and under her white blouse. Her eyes once again sought the promise of cooling water. The still liquid, tempting in its calmness, called out to her. Charlotte stamped her foot. She couldn't go swimming in the sacred lake. It was forbidden. Besides, it was probably full of crocodiles.

She removed a handkerchief from her sleeve and dabbed at her forehead. The white linen came away with a smudge of dirt across it. Charlotte humphed. Nothing stayed clean in the middle of the desert. She tucked the now soiled linen back up her sleeve and removed the wooden box and her brush from the sack.

The box was no larger than a thin loaf of bread. She gently blew away the sand covering it. The cartouches were well worn, but still clearly visible in their gold inlay. Charlotte stared in wonder, turning the box this way and that, studying the

craftsmanship. The wood felt rough against her fingertips from the harsh treatment of the sand.

She looked for an opening. There didn't appear to be one. It certainly hadn't belonged to a commoner. Had a thief dropped it while trying to make his escape? It wouldn't be the first time artifacts had been found discarded in the sand like rubbish. She shook her head in disgust.

She picked up her brush and proceeded to clear away the last remnants of sand until she was able to read the inscription. Charlotte's eye's widened as the words on the box came to life in her mind.

Through the sands of time

By the pharaoh's breath

When the waters rise to highest depth

Then the veils will thin

For two worlds to see

A fated love that must once again be

He who gazes upon the one wearing the Tears of Amun

Shall go on to rule the kingdoms of Egypt

Charlotte almost dropped the box as she read the last words. It didn't sound like a curse, but it definitely sounded ominous. She set the box down, taking a moment to catch her breath. Who had owned this and what were the Tears of Amun? She'd never heard of them, even though her parents had taken care to teach her about all of the legends and pharaohs that existed in ancient times.

They'd pounded everything Egyptian into her head, until she could read and write Hieratic, Demotic, and Hieroglyphs. Charlotte could also speak Arabic, Coptic, and even a little Ancient Egyptian; although she was unsure whether her pronunciations on the latter two were correct, since they had been virtually extinct for over a thousand years. She picked the box up again to examine it further, the words inscribed on top

floating through her mind like an apparition. Its presence, a ghostly voice from the past, spoke to her.

Her mother and father had warned her about curses, although they didn't believe in them personally. Charlotte wasn't so sure. Howard Carter had lost several men who'd been there to open Tutankhamen's tomb. Whispers of a curse had spread like wildfire throughout the campsites. Charlotte shivered at the thought.

She heard a splash as something hit the water. Charlotte jumped, her hand automatically flying to her heart, before spotting the culprit. A duck paddled around the center of the lake, unconcerned with her presence, quacking away. She laughed, the nervous sound strained to her own ears. Why was she so jumpy? It wasn't like she'd done anything wrong.

Sweat was now pouring off her. She told herself she'd just go to the water's edge to wet her handkerchief, then come right back. Charlotte went to stand the box on end, when a latch she hadn't noticed before slid free. A golden necklace dropped out on the ground with a clunk. Her breath caught. The sun sparkled off the precious metal, glimmering red on the stones inlaid in the gold. They were teardrop shaped and as crimson as blood. Charlotte gasped—rubies. She ran her fingers over the gems.

The Tears of Amun...

Charlotte heard footsteps and immediately grabbed the necklace, slipping it over her head before someone could spot her. Hanif, one of the workers, stepped from behind a column, his slight body drenched in sweat. She waved to him. Hanif smiled back, white teeth flashing against bronze skin. The man turned silently, as if realizing he'd intruded on her space. Once again she was left alone with her thoughts and her precious treasure.

Charlotte's head was spinning. The gold and jewels around her neck were heavy, weighted. The gold heated her skin, eclipsing the warmth of the day. Lightheaded, she made her way to the water, pulling a square of soft linen from her sleeve. She knelt down near the edge to dip her handkerchief in the liquid. Unable to reach, Charlotte

inched closer. The rock near the shore crumbled, toppling her headfirst into Karnak's sacred lake. The air was knocked from Charlotte's lungs as she hit the water.

The lake was hot, stagnant from lack of current. As she struggled to break the surface, Charlotte felt as if a thousand hands were tugging her from below, preventing her from gasping much needed air. She opened her eyes. Her movements slowed as she watched the light from the sun fade and reappear over and over again. Surely her mind was playing tricks on her due to lack of oxygen. She blinked.

Fear surged through her, giving her an added boost of adrenaline. Charlotte broke the surface, sputtering and coughing, trying to rid her lungs of Nile water. Reaching out with both hands she grasped the rough stones near the water's edge. Her hat was gone, leaving her curly brown hair plastered to her back. Her clothes hugged her like a second skin. She brushed a hand over her face, ridding her eyes of water. Geese honked overhead as they flew by.

Charlotte blinked again as she pulled herself out of the lake enough to sit on the stone edge. She scanned the area, a frown upon her face. Once again she wiped at her eyes while her mind struggled to decipher what she was seeing. The columns in Karnak were aligned with intricate carvings at the base, not crumbling and worn. She stood to get a better view. The stones that she'd carefully maneuvered around to get to the sacred lake were smoothed into level walkways. A wall rose up in the distance marking the entrance into the temple area. Charlotte reached over and pinched her hand.

"Ouch!"

Her flesh turned an angry pink upon contact. Well at least she knew she wasn't dreaming. Was it possible that she'd drowned? She glanced out at the lake and saw craft upon the Nile in the distance. They didn't look like the normal boats used by modern Egyptians. They appeared to be longer, thinner. Dark-haired people dressed in white linen stood at the ends of the vessels steering them through the black water.

"Oh my...this can't be...it isn't possible," Charlotte muttered to herself. "I must have hit my head on the bottom." She closed her eyes, resting her head in her hands.

Perhaps if she sat here long enough the world would return to normal. “It’s only a dream, a bad, bad dream.” A cough coming from behind one of the nearby columns jolted Charlotte back to reality.

“Hanif, is that you?” she called out.

There was no answer.

“Hanif, I’ve had a terribly bad day. Please show yourself.” Her voice quivered.

A brown hand appeared to the side of the column. Charlotte released the breath she hadn’t known she’d been holding and waited for Hanif to appear. Instead, the most striking man Charlotte had ever seen stepped from behind the column. He wore a white linen kilt with embroidery at the top around his slim hips. The material hung down to his knees, leaving his well-developed calves exposed. His dark eyes, slightly slanted, were lined with kohl, like the ancient Egyptians had been depicted in carvings for thousands of years.

Charlotte frowned. He looked familiar.

His chest was wide and heavily muscled. Gold bracelets with blue scarabs crowning the tops bound his wrists. A gold necklace bearing the shape of three flies circled his throat. Hair of the blackest night hung to his shoulders and had been ornately braided. Charlotte instantly recognized the necklace as a sign of bravery. Why was he wearing it? And who was he?

His face was a work of art, sculpted with high cheekbones and full lips, squaring into a firm chin. His black eyes were heated, intense. His gaze was locked on the front of her shirt. Charlotte watched the rise and fall of his chest, the rhythm mesmerizing, as his fire took hold of her. She glanced down to see what was holding him so captivated.

The white of her shirt had turned transparent from the water. The Tears of Amun were clearly visible through the garment, along with her rosy nipples, which had taken that moment to bead under his close scrutiny. Charlotte sucked in a surprised breath and covered her breasts with her hands.

For a moment more, his gaze lingered before returning to her face. When his eyes met hers, he smiled. The simple act melted her insides.

He was the man from her book.

The same man she'd spent countless hours gazing at like a schoolgirl suffering from her first crush—except he was real. It wasn't possible, *was it?* Had she wished so hard, he'd come true?

Charlotte felt heat start at her toes, rise along her legs, over her knees, gravitating to the apex between her ample thighs. If he could do that with just a look, what would it feel like if he touched her? The traitorous thought entered her mind, sending warmth flaring to her face. She knew without the aid of a mirror, she was blushing.

Her dream man stepped forward. Charlotte hadn't noticed the harpoon in his other hand. She glanced over her shoulder at the water. There was nowhere for her to escape. Her eyes once again found his. He paused, frowning as if reading her thoughts. Charlotte forced herself to smile, willing herself to keep calm until she could figure out what was going on.

Of course, why panic over the fact that my fantasy man has come to life from the pages of a book? It happens all the time. Yeah, and Mother thinks I'm the perfect daughter.

The man continued on slowly, making his way toward her until they were standing but a yard apart. The detail of his clothing was unmistakable. Charlotte had never seen anything like it with the exception of Howard Carter's finds and the book she'd borrowed from the library. She glanced to the ground where she'd left her sack before falling into the lake, but it was gone.

Charlotte looked back at the man before her. A shift of the wind brought his spicy scent to her. Shock and awareness slammed into her body. Her knees weakened as she inhaled deeply. Her senses came alive, zeroing in on the man before her. The juncture between her thighs started to throb. Her nipples beaded painfully. It was as if his mere presence jolted her awake from a deep, deep sleep. Charlotte fought the urge to move closer so she could inhale more of his essence. Touch his bronze skin. He was even

more handsome than she'd imagined. The picture did not do justice to this striking figure.

What was she saying?

In all likelihood this man simply resembled the man in the picture. He couldn't possibly be him. That man's name was Amasis and he'd lived over two thousand years ago. Charlotte felt the back of her head, her fingers tangling in her wet locks. There had to be an injury somewhere. She gave up after a moment, unable to locate a wound.

If she wasn't hurt, then she needed to figure out where he had gotten all of the items on his body. She needed to authenticate what she was seeing, and then inform her parents of the find. Charlotte was sure her mother would have a thing or two to say about her appearance, but it couldn't be helped. After all, she hadn't planned to take a swim in the sacred lake. It was an accident, like all the other times...

She held out her hand. "My name is Miss Charlotte Witherspoon."

The man looked at her hand and then back to her face. When he made no move, Charlotte clasped his hand. His large palm enveloped hers, sending delicious tingles racing up her arm. His eyes widened but he didn't pull away.

"It's nice to meet you," she prompted, before quickly releasing him.

Still nothing.

She blew out a ragged breath and ran her hand through her hair. Charlotte wasn't sure why the man wasn't speaking. *Fantasies don't talk*, the little voice in her head chided. She dismissed the thought with a wave of her hand. She needed to focus, but it was difficult with the resemblance to the picture being so uncanny. Perhaps he refused to talk because he thought she'd turn him in for theft. Charlotte glanced at his necklace. For something over two thousand years old, it showed remarkably little wear and tear. In fact, it looked almost new, along with the temple's reconstruction, which was impossible.

"What is your name?" she asked in her best Egyptian tongue, the words stumbling from her lips.

His brows furrowed and then rose as he finally comprehended. “My name is Ahmose.” He pressed a large hand to his wide chest.

“Ahmose,” she repeated, letting the name play across her mouth. Charlotte tried to ignore the way his taut skin was stretched across a canvas of hard muscle. “I like it.” She smiled. At least that answered the question at the back of her mind. He wasn’t the man in the picture. His name wasn’t common in Egypt, but that didn’t necessarily mean anything. Familiar, yet not. She brushed it away, deciding to examine it later.

Charlotte placed a hand over her breast, her erect nipple stabbing her palm. Surprised by her body’s strange reaction to the man’s nearness, she gulped and forged on, praying he hadn’t noticed. “I’m Charlotte Witherspoon.”

He stared at her for a moment, his gaze caressing the rigid crests, as if they were still visible. Her skin prickled. Then once again he sought her eyes, his lips now pursing to try and mimic what she’d said. *Well so much for him not noticing...* She flushed as she repeated her name.

“Ch-aaarleete,” he said attempting to imitate the sound she’d created.

Charlotte nodded encouragingly. “Charlotte.”

“Ch-charlotte,” he said again.

“Yes.” She smiled.

