



IN THE ARMS OF ORION
AND GOD CREATED WOMAN

BOOK 1

INSPIRED BY GOD AND PRINCE ROGERS NELSON
HIS WORDS HIS MUSIC AND WORDS

LYSBETH SUZANNE DANIEL

In the Arms of
Orion:
And God Created Woman

Book One

Inspired by God and Prince Rogers
Nelson

There is more than one path to the Truth

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Disclaimer: The author does not have any academic degrees in Egyptology or Theology or any affiliations with institutes of higher learning. The author did graduate from college with a BS in Education though so don't totally discount the author's abilities. ☺ That being said, the author did work hard on the research to ensure there was no intentional misleading information (indicated where the author did voice personal thoughts). The author makes no claims of scientific exactness and observance of scholarly protocols but has done the best to "get things right" If you see an error, please feel free to write the author. All edifying comments are gratefully received.

Acknowledgments: André Dollinger, author of the website *An Introduction to the History and Culture of Pharaonic Egypt*, for your idea of a disclaimer and subsequent well voiced words.

Self-Published in Raleigh, NC, United States of America by Peace In Purple

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Author's Note

Thank you, G-d, for Your Love, Unending Patience with my stumbling during my lifetime and allowing me to do this work set before me.

Thank you, Brother, who guided me and trusted me in this work. The greatest gift I have been given is the love that has been in my life. I am happy, Brother.

Thank you to ALL the people who have touched my life over this past two year journey. You have spoken to me from around the world in my Purple Family or in the beautiful city of Minneapolis with all you purple people or right here in the Durham-Raleigh area. Each one of you was brought to me at a time that I needed the smile, the support, the excitement, the ear that you gave to me and I have been blessed to be able to give this back to you as thanks. Thank you for being you, for your love that has made this world a brighter, stronger place to be and do not stop bringing your love into everything you do. You do make a difference.

Thank you to my children, Jonathan, Timothy and Ashley – each of you have an important part in the world around us and you are following it. Even the smallest part is immeasurable in the Whole. Do not forget to listen so the whisper is heard. Quiet your mind and keep it open.

Thank you to the Scudder Family for being front line in the support and listening as I talked and talked over the past two years as I wrote while pounding your ears with the funk of the King of Funk, Prince. Not once did you ever let me know I had driven you bonkers and I deeply appreciate your tolerance.

Thank you to Jennifer Kelley and Jonathan Giles for the editing help you gave to me.

Thank you to Jennifer again for being absolutely fabulous in supporting me every morning as I excitedly told you about my latest learning, letting me head to Minneapolis to recharge, insisting in it even, letting me dance through work with the music of Prince playing and just being the source of an unending belief

in this experience, ... the list goes on with all that you have done for me. Thank you.

Thank you to the rest of my co-workers at the Organization for Tropical Studies for the support and tolerance over the past two years as I wrote and looking forward to reading the books: Stephen, Suitbert , Mercy, Bonnie, Casey, Lori and yes, Brooks!

These books began as a whisper in my ear and in listening I began writing what I heard. The words were first written on my Facebook page *Peace In Purple* but as time went on, a story began, a story I was given and the eras within which they were written were not chosen by me, they also were given to me. For my lack of knowledge, I did invest long hours and money in research to make sure I did not mislead using as many primary sources as possible. I never thought I would have written any story of this scope as I am more inclined to murder mysteries myself but this was a story that I was given to tell. I have gained so much from the experience. Very blessed. From the first day I heard the whisper, I knew this was to be a gift to all of you, not sold, not barter for, just a gift

for you to accept or not. I do hope you do and that you find the love within as I have.

Peace In Purple began on a license plate in June 2016 as a tribute to Mr. Nelson and has remained in this capacity. It is not a business or a religious organization or any other monetizing agency.

I have done my best to respect all copyrights especially with the Estate of Mr. Prince Rogers Nelson, as I deeply respect his work and ideals but I will admit it is hard to hear his words and paraphrase them for several reason: he is so eloquent that anything less than his words does not convey the meaning as well and he is always clear he wants to be quoted exactly. I tried to do so without infringing on his work so if I did do so, it was without malice or intention to defraud or cause damage. Please for the Estate and any others, just let me know and I will fix it.

The cover design is by my hand, again one day I was given the image to draw and I have done so. I am not an artist so be gentle in any comments.

If there is not a credit accompanying any pictures, it is a result of an oversight or of my having lost the source. If you have the source I will gladly add it.

I have referenced as diligently as possible with all quotes in italics or footnoted references. I have tried to follow the US Fair Use Law to the best of my non-legal ability. If there is any objection to my use of your creation, please send me an email.

None of this would have happened if Mr. Nelson had not sung his songs of love so I hope you don't stop here but go and get his music, listen to his words because the Artist was a gift given to us and he gave us all he had. Let his music weave the story you hear and find the joy that is within it so we may all begin to move together, one in Humanity.

Thank you to all of my brothers and sisters out there. You are truly beautiful.

Peace in Purple.

Lysbeth Suzanne Daniel

The Question of U
Prince

Beginning Endlessly

In the beginning ... when they were thirsty, they drank. When they were hungry, they ate. They laughed. They played. They sang. They danced. When they were cold, they were warmed. When they were hot, they were cooled. They did not know a cross word for it was love that surrounded them, and peace was in their hearts for they were children and yet to learn the lessons that would bring them Home. This is what they waited for together in this world under a sun that warmed them and an endless blue sky scattered with white ethereal clouds. When the silver moon rose with the brilliant stars that reminded them of Home in the dark of night, they rested, falling asleep, dreaming of their return. So they waited for the journey, their memories dormant until woken by words said, actions taken or lessons learned. They waited for the journey on which they would wander with each lesson, until they found their way...

And God Created Woman

New Kingdom Period
Km.t (Egypt), 18th dynasty
Waset (Thebes) and Akhet-Aten¹
1386-1330 circ.

She was wandering in the hesep (garden), drifting along, pulled by the memories that were shifting through her mind. The memories were pictures, vivid and beautifully colored, years accumulated to this moment, in this hesep (garden), in this 'ah² (palace) gifted to her by her brother as a token of his love and protection. The beauty of the hesep (garden) surrounded her as she flitted, like a song bird, among the trees of nehet³ (sycamore), ished⁴ (persea), imaw⁵ (date palm), doum palm⁶, tcheret⁷ (willow tree), cedar, and shened (acacia) through which the path built for her pleasure led. These were the trees, strong and

¹ Today called Amarna; Horizon of the Aten

² Pr-'3; Great House; palace; from which the title Pharaoh was derived during the reign of Akhenaten .

³ Sycamore; means 'refuge"; symbolizes goddess Aset and then Hathor

⁴ *Mimusops schimperi*, now extinct; a sacred tree; the Tree of Life on which the king's name would be inscribed on either a branch or leaf and the leaves indicate the number of years in his reign.

⁵ Symbolizes gods Ra and Min

⁶ Symbolizes god Thoth

⁷ Willow; aka tamarisk; Sacred for sheltering god Osiris's body

loving, sheltering her as she wandered among them, keeping her company while she waited for her brother to find her.

Her brother had wanted to make her feel at home, loved, and he did with every stone, every tree, every plant he placed. He had built a lake and filled it with her favorite flowers, the beautiful blue seshen-w⁸ (lotuses) that rose every morning from the waters, the mirrored 'itn⁹ (sun disc) bursting its golden rays from their petals, only to close and sink back into the abyss at night like the 'itn (sun disc) in the two horizons of their land. Among the tall papyrus¹⁰, the reed-like white seshen-w¹¹ (lotuses) bowed in submission to the rays of the sun, mingling their sweet perfume with perfume of the blue seshen-w (lotuses) mixed by the north wind as the fish slowly swam below them. Dragonflies danced above the water, and butterflies of orange and black, red and black, and black and white fluttered among the flowers, drinking of the nectar with the more industrious bees. Hb-w¹² (Ibises), bnw (herons), larks, sparrows, n'rw-w (doves), and

⁸ sSn; Plural designated by -w or -u; I will use -w to be consistent; Lilies or lotuses; *Nymphaea caerulea* sacred Egyptian blue water lotus/lilly were symbolic of sun, creation, cycle of the sun and rebirth; Gods Nefertem, Atum and Re

⁹ Aten; itn/jtn; the sun disc meaning sun itself which is also called re; Not a god but an "aspect" of the sun gods Re and Horus

¹⁰ Symbolizes god Horus

¹¹ *Nymphaea lotus* or White Egyptian lotus or water lilly; symbol of creation; used in funerary; Gods Horus the Child and Heqet

¹² Sacred bird symbolizing god Thoh; hb

other birds lived here, their songs scattering like bells among the trees.

Her brother's favorite bird, he said, was the n'rw (dove) for their soft "turr, turr" sounded like whispers of love to him. She smiled with the thought of her gentle-hearted brother and how the n'rw-w (dove) of her hesep (garden) reminded her of him when he was absent. This hesep (garden) had become their sanctuary and it was here where, even when he was not with her, she felt loved and safe. It could not be more loving and safe than if his arms were wrapped around her. Her eyes did not really register all of the beautiful details of the 'ah (palace), that he had spent hours going over with his master qed (architect), because they were focused on the memories that were filling them, but she innately knew and was thankful for the gift she was given out of love.

Her fingers traced the bright flowers and lush leaves as she wandered along the path, letting her feet direct her as they willed. A gentle smile softly curved her lips as the memories drifted through her mind to a time of orange butterflies and sunlight, green trees, and blue water, the scent of the seshen-w (lotuses) heavy in the air, lifting one's 3ḥ (spirit) to the joy of the day. She had gone in search of her brother for she had felt a sadness creeping over her, but it did not belong to her. It was his sadness.

The sky was blue and filled with soft white clouds and bright sunlight warmed her naked skin

as she walked around the lake looking for him. He was not at their bench under their heter¹³ ished-w (twin perseas) which was unusual, so she closed her eyes, waiting and listening. Then she began walking again, this time off the path, through the trees, still moist from the morning rain, her fingertips brushing the trunks as she passed them, whispering soft words of greeting to each one until she saw the tcheret (willow) where she knew he lay within, protected by the sweeping branches, hidden from the outside world, as safe as if in their mother's womb.

She paused and then parted the branches to see him. He looked as if he was asleep, eyes closed, breathing softly. She knew he was not asleep because she could feel his heart racing and his overwhelming sadness now that she was close to him. She lay down next to him and took his hand in hers, waiting. There were tear streaks on his cheeks and her heart ached for him, but she remained silent. She felt heat radiating off his naked body as he lay there, always warmer than she, and she gently snuggled up against him.

"There is nothing I can do that will make it¹⁴ (Father) see me," he whispered, brokenly.

¹³ Htr: twin, tax and horse have the same transliteration, distinguished by the symbols that followed to show the difference of the meanings. Ray, John. *Wonders of the World: The Rosetta Stone and the Rebirth of Egypt*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. 2007. Pg 89.

¹⁴ It <- written in transliteration form (translating from hieroglyphics into letters before inserting vowels); Vowels were not written in ancient Egyptian, but we added them for ease of reading etc.

She said nothing but brought his hand to her face to hold it against her cheek. A child of the kap¹⁵ (nursery) learned to not wish for the it (father) for there were many children. If a child was not the eldest son, the sA-nsw tpy (First Royal Son), or perhaps the eldest sa.t-w (daughters) of the favorite wife of the nsw-twy¹⁶ (King of Upper and Lower Egypt), then a child was not seen. This was the way it was for a child in the kap (nursery) where not only the princes and princesses lived but also the children of nobles or favored rekhyt (commoners), and even children who were captured during battles and brought back. She and her brother were unseen. Their mother was not only the favorite of the nsw (king); she was the ḥm.t nsw.t wr.t¹⁷ (Great Royal Wife). Their older half-brother was the sA-nsw tpy¹⁸ (First Royal Son) of their father and the ḥmt nsw.t snw (Second Wife). Their older sisters, of their mother, were the ones who would be married to their father or to their half-brother who was to succeed their father as nsw (king).

This was the hard part of being the youngest because the older children filled the roles

Sometimes I will have found the full transliteration of the word and sometimes not. This is not.

¹⁵ K3p; royal nursery but I am just saying nursery

¹⁶ King of Upper and Lower Egypt or Lord of Two Lands; one of the usual titles we call Pharaoh which was not used until the New Kingdom during Akhenaten's reign.

¹⁷ Great Royal Wife; title of wife who was most important to the king

¹⁸ We say Crown Prince

closest to their father. They would become important if any of their siblings died but they did not wish this for any reason. They loved each other. So she understood her brother's sadness because he was simply one of the many other princes even though he was a son of the ḥm.t nsw.t wr.t (Great Royal Wife). It was hard for him to watch his half-brother and his sisters bask in their father's attention while he waited to be seen. He was not alone but that never helped when it hurt to be ignored by the one person you loved the most.

As a little girl, she did not know how to tell her brother she understood his sadness. All she knew was her brother sought their father's love like a thirsty man who sought water in a desert. She did not seek the same because she had watched and learned the futility of it. Instead she found love around her, in her, with the joy she was given in the world she had. She was a happy child who smiled a great deal. This she could teach her brother, how to find joy in what was given to them. She could give him her love and listen to his words and then bring him into the joy of the world they were living in for it was full of unending love. She tightened her grasp on his hand and felt his responding squeeze.

He had fallen back into silence, noticing an orange and black butterfly¹⁹ that had found its way

¹⁹ *Danaus chrysippus* aka plain tiger or African Queen of the Monarch butterfly family (Nazari, Vazrick and Linda Evans. "Butterflies of Ancient Egypt." *Journal of the Lepidopterists' Society* 69.4 (2015): 242-267.)

through the long hanging branches of the tcheret (willow) to join them in their cave of green. He liked the fierce orange color of the butterfly's wings. It was strong and vibrant. There were also red butterflies with black markings²⁰ that flitted among the many flowers in the lake, trees, and bushes but this one dared other animals to eat it. It was not afraid to stand out. The orange and black butterfly fluttered above them as if looking for a place to land so he watched it search as it bobbed, its two wings moving in unison. He felt as if he was just as lost as the butterfly looking for something that was not.

"Caterpillar now. It hard to see. One day you butterfly. He see you," she whispered.

He looked at her. This was not the first time she spoke wisely or that she echoed a thought in his head. She had always, since she could first talk, said something that was so calmly wise that he was astonished each time she spoke. She was several years younger than he, but the words that came from her were much older. It was why he listened to her. She was watching the butterfly and nodded, smiling happily.

"New life, sen²¹ (Brother)," she whispered again, looking up.

"What about you, sen.t²² (Sister)?"

²⁰ *Precis octavia sesamus* aka gaudy commodore, summer form is red with black or winter form is blue with red markings; (Nazari)

²¹ Also written sn

²² Also written sn.t

“Djet²³ n neheh^{24, 25} sen (Forever and always, brother). I always with you,” she touched his chest over his heart with her finger, her eyes meeting his, “Like butterfly wings, together then apart. We fly together ready when time.”

He searched her eyes. She could see the slow dawning of realization in them. He understood what she meant. They always had done this, and he had never thought about it before because it was just the way it was. He had been waiting because he knew she would find him. He knew as she knew. Now he understood.

He nodded, “This is true, sen.t=j²⁶ (my sister). I have this life now ... with you,” he nodded again, looking back at the butterfly, seeming to become resolved, “No more sadness, sen.t (Sister)! We are caterpillars now. I must learn a lot to be a butterfly,” he sighed heavily as if letting go of a burden, “Do you want me to tell you the story of how you found me?”

²³ Forever; eternity, continuous, infinity; djt; Dt Bochi, Patricia A. “Images of Time in Ancient Egyptian Art”. *Journal of American Research Center in Egypt*, 31(1994):55-62.

²⁴ And always; ḥn' nḥh/ HH; cyclic perpetuity like the sun rising and setting (Bochi, Patricia. 55-62)

²⁵ Divine time: eternity consisting of both dt and nḥh; Quirke, Stephen, Wolfram Grajetzki and Narushige Shioda. “The Boundary Stele of Akhenaten”. *Digital Egypt for Universities*. University College London. 25 August 2018. <<https://www.ucl.ac.uk>>

²⁶ My sister; “my” was shown by using “=j/i” behind a word in transliteration but t3y.i was used more starting in 18th Dynasty; I will use “=” for consistency

Her giggles bubbled up, making him smile, and she nodded, “Please, sen=j (my brother)!”

She had heard the story many times, but she loved hearing him tell it again. His voice made her feel warm and loved and his eyes always got misty when he told it. He smiled at her and they settled against each other, one speaking, one listening, like twins nestled in a mother’s arms.

“I had been waiting for a long time, here in the hesep (garden), playing among the butterflies and flowers. Sen-w=j²⁷ (my brothers) and sent-w=j²⁸ (my sisters) of the kap (nursery) loved me but I waited for there was something within me that was empty. I did not know what it was. I was not sad with this emptiness. I was happy, waiting because I knew it would come to me one day, so I played, waiting. Life was very happy. Then one day, Mewet²⁹ (Mother) took me onto her lap and told me she was to have another child. She told me because I was the youngest and she worried I would be sad I would be no longer. I was not. I was so excited. I knew my wait was over because sen.t=j (my sister) was coming. I told Mewet (Mother) that you were sen.t=j (my sister) and she was happy, but she did not hear me yet. It did not matter. You were sen.t=j (my sister). Now that I knew you were coming it

²⁷ Brothers; plural was shown by adding a- w or - u. For consistency and ease of reading I will use “- w”

²⁸My sisters; female gendered words are written with “.t” or “t” at the end of the word; I will use the former.

²⁹ Mother; mw.t

was now hard to wait. You took a long time to come and I watched Mewet (Mother) grow round with you. She let me talk to you as I waited so I whispered all that we would do together. I told you of the hesep (garden) and how we would play among the trees, the songs and dances we would share, mewet=w (our mother) who would love us and our sisters who would watch over us, our great wonderful brother who would laugh at us and our sisters and brothers in the kap (nursery). This is how I passed the days while you were not here.”

“The day you were born I was so happy because you were finally here. Mewet (Mother) gathered me to her, there under heter ished-w=w (our twin perseas) where we now have our bench, to sit next to her on the bench and the mn’t (wet nurse) gave you to her. My heart was pounding, and I could not breathe I was so excited. You were so small in her arms. I was finally going to see you. I shivered all over with the happiness that ran through me. No words were spoken as Mewet (Mother) gently placed you in my lap. You were soft and smelled so clean. You looked up at me with your beautiful brown eyes, as you are now,” he touched her cheek gently with a finger, “My heart beat so fast and hard that my hands trembled. You are beautiful, and you quietly stare back at me. You are the beginning, I am the end. There was no other now, just you and I, as we stared at each other, Mewet (Mother) forgotten. It was then that I named you as I reached out one finger, which

trembled no matter how I tried to still it, as I gently touched your cheek. Mewet (Mother) told me you were called Nebetiah³⁰ but I knew better.”

She said nothing but waited, her eyes never leaving his as he told the story because he still had to name her.

“You are Kiya³¹,” he whispered.

Her solemn little face lit up with a smile. His naming her was her favorite part of the story. She still struggled with her birth name, Nebetiah, but she had always been able to say “Kiya”.

He fell silent and she kept watching his face, her hands tucked warmly in his, two naked little children nestled on their island of earth, facing each other, within the cave of the sheltering green branches of the tcheret (willow), as they looked at each other silently, the birds singing around them. Then he smiled at last, and she felt his heart lifting. She knew he had finally seen it did not matter if it (father) did not see him. It was as it should be. She felt very happy as he nodded in his realization of being satisfied with his world as it was, instead of searching for what did not exist, like his butterfly.

³⁰ Lady of the Palace/House; also spelled “Nebetah” which is now all over the internet but when I began the story two years ago, this was one of the spellings used. Daughter of King Nebma’atre and Queen Tiyi

³¹ Also transcribed as *kaia*, *kia* and *kiw*; meaning unknown although there are reports of it meaning ‘jovial lady’ but I cannot find any documentation to validate that definition. This leads me to believe this was a pet name which would only have meaning to those who used it. That there were variations on the spelling also lends to this thought.

He would wait himself and then find his path when it was time.

She whispered, "Butterfly begins another life."

"When it is time, the butterfly begins again. I am where I am supposed to be now. I have you with me, sen.t (Sister). Dwa-nejter n³² (Praise God for) reminding me," he whispered back, and he put an arm around her shoulders, placing his forehead against hers and touching their noses³³, "Djet (Forever)..."

"N neheh (And always)," she finished.

The butterfly fluttering above them circled its way back out of the cover of the tcheret (willow), leaving the two children in their embrace. Her memory was dimming as the butterfly disappeared but the ever-present feeling of love enveloped her, bringing tears to her eyes and choking her throat with its strength.

She smiled, closing her eyes to feel the last of the memory, falling into the warmth of the love it brought, while tracing her fingers along a bench that sat under an imaw (date palm). Their bench was similar to this one in the 'ah (palace) hesep-w (gardens) of their childhood where she had sat next to her brother, writing their poems and songs.

³² Dw3-ntr n (twt) = Thank you for (you)

Drifting along her path now, fingers trailing, the memory was becoming clearer.

She was sitting comfortably, in the warm sun, dappling through the branches of their heterished-w (twin perseas) that sheltered the bench on which she sat. She was a small, slim, sun-kissed little girl with her side lock dangling forward, bent over a papyrus scroll, practicing the medu netjer³⁴ (words of god), feeling the warm stone hard against her bottom. The beautiful green hesep, (garden) with dancing butterflies and bees and singing birds surrounding her, was captured by the view from a large room in the 'ah (palace) that opened onto it by two equally large windows. The windows were covered with light linen cloths, gathered at the sides to allow the gentle breeze to enter the room. But that view encompassing the hesep (garden) and child was not being enjoyed by the two men inside the room, their intense concentration mirroring that of hers outside.

She looked up from her work to watch them. One was a youth, the other was older, similar in their features and both, as she was, were bent over, only over a long table, looking at a papyrus scroll being held down on it within the room. Tamiaut³⁵, a pretty, brown striped cat with black tips on her ears, was lying curled asleep on a cushion on a lounging settee placed with other chairs and

³⁴ Hieroglyphics

³⁵ Means "She-cat" and this is her actual name. Djhutmose had a coffin made for her when she died indicating his love for her.

pillows nearer to the door that led to a hallway. This doorway was covered with another linen sheet stirring gently, the breeze moving in from the hesep (garden) and continuing down the hallway to find more open doorways further inside.

The men's voices carried into the hesep (garden) but Ti-miaut's slumber was not disturbed with the low words. The cat belonged to the youth and enjoyed the soothing sounds of the low masculine murmurs over the papyrus scroll which was under their scrutiny. They were not aware of the young girl in the hesep (garden) watching them as they intently studied a structural rendering of a large building covering several acres. The older man rested his hand on the seated youth's shoulder as they both bent over the drawings of the qed³⁶ (architect). They were preparing for the construction of a ḥwt netjer (temple of god), studying the renderings, their smoothly shaved heads close together. They both were bare-chested, lightly clad by shendyt-w (linen kilts) tied around their waists with papyrus scandals on their feet.