Charlotte glanced over his shoulder at the temple of Karnak. Why wasn’t it in ruin? As the question ran through her mind again, her head began to swim. The temple was complete, not a stone out of place. There were no ruins in sight. She’d really thought her fall in the water had affected her perception, but since Karnak was still whole, Charlotte was beginning to get worried.

Several men rushed toward their location, weapons drawn, dressed exactly like Ahmose.

This wasn’t conceivable. There was no way this could be happening. The man standing before her wasn’t her dream. She’d already confirmed that. Charlotte shook

her head in denial. She was not back in ancient Egypt, it wasn't possible. She couldn't be seeing what she was seeing.

Charlotte's gaze locked onto his and she swayed. The man grabbed her. The warmth from his palms penetrated her skin just as her world faded into darkness.

Chapter Two

Charlotte's lids fluttered as she willed herself to open her eyes. No longer hot, she felt comfortable for the first time in a while. She stretched, trying to recall what she'd been doing earlier. She'd found a necklace while sitting beside the sacred lake at Karnak. She'd also been talking to the most beautiful man she'd ever laid eyes on, and then everything went black.

Charlotte's eyes flew open. Had he struck her? No, she didn't think so, her head bore no pain. She glanced around at her surroundings. She was inside of a chamber of some kind. Torches protruded from the sienna-colored walls, lighting the area. A ceremonial-looking axe hung between two torches, its gold glittering in the firelight. Shifting, Charlotte looked down at her side. She'd been placed upon a bed constructed of mud brick that appeared to be layered in reed mats and then covered with thin linen. The material was soft against her skin. The odor of frankincense wafted in the air, its spicy aroma soothing.

She turned over, allowing the material to slip down her shoulder and over the fine hairs on her arm like a sensuous caress. A slight scrape over her nipples drew her attention down. Her eyes widened. Her clothes were gone. She was lying in the bed naked with the Tears of Amun around her neck. The rouged pink of her nipples poked out over the top of the covers.

Confused, Charlotte pulled the linen close and glanced around the room again, ensuring she was alone. Had the man resembling the picture undressed her? What had it felt like to have his large hands on her body? Were his palms rough or smooth? Had he taken his time lingering over her breasts, perhaps stroking the tuft of hair between her legs? She squeezed her thighs together to halt the ache that had begun. Charlotte tried to muster outrage, but could only manage insatiable curiosity.

She flopped down on her back and stared up at the ceiling while she tried to make sense of the situation. Leaves had been intricately painted on the mud brick ceiling giving her the sensation of being out-of-doors. The walls were smooth and appeared to be thick, lending to the coolness in the room, the firelight giving them a golden glow. The details were familiar to her, but different. The only time she'd seen anything similar was on a dig and no one in those sites had lived in the dwellings for over two thousand years. It just didn't make sense.

Footsteps down the hall were her only warning a moment before Ahmose appeared in the doorway. Charlotte whipped the covers up to her chin, suddenly feeling vulnerable and small in his presence. He looked as handsome as before with his brown sun-kissed complexion and brilliant smile. His skin had been oiled, carrying the aroma of myrrh.

He opened his mouth and began to speak. The slight difference in dialect compared to what she'd studied had her scrambling to keep up. In over a thousand years no one had heard ancient Egyptian spoken aloud. And no matter what her mind was telling her Charlotte knew beyond a doubt that was exactly what he was speaking.

For a few seconds she just stared in wonder, listening to the words roll seductively off his tongue, her fantasy come to life. From her earliest memory, Charlotte had been surrounded by Egypt and the digs. Her parents had brought her on her first excavation when she'd been barely able to toddle. They'd filled her head with tales of the ancient kingdom and of the great rulers and cities that had once existed. It had been Charlotte's fondest wish at the time to be able to see the cities in all their glory, exactly how her parents had described. And from the looks of things, it had come true.

"Be careful what you wish for, Charlotte Witherspoon," she murmured under her breath.

The man arched his brow.

"W-where a-am I?" Charlotte struggled to speak his language, enunciating every word to make sure she was understood. Her lips puckered as she twisted her tongue

around the dialect. Having never heard ancient Egyptian spoken it was difficult to say the very least.

He looked around the room. “You are in my home.”

“But where exactly is that?” She glanced at the walls, then back to his face, all the while keeping herself covered.

“The great capital city of Egypt—Thebes.” Ahmose’s hands moved to his hips and his chest seemed to puff out at the proclamation.

Charlotte’s brows knitted. Thebes wasn’t the capital of Egypt, but she wasn’t about to tell Ahmose that, especially with everything else going on. She didn’t want to know, but she had to ask.

“Who is the leader of this land?” Charlotte’s fingers gripped the material at her throat until her knuckles turned white.

“The great King Kamose, my brother,” he replied, as if she were dense.

Charlotte’s mind refused to function. The pharaoh Kamose ruled in the Second Intermediate Period followed by Ahmose the first, who heralded in the New Kingdom. Charlotte’s eyes locked with his. She couldn’t seem to catch her breath.

This was Prince Ahmose, the man who would be King. Or as the Greeks called him, Amasis, the very man from the picture in her book.

Charlotte brought a hand to her head, trying to stop the wave of dizziness threatening to overtake her.

“You wear the Tears of Amun.” He pointed to the spot beneath the linen where the jewels poked through.

She glanced down at the necklace beneath the covers.

“Do you know what this means?” he asked, as he crossed his arms over his chest.

Charlotte wasn’t absolutely positive, but from the inscription she had a pretty good idea. Perhaps it had been a curse after all, considering she’d been catapulted through

time. With speed she hadn't anticipated, Ahmose closed the distance between them, snatching the cover down while she was lost in thought.

"Wait one minute." She tried to grab the cover back, but his grip was too firm.

He slid his hand beneath the necklace. "It means that whoever gazes upon the Tears of Amun shall rule all the kingdoms of Egypt, with the wearer by his side."

Charlotte's eyes practically bugged out of her head. "It didn't say that," she whispered, distracted by the heat of his hands.

"The last part I added myself," he practically purred. "I care not, whence you came. Nor that you speak my tongue strangely. Only that you are here now to become my qefent."

Charlotte couldn't seem to focus. She must have misunderstood him. Had he just told her he wanted her cunt? She blinked, retracing his words, before remembering the other meaning of the word. Surely he didn't expect her to...to become his qefent—his wife?

His gaze heated as it latched onto her nipples. Charlotte's body responded, despite her shock and the need to protect her modesty. With his free hand, Ahmose dropped the necklace and reached out slowly, giving her plenty of time to move away, until his fingertips made contact with her jutting flesh.

Charlotte gasped, then sucked in a surprised breath at her body's response to the warmth radiating from his hands. No one had ever touched her so intimately. Growing up on a dig site had kept her fairly isolated. Had it not been for reading Casanova's "The Story of My Life" she would be completely ignorant. As it was, she'd only managed to experience the sensation of kissing a couple of years ago on her sixteenth birthday. Luckily for her, Victoria had been too preoccupied to know of either event.

Ahmose fondled her nipples, drawing her back from her musings. Charlotte knew she should slap his hand away. But her flesh had begun to tingle, feeling as if a fire had been lit beneath its surface. Besides, being in another time period, things like this held no consequence, *did they?*

He circled her nipple with the pad of his thumb, until it was standing at attention, begging for more. Charlotte's breasts ached and began to throb. She burned for him. He pinched her nipple gently and she moaned. Without thought Charlotte leaned into his hand, seeking his scorching touch. His eyes were locked on her face as if gauging her reaction. She flushed from head to toe.

No matter how hard she tried to fight herself, Charlotte couldn't seem to utter the words to make him stop. She'd dreamt of this moment with him for years. Everything felt so new and exciting, yet so right as if they'd done this a thousand times before. Was it wrong to want to experience something so beautiful with the man she'd loved since the age of fifteen? Her mind refused to think so.

Charlotte stared at his mouth, wanting more than anything to feel his lips upon hers. What he was doing with his hands was driving her insane. She couldn't seem to think clearly, focusing solely on his insistent massage. The ache between her legs had grown to an inferno and she had no idea how to assuage it.

He plucked at her nipple and Charlotte's lips parted. Ahmose didn't hesitate. He swooped down and captured her mouth, drawing out a teasing kiss. Charlotte's body fired off every nerve at once. She couldn't breathe. Her heart was pounding in her chest loud enough to make her believe Ahmose could probably hear it. He tasted of spice and honey, blended nicely with all that was male. She found him utterly intoxicating and was drowning in his embrace.

It wasn't enough. Suddenly there were too many covers on her body. She pushed at them, until he let them drop from his hands and onto the floor. Charlotte sat up to meet his lips. The second her naked body made contact with his muscled chest, her world tilted.

She was on fire. Skin on skin, their bodies slid together as if they were meant to be. He deepened the kiss, tentatively dipping his tongue, then plunging in once she didn't recoil. Charlotte's fingers reached out and grasped his forearms to keep herself from being pulled over the edge into the abyss. He increased the pressure on her mouth,

dominating. A growl escaped from the back of his throat, as Ahmose's hands slid over her breasts and around her waist until he could cup her bottom. Charlotte gasped against his mouth, her fingers digging into his skin. They merged once more, the kiss turning fierce.

Within seconds she was being gently guided back onto the bed. Once she was lying flat, he broke the kiss and stepped back to remove his embroidered linen kilt. It fell away from his body. Charlotte's eyes locked onto the rising cock nestled within a bed of crisp ebony curls between his legs. It was as thick as her wrist.

Heat had gathered and pooled between her legs along with moisture. Her lungs heaved in air as he slowly approached the bed and lay down beside her. Every rule she'd been taught about the proper etiquette for young ladies flew out the window when Ahmose touched her nipple again.

His mouth came down on her breast and her nipple sprang to life like a long dormant flower. He suckled and licked, teasing the bud into bloom. Charlotte cried out, shifting her hips in invitation. Her senses were in overload and she couldn't seem to take in everything that was happening. She wanted this man more than she'd ever wanted anything, yet she didn't really know him, only knew *of* him. Ahmose finally took a breath, giving Charlotte a moment to gather her addled wits.

"We shouldn't be doing this," she gasped, as he ran a finger along her arm. "We don't really know each other."

"We have a lifetime to get to know each other." His eyes were intent as he focused on her face. "Our destiny was written long ago. It cannot be avoided or ignored." His deep voice was raspy as he spoke.

Charlotte tried to concentrate on his words, so she could come up with a viable argument. This was wrong. They were wrong. She wasn't meant to be here, *was she?* She shouldn't even be contemplating having sex with this man. *It's all you've ever dreamed of,* the random thought entered her mind. Eventually she'd have to return to her own time.

Her parents were probably worried sick. *If they even notice you're gone*, the little voice inside her head whispered. *Why not enjoy the time you have here?*

Even as the thoughts swept across her mind, Ahmose's hands were beginning to do strange things to her ability to reason. He stroked lightly over her skin, leaving gooseflesh behind. His breathing had deepened until it matched hers, calming, reassuring. Charlotte's gaze found his black eyes. They were like molten liquid, shimmering, fiery and scalding in intensity. The temperature in the room seemed to rise within seconds. Charlotte felt feverish, needy. Her pussy ached.

Ahmose smiled in understanding then dipped his head down to the other breast that had been neglected earlier. Charlotte's lids dropped, colors exploded behind them. All thoughts of refuting him and returning to her own time left her head. Her body was his for the taking. She let him explore freely.

Ahmose examined all of Charlotte's hidden peaks and valleys. He couldn't seem to get enough of the fair vision that had appeared out of the sacred lake. He knew better than to question the gods on their wisdom. She arrived bearing the Tears of Amun, which was all he needed to know. He would follow his destiny as was foretold in the stars and bring the kingdoms of Egypt together once again.

He caressed her nipples, the rosy skin as soft as the petals on a flower. His fingers trembled as he lingered over the soft curves of her full breasts. Ahmose dipped between the valley, trailing his finger down toward her navel. He circled the sensitive area several times, before following the same route with his mouth. Her breath seized as he placed tiny kisses across her skin. Ahmose sensed her inexperience and slowed his exploration. He wanted to take the time to cherish this gift, pay homage to her beauty. Praise be to the gods.

Charlotte's full hips bucked as he ran his hand along her leg, scraping his nails over her thigh. She peeked out from beneath her lids, following his exploration. Ahmose marveled at the contrast between the white of her skin against the brown of his hands. The oil from his body added to the glide as he made his way over her flesh, intoxicated.

Ahmore slid down until his head was situated above her mon. The sweet aroma of Charlotte's arousal wafted in the air, mingling with the myrrh on his skin and the frankincense. He inhaled deeply, dipping one finger into her wetness. She gasped. Her eyes flew open, locking on his seeking fingers.

"Such beauty," he murmured low. "You are fairer than the flowers growing along the Nile." He slipped the finger into his mouth. "And far sweeter."

Charlotte blushed.

Ahmore swiped his finger again, this time connecting with the bundle of nerves hidden beneath her folds.

Charlotte thought she was going to come off the bed, her body was responding in ways she was unfamiliar with. She had the overwhelming urge to hang on to something, just so she wouldn't fly apart into a million pieces. Ahmore dipped his head and laved the same spot he'd just touched.

Charlotte gasped. "What are you doing?"

"Loving you..."

Her world narrowed to his insistent mouth. Nothing else matter or existed. Ahmore shifted again until his body was positioned between her thighs. He dove between her legs, lapping and thrusting at her clitoris with his tongue.

Charlotte could feel tension building inside her, winding tighter and tighter, as if drawing her near a razor's edge. Her hips were moving of their own volition, trying to match his probing. Charlotte grasped his head, her fingers sinking into his ebony hair as her pussy pulsed with need. It seemed to be all the encouragement Ahmore required. He became frenzied, feeding at her woman's center, plunging into her drenched channel.

The blood was pounding so loudly in her ears Charlotte could hardly hear. "Please," she begged, not at all sure exactly what she was asking for. She closed her eyes against the sensation. Her hips thrust against his mouth, wanting, needing, and desiring something more.

Ahmose sucked her clitoris between his teeth and purred, vibrating the sensitive flesh, until a dam seemed to burst inside of her. Charlotte cried out again as she slipped over the precipice and into the unknown below. Her body tingled from head to toe, her legs shaking around his head. Charlotte couldn't seem to stop twitching, as contraction after contraction of pleasure rocked through her.

When Charlotte finally opened her eyes and could focus, she glanced up into the smiling face of Ahmose. His grin said it all. He was more than pleased with what he'd done to her. He positively glowed. The second Charlotte recalled exactly what she'd let him do, her gaze dropped. She didn't think she'd ever be able to look Ahmose in the face again. He'd kissed her and she'd turned positively wanton in his arms, thrusting her sex in his face like a dog in heat. What must he think of her?

As if reading her thoughts, Ahmose shifted up, until his hips were cradled within her own. Charlotte's gaze flew up, meeting his eyes. She could feel the hard evidence of his arousal, digging into her soft belly. He held her captive as if willing her to recognize the woman she was about to become.

"I'm not so sure I can do this," she whispered.

He smiled again, his cock bucking against her skin. "We have been made for this since the beginning of time, my precious jewel. Trust in what is to be."

Ahmose shifted his hips until his cock lay poised at her entrance. It took every fiber of his being to keep from thrusting forward and taking what was rightfully his. He wanted Charlotte to go on this journey with him. He slipped his hand between their bodies and began to rub the crown of his shaft over her slick folds. She sucked in a breath, then bit her lip. Ahmose allowed the head to slide into her entrance—it was like heaven, tight, hot, and oh so pleasurable. Charlotte's eyes widened in surprise, but did not show fear. The fact made him prouder than it should have.

"This will hurt but for a moment, my love," he murmured against her cheek as he placed kisses upon her face.

Ahmore slipped his cock in a few more inches, until he encountered her thin barrier. Her velvet channel was molten as it gripped his length, drawing him deeper inside her sheath. There was no easy way to aid this first joining. Ahmore leaned over, latching onto her nipple with his mouth, and thrust forward at the same time. A pain-filled gasp escaped from Charlotte's lips, but he continued to embrace her, lapping at her nipple soothingly. He held his body completely still, the muscles in his back and buttocks straining against the urge to seek his completion.

Charlotte couldn't breathe. The pain...the pain she'd felt moments ago was fading and turning into something else. She felt full, stuffed, and unable to move. Ahmore was in her, surrounding, dominating her with his presence. Before this, she hadn't thought their joining possible, but now her body was adjusting, accepting, and welcoming his cock as if it belonged. He slowly released her nipple. Just when Charlotte thought the sensations would cease, he moved, a gentle thrust at first, testing her. She gasped, but instead of pain she felt only pleasure.

Her nipples beaded against the scrape of his hairless chest as he rose up to support himself with his elbows. The small movement brought him deeper inside of her, nudging her womb. Her channel flooded once again, accommodating his size.

"Are you all right?" he asked, little lines creasing his face while concern marred his brow.

"I'm fine. It feels..."

He thrust again. And passion exploded inside of her.

"Wonderful." The word came out on a sigh.

He smiled down at her as he picked up speed. His cock plunged deeper, his rhythm picking her up and carrying her along on a wave of desire. He rocked sideways, massaging a spot inside of her that was almost as sensitive as the little nub on the outside. Charlotte allowed herself to fall into the feeling. Ahmore's hips bucked and surged, pistoning faster and faster. Charlotte's lids started to fall.

“No,” he cried. “I want you to look at me when you come again.” The muscles in his neck strained. “I want you to know who will be your king.”

Charlotte opened her mouth. She wasn't sure if she was about to protest or concur. Ahmose took that moment to dip his tongue inside, circling and twisting with her own. The now familiar throbbing sensation started low in her belly. Charlotte's grip tightened. Ahmose drove deep again and again, centering his effort at her very core. It was all that was needed to hurl Charlotte into another orgasm. She pulled back and screamed, all of her muscles tensing at once, her pussy milking his cock.

The second her sheath grabbed him it was over for Ahmose, and his seed began to spill from his body. Her unrestrained response sent him into oblivion. His hips continued to move as the last of his essence was emptied into the center that would soon hold new life. This wonderful gift from the gods was his, all his and he had no intention of ever letting her go.

Before he'd given it another thought, Ahmose decided they would wed before the celebration of the Opet. Charlotte would become his princess and then later his queen.

Charlotte was seeing stars across the handsome face above her. He was everything she'd ever imagined in a lover and more. His passion had been limitless. They were still joined, but the fact no longer held embarrassment, only joy. Her heart swelled as she felt him throb inside her.

This man, this prince, had wanted her, Charlotte Witherspoon, the woman who'd fallen in love with a picture, when he could have had anyone in the kingdom. The thought was empowering. She reached up and moved a satiny braid of his hair over his shoulder, so that she could see his face clearly. He was grinning down at her, possession burning in his eyes.

A loving curve touched Charlotte's lips.

“What brings you joy?” His smile reached his eyes.

She ran her finger along his jaw. “I was just thinking how lucky I am to have found someone like you to be my first lover.”

His expression darkened, storm clouds filling his eyes.

Charlotte dropped her hand away. “Did I say something wrong?”

“You shall have no other lovers from this day forth. You have given yourself to me. I have planted my seed. It is done.” He slipped from inside her and slid off her body.

Suddenly Charlotte felt cold, empty. She frowned as she tried to think about his words. “You can’t expect me to stay here. I don’t belong in this t—”

“I shall hear no more of this.” He fastened his kilt in haste. “You are to become my wife.”

“Wife!” Charlotte sat up, scrambling for the covers at the same time. “I can’t become your wife. I have to get back.”

For a moment an expression of confusion crossed Ahmose’s face, then just as quickly it cleared. “I will offer the proper gifts, ones fitting for a soon to be queen. Tell me what land I must send them to and it shall be done.”

“Queen? Land?” Charlotte was struggling to keep up—first his wife, then his queen? The pieces of the inscription fell into place like an iron latch. “Ahmose, there’s been a terrible mistake. The Tears of Amun aren’t mine.”

He stared, aghast. “You stole them from their rightful owner?”

Charlotte’s mouth dropped open. “I would never.”

Relief flooded his features. “Then it is settled. We wed in a few days, just in time to join the Opet festival.”

She simply stared, unsure of what to say next.

“I will return with some clothing, since your old garments were...unsuitable.” Ahmose slipped from the room before she could respond.

Charlotte watched his retreating back until he disappeared around a corner. She had to explain, try to convince him to call the wedding off. Her heart sank. It would do no good falling in love with the man, when in the end she’d have to leave him.

Who was she trying to kid? She'd fallen for Ahmose years ago when his name had been Amasis and he'd only been a picture on a page. The thought of never seeing him again bothered Charlotte more than she cared to admit. After today, how was she going to live without him? The thought was too painful to contemplate.

Chapter Three

Charlotte lay on the bed, sated, awaiting Ahmose's return. As much as she liked being here with him and experiencing the joys of lovemaking, she had to find a way out of his time and back into her own. If there was a way in, there had to be a way out. Besides, if she ended up staying, history could be irrevocably altered. The question was...how to get back.

She was playing with the gold around her neck when Ahmose returned. He brought her delicate linen, much like what he wore, and carried a wooden chest, laminated in precious gems and mother of pearl, which he proceeded to open. Charlotte almost fell off the bed when she saw the jewels and mass of wealth he displayed. Only in Tutankhamen's tomb did gold like this exist. Her heart thudded as he picked up a ring of gold. Charlotte stared as he slid the ring onto her finger. Tears sprang to her eyes as she realized no matter how much she wanted this, it could never be.

"If you do not like this one, I can get you another." He hesitated, then began to dig through the jewelry.

She swiped at the tears with the back of her hand, then reached to still his movements. "It isn't that. The ring is lovely."

"Then why the tears?" He ran the pad of his thumb over her cheek, wiping away the moisture.

"I'm a little overwhelmed." She shrugged. "I'm a long way from home and not sure how to get back."

He smiled. "Egypt has some of the finest trackers in the land. I'm sure they will find your home, if that is your wish."

Charlotte laughed. She doubted very much if anyone here would be able to find her home. Ahmose reached back in the chest and was once again looking through various

items. He picked up two ruby earrings and grinned as he held one up to the side of her face.

“Perfect. They match the Tears of Amun and the fire that lights your eyes.”

Charlotte brought his hand to her mouth. She placed a chaste kiss upon his knuckles, before allowing him to hang the earrings from her ears. Ahmose helped her get dressed, showing Charlotte how to tie the linen about her. By the time he’d finished she felt like a true Egyptian princess. He slipped sandals onto her feet and then led her out of the room.

They walked down a narrow corridor into a courtyard. A tree grew in the center, lending shade to the hot afternoon sun. They continued on until reaching the main entry, where several women sat.

“These are my servants. They will assist you with anything that you might need.” He swung his arm wide, indicating everyone in the room.

“I’m not sure I need so much help.” Charlotte stared at the women, giving them a tentative smile.

Ahmose squeezed her hand. “This is how I live in Thebes. Later we will visit my brother’s harem. He will be anxious to meet you.”

Charlotte pictured a houseful of naked women running around feeding the men grapes. She knew she was just being childish. This was how ancient Egyptians lived—at least the ones who had money.

“Do you have a harem?” she asked without thinking.

Ahmose turned to her. “You are standing in my harem.”

Charlotte’s gut clenched. “B-but I thought these women were your servants, not your wives.” Her gaze traveled over their faces once again, jealously scrutinizing their appearance.