"Tell me what you see, sA (son)."

The youth glanced up at his father's face quickly and then back down to the renderings, "We should remove these shrines and reuse them here to construct your new entrance way here," he indicated the moves on the renderings," and then

³⁶ qed

erect the columns of which you spoke down the center of this court.”

Nsw (King) Nebma’atre³⁷ considered the move and then sagely nodded, “I agree, Djhutmose³⁸. You bring honor to Ptah³⁹ and Seshet⁴⁰ with your work. I give this to you to complete with the qed-w (architects).”

He clasped his son’s shoulder again, this time smiling warmly at him. The sound of running bare feet interrupted them as a young boy burst into the room, his face bright with energy and excitement, and smudged with dust. He had a side lock of hair and wore a shendyt (linen kilt) belted at his waist. He carried a small statue with him. Tamiaut raised her head, watching the three humans but otherwise did not move.

The young boy raised the object in his hands, “It (Father), look! I have made a model of a statue I will build! It is to honor Re⁴¹!”

Nsw (King) Nebma’atre turned to him, irritation tempered with love, but the irritation was

³⁷Lord of Justice is Re; Prenomen or throne name of Amenhotep III; Nb-m3’t-r; Lundström, Peter. Amenhotep III. 2018. 6 July 2018. <https://pharaoh.se/pharaoh/Amenhotep-III>.

³⁸*Djhwty.ms*; Djehutymes; “Son of Thoth”; we write it “Thutmose”; not known definitively if he is full brother of Amenhotep IV

³⁹Pth; God of craftsmen and architects; creator god who brought the world forth first in thought and then word; centered in Memphis

⁴⁰Ssht; Female Scribe; Goddess of Precise Measurements and all forms of Writing

⁴¹Re or Ra; Egyptian sun god; merged with many gods

winning, "Where is mn'y=k (your tutor), Ay⁴²? You should find him for your lessons, Amenhotep⁴³."

The little boy stopped coming towards him, and lowered the statue in his hands, not answering, disappointment showing on his face.

Djhutmose stood up and gestured his little brother to come closer, "Perhaps you will join me in Hut-Ka-Ptah⁴⁴ (Enclosure of the Ka of Ptah) to become a hem-netjer⁴⁵ (servant of god), sen=j (my brother). You seem to have good work. Let me see this."

"We do not have time to play, Djhutmose. The qed-w (architects) are already behind with the work."

Djhutmose did not look at his father but smiled at the little boy and took the statue from him.

He looked at it closely, turning it in his hands and his smile deepened, "A moment, it (father), for a young learner, as you did once for me. Perhaps he will, one day, out-do my work with even greater hwt-w (temples)."

He smiled down at his younger half-brother who grinned happily back at him, relief flooding

⁴² Possible brother of Tiye - He is from Akhmin and has her father's titles which indicates that he inherited them, hence a son. Father of the god" means he was a tutor, a foster father or tutor of a prince or father in law

⁴³ Amāna-Hātpa; Amun is satisfied

⁴⁴ Temple of Ptah in Memphis, Egypt

⁴⁵ Also Prophet of God; We call this priest but that is a wab; This is more like a Bishop

his little face. Nebetiah saw Djhutmose's face soften even more as he looked at his little brother. She smiled, as she watched him, a smile playing on his lips, as he turned the statue in his hands, running them over its lines as if stroking his beloved Ti-miaut. Amenhotep watched him eagerly, very excited to have found something that brought him attention, even if his father was reluctant. Nebetiah began whispering a seta⁴⁶ (prayer) of protection to Bes⁴⁷ for Amenhotep as she watched her two older brothers, her stylus forgotten in her hand.

Djhutmose smiled openly at the young boy as he spoke, "The lines of the statue are strong and smooth, different because they flow, curve, more naturally. I like where you are going with your vision. It is not what we do now, but this shows me you are not afraid of showing your thoughts even if they are different from others. This is a strength, sen=j (my brother). You stand for MaAt⁴⁸ (Truth)."

Djhutmose looked back at the statue, ignoring the impatient movement of his father next to him.

He handed the model back to Amenhotep, "You have a good eye for beautiful lines,

⁴⁶ st3; also sš3

⁴⁷ Also Bisu; Egyptian dwarf god who protected woman and children above all others

⁴⁸ Concept of truth, order, and justice so these words will be interchangeable; this is an all-inclusive concept of harmony, balance, law, morality for all was the culture of Ancient Egypt. MaAt was balanced by Isfet (chaos); Personified by goddess MaAt

Amenhotep. This is very truthful. Is there a reason you work this way?"

Nebetiah could tell by Amenhotep's face that he could not believe his ears. He was so happy that not only did Djhutmose like it; he was actually asked to explain his work! This was a great honor.

He made himself relax and spoke slowly, "Yes, sen=j (my brother), I wanted to be truthful in what I saw and bring that truth to my work. I wish to have work that shows the truth in what is around us."

"This is good work, sen (Brother)," Djhutmose nodded, "I see this truth in your work. I am glad to see you have taken an interest in our *ḥwt-w* (temples) and buildings. I would like to see more when I return. Fashion me some models for Bastet⁴⁹ and Ptah. We wish to honor them, so they find pleasure with our work in Men-nefer (Memphis). I would like to see what you would do."

Amenhotep looked as if he was going to burst. He had been given a real project by his brother, the *sA-nsw tpy* (First Royal Son), the Overseer of the Prophets of Upper and Lower Egypt, High Priest of Ptah⁵⁰ in Men-nefer⁵¹ and

⁴⁹ Goddess of War

⁵⁰ Also called *Wer kherep hemw* or *wr-ḥrp-ḥmwrt* or *wr-xrp-Hmwrt* or "Great Overseer of Craftsmen" or "Greatest of the directors of craftsmen"

⁵¹ Enduring and Beautiful; *mn nfr*; Today called Memphis

Sm⁵² of Ptah! He had taken time to look at his work and approved of it!

He caught his grin and mastered a serious look with a respectful bow to Djhutmose, “Yes, sen (Brother)!”

The little boy turned hopefully to his father who now took the statue from Amenhotep and looked at it more closely. He turned it over in his hands several times, running his fingers across the body of it, as Djhutmose had done.

After several moments of silence, he spoke slowly, “I see what you are saying, Djhutmose. His lines are gentle yet commanding, smooth and flowing, natural. I will speak to Aperiar⁵³, Overseer of the Nurses⁵⁴ of the Royal Children, to ensure he has a mn’y⁵⁵ (tutor) in this.”

⁵² Sem or setem: Prophet (we say priest, but this is a higher rank) responsible for the exact utterance of prayers to guarantee eternal life to deceased and also made the incisions to remove organs, ritually insulted by peers to keep him safe from bad spirits since he harmed a body

⁵³ “Servant of the god El”; ‘pri3r or Aperia (‘pri3), Zivie says “i3r/l” is Egyptian way of writing El so his name is Aper-El. Using the Egyptian spelling but more information is found in: Zivie, Alain. “Pharaoh’s Man, “Abdiel: The Vizier with a Semitic Name”. *Biblical Archaeology Review*. 44.4 (2018): 22-31, 64-66.

⁵⁴ mr mn’w/wt msw nsw: Overseer (of the) Nurses (male and female) (of the) children royal /king - literal translation (Zivie, Alain); In the royal nursery the children had male and female nurses and then tutors (we also call them foster fathers or mothers) of the same who were managed by a trusted noble as the Overseer.

⁵⁵ Nurse or tutor; the male foster father of a royal child

He handed the model back to Amenhotep, “Go find mn’y =k⁵⁶ (your tutor), Amenhotep. We still have much talking to do, sen=k⁵⁷ (your brother) and I, and when you next present a work for evaluation be sure to tidy yourself.”

Amenhotep, glowing with the recognition from his father, bowed to him and his brother, “Dwa-nejter n (Praise God for) your time, it (Father), sen (Brother), I will have the models you wish for on your next visit.”

He walked with the energy of barely contained excitement until he reached the door where he burst into a full out run, “Kiya! Kiya!”

The two men looked at each other, one amused, the other now only slightly annoyed.

Djhutnose laughed, “Perhaps you grow too old for the youth, it (Father). I remember your time given to show me these things.”

“As sA-nsw tpy⁵⁸ (First Royal Son) of the Two Lands, it is better you do this now as one day this will be yours,” Nsw (King) Nebma’atre gestured with his head back to the table that had their renderings spread out, “Do you see any other improvements that can be made? I am interested to hear what you have in mind.”

They moved back toward the table, all thoughts of the younger boy lost among the plans

⁵⁶ One way possessives were indicated in transliteration with “=k” for your; “=w” ours; “=f” his; “=s” hers; “=j” my

⁵⁷ Your brother

⁵⁸ Crown Prince

for the ongoing constructions of the ḥwt-w (temples).

“Kiya! Kiya!”

In the hesep (garden), Nebetiah smiled. He was the only one who ever used her baby name now. She liked that he still used it between them. She already had begun putting away her stylus because she knew, when he left the room, he would be seeking her out. Relief had flooded through her as her brother burst from the room calling for her. Her seta (prayer) to Bes had not gone unheard. Children were not allowed to interrupt their father while he was working but, by Bes’s guidance, Djhutmose had intervened. He would not be disciplined by Aperiar for disturbing their father when they were supposed to be within the kap (nursery).

There were times when Amenhotep teased her of being a prophetess because she was able to anticipate him. She innately knew when he was sad and how to cheer him up. She had always known this as long as she could remember. He did not seem to mind her following him when he was not with his studies. She did prefer being with him, in truth, for she was more at home outdoors, playing with him among the trees in the gardens (hesep=w) and getting chased away by the caretakers instead of dancing and singing with her sisters⁵⁹. In return, he did not mind joining her in

⁵⁹ This would be all the girls in the kab, not just her blood sisters

songs and dances when she had to practice. He even taught her new ones so even this was enjoyable.

However, with their respective studies, they did not have as much time to be together. More recently she was prone to find him bent over, working on a ḥwt (temple) or statue he wanted to build when he was older or working on some papyrus writing which left her to her own pursuits. She had learned to enjoy making up her own songs and seta-w (prayers) for her favorite goddess, Bastet⁶⁰, a goddess she learned of at the knee of Wriai⁶¹, wife of Aperiar and her mn't⁶² (tutor) in the kap (nurse). Wriai was also called T3wrt (the great one) by all in respect. She learned much from Wriai and when Djhutmose was home, Nebetiah would sing and recite her work for him. He had told her she should become a šm't (chantress) for Ptah and she could be with him in Men-nefer (Memphis). She was thrilled to be seen so favorably by her older brother, so she understood Amenhotep's current excitement.

She heard him call her again, smiled and hurriedly gathered her papyrus and stylus, quickly rolling the sheet as she moved toward the 'ah

⁶⁰ Goddess of Protection

⁶¹ Also spelled Uriai but known as Tauret/T3wrt "the great one". She is the lady with the 3 coffins but her husband and son were also buried in 3 coffins so the honor was for the whole family who was closely tied to the kings for several generations as tutors and nurses. Hence the honor.

⁶² Female nurse and tutor

(palace), skirting the larger windows where her father and older brother were working.

She swiftly moved to a window closer to her brother's position, "Huy⁶³! Shush! I am here in the hesep (garden)!"

Her brother, who was charging down the hall, skidded to a stop, and turned, his excited face making his sister laugh. His side lock swung around his head in his haste as he came towards her. He emerged from the darker building into the light of the hesep (garden), and they started back to the heter ished-w (twin perseas) she had just left. She matched herself to his excited steps as she looked curiously at the statue he held in his hands. He sat on the bench under the heter ished-w (twin perseas) and then held it out to her. She sat beside him. The two children could have been reflections of each other, like a mirror, sitting there with their shaved heads together, side locks dangling forward, except Nebetiah was of slighter frame and smaller.

He smiled at her, his eyes shining, "I have a project from it (Father) and Djhutmose! They have asked me to bring them more models of ḥwt-w (temples)!!! Djhutmose said I may become a ḥem-netjer⁶⁴ (servant of god) for Ptah!"

⁶³ Nickname for Amenhotep

⁶⁴ Literally "Servants of God"; Over the centuries this has been translated for ease as 'priests'; The King was the "High Priest of All the Temples" so it was he who spoke with the god and appointed men to perform the daily rites because he could not be there in every temple. All offerings were given by the king in an offering formula.

Nebetiah place her roll on the ground and gently took the model from her excited brother, "Let me see this work you do.

He sat silently as she turned it in her hands, peering into the little face of the supplicating statue.

"I like the rounded lines. It is nice to see and hold."

"Our bodies are not hard lines with corners, but smooth curves so I tried to capture these here...."

"I like it. Are you going to paint it?"

Her brother scoffed at her, "Of course, Kiya! It would be incomplete if I did not! It (Father) is building more ḥwt-w (temples) and maybe one of my statues will be used in his work."

She handed his model back to him, "That would be wonderful!"

Amenhotep smiled, his excitement still lighting up his face, "I must tell Mewet (Mother). She will be surprised. She told me to not bother it (Father) ..."

"Then I would wait, Huy. Let her know once you have given your models so she can only praise your work and not be angry because you disobeyed her," Nebetiah put her hand on his arm

Rather like the Roman Catholic Church with the Pope of Rome (King) followed by the Cardinals (High Prophets/ ḥm-nTr tipy), Archbishops (Mr; priest manages the business of the temple, both worldly and god), Bishop (Lector Prophet/ ḥm-nTr-ḥry-ḥb), Priest (hem nTr/prophet) and Decon (w'b /priest).

to soften her words, "You know how she does not like to be disobeyed especially if it turns out she was not in the right."

Amenhotep paused, "You are right, as always, Sen.t (Sister). What would I do without you?"

She laughed softly, "You would run bullheaded into everything, imi-ib (Heart's Desire). It is why I am here, to be ib=k⁶⁵ (your conscious). Djet (Forever)...."

"N neheh, tjaw n tjaw=j (and always, Breath of my Breath)," he touched his forehead to hers and put one arm around her shoulders as they sat there in the dappled sun under the heter ished-w (twin perseas), "We will always be of one mind, sen.t=j (my sister)."

Nebetiah put her arm around his waist, "Djet n neheh, sen=j (Forever and always, my brother)."

He broke their embrace by bending forward to pick up her scroll leaning against the bench, exclaiming, "You must show me what you have been working on, Kiya! I will want you as my scribe for you do this much prettier than I. Is it a song?"

The memory of the hesep, under the ished-w (perseas), warm in the dappled sunlight, with her brother, sharing their dreams, shifted as their

⁶⁵ "Your Heart" meaning your conscious: Egyptians believed their conscious and emotions was held in their heart, not their mind.

voices faded into another memory of twinkling stars above her.

She looked up. She knew they were there. She searched the skies for the three bright stars that always drew her to them. She did not know why she liked them best of all the stars, but she did. She had watched them so much that they were like friends, happy and beautiful, shining down on her when she snuck out at night and she did this often, as she had done now. She smiled and looked around her, where she sat on the roof of the 'ah (palace). She had come to the back of the hesep (garden) and climbed the old stairs that no one used so she could sit among the stars. There were no trees to block her view and the heat of the day was gone with the 'itn (sun disc), probably traveling through the netherworld⁶⁶ now. She like to imagine it blazing a hot trail through the underworld that Re traveled, to rise again on the other side, driving the 'itn (sun disc) like a horse and chariot. The calls of the night insects sounded far away in the hesep (garden) and she could almost pretend she was the only person in the world, just her and the stars.

"And me," whispered through the dark,
"Would you not want me with you?"

⁶⁶ We call Hell; Realm of the dead, overseen by Osiris, where the dead traveled 12 regions defeating demons etc to reach the weighing of the heart (judgment) and if they passed the Judgment of MaAt with a heart lighter than a feather, they moved on to Aaru aka Field of Rushes where they lived eternally in an ideal version of the world (heaven)

She did not jump because she knew he was coming. He always came when she was out here.

“Yeh⁶⁷ (Hi),” she whispered back, not taking her eyes from the stars above her, “Of course, sen (Brother), but you are always with me, so I do not need to want it so. Why were you so long to come?”

“I had to convince Weriai to not come herself. She is just beside herself that you come out here all the time and she cannot stop you,” he whispered in her ear as he tucked his arm around her shoulders, warming her.

“Dwa-nejter n t̄wt (Praise God for you),” she whispered back.

He smiled, and they looked at the stars in silence for a long time.

“Do you ever think that you will go there?” she asked softly.

“I hope to. If we follow our sbayt (instruction)⁶⁸ and keep MaAt (order) has we have been taught, we both should be there when it is time.”

She sighed, “Do you think that they are the lights of pa netjer-aA (the Great G-d)? The three there are the easiest to find. I think they are showing us where to go.”

“And the one down there,” he pointed below and to the side of the three stars in a line,

⁶⁷ Greetings used within this book are from karathutmose.tripod.com/dictionary/pidictionary.html

⁶⁸ (Murnane, pg. 198) sb̄ȳt; instruction

“That one always follows them. They are always together.”

She nodded, “Almost. There is a time they are not, but they come back ... like us,” and then she giggled.

He looked at her in the moonlight, “What do you find so funny?”

“I just realized you have another who follows you,” she grinned. She could feel him stiffen.

“Yes,” he nodded, “our cousin, Nefertiti⁶⁹, daughter of Ay. Do you know her?”

Nebetiah shook her head, “We used to play together but now she will not speak to me. I have tried because she is not interested. She is with Nebetnehat and Henuttaneb most of the time. You should speak to them of her.”

He nodded and looked up at the stars again, “I wonder why she does not speak to you.”

“Perhaps because she does not know that I speak to you. I do not talk of you or Djhutmose with my friends because they would never stop talking about you if I did,” she poked him, and he arched away from her, but still watched the stars, only half-heartedly batting her hand away.

“It is not easy being the sister of the sA-nsw tpy (Frist Royal Son) and the sA-nsw snnw (Second Royal Son). The only thing all the girls talk about in

⁶⁹ “Beautiful one has come”

the kap (nursery) is who you are going to take to wife," she returned her gaze to the stars.

"That has not been decided I am told," he was still looking up.

She nodded, "It would need to be decided. Sometimes I think they would fight over the both of you if it were allowed."

"I think there has been already. There is one who is not approving of Nefertiti," he looked at Nebetiah again, "Mother of Djhutmose, Hm=s (Her Majesty) Kilu-Hepa⁷⁰ has said she will not allow Djhutmose to marry Nefertiti. Djhutmose said she would not say why but obviously there is something that his mother does not like. I wondered if you could tell me anything."

"I know no more than you. All I know is Nefertiti follows snet=w (our sisters), Nebetnehat, and Henuttaneb. She enjoys their company. Maybe she was to wed Djhutmose and her sister, Mutnedjmet, is for you. All I see is Nefertiti watches you a great deal. I would say it is not Djhutmose she would wed if she was given the choice."

He laughed, "She does watch me. I have not spoken to her yet. I watch without her seeing. She is very pretty. I wonder that I had not seen her before."

She smiled, "You were not interested in looking before. There are several girls in the kap

⁷⁰ Gilukhippa also; Moran, William L, Ed., *The Armana Letters*, John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 1992.

(nursery) who hope to catch your eye. She is the prettiest one.”

“Perhaps I should speak with her.”

Nebetiah sighed, “I can give no advice, sen (Brother) so you must follow your heart in this one. I can only tell you this is why I do not speak of you within the kap (nursery). The scheming can be exhausting.”

“I wish to tell you something for your heart to keep, sen.t (Sister),” he put his arm behind her as he leaned into her, “I will keep you with me no matter who I marry, and she will welcome you as sent=s (her sister) for me. We are like these stars, you and I, above us and she will be one of them also.”

She kissed his cheek and they turned back to the stars, falling silent as the sound of the hesep (garden) below them rose up in the darkness.

Nebetiah pointed at the thick path of stars across the sky, “Tell me more of the stars, sen (Brother).”

“Ay has said the sky is Nut⁷¹ who will give birth to Ra, so he may rise again now that he was swallowed by Geb⁷².”

She bent backwards over his arm so much that he was now holding her up as she looked up into the sky that spread behind them with thousands of points of lights, “Nut goes on forever

⁷¹ Goddess of the sky

⁷² God of Earth

and she is so beautiful. If I were to be a goddess I would wish to be her.”

“And I would be Geb, so I could stare at your beauty my whole life,” he shook his head, “Sen.t (Sister), you are not as little as you used to be.”

She laughed softly, trusting him totally to not drop her, “This makes you Shu⁷³ for your arms are to hold me up, sen (Brother). Will you be able to hold me?”

He smiled into the darkness, “Djet (forever),” he said as he shifted his arm, accommodating her position.

“N neheh (And always),” she sat up and snuggled up against him.

They fell into the silence again, their cousin forgotten, the mn[˘]-w (nurses) forgotten, bedtime forgotten as they wandered together among the stars, their laughter winding a path among them.

The starlight of her memories dimmed as she moved to a time when laughter was silenced, side locks were of the past and the sun god began to shine more strongly on them. The beginning of these times was heralded in when Ay, also now an overseer of the horses⁷⁴, returned from Men-nefer (Memphis). He bore the harsh news of the unexpected death of Djhutmose. The loss of Djhutmose, sA-nsw smsw⁷⁵ (son and heir) of the

⁷³ God of Air and Sunlight who holds Nut up

⁷⁴ Regiment commander

⁷⁵ Literally means “son and heir”

throne of the Two Lands, brought dark times to the 'ah (palace), per-ḥnr.t⁷⁶ (House of Royal Women), and heralded a change in Nsw (King) Nebma'atre. The caterpillar had become a chrysalis.

Nsw (King) Nebma'atre became increasingly focused on projects that drew him closer to Amun-Re⁷⁷ and Re-Harakhty⁷⁸, and the 'Itn (Aten)⁷⁹. Major temple constructions were undertaken at Ipet-isut⁸⁰ (Karnak) in Waset (Thebes) as he became more preoccupied. The grief of the nsw (king) was darkened further by the whispers beginning to dance among the columns of the per-ḥnr.t (House of Royal Women). Dark whispers of throne stealing, and murder swirled, and accusations rose. The sudden death of the first-born son of the ḥm.t nsw.t snw (Second Royal

⁷⁶ House (pr) of Royal Women in New Kingdom; aka harim but not the harem of today. A residence and court for all the royal women, children and favored non-royals, providing education of the future ruling nobles, musical performances, and provisions for royal family. (Roth, Silke, 2012, "Harem". (Frood, Elizabeth and Willeke Wendrich (eds.), *UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology, Los Angeles*. <http://digital2.library.ucla.edu/viewItem.do?ark=21198/zz002bqmpmp>. Accessed 19 July 2018.)

⁷⁷ imn -re; Amun-Re or Amun-Ra is the fusion of Amun (hidden one and the "King of the Gods") with Re/Ra (most powerful Sun God) making Amun-Re/Amun-Ra the most powerful god in Thebes

⁷⁸ Fusion of Re and Horus of the two horizons (sunrise [Khepri the rising sun] and sunset [Atum the setting sun]) plays a role in ferrying across the sky

⁷⁹ aka Aton; the sun disc; an aspect of sun gods but now receiving focus in worship by King Nebma'atre as he began to deify himself

⁸⁰ Most Sacred of Places: today called Karnak; main place of worship in 18th dynasty of ancient Egypt for Amun and gods associated with him

Wife) Princess Kilu-Hepa⁸¹ soon had the wind carrying words of jealousy and rage, wisps of a power struggle within the per-ḥnr.t (House of Royal Women) that did not end with Djhutmose.

As the unseen struggle for power within the ʿah (palace) was waged, the longtime peace established with their neighboring countries continued under the rule of Nsw (King) Nebmaʿatre. He had turned from battle to diplomacy to maintain the peace at their borders. This was a wise decision, for their mother, ḥm.t nsw.t wr.t (Great Royal Wife) Tiyi, was also becoming more and more prominent by the side of her husband and Neb (Lord). Ḥm.t nsw.t wr.t (Great Royal Wife) Tiyi, was often in deep discussions with her husband and other state officials in the usechet (audience hall). Nebetiah and Amenhotep watched as their older sisters Sitamun⁸², Aset⁸³, Henuttaneb⁸⁴, and Nebetnehat⁸⁵ became more involved in the ceremonial celebrations led by their parents.

There were also times, when the projects and state visits of the nsw (king) took him away from the ʿah (palace), and ḥm.t nsw.t wr.t (Great Royal Wife) Tiyi remained to deal with the daily needs of their rekhyt (people) and messengers of

⁸¹ Gilukhippa also; Moran, William L, Ed., *The Amarna Letters*, John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 1992.

⁸² Daughter of Amun

⁸³ Iset; Goddess we know as Isis; “throne”

⁸⁴ Lady of All Lands

⁸⁵ Lady of the Sycamore

foreign crowns. The respect for the knowledge and judgment of ḥm.t nsw.t wr.t (Great Royal Wife) Tiye continued to grow among the foreign rulers as Nebetiah watched her mother grow in her stature as partner for her husband. She was proud of her mother and determined to emulate her, so she could continue the harmony and strength of which ḥm.t nsw.t wr.t (Great Royal Wife) Tiye was fast becoming a symbol. The importance of the ḥm.t nsw.t wr.t (Great Royal Wife) to the nsw (king) was reflected in some of the ḥmt-w (temples), statues and inscriptions he was erecting in her honor. He was depicting her by his side, equal to him as both a divine partner and an earthly partner. But the dark whispers did not dissipate.

A memory, like a whisper forgotten, wound its way into her vision, dimming her smile, as she saw Amenhotep standing in front of Nsw (king) Nebma'atre and ḥm.t nsw.t wr.t (Great Royal Wife) Tiye. She and her older sisters were seated below and behind the thrones on which their parents sat looking down at their son who was bowing at the bottom of the stairs of the throne platform. Silence had fallen in the room so one could hear the breath of others.

"You do not answer me?" the nsw (king) asked again.

His voice was silky smooth, but his anger vibrated in every word.

“I have no answer, Neb=j⁸⁶ (My Lord),” Amenhotep responded softly, not lifting himself from his bow.

Nebetiah’s heart ached for her brother. He had wanted his father’s attention but now this attention was heavy with resentment and anger. She knew it was not earned by Amenhotep, as did everyone in the room, but he was still the one who was expected to carry it. It had been months since their brother had been taken from them, no closer to finding the reason of his death, and their father no closer to accepting his loss. Instead, he had taken to leveling his anger at Amenhotep and arguments with ḥm.t nsw.t wr.t (Great Royal Wife) TiYi rising daily as she entreated him to not blame the child for an action of the netjer-w (gods). Her words only angered the nsw (king) more so she, too, began to hold her tongue.

“You fail on the field of weapons, Amenhotep!” Nsw (king) Nebma’atre spoke sharply, “How will you defend our land? Rekhyt=w⁸⁷ (Our people)? Do you not care that you disgrace me with each of your failures?”

His words were harsh and meant to hurt. They were spoken in pain and loss but knowledge of this did not lessen the blow they delivered. Nebetiah did not see Amenhotep move a muscle as she felt every stab that went through his heart. She choked back her cry to tell her father to stop. If

⁸⁶ My Lord; can use either “j” or “I” for my; I will use “j”

⁸⁷ Our subjects; common people

their mother's entreaties failed, she could do no better. She was a caterpillar. She looked at her sisters, entreating them to speak up. Sitamun was closest to their father and he bent his will to her wishes constantly. Sitamun met her eyes and shook her head slightly. Her face was just as shocked and upset as Aset, Henuttaneb, and Nebetnehat, but they held their silences. Their mother was sitting still, her face immobile during the tirade on her son. Nebetiah fought back her tears and closed her eyes, sending all her love to Amenhotep, hoping he could feel her surround him with it, trying to protect him. She began whispering, sending a silent seta (prayer) of entreaty to Bes.

"This is foremost in my thoughts, Neb= (My Lord), and I work hard every day with my practice, so I may bring honor to you for rekhyt=w (our people)," Amenhotep answered.

"Words are meaningless!" Nsw (king) Nebma'atre barked, making Nebetiah jump and open her eyes.

She watched him turn to his wife.

"This is sA=k (your son)," he spat out, "I do not see where he even tries but he will spend hours working on the papyrus or a building. He dances and sings. He needs to be able to protect as well as nourish the rekhyt (people) and netjer-w (gods). He needs to ensure MaAt (Order) for all. He needs to

overcome isfet⁸⁸ (chaos) with strength, not song.
How will he do this if he cannot fight?"

Ḥm.t nsw.t wr.t (Great Royal Wife) Tiyi did not look at Nsw (King) Nebma'atre but watched her son, bowed at their feet. He had not moved a muscle. She swept her eyes around the usechet (audience hall), not really seeing the nobles who all remained motionless, watching. She lifted her chin, her eyes finally resting on sat-w=s (her daughters) and then looked back at her husband.

"There are strengths and weaknesses in every one of us, Neb=j (My Lord). Amenhotep is no different. He does practice for hours every day. He is bruised and cut from this practice. I have seen him do this. I ask you take a different approach. See him for who he is and not who he is not," she spoke quietly but an undertone of strength reverberated in her words.

Nebetiah saw Amenhotep flinch with their mother's last words but it went unnoticed by all others in the room. All eyes were trained on the royal couple. Ḥm.t-w (Wives) had been demoted for speaking so directly to their nsw-w (kings). In Ḥm.t nsw.t wr.t (Great Royal Wife) Tiyi's favor was that she had been with their father from their

⁸⁸ Jzf.t/izf.t; Chaos, "that which is difficult", "evil", "disharmonious", "troublesome", "injustice", "violence"; Chaos, injustice, to do evil; the balance of MaAt when in duality but easily imbalanced by the wrong choice thus meaning it is a complement to maAt in paradoxical dualism meaning one cannot exist without the other; verb form "to do evil" Wikipedia. *Isfet (Egyptian Mythology)*. June 2018. 10 August 2018 <[https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Isfet_\(Egyptian_mythology\)](https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Isfet_(Egyptian_mythology))>

childhood. They had grown up together in the kap (nursery). He would not be able to easily put her aside.

Nsw (King) Nebma'atre sneered, "You have said this was the bidding of the netjer-w (gods) and yet they do not give him what is needed to be nsw (king)," he shrugged and turned away from his wife. "The battlefield will not care, sen.t⁸⁹ (Sister). He will die there. Perhaps these "netjer-w" ("gods") did not think of this so they have killed him also."

His words, cold, calculated, and riddled with sarcasm, made it clear he doubted his favorite son's death was by the hands of the netjer-w (gods). He believed Djhutmose was murdered. Nebetiah caught her breath, still concentrating on her brother and her love for him, but now she was scared. There was a truth in her father's words. Had Djhutmose's death been ordained by the netjer-w (gods), then would not Amenhotep also be given their help if he was to be the king's true son? Her father thought so and he was the High Priest of All Temples, the highest authority. The idea that someone within their family killed their brother was solidifying into a horror for her. She felt Amenhotep's despair and she looked back at him. He was still bowed, not moving, and she surrounded him again, envisioning herself with her arms protectively around him. If she could place

⁸⁹ Ancient Egyptian husbands did call their wives "sister"

herself in front of their father to take these words, she would do so. She poured her heart into covering him with her love, closing her eyes, concentrating, praying to Sobek⁹⁰, Bastet and Aset⁹¹ for help.

“Then, sen (Brother), take him with you and train him yourself. If it was not the netjer-w (gods), you can protect him from men. What is better than to learn from the greatest warrior on the field?” Tiyi responded, “All know your loss. They wait to see where you will lead us. I do not believe it is to be lost in despair. Perhaps your anger is in the way of the wishes of the netjer-w (gods).”

Nsw (King) Nebma’atre looked back at ḥm.t nsw.t wr.t (Great Royal Wife) Tiyi and held her level gaze. She did not blink, nor did she lower her head. She met his eyes directly and calmly.

“If I find that the hand of man was responsible, no one is safe,” his words were soft but deadly, “No one.”

Ḥm.t nsw.t wr.t (Great Royal Wife) Tiyi did not look away but smiled at him sadly.

⁹⁰ “God who protects the pharaoh, Egyptian army and the people. His strength and power help the worshiper to overcome obstacles and protects them from evil magic” Ancient Egypt Online. *Sobek: The Crocodile God of Strength and Power*. N.d. 1 September 2018. <<https://www.ancient-egypt-online.com/sobek/html>>

⁹¹ Isis; “throne”; Goddess who assists and protects kings, has greatest knowledge in Heka; a healer; brings the dead back to life and a role model for mothers and wives; Sister and wife of Osiris

“May your love find its way again, sen=j (my brother),” she returned.

Nsw (King) Nebma'atre stared at her a moment longer, then he nodded once, submitting to her request and turned back to Amenhotep.

“You will be with me, Amenhotep. All mn'w=k (your tutors) will come with us when I must leave.”

Nebetiah's heart leapt with both sadness and happiness. Her father had accepted her mother's declaration that she was innocent of the whispers in the 'ah (palace) and this was done in view of all. He would continue to look for the ones who he believed murdered sA=f (his son) but their bond would not be injured. In accepting her, he had given his acceptance to Amenhotep. There would be a ceremony making him the sA-nsw smsw (son and heir) to formalize the decision of the nsw (king). Now Amenhotep was to be where Djhutmose had been almost every day as a child and young man, at his father's side. Amenhotep was much older, and this had not happened with him. It was to begin now. He would be leaving them ... her. For the first time, Amenhotep moved. He bowed lower and she felt a wave of love from her brother so strong that it took her breath away and her tears threatened again, this time in happiness.

“I serve you, Neb=j (My Lord),” he responded.

The memory swirled away, blurring as she moved forward into the hesep (garden) just as their father had swept forward. His consultations with the unnut-w⁹² (astronomers and astrologers) and the hery-ḥeb⁹³ (lector priest) increased and he was found more often in deep discussions with the wr-maw⁹⁴ n imn (greatest seer of Amun) and the ḥem-neter tpi (First Prophet of God) in Ipet-isut (Karnak). Changes also occurred in the children's small world of the kap (nursery). Nebetiah relinquished her final small place in their father's regard to silently disappear among the children, one of the many princesses now. Amenhotep, now the sA-nsw smsw (son and heir), found himself with his time structured and accounted for by others. He was moved into his own apartments, the rooms that had once belonged to Djhutmose, within the 'ah (palace).

In gaining his father's long sought attention, Amenhotep was started on his training to assume his brother's place beside their father. He was

⁹² Astrological clergy of temple included ami, mer and unnut who used stars, planets, sun and moon to predict floods, royal births; times to give royal edicts, time to plant or harvest, times to complete rituals and kept time: Clark, Rosemary. *The Sacred Tradition in Ancient Egypt: The Esoteric Wisdom*. Woodbury, MN: Llewellyn Publications. 2012.

⁹³ (hry-ḥb) Chief scribe, reciter and lector; keeper of the sacred books, accomplished in all rituals in temple; taught the religious texts to other priests and kings; wrote the texts, and recited the authoritative utterances (heka/words of power) in temple and festivals and responsible for the exact utterance of prayers to guarantee eternal life to deceased

⁹⁴ Wr-maw; Interpreted omens and dreams; predicted the future using the same

already attending the Prince's School with his closest friends: Huy⁹⁵ son of Aperiar, his half-brother Nakhtpaamun⁹⁶, Ahmose, and May⁹⁷, the son of a favored rekhyt (commoner) of the nsw (king). When he was not with them or his father, he was under tutelage with Parennefer⁹⁸, his advisor, in preparation for his attendance at the per ankh⁹⁹ (House of Life) in Men-nefer (Memphis). Ay had been replaced.

Nebetiah found she was drawn to healing and was allowed to begin her training under the guidance of the ḥem.t n (servant of) Aset, preparing for her schooling at the Per Ankh of 'Iwnw¹⁰⁰ (Heliopolis). Her mother was even pleased with her wish to do so which surprised her, but she did not have time to think on it. She would continue her studies in the women's medical school at the

⁹⁵ Son of Aperiar and Weriai who grew up to serve under Amenhotep

⁹⁶ Strong is Amun; nickname "Nakht"; nobleman; friend; half-brother who changed his name to Nakhtpaaten and became vizier and overseer of Akhet-Aten; seal bearer; overseer of the work projects in Akhet-Aten

⁹⁷ Nobleman (rpat); friend; who grew up to be the royal chancellor and fan-bearer of Amenhotep; scribe of the king; Overseer of all the works of the King; held military titles: Overseer of the soldiery of the Lord of the Two Lands and scribe of the recruits; Overseer of the house of Sehetep-Aten; overseer of the house of Waenra in On and overseer of the cattle of the temple of Re in On

⁹⁸ Noble of the court; advisor to Amenhotep as S3-nsw tpy; King's Cup Bearer; Washer of the King's Hands (royal butler); Chief Craftsman and Overseer of All the Works in the Mansion of Aten (headed the architecture of Akhet-Aten).

⁹⁹ 'nh; Life or Breath of Life; represents mortal and eternal life (djjet/djed); symbolized in the looped cross

¹⁰⁰ "The Pillars"; also known as Ôn and Āwen

ḥwt (temple) in Sau (Sais) following the noble ladies who had become swnw.t-w¹⁰¹ (doctors) before her. The hesep (garden) fell silent, no longer their childhood playground, becoming now their sanctuary for stolen moments.

One of those stolen moments rose undulating, like the heat of the sun rising from the hot sands, swirling in the dry wind of the west. Nebetiah and Amenhotep had been chased from the hesep (garden) for the caretakers and shepherds were tired of them among their plants and animals. They had grown used to the silence and wished for it to remain. This left them with the roof top of the 'ah (palace) where they could look for a breeze. The stairs to the higher level was alongside the back wall of the hesep (garden). Amenhotep was leading the way, as always, and talking to her over his shoulder. It was then that she saw the dark, fat-tailed srq (srq (scorpion))¹⁰² sitting on the stairs, with Amenhotep heading directly for it.

She grabbed him, pulling him backwards. This threw him off balance and he, still not seeing the animal, tried to regain his balance, shifting forward, so as not to fall on her, so he struggled against her. She yanked him again, throwing all her

¹⁰¹ Swnw; Doctor using holistic approach in healing with emphasis on medicine. We say their prayers are magical incantations or spells, as defined through the exclusionary lens of Ancient Christianity, but warding off evil, asking for a god's intervention is all part of our prayers today.

¹⁰² Arabian fat-tail scorpion, *Androctonus crassicauda*

weight away from him, back down the stairs, unable to speak for her voice was stuck in her throat. It was hard to pull him backwards as he fought against her for he was much taller and stronger than she, but her desperation gave her strength she did not know she had. She yanked hard and he lost his balance, falling backwards with her just as the srq (scorpion) sprayed its venom from its moving tail. The poison arched harmlessly into the air as they tumbled down. Then all was a jumble as the two of them were landing on the dusty ground, the larger boy trying not to land on his smaller sister. She never took her eyes off the srq (scorpion), and it seemed to grow larger as they fell into a heap of arms and legs.

Still trying to pull him away, scrambling on the ground, she finally managed to gasp, "Srq (scorpion)!"

He turned and looked and now both of them scrambled backwards like srq-w (scorpions) themselves, even further away. Amenhotep was now eyeing the black animal as it sat on the stair, seemingly watching them. Nebetiah's heart was pounding in her chest as her breath caught in her throat. Amenhotep stared at it for a moment and then turned to his sister, reaching for her.

"Are you hurt?" she shook her head, "I did not see it, sen.t (Sister)," he looked back at it, now the realization of what had happened dawning on him, "I could have been blinded or stung."

She still could not speak. Her arm hurt where she had fallen but it was only a bruise. She rubbed it, looking at the animal where it crouched on the stairs.

Amenhotep looked back at Nebetiah, stunned, "You saved me, Kiya."

She laughed shakily, "It moved very fast. It is almost as if it did not want to let us pass up the stairs."

"I do not feel like passing up the stairs now," Amenhotep replied.

"But we cannot leave it there. Someone may get stung or spat at if they get close like we did."

Amenhotep looked at her, "And how will we kill it?"

"You need to find someone."

Amenhotep looked back at the srq (scorpion) still sitting on the stairs and shook his head, "I will stay and watch it. You run for help."

Nebetiah shook her head, "No, you cannot risk being hurt, Amenhotep. You are the sA-nsw smsw (son and heir) now. I will stay and watch while you get someone who can help."

She shook her head again, before he could argue some more, adamant, "You must go for I will not move. I would die for you if need be so do not argue with me, sen (Brother)."

He grabbed her by the shoulders, "Do not say that, sen.t (Sister). If you were to die, I would not want to live anymore. I do not want to hear that again."

She was firm, "Then you understand why I cannot leave you here. It is the same for me, sen (Brother), but also if anything happened to you there would be much sadness throughout our land, mewet (Mother) and it (Father) the most. My life would be dark without you."

"My life is not more important than you."

She smiled at him. He was denying a truth she had accepted long ago as a little caterpillar, "You can deny it but it (Father) and mewet (Mother) would say otherwise. I will not argue with them, but I will argue with you. Hurry and get someone. I will stay far away from it. And if it comes closer, I will strike it with my heel."

He looked at her steadily for a moment, "You are stubborn, Kiya. Stay away from it. I do not trade my life for yours. If it comes closer, you are to run. Do you hear me?"

She felt the warmth of his love surround her with his words and she nodded silently. He held his hand out to her and they stood together. One more look at the srq (scorpion), a shake of his head at her, and he was gone, running like the wind back into the hesep (garden) to find someone to help them. Nebetiah stood watching the dark animal. It had moved so quickly, so calm in its attack, with no noise. It seemed to watch her every move even now. A heaviness seemed to rise out of nowhere, engulfing her, surprising her, and making her feel saddened.

“You shall not pass,” rose in her mind and she looked at the srq (scorpion) as the words flitted around her, dark and unbidden, settling on her with a heaviness that stifled her heart.

She stared at it for a moment, trying to understand what she was feeling, looked up the stairs that led to the blue sky, then back at the dark srq (scorpion). She stared a moment longer, feeling both a fear and the heaviness surrounding her. Then she pushed the heaviness away from her, clearing all of it from her head.

“We shall pass,” she spoke softly but determinedly to the srq (scorpion).

Her resolution to not be afraid filled her. She moved forward, towards it, now feeling her own surety and the heaviness was dissipating.

“We shall pass,” she spoke again, intensely, clearer but still in a low voice.

The srq (scorpion) shifted and then, as if it were reluctant, backed away from her, slowly moving toward a crack in the stair where it disappeared. The feeling of heaviness was gone but she also knew the srq (scorpion) lurked within the stair. It had not gone away and could return unbidden at any moment. She was to dispel it. Determined now, she searched for a stick. The hesep (garden) was well tended even in this unused corner but she found one and she had just picked it up when her arm was grabbed.

“Kiya!” and Amenhotep was holding her arm tightly while someone pushed past her.

She dropped the stick and flushed, looking up into his astounded face.

“What were you doing?”

“I was not going to let it stop you from going up,” she said, lamely. The dark feeling had lifted from her heart and she could breathe again. She could not explain why she needed to strike the animal herself.

He stared at her, “You would risk your life, so I could go up the stairs?” then he shook his head.

“There is no srq (scorpion), Neb=j (my lord),” the shepherd called out.

Nebetiah turned to him, “It is in that crack on the stair,” and she pointed to the crack.

The shepherd pulled out his knife and began stabbing within the crack. As the sound of his assault filled the silence, Amenhotep looked sternly at Nebetiah.

“Your life is not a sacrifice I am willing to make, sen.t (Sister). A little patience and see? The shepherd tends to it,” he looked at her sternly.

She watched the shepherd who was now cleaning the remains of the srq (scorpion) from his knife, “I was in no danger, sen (Brother),” she felt so calm, “I would have finished it,” she looked back at him, determined, “I am to protect you, sen (Brother), however I must.”

He laughed at her and tucked his arm around her shoulders, touching their foreheads together.

“Tjaw n tjaw=j (Breath of my breath), I do not want to lose you. You have protected me all your life as a mother her child. It is I who should protect you, Kiya,” he whispered, “We are together djet, sent (forever, Sister). If you wish to take care of me, keep yourself safe. You are ib=j (my heart).”

She nodded, subdued.

“N neheh, sen (And always, Brother),” her whisper floated on the air, fading with the memory.¹⁰³

Nebetiah lightly touched a tree trunk with her fingers, tilting her head back to look at the branches above her, peeking out of the mist, so like the glimpses of moments as her memories were moving past her. There were the memories of her father, Nsw (King) Nebma'atre, immersed now in construction of ḥwt-w (temples), with almost an obsession. Where once he was building ḥwt-w wr.t (great temples), he was now increasing the magnitude and scope of his buildings for the gods. As the ḥwt-w (temples) became momentous so did the incomes of the ḥwt-w netjer (temples of god), and thus the hem-w netjer (servants of god) were growing more powerful with the increased wealth.

The nsw (king) made some attempts at curbing the power of the hem-w netjer (servants of god) but his interest did not lie in arguing with them. Instead he continued with major constructions undertaken at Ipet-isut (Karnak) in

¹⁰³ This memory was a dream I was given for this book.

Waset (Thebes) as he became more preoccupied with honoring the gods to maintain MaAt (Order). He had begun working with Amenhotep's flowing lines in the paintings and sculptures and this inclusion of his son eased their once strained relationship, bringing the son closer to his father.

While the nsw(king) built, Ḥm.t nsw.t wr.t (Great Royal Wife) Tiyi guided the state affairs with the tjaty-w¹⁰⁴ (viziers), stewards and overseers. Her brother, Ay, was now an Overseer of Horses¹⁰⁵ within the charioteer division of the army for the two lands, and she often consulted with him when her husband was away. He had become, over the years, not only a brother-in-law but an advisor to the nsw (king), a closeness born of their families growing up together within the 'ah (palace).