Ahmose tipped her chin back until she was looking at him. “A harem is private quarters. A retreat. These women are my servants. You will be my wife.”

Charlotte leaned into the warmth she saw in his eyes. His gaze held so much promise, so much...*love*? She knew it wasn't possible, but there it was in the depths of his black eyes—love. He'd just met her. There was no way he could be feeling such things. It couldn't happen, she wouldn't allow it.

What are you going to do, rip out his heart? The thought had her cringing. If she stayed here for much longer it could very well happen when she left.

"Come, my love. Let us eat." Ahmose clapped his hands twice and the women scattered in all directions.

Within moments a linen throw had been tossed on the floor and an area had been set up for them to dine. Bowls containing dried fish, fresh fruit, and bread were laid upon the blanketed floor. Cushions stuffed with goose feathers were brought for them to sit upon. A thick beverage was poured into two cups; the servants tossed in dates and stirred in honey. One was handed to Ahmose, the other to Charlotte. He held up his cup and waited for her to do the same.

"Here's to my future bride." He grinned and took a sip.

Charlotte smiled back and drank from her cup. The brew was thick and grainy as it slid down her throat. She'd read about this drink, but this was the first time she'd ever tasted barley beer. From the darkness and the taste of the brew, it was quite a potent batch. As Charlotte drank, her muscles begin to relax. Ahmose tore off a bit of the crusty bread and handed it to her, then passed the fish.

"How long have you lived here?" Charlotte asked, sounding too eager. There was so much she wanted to learn, so much she wanted to see.

"Many years." He swallowed the bread he'd been chewing. "My brother and I were raised in the town of Gurob, near the Fayuum oasis on the edge of the desert. My family has another harem palace there. Perhaps you'd like to see it sometime?"

"I'd love to." Charlotte couldn't hide the enthusiasm in her voice.

This whole experience was like a dream come true. She was afraid at any moment she'd awaken and it would all be gone. Charlotte's heart squeezed in her chest and for a

moment she had to look away, unable to gaze into Ahmose's eyes. After a few seconds, she composed herself enough to continue their conversation.

"Would it be possible to view the city of Thebes today?" Did she really have time to sightsee? But how could she be here and not?

Ahmose was watching her closely, not missing the moment her eyes misted over. "I think that would be possible. My chariot is housed with my horses."

Charlotte's green orbs lit up in excitement.

"Tell me, my love, where do your people hail from?"

Charlotte stilled mid-motion from picking up her cup to take a drink. She'd hoped they could avoid this question. She put the beer down, her teeth worrying her bottom lip. Finally she released a breath.

"I come from lands far to the north, beyond the realms of Egypt, across the seas." She began picking at a loose thread on her kilt.

"How did you come to be here?" Ahmose took a drink of his beer, and then set the cup down.

That was a very good question and for the life of her, Charlotte wished she had the answer. She couldn't exactly blurt out she was from a different time. Ahmose would probably have her stoned to death. So she fibbed. "My people left me on their journey further south."

His brows furrowed and anger flashed in his black gaze. "How could they leave the bearer of the Tears of Amun and one so fine and beautiful as you?"

Charlotte glanced down at her lap, then back up into his face. "Where I'm from the Tears of Amun don't have the same meaning."

"How can that be?" He shook his head. "The gods would not allow it."

"My people have moved away from the gods. They are not as well thought of as they are here."

Ahmose gasped. "This cannot be. It is blasphemous." He rose from the floor, his hands going to his hips. "I do not understand your people."

Charlotte chuckled. "If it makes you feel any better, I don't either."

"Come." He held out his hand. "Let me show you Thebes."

Charlotte let Ahmose pull her to her feet. He led her behind the palace to a stable. There were many horses of various colors in a paddock, and off to the side stood five chariots.

"Are those all yours?" She pointed to the chariots.

Ahmose grinned. "They are mine and my family's. The one on the end is my favorite."

Charlotte could see why it was his favorite. The front of the chariot was inlaid in gilded gold. The wood paneling at the sides had been painted and carved with depictions of Ahmose defeating his enemies in battle. The vehicle was so ornate, Charlotte wondered if they should really be riding in it.

"Come." He tugged her arm, pulling her forward. "What color do you prefer?"

Ahmose nodded toward the horses. Her gaze flew to the massive horseflesh prancing around the ring, kicking up sand. A dappled gray stallion bucked and reared, nickering loudly, drawing her attention from the others. His long white mane and tail glowed in the sunlight. The muscles in his sleek body rippled with unbridled strength. He tossed his head in her direction, then snorted.

"Him." She pointed to the stud.

Ahmose smiled again. "He's my favorite. I call him Hasani. It means handsome."

Charlotte glanced back into the paddock. "It fits him," she said, laughing.

Ahmose whistled, three quick bursts of sound. Hasani's ears twitched then perked up. Ahmose repeated the whistle and the stallion trotted over to stand next to him.

"That's a great trick." She nodded toward the horse. "Do they all do that?"

It was Ahmose's turn to laugh. "Only when they feel like it, I'm afraid. They are much like women—they do nothing unless they want to."

Charlotte opened her mouth to protest.

Ahmose winked, immediately soothing her ruffled feathers.

Heat rose in her cheeks. How did he calm her so easily? She shook her head and rolled her eyes. Ahmose leaned in and kissed her on the cheek, then signaled for his servants to ready the chariot.

Moments later, wind whipped through Charlotte's hair as they raced down the roads of Thebes. Several people lined the streets to see the chariot pass by. Hasani's slashing hooves and the chariot's wheels clattering over the stones sent dust whipping behind them. Ahmose had her pressed to the front of the chariot, his weight balanced behind her as he guided the conveyance. Charlotte could feel his cock against her back, as it grew and lengthened with every move she made.

She felt strong, powerful, like a woman. Not the klutzy girl she'd been when she left her time. She wiggled and his shaft grew, hard and urgent. He groaned, dropping one hand to his side. Suddenly she felt a tug at the back of her kilt and then a breeze. She froze.

"What are you doing?"

He pressed his lips to her ear. "Spread your legs a little more." He rasped his fingernails over her silky skin, leaving gooseflesh in its place.

Without thinking, Charlotte did, exposing her cunny to his machinations. Ahmose slipped inside her from behind, filling her completely, before taking up the reins once more. Each bump they hit drove his thick cock deeper into her core. The slow torturous movements seared her, fanning out across her body like licking flames. Charlotte tried to wiggle around so she could see him.

"Don't move." His hips pressed against her, holding her to the front of the chariot. The pressure caused her clitoris to throb. "Or someone may notice," he whispered, taking care to steer the chariot over the uneven road.

She couldn't breathe or think, only feel as she gripped the chariot, as he continued to slip in and out of her wet pussy. Her nipples stabbed against the linen, rasping. Ahmose placed the reins in one hand and circled her clitoris with the other. His thumb probed and stroked, feathering the nubbin with glorious attention. Charlotte's cunny pulsed once, then she came hard. Her scream was muffled, swallowed by his rapacious kiss. He thrust rapidly, driving into her like a man possessed, before following her shortly thereafter.

This was one chariot ride she wouldn't soon forget. Deliciously sated, it took Charlotte a few moments to realize that they had passed the temple at Karnak. Sand dried out her mouth, but she didn't want the ride to end. She breathed in, the heavy spice from nearby kitchens perfumed the air. Charlotte could almost taste the food from the odor alone.

Ahmose slowed Hasani to a trot, his hooves clapping, as they echoed off the walls of the many shops and homes tucked throughout Thebes. The sun was setting on the horizon, brilliant rays of red, purple, and pink, catching the sails from the boats on the Nile in its fading light. Charlotte sighed and snuggled deeper against Ahmose's chest, a smile planted on her face. She could get used to this way of life quite easily. The thought should scare the wits out of her, but it didn't.

They returned to the palace as the last rays of light dropped below the horizon. Ahmose helped her down from the chariot and handed the reins to one of his servants.

"Come, it is time to break for the night." He guided her along the path, his big hand resting on the small of her back.

Charlotte could feel heat from his touch through her clothes as if he'd placed a hot iron against her skin. Her stomach knotted in anticipation. Ahmose didn't look at her, but she could tell he was aware of her slightest movement. They entered the palace, passing through the main parlor area, out into the courtyard beyond, and then into the chamber that held his sleeping area.

Charlotte couldn't seem to remember how to walk. She tripped over one stone and then another, until Ahmose clasped her elbow, steadying her.

His singeing touch only served to intensify the emotions she was feeling. Her skin burned. Was it possible to spontaneously combust? At the moment, Charlotte thought so. She tugged at the material near her neck. Her clothing felt as if it were smothering her, every fiber woven together to add to her discomfort. She glanced out of the corner of her eye and caught Ahmose smiling at her. She didn't think this situation was in the least bit funny.

"Are you warm, my love?" He leaned in until his lips were almost upon her ear.

Charlotte shivered.

"I can help," he all but growled. "Perhaps you'd like some water?" His eyes twinkled in the torch-lit hallway.

She shot him a look. Ahmose didn't even flinch. He was enjoying the fact that he could toy with her. He knew she was at the mercy of her hormones. Well two could play that game. Charlotte knew she may not have much experience, but if the chariot ride was any indication, she wasn't completely without means.

Charlotte ran her hand along Ahmose's arm, pausing at his rounded shoulder. His muscles tensed beneath her fingertips, but he did not pull away. She continued her innocent exploration onto his chest, his skin searing her hand. When she reached the flat disc of his nipple Charlotte rubbed it between her thumb and forefinger. Ahmose's breath caught and his eyes flashed.

"You are playing a dangerous game, little one. Everyone knows not to tease a lion." His grin was absolutely feral.

She gave him a wide-eyed look as if to say she didn't know what he was talking about, and worked her hand lower. Charlotte's fingers slid over the ridges of Ahmose's muscled stomach. When she arrived at his navel, he flinched. This was fun. Having this big strong male at her mercy was more enjoyable than she'd thought it could be.

She circled his belly button, allowing her nails to lightly scrape his skin. Charlotte slid her hand along his belted waist. She glanced down and saw the evidence of his arousal pushing against the white linen of his kilt.

His cock grew thicker the longer she stared. Finally Charlotte couldn't resist. She slipped her hand over his shaft. Ahmose froze for a second and then pressed his length into her hand. Charlotte's fingers wrapped around his cock. His breath came hissing out.

"Are you trying to cause injury to me?" he asked, his voice hoarse.

"No." Charlotte went to pull her hand back, but he stopped her.

He took a deep breath and let it out. "I was trying to be gentle with you since today was your first time. But such torture is driving all honorable thoughts from my head." His body trembled beneath her touch. Ahmose's gaze bulleted to her lips. "Ra, give me strength." He groaned and leaned down, pressing his lips to hers. The kiss was gentle, not rushed, as if they had all the time in the world.

She didn't think there would ever be a moment when she would tire of his embraces. Her knees quivered as he deepened the kiss, his mouth firming as hers grew more yielding. His tongue swiped at her lower lip, seeking entrance. Charlotte opened for him, welcoming his spicy taste. His hands moved to her shoulders. He rested his palms there for but a moment then pulled her closer without shifting her hand from his shaft.

Charlotte felt his cock pulse against her fingers. Tentatively she stroked down, unsure of exactly what to do. He bucked his hips in encouragement. She reversed direction and slid her hand back up his length. Ahmose growled against her mouth. Feeling confident, Charlotte stroked him again, this time without pausing. His grip on her shoulders increased, but he didn't break the kiss. She increased her speed, enjoying the feel of his fullness in her hand.

Sweat broke out on Ahmose's brow. He was trying very hard not to drag her to the ground right in the hallway. His fingers bit into the material around her shoulders,

trying to anchor his need. She slid her silken fingers over his crown and gently applied pressure. He clenched his jaw against his instinctive response to thrust. If she kept this up for much longer he was going to spill his essence. Unable to take a minute more, Ahmose pulled back from the kiss, gasping.

“Woman, you have tortured me long enough.”

He grabbed her hand, pulling Charlotte more forcefully than he'd intended toward his bedchamber. He was loosening the ties holding her kilt together before they even reached the door. Her lips were swollen and red from his kisses. Ahmose snatched up a wisp of her curly hair and brought it to his nose. She smelled of wind and sunshine. Her eyes were wide and sparkling in the torchlight.

He released her long enough to shut the door. He then walked to a small bowl containing myrrh and frankincense, crushing the resin in his hand until the room smelled of spice. He turned in time to see Charlotte remove the remaining linen from her body. Ahmose's breath caught. Her skin glowed like alabaster. The rose of her engorged nipples called out to him. The dark thatch of curls between her thighs had already begun to dampen, glistening like a beacon in the torchlight.

She wanted him, just as much as he wanted her.

His mouth watered at the thought of sinking between her spread legs and sampling of her bounty once again. Tasting her juices as they burst from her body in ecstasy. His cock strained beneath the material of his kilt, demanding to be released. The Tears of Amun adorned her neck, while the ruby earrings flashed fire against her ears. Ahmose swallowed hard. He longed for the moment to last for this lifetime and into the next. He fisted his hands at his sides to keep from reaching out and taking her. He wasn't done looking his fill.

Charlotte shifted under his intense gaze. Inside her a fire raged that only he could douse. She had no idea what possessed her, but she brought her finger to her mouth, gave it a quick lick, then ran the same finger around her nipple, leaving a trail of moisture. The areola puckered. Ahmose's nostrils flared and his body trembled. He

removed his kilt in a few seconds flat and was upon her. This time his kiss was aggressive, hungry. He pushed past her defenses, attacking her mouth savagely.

Charlotte was lost. His hands seemed to be everywhere at once, groping, pinching, squeezing, and caressing. He kneaded her flesh, stroking her mons at the same time. Charlotte moaned against his mouth. He dipped one finger into her drenched channel and began to thrust in and out. When her hips joined in the rhythm he added another finger. The tension in her abdomen was building, drawing nearer to release. She tightened her inner muscles, holding his hand in place, seeking the relief he promised.

Just when she was about to slip over the edge he broke the kiss and pulled out of her, maneuvering her toward the bed. Charlotte went to lie down, but Ahmose stopped her. Instead he spun her and bent her forward until only her elbows rested on the reed mats. Charlotte's heart leapt to her throat and her breath seized. Visions of the chariot ride passed through her mind, fueling her need.

For a few seconds she stood there, her bottom raised in the air toward Ahmose. Then she felt his cock as it brushed against her cheeks, hard like granite, yet soft as satin. He didn't try to enter her. He just continued to stroke over her skin, teasing the edge of her pussy lips. Charlotte pushed back in encouragement. He laughed and held her hips still. He leaned down and placed a kiss on each globe. Charlotte trembled.

Ahmose stood, and then bent over her. "You have punished me long enough," he whispered against her hair. "Now it is my turn."

Excitement thrummed through her. She could feel her nipples bead to the point of pain. Her cunny was saturated to the point that her dew was about to run down her legs. And not for one second did Charlotte care, her sole focus on the large cock between Ahmose's thighs, and the sexy voice vibrating through her senses. Her clitoris twitched as he slid the crown over her nub, his heavy sac brushing her leg. Charlotte bit her lip to keep from crying out, or worse yet, begging.

Ahmose stuck the tip of his cock in her waiting entrance, his fingers digging into the flesh of her hips in preparation. He would torture her for a few minutes more and then fuck her senseless. He pulled out and she whimpered, opening her legs wider.

“Is there something you wanted to say to me, my love?”

Charlotte groaned. “No.”

He dipped inside once more, this time releasing one hip so that he could reach around and massage her clitoris. Charlotte whimpered, her legs almost giving out. Ahmose circled her stomach, holding her up with one hand. He rocked forward again, his shaft sliding past her entrance and along her crack. She bucked within his hold, her cunny demanding his cock.

“Please,” she begged.

“That’s all I wanted to hear.” His voice was gravelly as he released her long enough to grab her hips once more and plunge in from behind, branding her.

Charlotte screamed as an orgasm racked her body, pulsing and throbbing as wave after wave hit her. She could hear the suction noise as Ahmose drove his cock in and out of her pussy, his heavy sac slapping against her skin. His hips thrust against her bottom, lifting her up onto her toes. Charlotte bore down to take him deep inside. It was his turn to groan. She clamped her muscles tight around his cock, slowing his movements.

“Charlotte, if you do that again, I will spill.” His voice was strained.

She smiled, considering it for a moment, then squeezed. Ahmose gripped her tighter and then thrust one more time, a cry dying on his lips. His hips continued to flex and move. She could feel his hot seed spurting into her body, filling her womb. For a moment the thought panicked her, but then Charlotte realized if she got pregnant, it would be okay because she’d be carrying Ahmose’s child.

“You are truly a sorceress, my love.” He dragged in a ragged breath. “And I thank the gods that you are mine.”

Charlotte rested her head on the bed. She wasn't sure if when she moved, her legs would support her. Sweat dripped down her back and under her breasts. Her pussy lips felt pouty and swollen. The room smelled of spice and sex...their sex. Their lovemaking was the sweetest aroma she'd ever inhaled.

Ahmose lifted her from behind and placed her on the bed. He gathered the rumpled covers before slipping in beside her and pulling Charlotte tight against his smooth chest.

Chapter Four

The next day Ahmose had the chariot waiting. They were off to the city of Gurob to the harem palace.

The ride through the countryside was breathtaking—fertile fields, the Nile in the distance. Charlotte closed her eyes for a moment trying to store the picture in her mind for eternity. The air was clean and lightly scented with flowers.

Ahmose led her past several temples on the journey to middle Egypt, each one more spectacular than the last. He pointed out the fact that most were still under construction and would continue to be for years to come, because honoring the gods took time. Charlotte wished she could tell him that these temples would be much loved for thousands of years.

They arrived at the harem palace a couple hours later. Ahmose had stopped along the way to greet the people, taking time to enter fields and help out where needed. From what Charlotte could see he was well liked and well respected by all, winning over everyone who crossed his path. *No wonder you were able to unite the kingdoms of Egypt.* Her admiration and love for him grew stronger by the minute.

* * * * *

The palace was smaller than the one he lived in at Thebes, but far homier. Trees from the nearby oasis flourished, their thick, dense leaves shading much of the dwelling. Plump dates were cultivated in the fields, giving the air a sweet, fruity aroma. Grass the color of emeralds grew abundant enough to allow Hasani to graze.

A beautiful woman greeted them at the door, her skin the color of roasted almonds, and a regal countenance that was born, not learned. Her eyes were the same black fire as Ahmose's. She wore a perfectly braided ebony wig and immaculate white linens

draped over her pert nipples and lithe form. Jealousy streaked through Charlotte and her stomach knotted as she pictured Ahmose sinking his cock into this beautiful woman's cunt. His head buried between the woman's spread thighs lapping at her plump folds until she screamed out an earth shattering release. Charlotte fisted her hands.

"King Kamose is not here. He is visiting his fields."

Ahmose nodded, kissed the woman on the cheek, then immediately pulled Charlotte forward. "I'd like you to meet my mother, Ashotep."

The woman smiled and rushed forward to embrace her, pushing Ahmose to the side. Charlotte's discomfort faded instantly, replaced by embarrassment. And to think she'd actually considered throttling the woman. Ashotep tugged Charlotte's hands, hurrying her inside, and out of the hot midday sun.

"Ahmose sent word that his chosen one had arrived, but I did not believe it until I saw you with my own eyes," his mother said, her smile growing.

She wasn't quite sure how to respond to what Ashotep had just told her. When had Ahmose found time to send a message?

"It is not everyday that a son brings home his future bride," Ashotep continued, her voice rising with excitement.

She glanced over her shoulder at Ahmose, her eyes narrowing. He raised his eyebrows in innocence. "It's very nice to meet you." She squeezed the woman's hands before releasing them.

Charlotte tried to imagine her mother in the same position. Would Victoria enthusiastically welcome Ahmose as her soon to be son-in-law? She doubted it. Not unless he came with a pile of ancient gold relics and the keys to Egypt.

Ashotep's smile deepened. "We will break bread and then you can tell us about you. There is much to prepare in such a short time."

Charlotte's brows furrowed.

“You must be excited about your wedding,” Ashotep gushed.

Charlotte’s stomach twisted, forming a bundle of nerves. Could she really go through with this? As much as she’d like to spend her life with Ahmose, she would feel guilty leaving her parents without a word. *If she could even return to her own time...*

The conversation was lively as they dined. Ahmose’s mother told tales of the trouble he used to get into when he was a little boy. Charlotte glanced at him from beneath her lashes. It wasn’t hard to imagine Ahmose as a little boy with those big black eyes and ebony hair. He probably charmed his way out of getting punished. His children would be exact copies of him. Her heart squeezed in her chest at the thought of Ahmose with kids.

He would be a good father, patient and loving, yet firm. She swallowed the bread she’d been chewing, and it lodged in her throat. It wouldn’t do to think about such things. Once she was gone, he’d move on, find himself an Egyptian bride and go on to rule Egypt. Logically Charlotte knew that was the way things should happen, but no matter how many times she tried to convince herself, she still couldn’t picture Ahmose with anyone but her. The thought of another woman wrapping her body around him nauseated her.

A few hours later, they said their goodbyes. Ashotep promised to help with the wedding plans and assured Charlotte she was marrying a prince of a man. No one had to convince Charlotte. Ahmose was everything she could ever want in a husband. He’d had her at the first glance.

They rode back to the palace in Thebes as the sun lowered on the horizon. The sounds of families in their homes wafted into the streets, their voices rising high with laughter. Spice filled the air as the various kitchens were put to good use.

“What are you thinking?” Ahmose whispered near her ear.

“I’m thinking how wonderful a place Egypt is and how great the people are.” She smiled to herself.

A land she'd helped uncover from the sands of time now rose proudly before her like a sentinel standing guard at the gates of heaven. If she did end up returning to her own time, no one would believe the tale she'd tell, certainly not her parents. Charlotte knew without a doubt she'd never be able to breathe a word without fear of being locked away.

* * * * *

That evening Ahmose was especially romantic in his lovemaking. He anointed her body with myrrh-scented oil, pouring it from a Syrian inspired vessel. His hands were gentle as he smoothed the liquid over her shoulders and down her arms, carefully avoiding her beaded nipples and aching clitoris. He rubbed oil into her legs and over her buttocks, kneading them firmly as he made his way up her back. Ahmose rubbed until the last of the kinks were gone.

She was practically swaying with need when his palms finally made contact with her nipples. He brushed the pads of his thumbs over the rose-tipped peaks and they grew rigid with desire. Her breathing came out in ragged gasps. He continued to play with her full mounds, molding and shaping.

Charlotte's channel flooded and she mewled. She shifted to stave off the ache. It only added to the friction. When Ahmose leaned down and whisked his tongue across her stiff crests, she almost came.

He suckled her tortured peak, tugging with his lips, then his teeth. When she thought she could stand no more Ahmose switched to her other nipple. He fed hungrily, flicking his tongue, capturing it again and again as if this were the last time they'd get to lie together. She moaned. He pushed her back toward the bed without breaking contact. Her nipples were engorged by the time he'd settled her on the edge of the reed mat.

Charlotte's breathing was choppy at best. Her breasts throbbed and tingled as heat raced over her oiled skin, centering at the juncture between her spread thighs. Ahmose

dropped to his knees before her, then slipped his hands behind her and pulled her forward until her pussy was level with his mouth. He glanced up from beneath long lashes and smiled. The act was simply carnal, telling Charlotte without words that he was about to eat her alive. Her clitoris pulsed.