Ay and Tiyi's father, Touiyou¹⁰⁶, a local noble from Khent-min¹⁰⁷ (Akhim), came to the 'ah (palace) under Nsw (King) Menkheperure¹⁰⁸, father of Nsw (King) Nebma'atre. It was here in the 'ah (palace) that Touiyou met and married their

¹⁰⁴ Viziers: highest official to serve the king; ran the country much like the prime minister of today and maintained security of the king and the visitors of the palace; king reserved right to preempt the vizier
¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁶ Yuya; possible not an Egyptian origin but unknown; He was Master of the Horses under King Thutmose and now lived within the palace with his wife until their deaths upon which they both were given grand burials

¹⁰⁷ City in Upper Egypt; aka Ipu

¹⁰⁸ "Established in the forms of Re"; birth name Djehutymes Thoth is born aka Thutmose IV; older brother Amenhotep, King's Son and Executive, was crown prince but he was killed and Thutmose IV took the throne.

mother, Iouiya¹⁰⁹, who was the dresser of Nsw (King) Nebma'atre¹¹⁰, then a child known as Prince Amenhotep. Tiyi was born within the 'ah (palace) and, like all children of the nobles and rekhyt (commoners) who found favor with the nsw (king), she entered the kap (nursery) as her brother, Anen and Ay had done. Anen¹¹¹ was much older so Ay was the one who played with her. It was here, within the nursery, that she also met young Prince Amenhotep, simply a prince, a caterpillar waiting to grow, in the shadow of an older brother. Ay, Tiyi and Amenhotep became friends, the three of them, and overtime, they formed deeper bonds.

While Tiyi's brother, Anen, went on to become Second Servant of Amun after Nsw (King) Nebma'atre came to the throne upon the death of the older brother, Tiyi became his hmt nsw.t (royal wife). Ay, having risen in the favor of the new nsw (king), advanced in his military career within the ranks of the charioteers. Both the nsw (king) and

¹⁰⁹ Tjuyu or Thuya; Singer of Hathor; Chief of Entertainers of Amun; Chief of Entertainers of Min; Superintendent of the Harem of the god Min of Akhim; Superintendent of the Harem of the god Amun of Thebes

¹¹⁰ Williams, A.R. *Amazing Mummies: King Tut's Great Grandparents*. 3 March 2016. 2 September 2018.
<<https://news.nationalgeographic.com/2016/03/160303-king-tut-tomb-treasures-yuya-tuyu/>>

¹¹¹ Became sem-priest of Heliopolis, Chancellor of Lower Egypt, Second Prophet of Amun and given title Divine Father; died within the last 10 years of King Nebma'atre's reign and was replaced by Simut who had been the Fourth Prophet of Amun

Tiyi looked to the older Ay for his advice in many matters as they always had as younger children.

Thus, unlike Anen, Ay remained within the 'ah (palace) and he too married from within it. Like he, Tiyi and Anen, his first-born daughter, Nefertiti, was raised in the kap (nursery), a child of a noble. Sadly, her mother died when she was young but Ay remarried quickly to, Tiyi¹¹², Nefertiti's nurse, and they had another daughter Mutnedjmet¹¹³ who also played within the kap (nursery). This was the way it was within the world of the kap (nursery), the children of the nsw (king), growing up with and playing with the children of the nobles and favored rekhyt (commoners), building ties of loyalty and trust.

Thus, just as their parents grew up together, so did Nefertiti and Nebetiah, one side noble, one side royal, playing together with Nebetiah's brother, Amenhotep, as their parents once had when they were younger. Yet, instead of growing closer, as time went on, Nefertiti had turned more and more to the older princesses who were closer to the nsw (king) while Nebetiah happily stayed as she was, playing with her brother, Amenhotep,

¹¹² Wife of Ay who also had the same name as Queen Tiyi; Nurse to the Pharaoh's Great Wife, Nefertiti; not the mother of Nefertiti but mother of Mutnedjmet. She only cared for Nefertiti after her mother's death after she married Ay. She was called the nourisher of Nefertiti, perhaps even while Nefertiti's mother was alive and then was married to Ay after his wife's death.

¹¹³ Mutbenret or Benretmut; half-sister of Nefertiti; we are using her original name translation since I wrote this before this change

both little caterpillars. Nebetiah left the caterpillars alone for the light was brighter nearer the nsw (king).

Now that Nebetiah had been totally regulated to the kap (nursery), and removed from her father's side, Nefertiti no longer considered her important at all and disappeared from her life. Mutnedjmet, the youngest, however, remained the bright, happy little friend she always had been for she enjoyed the same things as Nebetiah. So, while Nebetiah's circle of friends was small, she enjoyed the simplicity of her friendships and she welcomed all with no qualms.

It was no surprise to Nebetiah upon learning her mother, ḥm.t nsw.t wr.t (Great Royal Wife) Tiye, had taken her nieces under her wing to raise them as her own children. It was not just that the girls were the daughters of her favorite brother, Ay, Nebetiah knew her mother's heart was wide as the h' pī¹¹⁴(Nile)¹¹⁵. To not do so would have been more surprising for her. This guidance was an example of the gentleness that lay within her mother, although she was of steel when speaking with the tjaty-w (viziers) and visiting dignitaries of Naharin (Mitanni), Syria, Babylonia, Karadunias, and other surrounding countries.

Those memories were dipping away now, being replaced by memories of tutors and nannies

¹¹⁴ Great River

¹¹⁵ A wide heart meant big-hearted or kind; a narrow heart meant small hearted or mean

of the kap (nursery) with flapping hands, sharp tongues, and quick whipping sticks, swirling around Nebetiah as time spun away. Losses dimming as their lives moved further away from the death of Djhutmose and the celebrations of births and temple completions brightening the once dark courts. Sadness always gave way to celebration and it was so within the neseyte¹¹⁶ (kingship). Their hesep (garden) sanctuary, on their bench under their heter ished-w (twin perseas), was now home to hours of stolen moments between their lessons, talking, writing, singing, reading, laughing.

Nebetiah sighed softly, feeling the sadness moving away from her. She extended her hand up to the leaves dipping down above her head, to pull gently on one of them. Laughter and love rose around her as her memory shifted, letting another memory float up from the mist of her mind.

Her fingers were tying a shen¹¹⁷ amulet of red carnelian encircled in gold around his neck. She

¹¹⁶ Kingship; nsyt; The **Kingship** of Egypt was divine, believed to be inherited from Horus. The man, **king**, was not divine until after death when he became Osiris. This is a very simplified explanation combining many sources but summarized by Allen, Susan. "Kings and Queens of Egypt". In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000-www.metmuseum.org.

Accessed 19 July 2018. and The British Museum. Pharaoh: Lord of the Two Lands. 20 September 1999. 19 July 2018.

www.ancientegypt.co.uk/pharaoh/home/html. Accessed 19 July 2018.

¹¹⁷ Symbol of neheh using the sun's orbit, bringing power of Ra for protection and enduring life; red stone rimmed with gold (sun) sitting on a tangent gold line on the bottom (horizon)

leaned forward, their breath intermingling, as she finished the knot to secure it for him. He waited patiently and then touched it gently with a finger when she was done. She sat back, looking at it and him, happy even though she knew his time to leave was coming.

“Djet n neheh, sen (Forever and always, Brother),” Nebetiah smiled at him, pushing away the sadness that nipped at her.

She refused to let anything dim her time with him despite the fact she was not sure how it was going to be without him. They had never been parted for a long time before. Even with all of their studies, they still met under their stars each night whether or not they saw each other in the hesep (garden) during the day. She could not even imagine not having those meetings because they had been doing them since she was little. Even the mn^c-w (nurses) had finally given up on trying to stop them. She just could not imagine what it would be like without her constant companion. She knew he felt the same way but knowing that did not ease the feeling that her heart was leaving with him.

She searched his eyes and said brightly, “You will be so busy you will not even notice you are gone.”

He touched her face, still seeing the sadness move across it despite her smile, “Djet n neheh, sent (Forever and always, Sister). I am coming back.”

She nodded then, and said softly, "I ask Sobek¹¹⁸, Bastet, and Re to protect and guide you while you are away so we may always come back together."

He touched the shen gently, "I will keep this always, Imi-ib (Heart's Desire), and it will also protect me for you. I have a gift for you," he smiled, "I am not sure if you felt my thought or if I felt yours as we have the same gifts."

He took one of her hands in his and placed a necklace in it. It also was an amulet but of two small golden hearts topped with the 'itn¹¹⁹ (sun disc).

He looked at her bowed head as she gently touched them with her finger. They gleamed softly in the sunlight.

"You have helped me hear when I have not, you have known my mind better than I have, you have been my wisdom, Ib n ib=j (Heart of my heart)," He lifted it from her palm to tie it around her neck, "When I am gone, this is so you know I am still with you and for anyone who wishes to know ... you are my heart and walk my path with me," he paused, waiting because she had not looked at him yet, "It may be a while before I see you again, " he continued gently.

¹¹⁸ Sbk; son of Neith; Protective god; wards off evil doings

¹¹⁹ Double gold heart = Heart of Wisdom meaning "heart of hearts" for one of wisdom who assists the king in keeping the cosmic order, a keeper of maAt; Sun on Heart = Heart of Illumination indicated king's ability to connect the divine world with the earthly world.

She lifted her head, smiling through the tears that now misted her eyes, "I do not cry because I am sad, sen (Brother). These are tears of happiness because I have you here," she said touching her bosom over her heart, "Djet...(Forever)"

He slid his arm around her shoulders and they touched foreheads in their childhood embrace.

"N neheh (And always). All the love you have given me goes with me," he whispered as the memory faded into the mist now surrounding her.

She found she was smiling, as she came back to the path, her hand at her throat, touching the amulet that still rested there many years later. It was not the last time they were to see each other before he left. The memories continued to flow around her as she moved forward. In one of their stolen meetings under the heter ished-w (twin perseas), before his departure, Amenhotep had told Nebetiah of his finally meeting Nefertiti, who he thought was the most beautiful girl in the world. From the first he became aware of her, he had been intrigued and this feeling had grown. Now he spoke of her in glowing terms. He shared poems he wrote of her and songs in which he sung of her beauty. Nebetiah decided he was in love, especially when he became very insistent that she love Nefertiti when she met her, so they could all become friends. She smiled at the memory of his earnestness.

She was pleased he had fallen in love for it gave her another thing with which to tease him. She soon learned he was serious for he admonished her, telling her it was very important to him that she and Nefertiti were friends because both of them had a place in his heart that neither could replace. It was then that she realized her brother had grown up and she was to respect his wishes. She promised him she would welcome Nefertiti with open arms. So, it was with anticipation that she waited to meet her cousin again, after so many years of being disregarded, the girl of her brother's growing attachment, who was to be her new sister and companion through him.

The meeting happened not long after their conversation. It was a quiet sun filled day with the birds calling to each other in the trees of the hesep (garden) and the flowers beckoning the butterflies and bees. The sweet smell of the seshen-w (lotuses) enveloped her as she practiced a new dance next to the lake, with the hb-w (ibises) and ducks watching her from the water. She was lost in her movements when she finally heard her mother calling her name and turned to see her approaching. She was walking slowly along the path with the two younger girls by her side, all of them followed by Tiyi, hm.t (wife) of Ay. Nefertiti was younger perhaps only by a couple of years. Nefertiti had grown into a beautiful young girl who was slight of frame with high cheeks bones and a full mouth. Nebetiah smiled at her as their eyes met.

Not receiving an answering smile she looked at her mother, "Mewet=j (My mother)?"

"Sat=j (My daughter), I want to bring the sat-w (daughters) of Ay to you for they will be joining you in your daily studies now," her mother smiled at her.

"Yes, Mewet (Mother)," Nebetiah smiled at the girls again and received an answering smile from Mutnedjmet who looked very happy.

"Let us sit here and get to know each other," her mother sat and patted the bench next to her, "Nebetiah, sit with me."

Nebetiah sat down. In a way, it was rather like she was holding court with her subjects, which made her feel a little uncomfortable. She swallowed the feeling while shooting a quick look at her mother who sat very regally next to her. She straightened her posture slightly and looked at the two girls. The girls remained standing in front of them with Tiyi remaining behind them at some distance. Hm.t nsw.t wr.t (Great Royal Wife) Tiyi reached out and took Mutnedjmet's hand. The little girl dropped her large brown eyes, shy all of a sudden.

"I hear from this little one that you are already friends. She tells me that you have been helping her with her dance, is not this correct, Mutnedjmet?"

Mutnedjmet nodded her head and looked at Nebetiah through her lashes, who smiled at her.

“I am happy to dance with you, Mutnedjmet. We also write some poems or songs together, Mewet (Mother). I have enjoyed talking to her about them,” Nebetiah said, “I do this with my brother ... until once he leaves. Then it will be Mutnedjmet and I.”

The little girl raised her head, looking at her directly with a bigger smile, “I would like that!”

Ḥm.t nsw.t wr.t (Great Royal Wife) Tiyi smiled at her daughter, and continued, “You know Nefertiti, her older sen.t (sister). I have told her I wish for her to join you in your daily studies now that she is old enough. You can help her catch up, so she is not so overwhelmed, Nebetiah?” her mother looked at her searchingly.

“Of course, Mewet (Mother)! Yeh! (Hi!)” Nebetiah smiled at Nefertiti who smiled back finally.

Her smile transformed her face into a into a stunning young girl. Nebetiah understood her brother’s infatuated heart. She was beautiful and as she grew, she would be the most beautiful one, as she was named. She must have been a very beautiful baby. Her mother gesturing to Tiyi, to draw her forward caught Nebetiah’s attention. The older woman presented herself with down caste eyes and bowed.

“Please, Nebetiah, this is Tiyi, ḥm.t (wife) of Ay, mewet (mother) of Mutnedjmet and mn`t (nurse) of Nefertiti. You will see her with the

children as it is her duty to watch over them," her mother said.

Nebetiah smiled at Tiyi, nodding, "Iiwy (Welcome!), em Hoep (In peace)."

"Iti (Hello), Aw ibetj (may your heart rejoice), Princess Nebetiah," she replied quietly.

Ḥm.t nsw.t wr.t (Great Royal Wife) Tiyi stood up in dismissal of them, "Perhaps you will share with Nefertiti and Mutnedjmet your favorite places in the 'ah (palace) and hesep (garden)? I am sure they would enjoy getting to know you."

"I would love to, Mewet (Mother). With Amenhotep deep in his studies, it has been quiet. Even Nakhtpaamun says so."

Ḥm.t nsw.t wr.t (Great Royal Wife) Tiyi laughed, "That would explain why the walls have not been echoing with cries of despair from the mn^c-w¹²⁰ (tutors). Your ringleader has been otherwise occupied. We should have engaged him so long ago," she touched Nebetiah's face gently, "I know you miss him, so I have given you two new companions, Nebetiah," she seemed to rouse herself, "Then I will leave you girls to yourselves. Do remember that I expect you for the meal tonight," and she moved gracefully away from the girls, beckoning to Tiyi to follow her back into the 'ah (palace).

"Dwa-netjer n twt¹²¹ (Praise God for you), Mewet (Mother)," Nebetiah watched as the two

¹²⁰ This means nurses or tutors depending on the use in the sentence

¹²¹ Dw3-ntr n twt – also Thank God for you

women walked away and then turned to Nefertiti and Mutnedjmet, "Would you like to see the hesep (garden)?"

Nefertiti was eyeing Nebetiah closely who realized she was staring at the golden heart amulet hanging at her throat. She touched it gently with her fingers. The movement roused Nefertiti from her stare.

"It is beautiful," she remarked, "Was it a gift from it=k (your father)?"

Nebetiah shook her head, "No, this was given from Amenhotep. He wears one from me also. This is his own design. His work is always so beautiful. Have you seen his models?"

Nefertiti stiffened and looked coldly at Nebetiah, "Of course," she looked around her, "I have been here with Amenhotep, there sitting on that bench you sit on, that is our place to meet. He told me it was unused by all, so it was ours."

Nebetiah raised her eyebrows, "Do not be upset with Amenhotep. He does not know this is where I study and dance when I am not with him," she waved her hand at the lake beside them, "This is where the seshen-w=w (our lotuses) grow the most and their aromas fill the air. It is the most peaceful place to sit. He simply chose the most beautiful spot for you."

"Then you will not come here anymore," Nefertiti arched her eyebrows back at Nebetiah.

Nebetiah burst out laughing, "What? No, I will continue to come here and if you are here

before me, I will leave you without disturbing you. But if this bench is empty, I will continue to study here as I have been, sen.t (Sister). You are welcome to join me anytime. I do not wish to claim this place all for myself. In fact, I welcome your company whenever I am here," she looked at Mutnedjmet, "You also, little sen.t (Sister), always come to keep me company."

The little girl smiled at her brightly and nodded. Nebetiah was astounded though for the thought of not allowing anyone to use the bench but Nefertiti and Amenhotep was beyond her understanding. The hesep (garden) was for all. That she and her brother had their spot was understood by all who left them alone when they were there, but she was sure "their" spot was just as used by others as any other bench in the hesep (garden). She was amused with Nefertiti's demand.

Clearly, Nefertiti was not amused with her response, "I will tell Amenhotep what you have told me. I believe a simple request is easy enough to be given. And there was no need for you to be so rude, Nebetiah."

She turned stiffly and walked toward the side of the lake, still speaking. Nebetiah looked at Mutnedjmet whose little face was all crunched into a sad smile now. Nebetiah reached out and took her hand in hers, patting it, listening to Nefertiti.

"I do not wish to walk in the hesep (garden) with you. I have been here before with Amenhotep many times, so I have seen most of it already. We

spend hours just talking out here. The lake is his favorite place in the garden. He enjoys sitting by the lake, here on this bench, not under the trees."

Nebetiah looked up at the branches of the trees above her and held back her comment that this bench was also under the trees. She smiled and shook her head. He obviously had not spoken of their bench under the heter ished-w (twin perseas) to Nefertiti. If he wished their bench to remain between them, their place for themselves, she would keep it so. She looked at Mutnedjmet who was visibly disappointed at her sister's response.

"I have not seen the hesep (garden). This is my first time," the little girl whispered.

"Then you and I will walk the hesep (garden) today. We can leave Nefertiti here to wait on the bench she enjoys with Amenhotep, to think of him. I do not wish to come between their hearts," she tweaked the little girl's nose, "But you? I will steal you from him for you will be all mine."

Mutnedjmet giggled, her face lighting up. Nebetiah stood up, with her little hand in hers, and looked at Nefertiti who was staring out at the water.

"Sen.t (Sister), I will take Mutnedjmet on the tour of the hesep (garden). I do not know how long this will take and I do ask that you join us. Perhaps there is something that you will know that I will miss in the tour, that you could show her?"

Nefertiti turned, she was clearly annoyed, "I do not feel like walking."

Nebetiah inclined her head, now positive that the girl was just being difficult.

Regardless, Nebetiah was not going to let the girl's ill humor mar the time she had with Mutnedjmet, "Then we will leave you here and will come back to get you when we are done, sen.t (Sister)."

She began walking with Mutnedjmet, smiling down at her, determined to clear away the sadness that was lurking in the little girl's eyes, "Come, I have this wonderfully hidden place under the arms of the tcheret (willow) where Amenhotep and I used to hide when we were your age. It is like a little green cave. We can listen to Amenhotep's favorite birds, the n'rw-w (doves), calling out their songs of love to the hesep (garden) because this is where they like to nest. Amenhotep sounds just like them when he sings. Then I have many things to show you in the 'ah (palace)."

The little girl visibly brightened up and nodded happily, "Will we be able to see all of this today?"

"There is a lot to see so perhaps not all of this today," the little girl dimmed and Nebetiah smiled gently, "but we can get up very early tomorrow, so we have time to explore more before we have our lessons."

Mutnedjmet was beaming again and they moved off, leaving Nefertiti frowning at them as she stood by the seshen-w (lotuses) who were praising the sun with their offerings of sweet

incense rising skyward, their scent drifting away as the memory drifted away.

Just as quickly as that memory faded, another memory began fluttering like a butterfly through the branches above her, insisting on being seen. It became clearer as it dropped down into the mist of her mind, opening to the usechet (audience hall) of the 'ah (palace) where she was seated with Amenhotep, Nefertiti, Huy son of Aperiar, Ahmose, and Nakhtpaamun watching ḥm.t nsw.t wr.t (Great Royal Wife) Tiye as she spoke to a messenger about getting their requested grain from a vassal king. Amenhotep bent close to the heads of his friends, whispering to them. He was explaining the importance of the grain when Nefertiti cut across his whisper.

"Nsw (king) Nebma'atre adores her. This is the way I will be, just as the ḥm.t nsw.t wr.t (Great Royal Wife)," whispered Nefertiti, "She is powerful, and no one dare say no to her and she is adored by the nsw (king)."

She shot a look at Nebetiah.

Nebetiah kept watching her mother but replied to Nefertiti, "Mewet (Mother) has told me she rules as she would like to be treated - gently but carries herself with great strength. You would be wise to walk in her shadow to learn her ways thus your power will be your fairness balanced with wisdom so all love you."

Amenhotep pinched her arm and she jerked away, looking at him quizzically while she rubbed

it and he shook his head at her behind Nefertiti's back. Nakhtpaamun was smiling a little uneasily while the other boys shifted, subconsciously giving room to the two girls. Nakhtpaamun had told Nebetiah that his experience taught him verbal exchanges with Nefertiti had the potential to go in the wrong direction so he did not engage with her unless necessary. Nebetiah smiled at him, ignored Amenhotep and the other boys, and turned back to Nefertiti who tossed her head. She was not going to allow any intimidation. She was her mother's daughter.

"That is because she does not have my beauty. With my beauty I can rule with power and I will still be loved," Nefertiti hotly whispered.

Nebetiah felt a little shocked but only blinked before softly replying, "Mewet (Mother) is very beautiful, Nefertiti. All beauty does not come from the face. Lead with love, not anger. Strength is in peace, not might, and good will does not result from greed."

Nefertiti stood up and looked at her, whispering rapidly, "You would have to believe that, Nebetiah, with your ugly round face. One day, Amenhotep is going to make me his *ḥm.t nsw.t wr.t* (Great Royal Wife) and he is going to look at me the way *Nsw* (king) *Nebma'atre* looks at *ḥm.t nsw.t wr.t* (Great Royal Wife) *Tiyi*. There will be no one else."

Amenhotep's eyebrows went up and he slid his arm around Nebetiah's shoulders, letting

Nefertiti know she was under his protection, “A ḥm.t nsw.t (royal wife) should speak with grace, not with the forked tongue of Apep¹²², Nefertiti, and this is not the way you will treat sen.t=j (my sister).”

The young girl stiffened, “You are right, sen (Brother). I should not speak so and I hope Nebetiah will give me forgiveness.”

“Of course, Nefertiti,” Nebetiah answered.

Nefertiti looked at the children still sitting on the bench and shrugged, “Then there is no more to say.”

She moved gracefully away from them, heading for the doorway of the usechet (audience hall). Upon reaching it, she half-turned and threw a smirk over her shoulder at Nebetiah who was still tucked under Amenhotep’s arm and then disappeared, the linen covering falling back down behind her.¹²³ Nebetiah felt Amenhotep stiffen. His irritation, combined with wanting to protect her, swirled around her, making her feel safe and protected. She was glad he had stepped in and that he had finally seen the Nefertiti she had come to know.

¹²² God of Chaos; ‘3pp, Isfet (chaos, evil) personified as a giant snake, “Enemy of Ra”; Apep described as originating from Ra’s umbilical cord thus chaos/evil is symbolic of being a part of man, comes from man, thus chaos/evil is man himself when he gives into his worst fears and lets it live. Evil (word we use today) is a personal choice driven by person’s own fear of becoming nothing. Kemboly, Mpay. *The Question of Evil in Ancient Egypt*. London: Golden House Publications. 2010.

¹²³ Dream I was given

Nefertiti's open attack on their mother was more than she would allow. She could handle what Nefertiti wanted to give to her, but she would not allow her to do the same with her mother. This was the first time Nefertiti openly attacked her in front of anyone besides Mutnedjmet. She was not sure if she believed Nefertiti really thought her beauty would ensure she would be revered, regardless of how she treated those around her, or if she was just trying to shock them. Regardless, Nefertiti was harsh, and Amenhotep had finally seen her at her worst.

Nakhtpaamun's mouth had dropped open. "I have to admit, she does say things that I would keep to myself," he did not bother to hide his admiration of the younger girl's audacity.

Nebetiah wrinkled her nose at him, not bothering to hide her disgust of him, "You are besotted with her beauty, Nakht. She could use a little gentility in her words. They would have greater impact."

He blushed while the other boys wisely decided to remain silent. They were not used to Nebetiah speaking sharply with them. Amenhotep stared after Nefertiti still but now he was a little bemused after Nakhtpaamun's comment.

"Well, she is not afraid to speak her mind with me right here. I am inclined to think that is a good attribute to have in a ḥm.t nsw.t (royal wife) who wishes to command. Sometimes though I worry that she truly believes what she says but

then she is so kind to me. Is there something that you have done to her to make her so annoyed with you?"

He looked down at his sister who was still tucked protectively against him. He did not release her but waited patiently.

"I think the only thing that angers her is that I see who she really is and still love her. Or it could be that I am the most beautiful girl in the world and she is deathly afraid I will steal that title from her ... really, it could be anything, Amenhotep," she sighed, "She has been this way since we were younger, but I will keep trying."

Amenhotep smiled at her and squeezed her shoulders before releasing her, "And that is why you are my favorite sen.t (Sister), Kiya. You always have the best things to say."

"Just be sure that if you do take that one to hm.t (wife) that you look at her with complete adoration all the time or she will blame me!" she quipped smartly, half meaning it.

Amenhotep pushed her as Nakhtpaamun said, "Shush, round face!" and the boys started giggling. Their smothered giggles interrupted their mother who shot them a look that silenced them, and the memory swirled away, lightened by their laughter.

Amenhotep had slowly become aware that the two girls were not exactly best of friends for he spoke to Nebetiah of it often, perplexed. Nefertiti was always pleasant in his company and he was

thoroughly smitten with the beautiful girl, so he was much like Ay and hung on her every word. He would do anything she asked except stop spending time with his sister. Nefertiti made it very clear that his refusal to stop seeing Nebetiah angered her even more and she began refusing to be around Nebetiah herself. This had the opposite effect that the young girl wished but her pride would not let her change her mind. So, Amenhotep and Nebetiah spent their time with each other, enjoying themselves and Nefertiti now waited to see Amenhotep when he was ready.

As much as Nefertiti caused concern for Amenhotep and Nebetiah, they found unbridled love in Mutnedjmet. The little girl was completely open and giving. Soon she was included in their circle of close friends. This did not seem to bother Nefertiti at all so Amenhotep always invited both Mutnedjmet and Nebetiah to spend time with them on many occasions. This annoyed Nefertiti, but she could not claim any favoritism by Amenhotep because both sent-w (sisters) were with them and she could not refuse to be with her own sister.

Nebetiah shook her head as those memories faded and another one floated up, one of a dark starry sky with the moon rising high, the sounds of the night surrounding her like nature's lullaby. She closed her eyes letting the cool night breeze kiss her face as she waited for Amenhotep who had sent her word to meet him under their heterished-w (twin perseas) after everyone went to sleep. She opened

her eyes and stared above her at the three stars in the sky, silently twinkling at her. The moon hung full next to them, silver and gently lighting up the hesep (garden) around her.

She did not jump as she felt him sit down beside her. He moved gingerly, trying not to disturb her and she smiled as she snuggled up against him, like she used to when they were little, feeling the warmth of his body radiating against her cool skin. He slipped his arm around her shoulders, tucking her against his warmth and looked up as she did. They said nothing for several minutes, simply watched the stars twinkling above them and listening to their breathing among the songs of the insects.

Then Amenhotep moved, pointing skyward and whispered, “I have been learning about our seba-w¹²⁴ (stars). Do you see our favorites, the seba-w (stars) there, the three in a line¹²⁵?”

Nebetiah nodded.

“This is Sah¹²⁶, it (father) of the nrtjrt-w (gods). We have been watching him since we were little, you and I, and there following him across the sky is Sopdet¹²⁷, his hm.t (wife). Her return to the

¹²⁴ Stars; sbA

¹²⁵ Orion’s belt

¹²⁶ The Hidden One; Sahu; The constellation we call Orion; stellar god associated with the resurrection of Osiris

¹²⁷ The Skilled Woman; Spdt; our star, Sirius; Goddess of Motherhood, Guide for the Kings to the After Life

skies marks the Opening of the Year¹²⁸, which is why she is called the Bringer of the New Year. She is the Goddess of Motherhood and guides the nsw-w (kings) across the Field of Reeds when their ka¹²⁹ (life force) leaves their bodies," he paused a minute as they watched their seba-w (stars) silently.

Then he whispered again, "These seba-w (stars) have been our companions for as long as I can remember, before I learned of their truth." He paused, still looking up, "I have also learned Sah is also Wsjr¹³⁰ (Osiris) and Sopdet is Aset¹³¹ (Isis)," he looked at her, "These likenesses in the stars are some of the things I am learning ... and I am also learning that netjer-w=w (our gods) are often put together with other netjer-w (gods) as our neseyte (kingship) grows. We are constantly trying to understand the world we have been given, so we live in harmony with our world and thus, with the netjer-w (gods), for the world is their realm."

She nodded again. She felt as if she were seeing them for the first time with him. She

¹²⁸ New Year in ancient Egypt celebrated with the festival The coming of Sopdet; marked by the inundation of the Nile that brought their fields to life again

¹²⁹ Spirit = life force; when ka leaves the body, one dies; allows spiritual travel; unites with ba to become Akh or eternal life IF maAt has been kept

¹³⁰ Osiris; God of the Underworld, Afterlife and Rebirth; God of Fertility; husband and brother of Aset

¹³¹ Isis; "throne"; Goddess who assists and protects kings, strong in healing, brings the dead back to life and a role model for mothers and wives; Sister and wife of Osiris

continued to watch the seba-w (stars) above them as he watched her.

“There is so much for me to learn, Kiya, and for me to do,” he paused and then continued, “I will be leaving soon. It (Father) has told me I will be going soon to complete my studies at the per-ankh¹³² (House of Life) in Hut-Ka-Ptah (Enclosure of the Ka of Ptah). I have heard I will also be sent to Abdju¹³³, if I do well. I will continue with my studies there.”

She had turned to him as he spoke and was now silently watching him. He was very subdued and now she had a growing concern for him. They had lost Djhutmose in Men-nefer (Memphis).

He continued, “I cannot think of not being with you. We have been like these seba-w (stars) of the netjer-w (gods), Sah and Sopdet. I have always looked to see that you were there with me, as Sopdet is to Sah. You have always been there for me.”

The moonlight was casting a beautiful silver glow on everything and it allowed them to see each other. His eyes searched her face. He sounded so sad that she placed her hand on his cheek. This was the reason for his subdued feeling and she wanted to take it from him.

¹³² Pr-anx or per-ank; the House of Life or Knowledge; sacred library containing the written knowledge of kings and priests where education occurred for princes, noblemen’s sons, and priests.

¹³³ Abydos; 3bdw/’AbDw; sacred city with many temples, where the Narmer, first king of the first dynasty is buried

“We will always be together, Amenhotep. Like Sopdet, see, I will follow you everywhere, even if you do not see me. As Aset (Isis) loves Wsjr (Osiris), so I love you. We will always come back together again.”

He remained still, watching her face under the moonlight. He looked sad, as if his heart was about to break, but she held still, waiting, as she always had done when he was sad.

“I know the love you hold for me is as strong as the love Aset (Isis) has for Wsjr (Osiris). I know I will always see you with me as Sah sees Sopdet,” he finally ventured, “There is a time that Sopdet is gone ... Sah rises without her.”

“True and he accomplishes much as he rises but after he rises, she does return, every time, and he knows where to find her,” Nebetiah smiled at him, “like me. You know where to look and I will always be here,” she tapped his chest above his heart, “Now it will be you coming to find me, and I will be right here, waiting for you under heterished-w=w (our twin perseas).”

“This must be so, sen.t (Sister), I cannot imagine not seeing you as we have done. You have been,” he stopped and looked away from her.

She felt a wave of his sadness engulf her and she now put her arms around him, “I will always be, Amenhotep, as we will always be. Djet (Forever)...”

“N neheh (And always),” he looked back at her, his eyes sparkling with tears he held back, “I

will miss you. You are not only sen.t=j (my sister) but mewet=j (my mother), my friend. When I feel as if isfet (chaos) is going to consume me, you bring MaAt (order) to me without my asking. You know when I need this.”

She touched her nose to his, “I am always here, sen (Brother),” and she placed her hand above his heart, “I feel you with me when you are gone... as if your arms are around me as they are now.”

He nodded, “I have also felt this from you. I thought perhaps I was just wishing it so.”

She smiled, relieved, “I had hoped you felt me when I sent my love to you. Trust this feeling because I send my love to you every day, sen (Brother). It is in this love that you will keep MaAt (order) when I am not with you, until you return.”

“Heri.t sesheta=j¹³⁴ (My Mistress of Secrets), we will have our celebration when we are together

¹³⁴ hry.t-sšt3; Today we say secrets or mystery, but use was more for confidential, restricted, expert knowledge. Balanda, Stanley Z. “The Title “hry-sšt3” to the End of the New Kingdom”. *Journal of American Research Center in Egypt*. 45 (2009): 318-348. 4th Dynasty royal family members and high rank officials understood the need for discretion with the secrets of the king and his court (11 holders of title). By the 5th dynasty lower officials were involved, and the title evolved for this status (96 holders of title). 6th Dynasty saw the return of the need of the superiority of the king, so the title declined again. Barta, Miroslav. *Architectural Innovations in the Development of the Non-Royal Tomb During the Reign of Nyusera*. Academia. 29 August 2018 thus this title was used across the court, not just for religion and indicated a deeper knowledge of a subject. There is no mystery ... just knowledge known by a few. As I continue to research I am still baffled how the scholars keep getting magic out of secret. I see confidential, sacred, restricted ... magic is unexplainable occurrence, but secret is simply withheld but attainable if you discern a way to it.

as we celebrate when Sopdet returns with the h'pī (Nile)," and for the first time he truly smiled at her.

She nodded, smiling back, liking her new title, "Yes, sen=j (my brother). The days will be long with you gone, but the nights will be short because you will be back again, here above me, in seba-w=w (our stars). As the arms of Sah hold me, so will you. I will rejoice when you are with me again."

He looked back up at the seba-w (stars) as she did. She felt his fingers wrapping around hers and they held hands.

"Where ever I am, sen.t (Sister), I will look to Sah and Sopdet and know that we both are looking at the same time, so we are not apart."

She smiled, this time at the seba-w (stars) above them, "I will, too, every night before I go to bed, sen (Brother), and know we are together."

"3h¹³⁵ n 3h =j (spirit of my spirit), just do not let mn't=k (your nurse) whip you for sneaking out. I will not be here to stop her."

¹³⁵ Eternal spirit or eternal life; believed to ascend to join the stars (heaven); comes into being when the ba (personality) unites with the ka (force of life) which left the body at death and passes the judgment of MaAt (Truth and Justice) when the heart weighs lighter than a feather becoming True of Voice or Justified and becoming eternal to live with God (thus becomes a holy spirit). This is the same as Christian teaching about eternal life with God – follow the path of Jesus and you will go home to God. BUT we are told to call it "effective spirit" ...

She laughed softly and leaned against him, the seriousness of their farewell fading with his gentle teasing.

“I will return before she notices I am gone,” she promised.

He nodded, mollified, “Then we shall see each other under the seba-w (stars), djet (forever)...”

“N neheh, sen (And always, Brother).”

Silence fell between them, the silence of knowing each other so well words were not needed and, hand in hand, they watched Sopdet follow Sah above them in the moonlight. When he left for school he was wearing his red carnelian shen amulet necklace she had given him.

As the memory dimmed into the twinkling seba-w (stars) above her, she looked up. Yes, there was Sah, the three bright seba-w (stars), shining strongly, but he was rising alone. Sopdet would return to be with him again, when he reached his zenith.

She smiled and gently whispered “Yeh (Hi)”, raising her hand as if to touch them, greeting her old friends who had kept her company as life swept them forward like the swiftly running h’pī (Nile).

While Amenhotep was in Men-nefer (Memphis) studying at the per ankh (House of Life), Nebetiah was not too far from him in in ‘Iwnw (Heliopolis) where she was beginning her schooling at the medical school within the per ankh

(House of Life) there to be a *swnw.t* (doctor). Despite their nearness, their studies kept them very busy but knowing each was near the other was comforting. However, they did not remain this way for once she completed her schooling in 'Iwnw (Heliopolis), she traveled south to the city of Sau (Sais) where she studied at the Temple of Sau, in its school, under the guidance of the divine mothers. She completed her spiritual duties as *wab* (priestess) of Neith.

She returned to the 'ah (palace) and assumed a position as *swnw.t* (doctor) to provide care to the *hm.t-w nsw.t* (royal wives) of the *per-ḥnr.t* (House of Royal Women) under Penthu¹³⁶, a noble son of the court, friend of Amenhotep, who was the Chief Physician of the 'ah (palace). She returned to her old life with her friends and family, and immersed herself into her spiritual duties, as *wab* (priestess) of Aset (Isis) and *heka.i.t.* (priestess of Heka), gained in her studies of medicine.

Nebetiah's memories were now tumbling through her mind, flashing scenes of the rare occasions when Amenhotep was home and had some free time. They would sit in the *hesep* (garden) of 'ah (palace), on their favorite bench under the *heter ished* (twin perseas), bent over respective papyrus in their laps with styluses in hand, writing. They worked in comfortable silence.

¹³⁶ Also sole companion; attendant of the Lord of Two Lands, favorite of the good god, king's scribe, king's subordinate, First Servant of the Aten in the mansion of Aten in Akhet-aten, and chamberlain

Usually he was writing poems or planning a ḥwt netjer (temple of god) while she wrote stories and the only sound between them were the songs of the birds. She enjoyed hearing his work stories, what he was learning, the different cities he had been to with their father or a situation with a vassal that needed to be settled that he took part in. There were times when they shared songs and dances they had written, dancing together as they once did as children when he was teaching her.

Other times they talked of Nefertiti, and Nebetiah would listen as he glowingly extolled her virtues. He was seemingly oblivious to Nefertiti's growing possessiveness of his attention as the day of her becoming a ḥm.t nsw.t (royal wife) drew near. Despite that, these were her most favorite memories of them together in the lush beautiful hesep (garden) of the 'ah (palace), rather like the scenes now painted on the walls of the 'ah (palace) that surrounded the hesep (garden) she was drifting along in now. There were many times when they hid from Nefertiti among the trees and plants, so they could have time to talk like in the days of their youth, sharing their secrets and laughter. Other joyous memories flowed past her, the celebrations of Princess Sitamun becoming ḥm.t nsw.t (royal wife) to Nsw (King) Nebma'atre and then Princess Aset (Isis). The birth of Smenkhkare¹³⁷

¹³⁷ Djeser Kheperu: Potent is the soul of Ra, Holy of Manifestations; prince and brother who grew up to be co-regent with Amenhotep/Akhenaten

a son for Nsw (King) Nebma'atre, giving the old nsw (king) a new heir, a son-grandson, and elevating Sitamun to ḥm.t nsw.t wr.t (Great Royal Wife).

The arrival of Smenkhkare seemed to bring a healing to the loss of Djhutmose for Nebetiah. The little boy had her heart wrapped around his little fist. When Amenhotep was home, he would sit with Nebetiah under their heter ished-w (twin perseas) playing with little Smenkhkare, sometimes their talk turning to Djhutmose. They still felt his absence but Smenkhkare was filling the sadness with his giggles and smiles. The little boy adored Amenhotep who would often hold him high above his head, smiling at his laughter, swearing to care for him as Djhutmose did for him. Nebetiah would smile but the memory of the accusations shadowed her brow. She watched closely over little Smenkhkare and continued her seta-w (prayers) of protection now for both the man and child. Their laughter would sometimes draw Nefertiti, bending her pride just enough to join them in the hesep (garden), but more often she was not inclined to sit with Nebetiah unless Mutnedjmet was with them.

Nefertiti seemed more intrigued with the ways she could increase her station and usually at the expense of her little sister, Mutnedjmet, and other young princesses in the per-ḥnr.t (House of Royal Women). This did not gain her many friends, but she did not seem to care as long as she had Amenhotep's ear which was not hard to do. He

adored her as strongly as he did when he first saw her. If Nebetiah felt any irritation with the younger woman, she put aside the feeling and met her cousin with congeniality and friendship at every turn.

She was smiling as the memories faded and then shifted, as she floated further down the hesep path, to a time of plenty and happiness with their father and mother. The Two Lands swelled with crops and riches under the benevolent gaze of Amun-Ra, the King of Gods, who sent those blessings on to his son, Nsw (King) Nebma'atre, and rekhyt=f (his people). Yet with such great blessing, Nsw (King) Nebma'atre was growing old and with this old age, came illnesses. Nsw (King) Nebma'atre turned more and more to the solar gods known for their life-giving powers for rejuvenation, aligning himself with the least of them, the 'Itn. It was not a god but just an aspect of the sun gods, a vessel that carried Ra across the sky. He celebrated his first heb-sed¹³⁸ under the life rejuvenating rays of the 'itn but the illnesses did not retreat. Princess Henuttaaneb became his newest hm.t nsw.t (royal wife), followed by Princess Nebetnehat.

As the nsw (king) continued to suffer, his thoughts turned more toward his mortality and his desire to live eternally of which he spoke to

¹³⁸ Feast of the Tail; hb-sd; held to rejuvenate the king's strength and stamina while still on the throne, celebrating his continued success, usually first celebrated after 30 years on the throne.

Amenhotep often and who spoke with Nebetiah. The focus of the nsw (king) continued to be reflected in the attention he gave to the ḥwt-w (temples) and the work done on them becoming more aligned with the dazzling sun disc, 'Itn, now also a symbol of the prosperity that was increasing throughout his reign. Nsw (king) Nebma'atre named himself Nsw (king) Nebma'atre, the Dazzling Aten¹³⁹, perhaps in his final bid to renew his health. With his alignment, the prosperity of the Two Lands was showered on all rekhyt (people) of the land and the royal family equally. As Nsw (King) Nebma'atre continued to focus on the ḥwt-w (temples), ḥm.t nsw.t wr.t (Great Royal Wife) Tiyi brought Amenhotep, to her side where he began handling the duties and affairs of the state, allowing him to assume more and more responsibilities under her guidance. Amenhotep's increased duties kept him at the 'ah (palace) more often and soon it was as if they had never been away because brother and sister were inseparable

¹³⁹ This self-nomenclature indicates to some historians and Egyptologists that King Nebma'atre was aligning himself with the Aten as a sun god, thus deifying himself while still alive. My question: the sun was seen as rejuvenation, rebirth, cyclic life eternal hence reincarnation so it is not possible that he was aligning himself because of his failing health trying to rejuvenate, not deify, by invoking the Aten's protection and rejuvenation powers with words because medu neter (words of god, their hieroglyphics) were powerful to them (Sia, Hu, Heh, Heka)? The kings studied their sacred literature. They were intelligent men ... and do we not pray when our health fails? Some of us...

again with Nefertiti on Amenhotep's other side, glowering.

These swiftly shifting memories slowed again, now bumping gently into the warmth of the sun itself as more memories full of laughter and song surrounded Nebetiah. With Amenhotep home, the halls of the 'ah (palace) were filled with music, laughter, and song. Celebrations seemed to become a continuous flow as he assumed his roles and responsibilities in preparation of his coronation as co-regent ... one song rising above all the others.

Its light strains of sistrums, flutes, and lyre mingled softly at first with the songs of the birds in the hesep (garden). The music filled the air as she stepped into a clearing of the trees and there, in front of her, as clear as if she walked among them, were the musicians she had brought with her to play while she practiced her dancing by the lake oh so long ago. She raised her arms and began dancing, the steps coming back to her as the music rose around her, drifting across the water with the fragrance of the seshen-w (lotuses). She moved, dipping, swaying, rotating her hips, gently undulating her arms, correcting a step, beginning over again. It was peaceful with the gentle sounds of the instruments mingling with the birds' songs. Her heart lifted as she danced, singing the words to the song her brother had written when he was just a boy. Her hands moved gently through the air, in unison with her feet as she swayed, falling deeper into the music, forgetting where she was, twirling,

and then Amenhotep was standing there, quietly watching her. She stopped, surprised and happy. She had not known he was there.

“Do not stop dancing, Kiya,” he said softly.

The music kept playing, rising around them.

She smiled and held her hand out to him, “Dance with me, sen (Brother), as when we were younger, and I did not wish to learn my steps.”

He laughed, low and deep, and moved forward, “I watch every move of the girl whose heart is golden, golden,” he said, gently touching her amulet at her throat with his finger, “Yes ... I danced with you, so you would learn,” and taking her hand they began to move again to the music.

The song of the instruments surrounded them, the years falling away as they danced, moving in unison, their bodies inches apart, movements mirrored in the other. Instead of looking into his eyes as she used to when she was younger, he was now taller, so it was his chest she saw unless she lifted her face, but she did not. There was no need to see his face. Their bodies remembered the dance as the music surrounded them. The hesep (garden) disappeared and it was just them, together moving as one, his hands lightly touching hers at times, brushing arms as they encircled each other, bodies close, just a breath away.¹⁴⁰

¹⁴⁰ Dream I was given

As the music ended she glanced up at him and he was watching her, a smile on his lips, visibly relaxed.

“Dwa-nejter n twt, Neb=j (Praise God for you, My Lord),” she whispered, thanking him for his company.

He nodded, “An unexpected pleasure. Dwa-nejter n twt, meryt=j (Praise God for you, My Beloved). I came to talk to you, but our dance has brushed all cares away. Is this not one of my songs I wrote?”

“It is, sen (Brother), I wished to surprise you at your coronation celebration with the chebejet-w¹⁴¹ (dancers) but”

“Still do, Kiya, I will enjoy watching the chebejet-w (dancers) while I remember us today in this hesep (garden),” he touched her face gently, “It is a great gift you have given me, and I will cherish it.”

She nodded and then waved her hand at the musicians, dismissing them, “You came to see me?”