Ahmoose leaned forward and inhaled. “Your scent drives me wild. I feel like an animal when you are near.”

Dew dripped down the soft curls between Charlotte’s spread legs, inviting him to drink deep. She smelled musky and aroused, the oil of myrrh only adding to her allure. She bit her lip as he dipped his head closer and gently blew warm air on her heated flesh. Charlotte shivered, her nipples jutting out like ripe fruit fresh for the picking. Ahmoose lifted one leg and slipped it over his shoulder, then repeated the action with her other, tipping her cunny toward his face.

“Do you know how much I long to taste you and touch you?” he growled in the back of his throat. “You are so beautiful, I’m surprised Ra has not come to claim you for himself.”

He smiled again, letting Charlotte see the fire that she’d ignited inside him, the passion that burned unending; the need that screamed out from his cock, and the love that he felt in his heart. She was his and he was hers. That was how it was and how it should be.

Ahmoose leaned forward and swiped his tongue over her swollen lips. Charlotte shuddered and closed her eyes. He could feel her body’s tension, the underlying desperation, and the overall yearning hidden deep inside.

“Food shall never taste the same to me from this day forth. For it could never compare to the bounty between your thighs.”

He laved her again, circling her hot wet sheath, teasing her pussy with his tongue. Her tender flesh responded by dampening more and puffing out. Ahmoose, intoxicated by her scent, swayed drunkenly with her responsiveness. He dove in, uncovering the hidden jewel lying beneath her heated folds.

Charlotte's nails bit into his shoulders as he sucked the bud into his mouth and gently worried it with his teeth. She gasped, unable to catch her breath.

"Ahmose..." She groaned.

He circled her clitoris with his tongue, sliding it back and forth in imitation of a snake. It was all it took to send her over the edge.

"I'm coming..."

Her channel flooded, wetting his chin, and still Ahmose fed, lapping up every last drop of her release.

Charlotte threw her head back and screamed. Her body convulsed as her orgasm slammed down upon her. Ahmose's face lay buried between her legs, devouring her. She couldn't seem to control the shudders racking her body. Her vision faded to black and she blinked to gain back her senses. Her skin was alive and pulsing as contraction after contraction rocked her.

She lay back on the bed waiting for her breathing to return to normal. Ahmose stayed between her legs, placing tender kisses upon her thighs. It took several minutes before Charlotte could piece together a coherent sentence. When she did, she sat up on her elbows and kept it short.

"My turn," she purred, licking her lips and pulling him up onto the bed beside her.

Ahmose lay on his back, his arms covering his eyes. His cock was hard enough to pound gold. He didn't think he'd ever tire of feeding from Charlotte's endless well. She was ambrosia, sweeter than the finest wines in Egypt and more precious than all his gold and gems combined. Her taste simmered in his mouth, tempting his appetite. Her breathing had finally slowed to a satisfied purr. Ahmose contented himself with the fact that he'd been able to please her as no other.

He grinned and was just about to turn to tell her when he felt her lips slip over the crown of his cock. The air seemed to freeze in his lungs. Unable to gasp or speak, he waited. Her touch was tentative at first, a quick lick followed by a gentle suck. Ahmose

held as still as the dead, forcing himself to keep from thrusting. When he was finally able to draw air it was on a gasp.

“Does that feel all right?” Her voice quavered as she spoke around his cock.

Ahmoose uncovered his eyes and looked down at her. “It feels like a thousand tiny butterflies have alighted on my staff.”

Charlotte licked him from balls to tip and back again. “Do you like it when I suck you?”

Ahmoose groaned. “You have no idea.”

She took him into her mouth and began to suck. Ahmoose’s muscles tightened and he gripped the sheets. She swirled her tongue over the sensitive head, sliding it around his length. The pressure of her mouth increased, coinciding with the building pressure inside Ahmoose. He felt his sac rise, drawing near his body, ready for release. Charlotte’s fingers slipped around the base of his cock and she began matching rhythm with her mouth. The combination of her wetness with the silky smoothness of her skin was too much for him.

“You must stop,” he gritted out between clenched teeth.

She shook her head without breaking stride, increasing the speed of her motions.

“I can’t hold back.” He gasped, the muscles in his abdomen contracting.

“Mmm,” she purred over his cock.

Ahmoose almost came off the bed. He grasped her silky hair, at the same time thrusting up into her molten mouth. The searing heat combined with the pressure from her sucking sent shockwaves through his body. His cock rejoiced. He jerked and thrust once more, then sent his seed jettisoning out into her mouth and down her throat. Charlotte didn’t try to pull back. Instead she drank deep. Ahmoose trembled and quaked, his body exhausted.

He pulled Charlotte up beside him. “You are amazing.”

She blushed. “Do you really think so?”

He brushed a wisp of hair off her face and kissed her. "I know so."

* * * * *

The days passed quickly, leading up to the Opet festival, where the pharaoh would be reborn. The celebration would also signal the return of Sopdet, a bright star on the horizon, marking the Egyptian New Year.

Charlotte's wedding day had arrived. So blissfully in love, she'd decided even if the opportunity to return to her own time should appear, she would not take it. Her life, her heart, and her future happiness were here with Ahmose.

Her soon to be husband had given her token gifts of his affection every day since she'd arrived. His lavish presents, like his love, were endless. Ahmose asked for nothing in exchange. Yet Charlotte couldn't assuage the guilt she felt about not being able to gift him back. She knew that the act of giving presents was a large part of the marriage ceremony. She ran her hand over the Tears of Amun and a chill skittered over her. She quickly dismissed the feeling as wedding jitters.

The city of Thebes was abuzz about the festival. Preparations had begun early in the week and were now culminating. Tonight, the people of Egypt would gather at the temple of Karnak, bringing out Amun, his wife Mut, and their son Khonsu's statues on sacred barques. They'd then be carried in procession along the sphinx-lined route that connected Karnak to Luxor. Worshipers believed that at the Luxor temple, in the inner sanctuary, Amun would ritually unite with Ahmose's mother so that she could again give birth to the royal *Ka*.

When the ceremony ended King Kamose would enter the sanctuary, merging with his newborn *Ka*. He would later reappear, replenished with divine power, as the son of Amun-Ra. King Kamose would then receive the crowds. Dancers would perform and great offerings of meat and bread would be made. Once presented and ultimately enjoyed by the gods, the bounty would be distributed to the people.

Charlotte was excited about the celebration, but dread had settled into her bones like an anchor, pulling her down despite her enthusiasm. Ashotep had brought a special gown from Gurob with her and had fashioned an elegant wig for Charlotte's head. She assured Charlotte that she looked beautiful, and then escorted her to the courtyard of the palace where Ahmose was waiting.

Charlotte's breath caught when she spotted Ahmose. So handsome, so regal. He stood loose-limbed near a fig tree with a small crown of gold on his wigged head. Ahmose wore a fresh, embroidered kilt that had been fashioned and inlaid with precious gems. A scarab of gold graced his ring finger. His hands were at his sides. Despite his relaxed appearance, his shoulders looked tense. His eyes sought hers, holding, confirming she was truly there, and only then did he appear to relax.

The ceremony, which amounted to little more than holding hands and declaring one's intentions, was over within minutes. By the time they'd finished, Charlotte's head was swimming. She didn't know if it was fear or exhilaration. Either way, it was over and nothing would come between them. Charlotte turned to her husband and placed a chaste kiss upon his lips.

"Remember always, I love you."

Ahmose's fingers trembled as he brought them to her face. "You have nothing to fear now. It is done."

Charlotte breathed a sigh of relief, trying to ignore the lingering dread, lurking like a shadow in the back of her mind. It seemed to be growing in intensity, like a storm on the horizon, moving swiftly, decimating everything in its path. Charlotte pushed it aside and smiled at Ahmose. *It's just wedding jitters.* They would eventually die down and she'd forget about them, so they could enjoy the Opet festival tonight.

Ashotep left to prepare herself for her part in the rituals. Ahmose pulled Charlotte into his arms and kissed her deeply. "You are now mine—all mine and no one can take you away," he whispered against her lips, rocking her from side to side. Eventually his head came to rest on top of hers.

Charlotte could feel the tension in his muscles. “You feel it too, don’t you?”

His muscles locked, holding her tight. “I feel nothing but happiness on this day.”

Despite his words of assurance, Charlotte sensed that he seemed reluctant to release her.

Chapter Five

The festival was a joyous occasion. Charlotte joined Ahmose and his family in the royal entourage as they made their way from Karnak to Luxor temple. The mood was jubilant, yet sedated. It should have been the happiest day of her life, but she couldn't seem to bring herself to celebrate. Ahmose strolled silently beside her, his hand holding her own. Strength poured off him in waves as he silently sent her reassurances.

Charlotte stayed close, afraid to release him for fear her dream would fade away. Which was ridiculous—she'd already been here for nearly a week. She'd found no way back in that time, nor desired to return.

The crowd gathered outside the temple, their hushed voices chanting in unison. Ahmose's mother had been inside the sanctuary for several hours by now, convening with the gods. His brother, King Kamose, stepped forward and entered the temple.

The full moon glowed yellow in the sky, its shimmering light abundant, making the use of torches all but unnecessary. An hour later King Kamose emerged, vibrant. The crowd broke out of their reverie, cheering and rushing forward quickly to make their offerings.

With the gods appeased, the mood turned outright hedonistic. Wine flowed freely, along with barley beer. Platters of bread, fish, gazelle, and geese were passed around for everyone to sample. Ahmose gathered food for them, then pulled Charlotte away from the crowd.

He stuck his mouth next to her left ear. "I'm selfish. I want you to myself."

They strolled back toward the temple of Karnak, passing revelers along the way. The moonlight glistened upon the waters of the Nile. In the distance, clouds gathered on the horizon, heralding an incoming storm. The breeze picked up, carrying perfumed

oils and cypress grass in its wake. Hand-in-hand they walked back. Ahmose took Charlotte around the temple until they were standing next to the sacred lake.

“I wanted to return to the place where I first laid eyes on you, so that I can offer the gods my thanks.” He spoke low and deep as he pulled her back against his chest, his arms wrapping around her waist.

Charlotte shivered as a raindrop spattered her face. “This place will always hold fond memories for me, also.” She squeezed his hands. “It’s where I met the man I’ve loved for as long as I can remember.”

She didn’t have to see his frown to feel it. The tension in his body increased tenfold. “How could you have loved me for years, when I just met you a few sunrises ago?”

Charlotte turned in his arms until she faced him. The moon was so bright she could easily make out his features, even with clouds closing in. “What is important is that we’ve found each other and we’re in love.” She framed his face with her hands and rose up on tiptoe to kiss him once more.

“You are my love,” he said when she pulled back. “My only love.”

Charlotte bit her lip and then smiled. “There’s something I want to give you.”

Ahmose stilled her hands as she moved toward her neck. “That is not necessary, Charlotte. You are gift enough.” He lifted her chin and began to nibble on her lips.

“I can’t think when you do that, you know.”

He laughed. “That is the purpose.”

“Ahmose...” He continued to feast upon her mouth. “Ahmose, please.”

He stilled. Lightning flashed in the distance, followed by a loud crack of thunder. Charlotte looked warily at the incoming storm before turning back to Ahmose.

“You’ve given me so much. I want to show you how much you mean to me.”

He frowned for a moment and then sighed. “If that is what you wish, I will accept your gift.”

Charlotte reached for the clasp on the Tears of Amun. It seemed to catch for a moment before slipping free. Ahmose turned and allowed her to put it on him. The air around them turned electric.

Facing her once again, he asked, “What do you think? I’m sure it looks better upon you.”

Charlotte smiled, as a wave of dizziness washed over her. “I lov—aahhh!” The scream ripped from her insides.

Pain shot through her and she couldn’t seem to focus, as if a spike were being driven through her skull. Rain started to fall in sheets. Charlotte could see Ahmose’s lips moving, his eyes rounded in fear. He struggled to grasp hold of her, but couldn’t seem to do so. Her gold wedding ring dropped from her hand. The storm raged around them. His handsome face swam before her eyes. One minute he was there.

The next he was gone.

“Noooo...” Charlotte cried out, but it was too late. Lightning flashed nearby, rattling her teeth. She was falling. Falling back toward the water. Back into the sacred lake. “Ahmose, I love you,” she shouted one more time, praying that her words reached him.

* * * * *

Charlotte broke the water’s surface, sputtering, her mouth full of moss. The sun was shining brightly and it took a few seconds before she was actually able to see. Her hair was plastered to her head, sans the wig she’d been wearing. She knew without looking that Ahmose was not with her. She wiped her face and pulled herself from the water. Her heart and body ached as if she were being torn asunder.

“Where have you been, young lady?” a shrill voice behind her asked.

Charlotte closed her eyes and took a deep breath before turning to face her mother. The sun was shining brightly, heating the air to oven temperatures. Her heart ached to the point of bursting.

“What did you do to your dress?” The frown on her mother’s face would have wilted flowers and seemed to be deepening by the second. “What on earth are you wearing? It’s positively scandalous.”

Charlotte glanced down and vaguely registered the fact she was still wearing her Egyptian kilt. Her body was unadorned of jewelry; it seemed the precious metal could not survive time-travel. *Except the Tears of Amun.*

“I’m glad we decided to come looking for you when you didn’t show up to help. Goodness knows what we would have found had we not.”

Charlotte’s brows knitted. “What do you mean?”

“Don’t play dimwitted with me, Charlotte Constance Witherspoon.” Her mother stepped forward then stopped, her eyes narrowing on the front of Charlotte’s wrap.

Charlotte glanced down and gasped. Her shirt had once again gone sheer, except this time she wore nothing underneath to disguise her nakedness. The sound of heavy feet caught her attention. Field workers rushed forward, their harried voices growing louder as they approached.

“Goodness...” Her mother sucked in a surprised breath as she glanced over her shoulder. “Henry, get down here this instant! And for heaven’s sake lend us your outer shirt. *Your* daughter is dressed like a...like a...harlot!” Victoria snapped her fingers and Henry jumped, ambling forward.

“I daresay, what have you gotten up to, gel?” he asked, handing over his shirt to Charlotte, his jowled features reddening beneath his hat.

Victoria harrumphed. “I know what it looks like she’s been doing.” She arched a fine brow, not bothering to lower her voice. Victoria pulled a handkerchief from her sleeve, bringing it to her mouth to cover her disdain.

Charlotte gazed at the crowd of workers whispering to each other, their eyes as round as saucers. Slowly she reached for the shirt her father had offered, wrapping it around her. Shivers wracked her body. “I’m sorry, Papa.” She glanced down, unable to meet his eyes.

Henry's eyes softened for a moment, then he coughed. "Don't want to hear it. Don't want to hear it." His hand was waving away any chance Charlotte would be given to explain. "Can't tell you how disappointed I am."

Explain...how in the world could she do that, when she didn't even understand what had happened?

Her full week of love and happiness had passed in mere hours here. Charlotte grabbed her aching head. Her world had tilted upside down and she'd landed on the wrong side. The Tears of Amun were gone, lost in time. Since she'd placed them about Ahmose's neck there was no chance of getting them back. The pain from that realization struck deep. Charlotte began to sob.

She was well and truly stuck here.

* * * * *

Her days passed in a blur. Life with her parents had resumed a normal pace, with one exception. Charlotte was no longer allowed to travel alone without their escort. The pain Charlotte had felt upon realizing there would be no returning to her true love had turned into a dull, continuous ache. Her eyes were a permanent shade of red and the puffiness refused to go down. Of course, it didn't help that she couldn't seem to stop crying. Charlotte was convinced she'd shed enough tears to flood the Nile Valley.

She thought about Ahmose. Twelve long days had passed since she'd last laid eyes on him. In his world she'd been gone nearly three months. Had he given up on finding her? Had he already forgotten about her? Was he waiting for her to return? Had he found someone new? The last thought had her heart tripping in her chest.

Back in her own world Charlotte couldn't seem to find her feet. She'd gone through the motions at the dinner parties she'd attended with her parents. She played the doting daughter part to the teeth. All the while her stomach churned with unease. Charlotte hadn't seemed to be able to keep any food down since returning.

Tonight she was being dragged to another boring affair. Lady Alexandra Stuart had invited them to dinner, which in Victoria's eye was a big coup. Charlotte's mother had been especially diligent in watching her prepare for the evening, even going as far as to pick out a dress for her to wear. But Charlotte couldn't summon the energy to care.

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Dinner turned out to be positively dreadful. Victoria had hoped to set her up with Lady Alexandria Stuart's son. Charlotte cringed as she recalled Robert's clammy fingers upon her hand. Raw liver was more appealing. Ahmose's touch had been so warm, firm, and gentle by comparison. Charlotte dismissed Robert unceremoniously.

By the time the evening closed and they'd reached their Model T, Victoria was fuming. "Why don't you want to see him?"

Because his touch doesn't set me aflame, make my nipples ache, my pussy throb.

"He's unsuitable, Mother. And he feels the same about me, I assure you."

Victoria gaze leveled. "You must have misunderstood him. Robert is from good stock, quite good blood. He wouldn't think such a thing."

"Believe what you want, Mother." Charlotte didn't bother to hide the exasperation in her voice.

Victoria's features hardened. "It's no wonder he thinks such things with the fodder going about town. Your virtue is in question."

Charlotte laughed; she couldn't help it. Her virtue was long gone. She pictured Ahmose above her, driving his thick cock inside her willing body. Charlotte knew she'd done nothing wrong, but still the guilt over dragging her family name through the muck pervaded. She considered apologizing, when her stomach suddenly rolled and lurched.

"Pull over please," she begged in desperation.

"We shall not," her mother vetoed.

Charlotte gripped the door. "I'm going to be ill." She threw the door open and leaned her head out in time to lose the entire contents of her stomach.

Afterwards, Charlotte slumped back down on the seat, staring out into the night.

"Gracious, Charlotte, what is the matter with you?" Victoria grabbed her kerchief and held it to her nose in disgust. "I believe I'll send a call out to Dr. Williams tomorrow."

"No!" Charlotte sprang to life. She had a pretty good idea what was wrong with her and she didn't need Dr. Williams confirming it. Things were bad enough between her and her parents. They didn't need to know she was carrying a two-thousand-year-old pharaoh's baby. She pulled herself together enough to look her mother in the eye. "I mean that won't be necessary mother. I'm feeling much better at the present. I believe I've just caught a bug."

Victoria eyed her suspiciously.

"Oh for Pete's sake, Victoria, leave her be," Henry grumbled.

Charlotte smiled tentatively at her father. He winked at her and then looked forward as if nothing had occurred.

Chapter Six

The next day Charlotte rose early, forcing herself to keep down some toast. Her menses had not arrived, confirming her worst fear and her greatest hope...she was pregnant. Somehow, despite the circumstances and against all odds, Ahmose and she were going to have a baby. Charlotte was overjoyed that a piece of him still existed within her yet terrified of her parent's reaction.

Charlotte frowned, unable to come up with a solution to the latter problem.

Her attention turned back to Ahmose and the life she had growing inside her. She placed her hand on her stomach. The thought of Ahmose not getting to see his child brought fresh tears to her eyes. It wasn't fair. Their love was not supposed to end this way. She pictured his face. The sadness she'd been feeling returned with a vengeance. Charlotte swallowed hard.

"I've got to be strong for you," she spoke, rubbing her belly.

An hour or so later her parents filed into the room. Her mother and father were setting off for the Cairo museum as soon as they broke their fast.

"Get your things together Charlotte, you're coming with us," Victoria stated between bites of toast and sips of tea.

"Mother..." Charlotte hesitated. "I thought perhaps I could stay home today and catch up on my studies."

Victoria stopped mid-bite and stared at her. She glanced at Charlotte's plate then back at her face. "You've eaten, so you obviously feel better. It would do you well, under the circumstances, to get some air." Victoria paused, her eyes narrowing. "Unless you aren't feeling better, in which case, I'll call for Dr. Williams."

Charlotte glanced at her plate then back up into her mother's face. There was no use arguing. "I'm feeling better," she lied.

"Well then, it's settled. Get yourself ready, we'll be leaving within an hour." Victoria dabbed her napkin at the corners of her mouth. "Besides, you'll learn a great deal more at the museum than you will in one of those books. Right, Henry?"

Her father coughed, his bushy brows rising as if trying to figure out what had been said. He looked at Charlotte and then at his wife. Charlotte followed his gaze. Her mother's frown said it all.

"Right," he blustered.

Charlotte rose from the table and went to her room to change. They were out of the house within an hour and on their way. The ride into Cairo was dusty as usual. She and her mother had to hang onto their hats as the wind picked up speed. The invisible breeze carried the odor of spice-filled cooking on its wings, triggering Charlotte's memory. She blushed as she recalled the last time she'd encountered that particular aroma. Ahmose had been standing behind her in the chariot, his hard cock filling her greedy pussy as they road through the streets of Thebes. The bumps had driven him deep inside her body until he'd actually nudged her womb. Had that been when she'd gotten pregnant?

Charlotte crossed her legs, trying to assuage the familiar ache that had begun. She missed his muscled body rising above her, his hairless chest scraping her engorged nipples, and his hips as they pistoned, sending his cock in and out of her moist sheath. Tears filled her eyes at the thought of never getting to experience those sensations again with Ahmose. They'd been so new and wonderful; she couldn't imagine life without them. At the same time, sharing her body with anyone else was out of the question. The thought was repulsive. His touch and his touch alone was what she sought.

The sky was clear and blue with the exception of a dark cloud lingering on the horizon. Since it was the flooding season that wasn't particularly unusual. By the time they arrived at the museum they were all covered in dust. Charlotte patted down her

skirt and shook out her hat. She glanced at the horizon once more. The dark cloud had shifted, drawing nearer, instead of farther away. Charlotte placed her hat back on her head, instantly shading her eyes. The spot in the distance shouldn't have gotten any closer given its position when they left. She fought back a shiver, then turned her eyes away.

It's just a storm. Shivers racked her body as memories from a similar storm filled her mind. *Stop being silly.* Charlotte wiped away the gooseflesh rising on her arms and followed her parents into the museum. Past the entrance, the museum opened into a wider space. Tutankhamen had already been situated in his own private area with more objects added daily as they uncovered them.

"Come, Charlotte," her mother called out, turning toward Tut's gold.

Charlotte walked a few steps behind, her eyes fixing on several familiar items. Ahmose had owned jars like the ones she was viewing, their vibrant colors and designs still breathtaking after all those years in the ground. Charlotte longed to run her hands over the pottery and combs, anything to make herself feel closer to Ahmose and the world she'd lost.

A tug at her hand snapped her attention back.

"Really, Charlotte, must I hold your hand to get you to follow?" Her mother gazed at her, shaking her head. "I'm about ready to give up. Perhaps you should go stay with Aunt Edna in Surrey, if you're so unhappy here."

"No! I mean, no, I love Egypt. It's my home." Charlotte squeezed her mother's hand, willing her to understand.

For a moment Victoria's features softened, then just as quickly the hard mask returned. "Well then, come on." She pulled, dragging Charlotte behind.