“Yes, but later, not now. Now just let us walk,” he said as he took her hand and she fell in step with him.

They strolled among the trees, wandering alongside the lake and the seshen-w (lotuses). The seshen-w (lotuses) sweet aroma filled the air, softening the calls of the ducks. He took a deep

¹⁴¹ Dancers who were girls and women from the House of Musicians (Pr xnr)

breath and she felt his hand tighten around hers. An hb (ibis) rested on one leg while ducks swam in a group across the water. He did not sit at a bench they passed but continued walking with her around the lake.

“I sit here with Nefertiti to give her a place that is special to her,” he motioned to the bench they were passing and then looked at her, “It was not to separate you from her, but to give her something of me that you did not have.”

She nodded, “That is as it should be, Sen (Brother).”

He shook his head, “It has not pleased her but angered her instead, so I think not. I should have also included you here to, so she would not think she needed something special. She wants to have our bench under heter ished-w=w (our twin perseas) which I have denied her. I have told her it is her anger that keeps her from the place I have always found peace and love. She does not understand this.”

“Perhaps it is because she sees it as you withholding a part of yourself from her that you have given to me?”

“You are right,” he fell silent and then spoke again, “but I have told her it is because I do not want this one place that has always been filled with love, colored with memories of anger,” he sighed, “She complains a great deal. She is so angry. Sen.t (Sister), you have always been able to help me with any problem I have had,” he bent his

head to hers as they walked along the path but he still spoke softly so she almost did not hear him.

"I try my best, Sen (Brother). There are times that I feel I have not been of any help at all."

He turned to look at her, "Stop with that thought. You have always helped me because you have told me of your love for me."

She nodded, and they continued walking, hand in hand.

"I come because I am torn with a decision," he lifted their hands and ran his finger across her knuckles, "You and I are like the butterfly, Sen.t (Sister). We move together toward the same direction, helping each other," he paused again, thinking, "Nefertiti does not understand this. She still struggles as if she is alone and she does not see how she is with me. I am not sure how to show her that she and I can be as you and I are, if not stronger. She is always complaining about what we do not have, that she cannot see what we do have, that can grow into what you and I have."

"Then you need to be louder than she, Amenhotep. You need to show her over and over in the way she will hear you."

He looked at her for a long moment and then shook his head, "I cannot do that, not the way she wishes."

"Why not?"

He fell silent for a moment and then spoke again, reluctantly, "She wishes that I stop seeing you because she does not believe I love her more

than you. She is right but not in the sense she thinks of it. Our love is different. You know me. We have been one since I first knew you were coming. She and I are just beginning to know each other."

It was Nebetiah's turn to be silent in thought. He waited as they walked.

Then she nodded, "It is you who she wishes to be with, not I. She will not ever want me to be a part of you because she does not see how she is with you as I do."

"But ..."

"Sen (Brother), for the woman you love"

"I give up my sen.t (Sister) who has loved me from the moment she saw me? You have loved me without stopping. I give up this love for love that still needs to see the light for anger covers it? Why do I have to do this? Why can she not let me be loved? Would you not do this if you were"

"That is not fair to her, Sen (Brother). She and I are as different as night and day. You do not love her because she is like me. You love her because she is herself. She should not be asked to change."

"Any more than I should change for her! It is not hard to get to know someone without judging them first. If she loves me she will do this with you. She will not ask me to give up my sen.t (Sister) simply because she has decided to hate you without knowing you."

"But this is how it is done. I am to"

“No,” he angrily turned toward her, “It is not done this way in my ‘ah (palace). You will not be turned away for another. I have already decided you will be with me.”

“And what if I were to marry and leave?”

“This will not happen. I will be nsw (king). I had spoken to mewet (Mother) and it (Father) when I first left for school. I am why you were not married to it (Father). I told them I would not have it so. It is why a princess of Naharin (Mitanni) is to come to us and take your place. I am why you were sent to ‘Iwnw (Heliopolis) and Sau (Sais). You have asked so many questions that even the hr °3 (seer) cannot answer them and I wished that you were allowed to learn your answers. Mewet (Mother) agreed for she sees what I see,” he shook his head, “It (Father) could not tell us no. You have a place within my court, by my side, doing what you love for me and for rekhyt=w (our people).

“This is the way it will be. It was not Nefertiti that I chose. She was chosen for me and I would marry her even if she were not so beautiful or intelligent. It is what I was told to do when I was younger, and I did not argue because it was my duty,” he smiled, “It did not hurt that she is beautiful to behold. That she shines even brighter than Re within the ‘itn (sun disc) at the mid-day light and her beauty captured my heart, I cannot deny. I came to love her for who she is but now she asks for what she has no right to ... to determine who I have in my life. This is a problem. I do not

wish to have a ḥm.t (wife) who thinks she can take love from me, who thinks she will command the nsw (king) as a child. Now that I prepare to be nsw (king), I can put her aside.”

She looked at him, “It is this that Nefertiti feels from you. This”

“Refusal to allow love that I have been gifted with to be taken from me? She will have to learn that she is loved just as strongly.”

“Perhaps it is she wishes to be the only.”

He shook his head, “She is my only. But she cannot be The Only. I am allowed to love others as I wish. Not only because I am nsw (king), but because I am a man who has a heart that I wish to share with those who love me. Love should be allowed to surround you, not be dictated by one person.”

“You are right, sen (Brother). Then you need to tell her how much she is your first love and tell her this every day until she hears you. Right now, what she hears is your determined refusal to set me aside for her which she sees as the lack of love you have for her.”

That comment stopped him. He looked at Nebetiah long and hard, his jaw working. The idea of not having his sister so they could talk and laugh, not being allowed to see her or speak to her panicked him. She could see this on his face and felt it surrounding her. He was not totally sure why, but he did know he would not just set her aside. She did no wrong in loving him as he her. It

was the one thing they knew was true throughout their life. He nodded, and they began walking again.

“That I can do every day, every minute, because it is easy to show someone how much you love them,” he finally smiled although grimly, “You taught me that, sen.t (Sister).”

She nodded back, “I will love her every day also and promise to you that I will love her no matter how angry she grows with me. She will, you know, because she is afraid you love her less. I understand this because”

“Because she is asking me to prove my love to her by turning my back on you,” his anger lay just below the surface, rising quickly each time.

“It is not turning your back, sen (Brother).”

He stopped walking and faced her, “Even now you are showing how much you love me because you defend her even when she is wrong. It is what she asks, and it will not happen. You and I will disagree on this, n neheh (always), so do not argue it with me,” he took a deep breath and shook his head, “Never had I thought I would be speaking of never seeing you again. Never. This is not the way to show love.”

She took a deep breath herself and nodded in agreement. She could not argue that he was wrong. He was not. She was hoping, however, to release his anger so he would be able to move forward in a decision best for the neseyte

(kingship), "You and I know this. She does not understand... yet."

His shoulders slumped, "How does anyone decide they can tell another who they can love?"

"It is fear ...," she whispered, "But she does love you. She is just not sure of herself. Remember she is not of royal blood. She comes from our mother's side, a noble so she already feels she is on the outside. She is not a princess descended from kings as we are with their blood in our veins. Her family was given royal favor and has become rtpat (hereditary noble) from before It=w (our father). What does she have that we do not? Her beauty. She is afraid of being thrown aside because she remembers how she began here. Our love for her can show her that her beginning is not her end."

His eyes searched hers. She could see that he was still agitated but calmer. His anger was lessening. He was now thinking of how Nefertiti was feeling.

"This was my decision I had to make. To let Nefertiti, go or to take her as a hm.t (wife)," he smiled at Nebetiah, "See, Kiya, you have helped me yet again. I know what I will do. I will make her feel loved," he nodded, resolved, and they started walking again, now arm in arm, "I will make her feel safe in my love for her, so she is not looking at anyone else to see if it is less or more. She will not have to measure herself against another to see her worth. She will not have to measure my love for her against any other, not because I have had to

give up those who I love, but because she sees my love for her shown in everything I do. She and I will also be as one.”

Nebetiah felt relief flood through her at his words. Until that moment she did not know how much she would have missed her brother if she had to go away. She would if she were told to do so, just as she would marry as it was wished.

“And I, sen (Brother), will not come to you as I have done.”

“No, this will not stop,” he stopped walking again and caught both her hands in his now, turning her to him.

“It needs to stop, even if just for a little while. She sees you make time for me which she sees as taking time from her. I will wait for you to come to me, sen (Brother), and then we both will know she came first in your heart. She needs to be given this, so she can begin to see how much you love her.”

“I do not want you to feel like you cannot come to me.”

“I do not feel this. I have chosen to wait so sen.t=j (my sister) may be with you as she needs without worry that I may take time from her. When you are able, I will always be here. This does not change us. I simply wait for you to come to me.”

He searched her face, “I do not like this decision. Ib=j (My heart) tells me you are right, but it also tells me you are wrong. No, you will still come to me when you need me. I will not know

when this is and I do not want to find out well after when you need me that I should have been with you. You will wait when I need you, but you will come to me when you need me. Tell me you will do this for me. I do not want to have to order you to me," he smiled.

She smiled back and lifted his hands to her lips, kissing his knuckles, "I promise, sen (Brother). You will not have to order me. If I need you, I will come to you and I wait for you to come to me," she lowered their hands and looked back up at him, "You said we are the butterfly. We move together helping each other to move forward. Perhaps you are the butterfly itself and Nefertiti and I are your wings."

His mouth slowly opened and then he shut it. His face cleared, and he smiled, "My wings. My two beautiful sent-w (sisters)."

She nodded, "We just need to learn how to fly together. It is a learning, but it will happen."

He laughed and pulled her to him in their childhood embrace, "Djet, Kiya, abi-ib¹⁴², meryt=j (Forever, Kiya, Heart's Desire, My Beloved)."

"N neheh (and always)," her laughter joined his as the memory faded away, whispers of their laughter following her down the path as she smiled, tipping her face up, listening to the trees talking in the north wind as the birds sang to each other. Her arms were spread out in the final moves

¹⁴² 3bi-ib

of the dance he taught her so long ago. Memories swirled around her as she danced with her partner, the mist of the hesep (garden), twirling her forward swiftly.

Following the coronation of Amenhotep as Nsw (King) Neferkheperu-re Wa'en-re¹⁴³, coregent king of the Two Lands, Nsw (king) Nebma'atre completed his second hed-seb. Then celebrations as Amenhotep first made Nebetiah a ḥm.t nsw.t (royal wife) to solidify his claim to the throne, followed by Nefertiti with a grander celebration, announcing her as his ḥm.t nsw.t (royal wife) to Waset (Thebes).

Not to be outdone by his younger nsw (king) co-regent, Nsw (King) Nebma'atre held his third heb-sed. This was followed by a flurry of excitement as the 'ah (palace) readied for the arrival of a new ḥm.t nsw.t (royal wife), Princess Tadu-Heba¹⁴⁴ of Naharin (Mitanni), and niece of Second Wife Kilu-Hepa, mother of Djhutmose and daughter of King Tušratta of Naharin (Mitanni), longtime friend of their father and with whose kingdom they had generational marriage alliances. Princess Kilu-Hepa had died not long after her son. Some princesses within the per-ḥnr.t (House of

¹⁴³ Beautiful manifestations of Ra, unique one of Ra; His full titulary: Ka nakht qa shuty, Wer nesyt em Ipet-sut, Wetjus khau em Iunu shemau, Nefer kheperu Ra, wa en Ra, Amenhotep, netjer hequa waset = The strong bull high of plumes, Wer nesyt em Ipet-sut, Wetjus khau em Iunu shemau, beautiful manifestations of Ra, unique one of Ra, Amenhotep, God ruler of Thebes

¹⁴⁴ Tadukhipa also; Moran, William L, Ed., *The Armana Letters*, John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 1992, EA26, pg. 84.

Royal Women) whispered she died of a broken heart from losing her son but there were darker whispers of death to silence her outcries and accusations against ḥm.t nsw.t wrt (Great Royal Wife) Tiyi.

Princess Tadu-Heba was received with a grand celebration of her marriage and then the news Nefertiti was to be a mother filled the 'ah (palace). The days of anticipation began. The air of festivity soon changed, however, for Nsw (king) Nebma'atre became ill and silence fell on the 'ah (palace) as the court waited to hear of his recovery. Nsw (King) Neferkheperu-re Wa'en-re moved smoothly into his father's shadow, assuming the full duties of the throne of the Two Lands and carried the neseyte (kingdom) forward.

Memories of Amenhotep and Nefertiti's happy faces, despite the illness of their it (father), as they awaited the arrival of their first-born child and heir to the throne flitted through her mind. Nefertiti, as a mother-to-be, was more pleasant to Nebetiah who found herself in Nefertiti's presence more and more often since they were Amenhotep's only ḥm.t-w (wives). Nefertiti sought Nebetiah for advice she could give from her experience with Smenkhkare and her schooling. A truce seemed to be settling between them, Nebetiah began enjoying the time with the younger woman, watching Nefertiti's face glow.

If it was possible for the beautiful young woman to become even more beautiful, carrying

her child did it. She glowed, sang, and did not have a harsh word for anyone as she waited for the birth of the son she knew she carried. Nebetiah enjoyed these times of happiness and peace, with her rendezvous with her brother scattered among them. Amenhotep, himself, was able to enjoy the two women he loved most, together at last, and he often simply sat with them to listen as they talked and laughed, watching them as they put their heads together over some pretty item he gave to them.

However, those moments were short lived for the rendezvous stopped abruptly with no word from Amenhotep. Silence began. Nebetiah heard from Smenkhkare, now attending the Prince's School, that Amenhotep had gone to the per ankh (House of Life) in Men-nefer (Memphis), and was deep in study and discussions with hery-heb (lector priest), hem-netjer-tepi¹⁴⁵ (First Prophet of God) of Ptah, and maw¹⁴⁶ (seer) with Parennefer by his side. He spent hours delving deep into their

¹⁴⁵ Given permission by the king's command to act as the representative of the king to the god; responsible for every day breaking the seal to the "Holy of Holies", care for the statue of the god, in which the god took residence, with prayer, food, bathing and clothing. At the end of day, he backed out, wiping his footprints away and resealed the chamber. His sole purpose was to provide for the needs of the god so It was happy and took care of the people.

¹⁴⁶ M3w; Interpreted omens and dreams; was the only one in knowledge of prayers used to protect the dead from negative influences and rites conferring kingship and priesthood which involved powers given directly from gods

libraries of sšt3¹⁴⁷ (sacred) scriptures as their father once did. Others had seen less and less of him as he increased this studying.

Nefertiti was also feeling his absence and as weeks went by, she began reverting to her old ways, the joy of waiting for their son lost. Nebetiah tried to allay Nefertiti's concerns but this revived her old resentment so Nebetiah was once again snubbed. Nebetiah could only do as she promised Amenhotep, so she waited. She tended the ill and her healing garden, a gift from Amenhotep, with her handmaid, Shadya¹⁴⁸, and the days passed, quiet but swollen with expectation.

Then the silence that surrounded her was broken, like a droplet of water bursting when it hits the ground, and the memory of his return engulfed her, swirling and rushing, returning her to the herb garden, where she was bent under the sun with Shadya, choosing her herbs. She lifted her head as she heard the approach of someone on the path. Parennefer was approaching them.

"Aw ibetj (May your heart rejoice), Ḥm.t=k (Your Majesty)," he bowed almost to the ground and waited.

¹⁴⁷ Typically translated as secret or mysterious but with research done is more sacred, restricted or confidential. Balanda, Stanley Z. "The Title "hry-sst3" to the End of the New Kingdom." *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt* 45 (2009): 319-348.

¹⁴⁸ Delight, joy, pleasure

Nebetiah hurriedly brushed her knees off and stood, "Parennefer, please, you used to chase me out of the halls when I was little."

"And today you stand before me the ḥm.t nsw.t (royal wife) of neb=j (my Lord), Nsw (King) Neferkheperu-re Wa'en-re," he smiled, still bowed, "I think I would not be chasing you from the halls now, ḥm.t=k (Your Majesty)."

She laughed, "That would be a sight to see, Parennefer, but truly it is just me. Does Neb=j (My Lord) send you? Is he well?"

He nodded, "Ḥm=f (His Majesty) asks that you meet him beneath the heter ished (twin perseas). He requests you to be alone."

She was surprised but also glad to hear he had returned to the 'ah (palace).

"Please tell Neb=j (my Lord) I will come after I prepare myself," she wiped her hands on the cloth handed to her by Shadya.

Parennefer bowed lower and backed away as she turned to Shadya, "Finish gathering the herbs and then begin with their preparations. I will return."

Shadya nodded. She smiled gratefully at the young girl and returned to her room to make herself presentable. Sen (Brother) or not, respect of his rank was court decorum, just as Parennefer would never approach her erect, no matter how she chided him, so she was to be clean and presentable in Amenhotep's presence.

Amenhotep was quiet on her arrival. Beyond smiling at her and sharing their bench, he did not immediately talk. She had expected this, so she had brought a song she was working on, knowing her brother would speak when he was ready. They had been sitting for a while, quietly working when Amenhotep broke the silence by sighing and putting down his stylus and sheet.

“Kiya.”

She smiled at his use of her name he had given her so long ago, but when she looked up, the look in his eyes was not teasing. She realized he was apprehensive; needing her support by his searching look when her eyes met his eyes. She put her hand on his hand.

“I have missed you. Why have you not talked to me?” he asked.

Nebetiah hesitated, “We did say that I was to come to you if I needed you. You were deep in study and there was nothing that could not wait while you were gone. I did wish to see you because I felt your conflict, but Nefertiti reminded me you were studying so I waited. It is how you said it should be. If you need me, you will come to me.”

His face clouded briefly, “I am sorry, sen.t (Sister). Then that is to be changed. Come to me when I am gone into the books. It is when I need you. You shall not wait like a ḥm.t (servant).” he rubbed his eyes, “I have been caught up in ... studies and have forgotten my duties to my family. I apologize.”

Nebetiah smiled, "No need, sen (Brother). I understand you have much to do. I can wait for a more appropriate time. Perhaps a word to Nefertiti would be wise to send."

He shook his head, "I have sent her a message to let her know I returned but I wish to not speak to her just yet. She will have a thousand questions I will not be able to answer. You are one who I trust to speak truthfully to me without questions to be answered. This is why you may come to me anytime. I have found I need this, but I forget," he hesitated, as if thinking, and then continued, "You must...," he looked at her intently and shifted his hand she touched to hold hers in his, then began again, more determined, "I need to tell you something"

"You know you may tell me anything, *ib n ib=j* (Heart of my heart)," she responded.

Amenhotep shifted in his seat, causing his papyrus sheet to drift off his leg which he caught absently with his other hand. His eyes were already gazing elsewhere as he sought his words.

"I am not sure how to start," he shifted uncomfortably again.

"All I can offer to you, sen (Brother), is to start at the beginning. I am here."

Amenhotep looked at her strangely for a moment and then began to speak again, watching her intently, "You must know I was not asleep. I know you are going to say I was because I have been told this already, but I swear my eyes were as

open as they are now looking at you," he paused and seemed to delve back into his memory, absently rubbing his free fingers on the edge of his papyrus. He firmly held onto her hand with his other hand.

Then with a new conviction of purpose, he continued, "I was in my bed chamber, trying to go to sleep but I could not. It was very dark, of course, and there were no night sounds to keep me awake but I could not close my eyes and rest. And then ... there was this ... shu¹⁴⁹ (light), like Sah at first, small, bright, and, as I stared, it grew larger, brighter. I rubbed my eyes and blinked them, but it still remained and it grew in size, moving and swirling, like a fire burning, as it did, to the size that of the 'itn (sun disc). It was an orb, not flat, golden bright, lighting up my room. It grew to fill my room, reaching out everywhere, every corner was burning bright with shu (light), golden and beautiful. It was ... not flat full, alive, the ... stwt (rays) reaching everywhere but not touching and pulling back, like the beat of a heart. I felt warm shu (dry) wind, all around me, on my body

¹⁴⁹ Šw; means air, light, sunlight, emptiness and dry; shu with the god symbol following it is Shu is the God who personifies the atmospheric air that holds up the heavens or Nut - Hoffmeier, James K. *Akhenaten and the Origins of Monotheism*. New York: Oxford University Press. 2015. AND also as air as a life principle and void that gives possibility for life; emptiness and dry are pure in that there is nothing in the void and light in the abstract of uplifting thus resurrection or rebirth – Butler, Edward P. Shu. N.d. 3 September 2018.
<<https://henadology.wordpress.com/theology/netjeru/sia/>>

and face, not the heat of the re¹⁵⁰ (sun) in the dessert but warmth that comforted me.

“Like the arms of Mewet (Mother) or yours when you hold me ... but it was greater. I was filled with this feeling of ... I can only say ... joy? Happiness so strong ... love so large that it just covered my whole *ib* (heart) and I was crying tears of happiness and I fell on my knees because it was so *šta* (sacred). I was in the presence of a greatness I have never known. He was so ... strong, beautifully strong. I could see my bed chamber just as if the *ʿitn* (sun disc) had come inside. This ... *shu* (light) ... was there ... in front of me, above me, around me and then I was not in my room anymore.

“I was in the desert, at the foot of two mountains, divided, in front of me, with a beautiful garden of trees and animals, a river rushing past behind me and above me is this beautiful fire of *sʿnh*¹⁵¹ (life) ... *shu* (light) ... waiting, moving in all directions and yet still, like that of the *ʿitn* (sun disc) but so completely larger, fuller and He was before me in His Glory. I felt this love so completely whole that I was happier than I have ever been,” the words seemed to tumble out of him, “I could feel *sʿnh* (life) drinking into my skin

¹⁵⁰ Re/Ra could reference two things: the God Ra or the sun. It depended on the qualifier that followed it. If there was a god figure behind Ra then it was the god, if it was a sun, then it was the sun. Same with *aten*. I have distinguished using capital letters.

¹⁵¹ (Hoffmeier, 222)

and I kneeled, bowing my head, just letting it fill me through to my bones as the north wind moved against my face.

“I spread my arms out and shut my eyes, keeping my face bowed beneath this beautiful shu (light) of s’nh̄ (life). S’nh̄ (Life) was all around me, in me and I knew I had finally found the love I had wished for all my life that I did not even know for which I was wishing. That is all I wanted to do, just kneel there and give this ...gift of s’nh̄ (life) all my thanks because all I ever wanted was there and I was so happy. I kneeled there, and I cried in happiness.”

He turned to her, his words now coming faster as if he found his way and both his hands now held both of hers, his papyrus forgotten on the ground, “And then, like a shu (dry) wind stirring around me, a whisper in my ears, Words telling me that I ‘need to listen so I may hear for it is time for the many to become one’. And a circle of warmth, tingling started at the top of my head, grew stronger, as I kneeled there, bowed, and I felt as if this warmth was bubbling up out of my head, bubbling over, this tingling feeling, cascading down over my head from the center of it ... passing down over my head like water cascading over me, my face, my shoulders, my back, my chest, to cover my body and I bowed low, because I was in His presence.