They finished examining Howard Carter's find and then headed into the other rooms. They were less organized, a mismatch of Egyptian artifacts, some labeled, others not. The museum was still in its growing stage, and as such was still finding its feet in the world. Several of the displays were set up to depict tombs. Charlotte walked by

each one, reading the markers beneath. Guards stood at the entrances of each room, their brown, mustached faces grim, ensuring no one stole any of the items. Punishment in Egypt was harsh. Just last week a man's hand was cut off for stealing coins from a wealthy sheik. The practice was positively barbaric, but served as a good deterrent to crime.

Her mother had considered protesting the Egyptian government, only to be stopped by her father. Charlotte grinned as she remembered that moment. It was the only time she could recall where her mother actually conceded to her father. A victory she knew her father would cherish for life.

Wandering without looking where she was going, Charlotte found herself in a smaller room. The air inside this area was still and musty, as if no one really came in here all that much. She glanced up. Her parents were nowhere in sight. Her mother would not be happy once she noticed Charlotte's absence. A boom sounded above the displays. The guards in the doorways glanced at each other and shifted uneasily.

Charlotte gazed around trying to place the sound. Another loud crack shattered the quiet. Hair on her arms stood on end. She stared out toward a blocked area that had earlier reflected sunlight. It now lay in shadows. Obviously the storm she'd seen on the horizon had caught up with them.

Charlotte ignored the tension in her shoulders and continued on. She glanced at several rows of papyrus, reading the stories they told. Her mind drifted back to ancient times. The peoples smiling faces, the simple joy their lives held. She closed her eyes, banishing the glorious thoughts from her head.

Whack!

Charlotte jumped as lightning struck nearby, shaking the columns in the building. One of the guards had caught her movement and now was following her with his eyes. She turned away, trying to ignore him. Her mother's voice rang out as her parents entered the room next to the one she was standing in.

"Have you seen a young lady with brown, curly hair, about so tall?"

Charlotte spun in time to see her mother interrogating the guard who'd been watching her. He slowly raised his hand and extended his finger in her direction. Charlotte harrumphed. So much for a few moments of peace. Her mother was marching toward her with Henry in tow. When she reached Charlotte, she halted.

"I thought I told you to stay with us."

"You did, Mother. I didn't realize you weren't here until just minutes ago." Charlotte kept her voice level. The sound carried easily inside the museum, much like when you were in a tomb.

"So your father and I are so insignificant that you don't notice whether we are here or not." Victoria placed her hands on her hips. Her raised voice had further caught the attention of the guards. The one who'd been watching Charlotte earlier was now moving closer.

"Of course not, Mother," Charlotte whispered, glancing over her mother's shoulder at the curious guard.

Victoria followed her gaze. Charlotte saw the guard's steps falter.

"Now where were we?" her mother asked, knowing perfectly well where they'd left off. "My mind is made up, Charlotte. I've spoken with your father and he thinks it's a good idea also. Right Henry?"

"Right, right," her father added before looking away, unable to meet Charlotte's questioning gaze.

"What's a good idea?" A lump had formed in Charlotte's throat as she forced the words out.

"You're going to stay with Aunt Edna just as soon as we can book you passage."

"But Mother, we had this discussion moments ago." Charlotte choked as sorrow leapt inside of her, wrapping itself around her throat until she was unable to breathe. Her mother didn't understand what she was asking of her.

Victoria snorted. "I've changed my mind."

Cold swept through her, like the jagged edge of a knife being plunged into her heart. “Mind...changed...but you can’t. I told you how much I love it here,” she pleaded.

“Don’t cause a scene,” Victoria hissed, glancing back toward the guard. “I know what you said earlier, but Egypt really isn’t the proper place for a young lady. I was wrong to bring you here.”

The finality in her mother’s words slammed like a steel trap in Charlotte’s mind. How could she think that bringing her to Egypt had been wrong? Everything good that had ever happened to her had occurred here, in this land. Charlotte didn’t have any idea what she would do with herself back in London. The place seemed cold to her, unwelcoming. The rain that fell there blanketed the city in a wall of never-ending gray. She trembled even thinking about it.

“Now finish up in here, so we can be on our way.” Victoria gathered her skirts and turned toward the door. Henry followed. Instead of continuing further, she halted, waiting for Charlotte.

Charlotte’s stomach clenched. She felt as if she’d been struck by a blow. The storm raged on outside, while the storm inside her had already blown over. There was nothing left to say. Her mother had made up her mind. She would be packed up and carted off to London within a few days. What about Egypt? What about Ahmose? She couldn’t bear to be that far away from either of them. Charlotte wasn’t sure what she was going to do.

Her eyes gazed unseeing at the displays before her, as she made her way around the room. Tears pooled, threatening to spill. She was about to turn and join her parents when a sarcophagus in a corner caught her attention. She glanced over her shoulder. Her parents were still standing in the doorway, but now they were conversing with the guard. His black eyes, so much like Ahmose’s, kept watching her.

Charlotte turned back to gaze at the sarcophagus. Glass surrounded it like a cage. The skin on her scalp tightened. There was no name on the plate, only information

stating the Egyptologists believed the man in the case to be royalty, perhaps even a pharaoh, and had been found in Deir el-Bahari cache.

According to cartouches found with the body, he'd never married after his love vanished near the sacred waters of Karnak. Her chest tensed as the implications sunk into her mind. She stared unbelieving as her lungs labored for air. Charlotte's gaze ran from the mummy's feet, up his legs, over his shriveled waist, stopping at his chest. Her vision, blurred by the unshed tears, refused to clear. She took a ragged breath and wiped at her eyes. Charlotte blinked.

It couldn't be. No way. *Was it? Please...*

Like a brilliant rainbow of gold, the Tears of Amun shone through the dim lighting, drawing her near. Charlotte's heart slammed against her ribs. Her gaze flew to the mummy's face...sightless eyes stared back. It was Ahmose. Searing pain stabbed at her heart, ripping away the last shreds of her sanity. Her head began to spin. What was she going to do? She glanced at her parents who were now looking her way. Her mother grabbed her father's pocket watch and tapped it impatiently. Charlotte heaved air into her lungs. Her mind was racing a mile a minute.

If it worked once, would it work again? She had no way of knowing. And what if placing the Tears of Amun around her neck didn't work? Charlotte had no doubt she'd be arrested. They'd probably chop off her hand, and quite possibly sentence her to death considering who she would be committing the crime against. But if she didn't try she'd find herself back in London with her Aunt Edna, raising her baby alone.

Charlotte stared at her necklace, her muscles locked in place. She heard the tap of her mother's foot as her patience reached its end. Within seconds her mother would come for her and then it would be all over. Charlotte took a step forward, her mind made up. She'd rather suffer the consequences than live her life looking back and wondering "what if." Without further thought, her eyes firmly on the target, Charlotte raised her fist and smashed the glass, cutting her hand in the process.

Blood dripped onto the floor like crimson teardrops.

Her hands closed over the necklace. Slipping the clasp, she pulled it away from Ahmose. In the distance Charlotte heard her mother scream. There was a lot of shuffling of feet, but it all appeared muffled over the sound of her heartbeat. She placed the Tears of Amun on, the gold once again heavy around her neck. The air crackled as thunder burst in the sky. Charlotte turned, gazing at the scene before her.

Her father was struggling to keep the guard from rushing toward her, while her mother's hands were pressed against her cheeks in a frozen mask of outrage. Their raised voices didn't seem to reach her ears as Charlotte stared on, waiting for something to happen. The guard finally freed himself from her father's grip and rushed forward.

Nothing was happening. She was about to be arrested for stealing from the Egyptian Museum and there was absolutely nothing she could do about it.

"Sorry, Papa...I love you," Charlotte cried out to her father, who was staring at her, agog. The guard's movements seemed to slow until he appeared to be moving in reverse. Charlotte stared in fascination as he swept past her parents. The world seemed to tip on its axis and then Charlotte was falling...falling...

* * * * *

Charlotte took a deep breath and opened her eyes. She blinked twice, unable to trust her vision. She opened them again and sure enough, Ahmose's smiling face was leaning over her.

"I thought I'd lost you forever," he murmured, his voice full of pain and joy all at once.

Charlotte smiled and glanced around. She was in his palace in Thebes. "How did I get here?" she croaked, her throat parched as if she'd been lying there for days.

"You were found in Cairo by one of my servants." He brought a cup to her lips, bidding her to drink. "When you disappeared I sent everyone who could be spared out to find you." He swallowed, his black eyes misting up. "I had almost given up hope."

“Me too,” she choked. “We should have remembered the inscription on the box. If we had we would never have doubted that we would be together again.”

He laughed and kissed her. “Perhaps you are right. I should have recalled a fated love that must once again be.” He pressed his lips to hers again, igniting the fire within her.

Charlotte gripped his shoulders, pulling him closer until his chest made contact with her aching breasts. She moaned, unable to get enough of his heat. Ahmose deepened the kiss. She slipped her hand under his kilt and began stroking his cock, reveling in the feel of his satiny hardness. His fingers tangled in her hair as he savaged her mouth. All the frustration and fear had culminated to this one moment. They needed to feel each other physically, to prove that this was real.

Charlotte grasped the belt at Ahmose’s waist and tugged, while her other hand continued to pleasure him. The kilt fell to the floor.

Ahmose grabbed the linen covering her and yanked it away, revealing Charlotte’s naked splendor. He released her lips and pulled away from her long enough to drink his fill, before tracing the ridges around her engorged nipples. They pebbled against his palm.

“In all the lands of Egypt, there is no beauty, such as yours.” His voice was hoarse, as he choked back emotion.

“Come,” she said breathlessly. “Show me.”

Ahmose didn’t hesitate. He slipped between Charlotte’s thighs, his cock sliding over her damp pussy. He closed his eyes and groaned. “I fear I cannot wait a moment longer, my love. I must be inside you.”

Charlotte tilted her hips to accommodate him. “My body awaits only you.”

Ahmose positioned the head of his cock at her entrance and thrust forward. They both cried out at the exquisite torture.

“I have dreamt of this moment, since the day you vanished,” he gritted out.

“My body has longed for your touch,” she gasped.

“Well, wait no longer.” With that Ahmose thrust again, spearing her deep.

Charlotte rose up to meet each gliding movement, her pussy gripping him in an intimate embrace. He sank inside her warmth, plunging possessively in and out, merging with her as only man and woman could. As one they moved, hot flesh upon flesh, leading each other on a journey of completion.

The familiar ache started low in her body, winding tighter and tighter. Charlotte couldn't get close enough or feel him deep enough to satisfy her endless need. After fearing she'd never hold him again, her need was desperate, urgent—frantic. She bucked her hips with each thrust of his cock, until the sensation was too much. Charlotte cried out, climaxing in a fiery explosion of ecstasy. Ahmose followed her descent into oblivion, his hips jerking as his seed spilled from his body into hers.

They lay side by side for several minutes, enjoying the intimacy. When they finally floated back down to reality, Ahmose leaned over and kissed her tenderly.

“I've got someone I'd like you to meet,” she whispered against his mouth.

Ahmose braced himself on one elbow, his face quizzical.

Charlotte grabbed his hand. Slowly she brought it to her flat stomach. Ahmose frowned for but a moment then broke out into a smile that could have been seen from the heavens.

“You bring me great joy, my love.” He beamed. “Just promise me one thing.” Ahmose grabbed her hand and slid the gold ring she'd dropped at Karnak, back on her finger.

“What is that?”

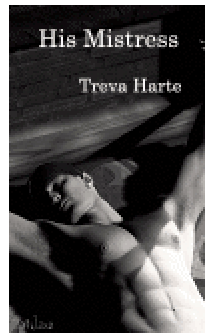
His grin widened. “That you'll stay by my side and we'll rule the kingdoms of Egypt together.”

“I promise,” Charlotte laughed, slipping her hands around his neck.

“From your lips,” he kissed her again, “to our son Amenhotep’s ears.” Ahmose leaned down and pressed his lips to her flat abdomen.

She was home.

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