“Then again, the Words surround me like the shu (dry) wind whirls around in a sandstorm, ‘I

have given you¹⁵² the neseyte (kingship) of Two Lands and the throne of Geb.¹⁵³ Come, sA=j (my son)¹⁵⁴, that you may become a spirit through me¹⁵⁵. Lead as you have been shown. Listen so you will hear. Hear so you will see.’ and then the bright shu (light) was gone, gone but I was still full of love and happiness. Yet I wished for Him to come back because I wanted to continue to feel this way forever. A wave of love surrounded me, and I knew I was not alone. I was staring into the darkness, so happy I could dance and sing. Then I heard your voice calling to me, ‘I am here’ but I did not see you anywhere when I looked around my room.

“It was dark, and you were not there, of course. I wanted to find you, but I was so sleepy, I thought I would just close my eyes for a minute to rest. And then I slept. When I woke I was so thirsty and I drank a great deal of water. Parennefer was worried but I told him we were to go the per ankh (House of Life) immediately. I needed to

¹⁵² Legal union = act in the name of god with the power given in the name; his servant working in his name, carrying out his task in his name; Walvoord, John F. “Prayer in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ”. N.d. *Commentary and Theological Collection*. 2018 August 19. <<http://walvoord.com/>>

¹⁵³ God’s words. Murnane, William. “XE30”. *Texts from the Armana Period in Egypt*. Atlanta: Scholars Press. 1995. pg. 32

¹⁵⁴ Life union = father and son; son bears father’s name and has certain privileges; joined through the new birth which is indicated by the purification by water; (Walvoord, John F.)

¹⁵⁵ God’s Words (Murnane, William. “On Side B” pg 93)

understand more and the šta (sacred) scriptures are there. I have been there ever since until now.

“I studied but I am no clearer now than I was then. I spoke with the wab-w¹⁵⁶ (all priests) both in Men-nefer (Memphis) and here in Ipet-isut (Karnak) but none could enlighten me. All they said only filled me with darkness and I knew it was not their words that would help. It was not that I knew ... it was that their words were rejected as they said them... I was told not to listen for they could not hear me,” he stopped, unable to explain it more clearly, “So I have come to you and you have said the words that have cleared my mind.”

Nebetiah watched his face while he was talking. He had moved from preoccupied to a peace and happiness she had not seen before, excited and thrilled, even as he said he was still searching for answers. She could not help but smile with him.

She looked down where now both their hands were clasped together as they rested on his knees, “You must listen to this maa (vision), Sen (Brother). A maa (vision) that is full of love, s’nh (life), is a good one and needs to be heard and followed. He has told you to do so. This shu (light) ... do you think it is ... a netjer (god)?”

Amenhotep looked at her sharply, “And what if I do know this is pa netjer-aa (the Great G-d)?”

¹⁵⁶ General term for all the ritually pure, all priests, servants of god and doctors – all holy men

She spoke, looking at him again, letting the words flow from her, “You know MaAt (Truth) so it is not for me to define that for you. I know you are true in your thoughts. I know you have held MaAt (Truth) in front of you so you walk only in it. You only wish to hear MaAt (Truth) from others. You only speak MaAt (Truth) yourself. So you know this answer,” she held his gaze, “You have been told it is time for the many become one... and you have been given the neseyte (kingship) of the Two Lands and the throne of Geb. You have been called “sA (son)” and told to come so you may become a ʒḥ (spirit) through Him.

“Only pa netjer-aA¹⁵⁷ (the Great G-d) can give these to you, only pa netjer-aA (the Great G-d) can command shu (light), only pa netjer-aA (the Great G-d) can command s’nh (life), only pa netjer-aA (the Great G-d) can give you life eternal as a ʒḥ (spirit),” she fell silent, knowing she was about to speak against the wab -w (priests) but it was to be said.

She nodded and continued, “The wab-w (priests) are wrong. None has challenged you in your rightful place. This was not reaffirming your right to the throne of Geb, sen (Brother). You have been given the throne by the rightful netjer-aA (Great G-d) of whom no wab-w (priests) can hear for they are deafened by their own desires. Pa netjer-aA (The Great G-d) has crowned you, not

¹⁵⁷ Great God = strongest god in the heavens; at this time it was Amun; used only for gods, not men

man. You are the rising as it=w (our father) sets. It is for you to listen if you chose to accept His Will.”

Amenhotep stared at her.

She looked at him, as if realizing what she had just said, “Surely, you told me what they said, sen (Brother). I heard their words.”

He shook his head, amazed now, watching her, “I did not ... I know you have echoed my thoughts before, sen.t (Sister), but you have spoken words I have not thought. Even ...,” he released his breath he did not know he had been holding, his heart pounding, paused, and then plunged forward, “that which I would not dare think. I knew their words were to be rejected and you have confirmed this for me,” he did not take his eyes from her, but he was speaking, as if to himself, “You spoke the words of my dream before I told you, the words of others. I am learning already,” then he seemed to gather himself and he reached out, squeezing one of her hands before releasing it again, “There is much for me to learn and I need you with me, 3h n 3h=j (spirit of my spirit).

“I search to understand. I have been reading our šta (sacred) scriptures. I have tended and praised the statues of Sah, Atum¹⁵⁸, Amun-Re, Re, Harakhty¹⁵⁹, and Ptah in their hwt-w (temples). This is a netjer-aA (Great G-d) of no body, no face. He does not rest within a statue of our hands nor

¹⁵⁸ Tm; self-created creator god; first god in Heliopolis in the North who created Shu and Tefnut.

¹⁵⁹ Aka Horakhty or Harakhti

takes a form of our making” he lowered his voice, “You say He is not it=w (our father) who is alive, here with us now, despite his naming himself “The Dazzling Aten”.

“This netjer-aA (Great G-d) is not of man. It is not a man blessed by a netjer (god) as the nsw (king) is. This was strength beyond that of it=w (our father), beyond me. I know this without knowing. He is as He is. He is not of this world but of djet n neheh (forever and always), of heka¹⁶⁰ (divine creative force),” he fell silent, staring down at his hands that hung limply between his knees as he leaned forward, “This shu (light) would have burned me if He had been of this world. He is not.

“ I know this because the ‘itn (sun disc) burns us even now when it is only warm. Fire burns. The re (sun) burns us. I was not burned. I was not blinded. He is not the ‘itn (sun disc). He looks like the ‘itn (sun disc) but He is greater, in all that He is ...,” he looked up and smiled at Nebetiah, “Like you, He surrounded me with Love. He is akh¹⁶¹ (Eternal Spirit), ka (life force) is so

¹⁶⁰ It is the Divine energy or life force which is a creative power used by G-d in both mortal world and spiritual world necessary for creation to come about using the combination of Hu (principle of divine utterance) and Sia (the concept of omnipotence) to bring forth life. Heka the god was man’s personification of this Divine Creative Life Force in Ancient Egypt; used by physicians to cure along with medicine. Mark, Joshua. “Heka”. 23 February 2017. *Ancient History Encyclopedia*. <https://www.ancient.eu>. Accessed 12 August 2018.

¹⁶¹ Eternal spirit or eternal life; believed to ascend to join the stars (heaven); comes into being when the ba (personality) unites with the ka (force of life) which left the body at death and passes the judgment

strong. I felt young again and strong as He moved through me.

“Those who have taught me have not seen anything of this either. They do not understand what I describe to them, but they cannot tell me if He is Re or Horus¹⁶² for He was not the form of either. We know these. Have we been seeing only what we understand? Is He pa netjer-aA (the Great G-d) we know but have not seen because we are not listening? Have we not seen Him because we believe we know all that is to be known? The wab-w (priests) have told me I am to let them guide me in my learning for Amun is the one who speaks, but they wait still for the statue of Amun to move for them. He has been silent. Answers given to me are within my ears like a whisper of the wind, not a statue moving. There is no man around me. Is it that our knowledge blinds our eyes?”

Impulsively she reached out and took one of his hands in hers which stopped his flow of words. They were sitting side by side, so she could feel a new tenseness radiating from his body. It was of excitement and uncertainty. He had shared a great deal with her. He had seen a maa (vision)

of maAt (Truth and Justice) when the heart weighs lighter than a feather becoming True of Voice or Justified and becoming eternal to live with God (thus becomes a holy spirit). This is the same as Christian teaching about eternal life with God – follow the path of Jesus and you will go home to God. BUT we are told to call it “effective spirit”

¹⁶² “He who is above”; God of the Kingship; God of Sky; represented by Falcon

and it had taken him to a place that no one had walked before, showing him things against all they knew.

And yet, Amenhotep was describing what she felt when she was sitting outside among the trees in the garden, watching the world of nature around her. She found, as a hekai.t (priestess of heka), this was a force of creation that vibrated in every living thing, connecting them together, used by the creator netjer-w (gods) to bring life out of nothingness of the primal waters. She had always been open to this feeling, relishing it and enjoying the peace it brought, there was no fear in it. So, she understood his awe and feeling of immense joy. She was by his side. He would not be alone. They were together, djet n neheh (forever and always).

Resolved, she spoke gently, "I fear I do not have much to offer, sen (Brother), except I understand the awe that brings you to your knees and the joy that fills you. I know you have seen something wonderful. I know you have felt pa netjer-aA (the Great G-d) move through you. Do not be hard on yourself as you move forward for it is not comfort that surrounds us when we are learning. It is uncertainty, confusion, and then a struggle to understand," she tightened her grip on his hand, feeling him returning it and she felt as if a veil was lifted from her eyes. She reached and took both his hands in hers, making him sit up and look at her, "Pa netjer-aA (The Great G-d) has chosen you. You need to decide to be ready to hear when

He speaks again. Know that you are believed and those that chose to hear, will hear.”

She smiled at him, certainty filling her with elation, a feeling so strong sweeping through her she couldn't breathe. Amenhotep stared at her, tears welling up in his eyes also, “Dwa-nejter n twt (Praise God for you), Kiya.”

He could not speak any further. The past weeks he had spent among men who had told him he was not seeing what he saw, or he did not understand what he was told, had taken its toll on him. His emotional reaction to hearing his sister speak the words of others unknown to her, and then being told he was believed, had overwhelmed him. He smiled at her through his tears.

“You are the first to say this to me. I have spoken with the heri sesheta n medu-netjer¹⁶³ (Master of Sacred Writings) and the hem-netjer-tepi (First Servant of God) of Ptah in Men-nefer (Memphis) who spoke more cautiously. They believe it was Re who crowned me as you said. Meryptah¹⁶⁴, hem netjer tepi n imn (first servant of Amun) in Ipet-isut (Karnak) has told me I was simply reliving my coronation”

“Put aside those thoughts that do not follow what you know in ib¹⁶⁵=k (your heart). You know

¹⁶³ (Balanda, Stanley)

¹⁶⁴ Succeeded Ptahmose under King Nebma'atre but his time ended with King Nebma'atre died

¹⁶⁵ The heart is the seat of thoughts and emotions, mind understanding, will, intelligence – not the brain.

maAt (Truth). MaAt (Truth) has awakened the Mekh Netjer¹⁶⁶ (direct knowledge of G-d) within you so now when you hear pa netjer-aA (the Great G-d), you will know. You do not need to explain why. You are nsw (king) and it is to you that pa netjer-aA (the Great G-d) speaks.

“No one can tell you otherwise for this is the neseyte (kingship) given of the netjer-w (gods). The wab-w (priests) may only approach netjer-w (gods) if you command them. They are at your command. The wab-w (priests) of Ipet-isut (Karnak) fear they will lose what power they have now with you speaking directly to Him. Knowledge that He is Pa netjer-aA (the Great G-d) who speaks to you fills their hearts with fear and it is this fear that now blocks them from hearing His Words when you speak to them.”

“You have begun a great journey, Neb=j (My Lord). Now is the time for qakh (prayer to G-d), uaa¹⁶⁷ (meditation) and kai (chanting). This will not be an easy path. There will be those who do not hear, those who challenge, those who are angered, those who doubt you, those who fear what you say and those who will try to convince you are wrong. But you are not alone. I am here and there are others.”

She choked up, as a strong emotion she could only describe as love swept through her.

¹⁶⁶ To know divinity

¹⁶⁷ Self-counsel of the heart

She nodded, aware of her self again, her eyes filling with tears, "I am here," she repeated, "Listen and do."

His face had filled with awe and his tears sparkled in his eyes as he listened to her speak.

He whispered, "It is as I was shown. I was told to come to you and I did not listen, so I have been tormented by those who do not know. The forked tongue of Sebau¹⁶⁸ would mislead me. I will always obey as I am told," He nodded and took a deep breath "Thank you, hekai.t (priestess of heka). This is what I needed... to know you believed me. Yes, I need to listen, so I may hear. I will prepare with knowledge and understanding. I will purify and pray "In His Name of Shu (Light)" so I may hear when He speaks to me again...." his voice died away, and they leaned forward, touching their foreheads. They did not move but sat there, bowed, hands clasped.

Then he whispered, "Has He spoken to it (Father) and has it (Father) been speaking of Him when he began speaking of the 'Itn and in his grief of losing our sen (brother) he misunderstood what he was told? I have not tried to talk to it (Father) of this because I know it is not time. I am told this," he fell silent.

"Grief can cloud one's thoughts," she said gently, and another strong wave of love washed over her, misting her eyes and tightening her throat

¹⁶⁸ Snake enemy that inhabited the netherworld

as if she was about to cry. She caught herself until she could speak again without crying, "When you feel ready, this may be something of which you will speak."

He remained silent.

"Sen (Brother)?" she asked gently. He sat up and she followed suit. He looked at her.

"I am sorry, sen.t (Sister)," he responded, "You asked ..."

She shook her head, "Nothing but what I feel ... you said "I am told this" this moment ago.

He looked at her, but he did not seem to see her, "I know without knowing."

She nodded, her breath catching in her throat. The energy that vibrated from him was not of him alone. Her training as a hekai.t (priestess of heka) had prepared her to expect wondrous events but not the emotion of the moment which was strong, flooding her eyes with tears again as a feeling of love and awe swept over her. He spoke again.

"Already from speaking with Meryptah, ḥem netjer tepi n imn (first servant of Amun), I know that I have caused much concern among the wab -w (priests) within the ḥwt-w (temples) of Ipet-isut (Karnak). They do not wish to accept any that is not Amun. They do not comprehend the greatness of s'nh (life) that surrounds us even though they have studied it as you have as hekai.t (priestess of heka). It is not within them. They are dead," he lifted his face, looking up, tears starting

in his eyes again, his voice growing thick with emotion.

“They cannot see this glory all around us. How our world is filled with it, shining brilliance greater than Re, than Harakhty in the two horizons¹⁶⁹, than Amun, than any netjer (god) of man. This is a knowledge that is older than we are. Pa Netjer-aA (The Great G-d) is not a netjer (god) that is here in statues ... He is ... How do I explain to those who do not understand this ‘the Great God, Lord of Heaven’? I am told for those who cannot see, they cannot understand. I can only say they will see him as ‘Re-Harakhty, ‘the Great God, Lord of Heaven’¹⁷⁰ but even this does not explain all that He is.”

She almost could not speak because of the emotion that had welled up inside her, watching her brother’s face, “Gather those around you who hear as you do, Neb=j (My Lord). What of Nefertiti? She, too, should know of this?” she softly ventured.

He shook his head, his eyes refocusing on her, and took a deep breath, “Not yet. You are here. Kiya, in my maa (vision) you said, “I am here” and after all I have said you have not turned from me. You have given me guidance without concern that we are now outside all that we have known. To have you with me ... this is my maa (vision),” she was startled by his intensity, “I was told you are

¹⁶⁹ Two references here: Double Horizon = sun rise and sun set or also Earth and Heaven.

¹⁷⁰ Very first name used (Hoffmeier, 84)

the one to whom I go. You said there will be others later. It is not that Nefertiti does not need to know.

“It is right now I need to learn because I must know and understand before I can sbayt (teach) and follow¹⁷¹. I am to have you who will listen with me, heri.t sesheta=j (my Mistress of Secrets), hekai.t=j (my Priestess of Heka) as I learn so I do not have to take time to find those who would believe me. This comes later, and this is why I am not to speak to Nefertiti about this before I am to do so. Where it concerns her, I have to be clear in what I am saying so that she knows the path we are on and does not misunderstand and become lost,” he smiled affectionately.

“She definitely will be a hm.t nsw.t wr.t (Great Royal Wife) who leads but because of that, she needs her nsw (king) to lead her so she does not lead him. I admire this strength in her but also know I must take responsibility. Also, I am not sure she would listen without adding her own thoughts which will not help me hear clearly.

“You, Kiya, have always helped me see my own way without words to direct me. You and I, we have always spoken like this. You listen to hear,” he squeezed her hand again, “as you have done at this moment. I am waiting for more to be

¹⁷¹ Sia (heart) personified divine accurate truthful perception and understanding, Hu (tongue) personified divine authoritative speech which leads to action. One first must understand in order to do and speak. “Sia”. Philosophy and Theology: Henadology.
<https://henadology.wordpress.com/theology/netjeru/sia/>

told to me. I have only spoken to you beyond the wab-w (priests). I have been told to continue to study the šta (sacred) scriptures and books of knowledge, perform qakh (prayer to G-d), uaa (meditation) and kai (chanting) so I may see Him in all. I will have you with me. There is much I need to know before I speak to anyone else, but I need you by my side now," he looked at her searchingly, "I will know when it is time."

She smiled reassuringly, "I serve you, Neb=j (My Lord). I keep my peace for you and listen. I will share all that I can with you."

Amenhotep leaned forward, speaking intently, "Sen.t (Sister), body of my body and now ib m ib-j (heart of my heart), you always helped with your gentle smile and deep thoughts. You do not fail me now as you do not fail pa Netjer-aA (the Great G-d). We are djet (forever) ..."

"N neheh, sen (Brother)."

He smiled at her, "It is beautiful and so peaceful. I wish I could bring you, so you could feel the wonder yourself."

She smiled again, "You have brought this feeling through you for I have felt it here with you as we have talked. I have no fear for I see the peace in your face when you speak. I know, when you have taught me, I too, will be as you are."

"Pa netjer-aA (The Great G-d) is 'nh (living¹⁷²), shu (light) of s'nh (Life), of Pleasantness

¹⁷² The Living is in contrast to the idols or gods of man's hands which are not living because they are made of man – explanation given to me

and Jubilation, Creation and Birth, even Death. Perhaps because of this great power we could only understand Him in parts I still do not understand all that I have seen," he slumped once more.

Nebetiah took his hand again, "You have just come back from a long trip, sen (Brother), where many have told you their thoughts. Cleansing yourself of their words, clearing your mind and then letting go of everything, including my words will help you hear what you are to hear."

"Your words are not to be ignored, Kiya," he looked at her, "That I am to listen to you was clearly spoken to me in my maa (vision). I will get some rest, but we will come back together. I wish to go to the šta (sacred) lake with you so we complete purification and meditations together. Will you come with me in prayer?"

She nodded, "I will. I will be ready for you when you send for me," she smiled at him gently, "Be kind to yourself, Amenhotep, these maa-w (visions) do not move as we expect. Sometimes they are fast and our heads spin with all we are being taught. Sometimes they are slow because there is something we need to hear."

He nodded, "You have given me the way I am to go. As always you find my heart when it is lost."

while I was sitting in a worship in one of the churches of G-d from a member of the congregation when I asked for the difference.

She raised his hand to her lips and kissed his palm, “Djet (forever)...”

“N neheh (And Always).”

And the memory swirled away into the mist. Nefertiti struggled with the changes in Amenhotep as he moved deeper into his rituals of purification, meditation and prayer. She moved anxiously around the edges of his new world while he spent more time at the *hwt-w* (temples) in Ipet-isut (Karnak) in prayer, before ‘Re-Harakhty, the Great God, Lord of Heaven’, and returning to Nebetiah who silently listened as he spoke of his *maa-w* (visions). Their conversations ran long and deep, a time of intense studying and discussion and many questions that she did not try to answer because she knew this was not for her to answer but listen.

Pa netjer-aA (The Great G-d) spoke only to Amenhotep and her place was to listen as he spoke to her. So, she watched as he moved between the world of man and heaven, giving time to both, meeting his duties in the *neseyte* (kingship) and listening for ‘Re-Harakhty, the Great God, Lord of Heaven’. Then he began speaking to his closest friends, Nakhtpaamun, Aperiar and his son Huy, Parennefer, Ay, May the Noble, and, as he was met with acceptance, others.

She smiled as the memories swirled now, full of joy, love, and knowledge running through her mind. They were filled with learning about pa *nh* *’Itn* (the Living Aten), sometimes breathless

with the speed at which Amenhotep spoke, watching him among those who listened, feeling this extraordinary feeling she could only explain as heka (creative energy) radiating from him, enveloped by the love that surrounded her. He was patient, trying to explain to those around him but he listened only to one and it was not her. There were memories of times he was overwhelmed, and they would sit for hours talking, sharing thoughts within the hesep (garden) under the heter ished-w (twin perseas), many of them and one rose now, pulsing with the worry that filled it, in the air around her. She caught her breathe as she moved into it.

She was hurrying, worried, through the garden. He usually called her with a servant sent, but now she was rushing behind Py¹⁷³, a lady of the court. Amenhotep had sent her running, to bring Nebetiah to him so Nebetiah, leaving her dance troupe, was hurrying after the flustered young woman.

Py stopped at the edge of the garden and turned to Nebetiah, "Neb.t=j (My Lady), Neb=j (my Lord) was speaking to me of things I did not understand, and I got confused which ... upset him," tears flooded her eyes, "I wanted to understand but ... he spoke so fast. I did not wish to fail him," her voice choked, and she stopped.

¹⁷³ "The true favorite of Wa'enre, she whom the king adorned" (Murnane, 182)

Nebetiah caught her hand and squeezed it gently, in understanding. The young beautiful woman was in love with the nsw (king) and often was just happy to be in his presence, "I will speak to him. I am sure he is fine. He has much on his mind and perhaps because you were so quiet, he forgot it was not me who sat next to him. That is a good thing, sen.t (sister), for it means he is comfortable with you as he is with me. Find peace in that."

Py nodded, "I pray this is so. I did not mean to fail him," her eyes were searching Nebetiah's face, "He said you would know where he was."

She smiled at Py, "I will go to him. Rest assured, we will speak later, you and I."

Relief flashed in her eyes and Py nodded, "Thank you, Neb.t (Mistress)."

"Sh, it is Kiya, sen.t (Sister), for any who loves sen=j (my brother) is loved by me."

This brought more tears to the young woman's eyes. As a woman who was known to love the nsw (king), she had been under the lash of Nefertiti's tongue and her harshness did leave a long mark. Nebetiah was well aware of it herself but she had also grown used to it. There were princesses and ladies of the court who were not ... yet. Nebetiah was beginning to believe that Nefertiti was attempting to drive the hm.t-w (wives) themselves away from the nsw (king) since she could not get the nsw (king) to turn from hm.t-w=f

(his wives). Nebetiah nodded, squeezed her hand once more and then left her at the edge of the garden as she hurried forward. He was under their heter ished-w (twin perseas) as she had known. He spoke the moment he saw her.

“Now is the time to see He is. I must begin.”

He was sitting forward in his customary slouch, leaning on his elbows. She sat next to him and he fell silent. The sounds of the hesep (garden) swirled around them, the gentle lullaby of their world, soothing and relaxing. She smiled as she heard the soft ‘turr, turr’ of the n’rw-w (doves) among the other birds. They reminded her of Amenhotep when he used to call to them.

Amenhotep sighed and sat back, “Such emotion rises so quickly within me now. Yet I feel full of life. I wish to take a walk. Walk with me?”

She nodded, also feeling the aftermath of the strong emotion vibrating off him, a sensation of relaxation and repose, a place of peace and yet exhilaration and happiness that made her want to sing. She was sure now that Py had been with him when he was with His Father. She would speak with her later so Py would not feel she had been at fault for not understanding. It was not easy to follow Amenhotep when he was with His Father and she was hekai.t (priestess of heka). But now he was alone and the peace that enveloped him was soothing. He did not take them out of the hesep (garden) but deeper in, away from the ‘ah (palace) and lake. She said nothing as he took her hand, just

waited silently as she walked next to him. He began speaking softly as they moved further down the hesep (garden) path.

“He is a greatness beyond our understanding. I do not even know if I will be able to sbayt (teach) the ... purity that shines brighter than the light of the ‘itn (sun disc), a brilliance that is ‘nh (living)¹⁷⁴ in the breath of heh (eternity). I see that which looks like Re (sun) but is not re (sun). He is because He made me His sA (son) and I am shu (he who is lifted) by his stwt (rays) of s’nh (life). In the 3h n It=J (spirit of My Father) ... I am shu (reborn)¹⁷⁵. This is not the netjer (god) Shu but shu “he who is uplifted”. How do I explain this so

¹⁷⁴ (Quirke, Stephen)

¹⁷⁵ Amenhotep IV/Akhenaten actually documented his visions as best he could. We lost his words because of the destruction of his monuments etc. out of man’s anger which is just another display of our own fear. He experienced something that moved him to ignore tradition but not before he came to peace with the reactions of those who opposed him. His words (Murnane, p 78). MaAt was still important and is today for us under many different words. Here I have combined the struggle of Egyptologists, Theologians, Historians, and other researchers for the meaning of “shu” as he used it (their words, not mine). Some work in the physical/concrete world (light, sunlight, dry, void, empty, uplifting) while others move to the abstract thought: *dry = pure* because absence of primal water; *light and void/empty = life by presence and the emptiness that gives possibility of life*; *sunlight = power unseen and able to lift from the surface of Earth* and *uplifting = rebirth, resurrection, eternal life*. Interestingly enough in combining these many thoughts from polytheistic, henotheistic, and monotheistic researchers (and I hope in follow up research I was led to also some atheistic thoughts so I would be complete) into one I wonder if it is a beginning of understanding the visions Akhenaten saw. I too struggled in writing to convey all this clearly so it is not lost in our language of misunderstanding one another. My apologies if not understandable.

others understand so they will not turn away? So, they will not think it is Shu of whom I speak? Or Re? or 'itn? The 'itn (sun disc), re (sun) are only that which we see of our world and are not to be mistaken for It=J (My Father). It is through these we may perceive His power, but these are not He¹⁷⁶," he grew frustrated, "How do I explain this so others will understand that this is not Re (Sun god), not 'itn (sun disc) but One who IS," he looked at her.

She looked at him with her eyebrows raised, speaking slowly as she worked through his words, "I believe I understand what you are saying ... the 'itn (sun disc), re (sun), stwt (rays) of Shu are only parts of our world that bring life to us, but they are not pa 'nh 'Itn (the Living Aten). When you say you are Shu you are not saying you are the netjer (god), but you have been lifted by the Will of It=K (Your Father) which is akh (eternal spirit). You ask how can you give sbayt (instruction) so others will understand. You can only use the words you have, sen (brother), and if we understand then we will follow. If not, it must be the Will of pa 'nh 'Itn (the Living Aten) that those do not follow. Is there no name given?"

He shook his head, "He Is. That is all. Pa 'nh 'Itn (the Living Aten)¹⁷⁷ is the closest I am able but even then, they will mistake this name for the 'itn

¹⁷⁶ The visible disc is the vehicle through which God's power is revealed. (Hoffmeier, pg 78)

¹⁷⁷ (Murnane, 158-159) & (Hoffmeier, 218)

(sun disc) itself as with Re (sun). I cannot use “netjer (god)” for then He becomes one of the many netjer-w (gods) and will be lost again.¹⁷⁸ If I begin with that which we are familiar with and then bring them to a deeper understanding, perhaps this is the way to sbayt (teach). It is us who made netjer-w (gods) ride in the ‘itn (sun disc) like a man in a chariot. We have made netjer-w (gods) in our likeness so we could understand that which puts fear in our hearts. We do not need to fear. His is Living, not made of any man’s hands¹⁷⁹, His countenance unseen by any¹⁸⁰ but I. Even I have only seen the brightness of His ʕḥ that is as brilliant as re in the highest point within the aten. He Is.”

They strolled silently along the path for a few minutes.

“Re and Horus are the netjer-w (gods) of the re (sun) who have ridden in the ‘Itn (sun disc). They are both creator netjer-w (gods). Horus rises and sets in the two horizons thus Harakhty and Re travels the sky in the ‘itn (sun disc),” he offered, “Divided they are only parts of the re (sun) which gives life to all. Together they are complete¹⁸¹ Sun Rise, Sun Set, Sun and the sun disc.”

“The many become the One?”

¹⁷⁸ (Hoffmeier, p 209-210)

¹⁷⁹ Jeremiah 10

¹⁸⁰ (Murnane, 58B.2, 109)

¹⁸¹ Re-Harakhty represents the fusion of Re and Horus of the horizon where the sun rises and sets (Hoffmeier, 82)

He slowly nodded, "I believe this is what It=J (My Father) meant when He said it was time for the many to become the one. We see our many in the One. He is all, Ra, Horus, Amun, Atum ... all gods we have made ... all that we have seen but we did not give to one netjer (god) because we did not understand, 'the Great G-d, Lord of Heaven'," he looked at Nebetiah, "They are just statues we tend. It is the wab (priests) who move them when answering questions for the rekhyt (people)," she blanched, her heart stopping, but he continued not noticing her reaction, "Pa 'nh 'Itn (the Living Aten) is heka (creation) ... He is as glorious as re (sun) when re (sun) is highest in the middle of the day. He is more brilliant and beautiful than Horus in the two horizons¹⁸², with shu (Light) and we are allowed to see His beauty in the 'itn (sun disc) and re (sun). And this is of the kind of beauty I have never seen before, felt before.

He shook his head, "He Is Lord of Heaven. He Is Lord of Earth.¹⁸³ He made heaven and has concealed himself within, so we may not see his body and only I am to know Him¹⁸⁴," he looked at her and her heart thudded as she slowed her breath, trying to not be startled with his words.

"Pa 'nh 'Itn¹⁸⁵ (the Living Aten)¹⁸⁶ shows Himself to us every day, as He wishes, as Re-

¹⁸² Where the sun rises and sets = east and west

¹⁸³ (Murnane, 109)

¹⁸⁴ (Murnane, 58B2 West, 109)

¹⁸⁵ Short name of G-d (Murnane, pg. 76, 148-149)

Harakhty, through the 'Itn (sun disc), watching over us. This is beyond my understanding but ... this is what I understand...I know," he looked around them, "We have no place to properly worship pa 'nh 'Itn (the Living Aten). The hwt-w (temples) we have are for netjer (gods) hidden in darkness, away from the world. Pa netjer-aA (The Great G-d), Lord of Heaven, who rejoices in the horizon, in His Name of (shu) Light, which is in the sun disc created this world and should not be hidden from the joy we feel. Pa 'nh (The living) Re-Harakhty, who rejoices in the horizon, In His Name of Light, which is in the sun disc'¹⁸⁷ has shared the greatness of heka (divine creation) with us and we should give thanks for being given this great gift we do not deserve but were given to help keep MaAt within our world. I am to build open hwt-w (temples), open to the heavens so the pa 'nh 'Itn (the Living Aten) may look down on our offerings, and see our joy in His abundance every day."

He fell silent and then started speaking again slowly as if in thought, "Come, sA=j (my son) that you may become a spirit through me... pa 'nh 'Itn (the Living Aten) is It=J (My Father). I chose to

¹⁸⁶ (Quirke, Stephen)

¹⁸⁷ r^e-hr-šhty h^ey m šht m r.n.f m šw nty m itn; (Hoffmeier, 72) Early didactic appellation that described each aspect of G-d in Amenhotep's vision; there are variations of it in the beginning: Unable to compare the original hieroglyphics because Murnane doesn't give the ones he used but according to Murnane it was: the living one, sun, Horus of the horizon who becomes excited in the horizon, in his name which is light (Shu) that is in the Aten (p 280). I don't see this in the ones used by Hoffmeier. It starts with Ra-Harakhty

yield “In His Name¹⁸⁸ of Light which is in the sun disc”, so It=J (My Father), pa ‘nh ‘itn (the Living Aten), may lead me in His Will, not mine,” he turned to her, “I have been praying so I may become completely open to hearing the Words of It=J (My Father). As I move forward in the work that is set before me, we will continue to raise our voices in rejoicing and celebration of pa ‘nh ‘itn (the Living Aten) every day. We will continue keeping MaAt (Order)¹⁸⁹ in all that we do with each other, our land and our neighbors and sbayt (teach) this way to those who choose to hear and then through me¹⁹⁰, others will come. I am to lead by sbayt¹⁹¹ (instruction) and bring our lands, rekhyt=w (our people) to pa ‘nh ‘Itn (the Living Aten).”

He had stopped in an open area of the hesep (garden) that was surrounded by trees. It

¹⁸⁸ “In his name” = indicates union of the two either legally, in life or in love; Amenhotep IV has union both legally and in life (Walvoord, John F.)

¹⁸⁹ Universal Order; There is a relationship between chaos and order which when balanced brings contentment. You cannot have balance without chaos. This concept of duality is the basis of Ancient Egyptian life (and other ancient life styles). We call it duality, but we also call it harmony, balance, homeostasis, equilibrium. It is Ying and Yang. Too much of one is chaos. Balance is contentment. Order (maAt) vs Chaos (isfet) are in constant struggle with each other but king was between the two to find balance for the people and gods so they would live in maAt. This is a ‘state of order’, aka harmony or balance, was personified in the goddess, MaAt, hence the word is used to indicate it.

¹⁹⁰ Ay: My lord instructed me just so that I might practice his teaching. I life by adoring his Ka and I am fulfilled by following him – (the one who is my breath, by whom I live, my north wind, mu millions of Niles flowing daily, Neferkheperu-re Wa’enne. (Murnane, 111)

¹⁹¹ (Murnane, pg. 198) sb3yt; instruction

was covered with flowers and two paths crisscrossed in the middle. They were at the junction of the paths. He looked up, his face in the sunlight, eyes closed, and sunk to his knees. She kneeled next to him and raised her face to the sunlight, feeling its warmth on her skin as she listened to him.

“Kiya, do you know how I know this of ‘In His Name of Light which is in the sun disc’?”

She silently shook her head, unnoticed by him as he continued.

“Because I feel Him MaAt (order) living within each word, each sight, every feeling I am given. There is no way to explain this knowledge that brings this pure joy that makes me want to sing for Him, “ he whispered, “I have never experienced this be”

“Amenhotep! You were supposed to come get me!” the pretty, melodic voice was sharp with annoyance.

They both jumped, startled and turned to see Nefertiti, standing with her hands on her hips, her silhouette attesting her entrance into motherhood, flushed with anger which only made her more beautiful than ever before. Nebetiah felt her face flush and a quick glance at her brother revealed Amenhotep was actually annoyed.

“Nefertiti. I was ...” he started as he rose to his feet.

“You will laugh at me,” Nebetiah broke in, averting the irritated reply that she saw forming in

her brother's eyes, "I have been trying to write a poem and having trouble with the words. He was only trying to help. I kept him from you and I apologize."

"No, no apologies for needing my help or for wishing to be with me, Kiya. You are my sen.t (Sister), you are my hm.t (wife)," he admonished as he held his hand out to Nebetiah to help her stand, "You have every right to my time as Nefertiti."

He smiled and pulled her to him in their childhood embrace and said gently, "Djet (forever)..."

"N neheh (and always)," she whispered back.

Nefertiti's eyes narrowed but the look on Amenhotep face as he turned to her silenced her. She had finally realized he was angry.

"Regardless if time did get away from me, Nefertiti, I ask that you do not chase me down. I spend my time the way I wish, not to please you," he said evenly.

"If you stopped spending so much time with her, then you wouldn't forget me at all!" Nefertiti shot an angry glance at Nebetiah who shook her head.

"Sen.t (Sister), you are first in his mind," Nebetiah replied.

Amenhotep shot an appreciative smile at Nebetiah and turned to Nefertiti, this time taking her hand and pulling her to him, so he could put

his arm around her. She came willingly and he looked down at her.

“It is not that I forget you, Nefertiti, the love of my life, the joy of my heart. It is that I had to speak with sen.t=j (my sister) and I wished to do this first, so I may spend the rest of the day with you with no interruptions. But if you wish that I only spend a little time with you, then follow me again when I am not with you,” he watched Nefertiti’s face carefully to see if she understood his words.

She looked back at Nebetiah and then at him again, “I only seek your company, sen (Brother).”

Amenhotep looked at Nebetiah who smiled reassuringly at him. She could see he was still irritated with the interruption.

“Sen.t (Sister), it is as we spoke, and we will begin there when I come back. Until then, come to me if you have a need or if I go into the books.”

“Yes, sen (Brother),” she replied.

His jaw worked as he placed Nefertiti’s hand on his arm and he bent his head close to hers, whispering sweetly in her ear as he led her away, leaving Nebetiah in the hesep (garden).

The memory flowed immediately into the next one of her healing hesep (garden) as she moved among her herbs, kneeling to work on a plant, cutting a leaf or whole plant. Shadya, her servant girl, worked with her, tending the plants while she was cutting what she needed. She

paused, looking up from where she was kneeling, and watched the path for a few minutes, sure that she would see Amenhotep rounding the corner. It remained empty, but she could not shake the feeling however, staring down the path would not finish her work. She turned back to the herb she held in her hand and then she realized Shadya had stopped working and was bowing low to the ground. She looked up again to see him standing just as she had expected to see him, dressed for a chariot ride, watching her.

“Sen (Brother), you are preparing to leave again?”

“I am taking you with me, sen.t (Sister). Today I think we will enjoy some time away from spying eyes,” he replied.

He was smiling but he was tense from anger. She nodded and rose to her feet, giving her basket to Shadya.

“Shadya, take this inside and prepare them as I have shown you,” she murmured to her and then she turned to Amenhotep, “Then let me change, Neb=j (My Lord), and I will join you.”

They did not speak as they rode out in a chariot from Waset (Thebes). The dry air blew against their faces as the horse ran swiftly, the sun shining down on them and they remained silent, enjoying the feeling of freedom that rode on the wind. She felt his irritation lessening as the miles passed underneath the chariot and she looked at him as he drove, concentrating on the road ahead.

He was lost in thought so she remained silent. They came to a stop where servants had constructed a large tent in a field and supplied it with all of the needs for refreshment and entertainment. Musicians were playing, and dancers were dancing. She raised her eyebrows when she saw the extent of care to which he had gone.

“I remember a time when we would simply drive into the desert with nothing but some water and stolen food,” she quipped.

He laughed, his seriousness disappearing like the fog in the hot sun, “Those days we were young, and I did not command a kingdom. Now we can remove ourselves with comfort. No more hot days and long walks.”

She smiled, “Did you not enjoy them with me?”

He looked at her as he pulled the horse to a stop, “I did. Are you telling me you would rather have that? I can send everyone away.”

She shook her head, taking his hand as he helped her out of the chariot, “No, sen (Brother), this is beautiful, and I am deeply thankful my feet are not covered with dust.”

She noticed that he had set up a shooting range for archery and smiled again. In her stay in Sau (Sais) under the welcome of Neith, the netjer.t (goddess) of the Lower Egypt, Nebetiah had offered her services to the netjer.t (goddess) and become a priestess of her ḥwt (temple). Neith was also a warrior netjer.t (goddess) whose prowess

with weapons was legendary and this spurred her interest into handling weapons that led to her leaning to shoot the bow and arrow. Amenhotep was a master of archery and upon learning she had become adept with them, while during her stay in Sau (Sais), he wished to see her ability. Since her return, he had challenged her to a contest and she had declined repeatedly. It seemed her days of declining had come to an end. She laughed.

“Tell me this was all done to simply test my skill at the bow, Amenhotep!”

He grinned mischievously, “No, I know I exceed your abilities, Kiya,” he dodged her hand flying out to swat him, laughing, “We are here simply to enjoy ourselves, talk at our leisure, and perhaps a game or two.”

She shook her head, smiling, giving up trying to swat him, and followed him into the tent where they seated themselves among the cushions spread on the covering on the ground. The midday meal was brought, drinks were supplied, and the music played softly while dancers danced for them. He held true to his word. The day itself was just to relax. He did not speak of “In His Name of Light” nor did he mention Nefertiti. Instead it was just them as they were, brother and sister, laughing and talking as they wished, dancing or singing, like they used to before the duties of being a nsw (royal) had finally taken them. He asked her about her practice of medicine and listened as she spoke of their brothers and sisters she had brought into

the world. He watched her face as it lit up, talking about the babies she held in her arms and smiled.

"I am pleased to see that your life as a swnw.t (doctor) is one that brings you joy," he remarked.

She was eating a fig slowly, as she reclined against the cushions, watching him across from her. He lay back also but he had stopped nibbling on the fruit and was now just watching her in return.

"I have never been happier," she replied, "except when I was with Smenkhkare. I miss him. I have not heard from him in a while."

"I have kept him busy so he has not had time to send you a message, but you are not far from his thoughts. He asks about you each time he sees me," Amenhotep replied.

She ate another fig and cocked her head a little, inquiringly, "You seem to be considering something, sen (Brother). Of what do you wish to speak with me?"

He laughed, "I can hide nothing from you, Kiya. It is of Smenkhkare. Sitamun has asked that I take him within my court, but I have a concern. You love him as much as I do, like Sitamun herself even since he was born."

"As you do," she nodded.

Amenhotep had taken him under his guidance as Djhutmose had once done for him.

"Now that she has asked that I bring him into my court, I wished to speak to you of his

future," Amenhotep shifted, "He is the second to the throne if I have no sons, so this is an important consideration. The boy learns quickly and is doing well in school as well as his weaponry and sports. I want him into my court."

She nodded, "I expected it so."

He fell silent and then started again, "Perhaps, but I wish to bring him into my court as my sA-nsw smsw (son and heir) if I am not given a son by Nefertiti."

She stopped eating her fig, "It is a great honor but the first thing that flew into my mind was fear for his life."

Amenhotep nodded, "This is the concern of mine also if others hear that Sitamun has requested his duty with me. I do not want any to become aware that he is my chosen successor. This is why I wished to speak with you here... one of the reasons. I would like to school him and prepare him. I would like to do this in safety for him and that is when I thought of you. You have always been seen with him, so the court knows of your deep fondness. Together we have always been seen with him by our sides. This can continue for it is already so. To not continue would raise questions."

She nodded. Her heart had skipped a beat and she was now trying to work through her concern. Djhutmose was never far from her thoughts for they had never found out how he had died, and the whispers had never gone away.

"I see the wisdom in this. Are we to tell him?"

"No, not until it is needed," he paused, "I have decided to take him as sA=j (my son), Kiya, and I am asking you to be mewet=k (his mother)."

She smiled, "Then he was the easiest child to bring into the world, Amenhotep, I did nothing but rejoice and eat a fig."

He laughed, "Then you will bring him into the 'ah (palace) and give him quarters within by requesting them from me. This will allow him to be within my court without raising suspicions because it is you who I am bending my will to in this matter. It will not seem as if I am placing him for any other reason than your place in my heart."

"And if you have a sA (son) by Nefertiti? What shall sA=w (our son) do then?"

"He will be trained to be nsw (king) so he will know to serve the nsw (king). If I have a sA (son) born to me by Nefertiti, Smenkhkare will be given tjaty (vizier) so he may rule second to the nsw (king)."

She nodded again, "I agree with this decision you have made, Amenhotep. SA=w (Our son) shall have a home with me and I bear upon you to give him some rooms within the 'ah (palace) and work within your courts."

He smiled, relieved, "This will also allow me to see him as much as I wish without raising any thoughts, since I spend time with you," he seemed rather proud of his stratagem.

Nebetiah laughed, "You were always one for sneaking around," then she sobered up, "but the moment I am aware there is something amiss, you must come. You must promise me that."

"I promise," he leaned forward and took her hand in his, "I will keep sA-w¹⁹² (our son) safe from all harm."

She nodded, satisfied and leaned back, picking up another fruit, she bit into it. Nefertiti's anger would be insurmountable if she knew a child was in place for the throne if she gave no sons. Insurmountable because it would be Nebetiah's doing in her mind. She would not listen to the truth because her reasons to despise Nebetiah will have been proven. The child was to be protected against this anger and she would guard Smenkhkare with her life as she did Amenhotep. She watched as Amenhotep started to get up.

"And now that you have filled yourself on the figs, I was wondering if you would enjoy a little challenge?" he held his hand out to her to help her stand, a smile dancing on his lips.

She smiled back and took his proffered hand, "I will enjoy out bowing you, sen (Brother), I am not sure that is a challenge."

His laugh was deep and relaxed, "I am glad to see you are sure of yourself."

¹⁹² sA also was used for nephew – they did not differentiate as also It meant grandfather, father, and uncle

“And I hope you brought my bow and arrows, so I cannot claim it was a bow of which I was not used to.”

He continued to chuckle, “Yes, I have your weapon and if you wish to change...”

“Sen (Brother), it is not the clothes that make the archer.”

He said nothing but bowed her out of the tent with a smile.

Their first three contests, she had won them all, and it was during their fourth when she was raising her bow that she looked at Amenhotep. He stood with his bow in hand, next to her, relaxed, a smile still playing around his mouth as he watched the target set in the field. He was much too relaxed to be losing to her. Nebetiah drew the bow back, setting it at her ear, arrow nocked. She let it fly and heard Amenhotep groan.

“Had I thought you would have become a better archer than I, I would have told Mewet (Mother) to not let you go to Sau (Sais). Who taught you?”

She laughed, “It was Neithotep¹⁹³ who is even better than I, of course. I do not mind giving you lessons, sen (Brother).”

He snorted.

She nocked another arrow, “Be true to this game and let us see who truly wins.”

¹⁹³ Neith is merciful

He looked at her in shock, "Do you really think I would let you win, Kiya?"

She laughed again, "Yes, Huy. You have always let me win. Today I stand in front of you as a warrior. Show me your skill so I may show you who is the better archer."

He smiled and shook his head, nocking an arrow also, "Since when did you become so competitive?"

"Only since I realized you are the dearest sen (brother) and you have let me win all these times we have played. I would like to win on my own, sen (Brother)."

He raised his eyebrows, "I had forgotten I was with sen.t=j (my sister) and thought I was with another woman who enjoyed being allowed to win. Sen.t=j (my sister) prefers to win on her own. My little sen.t (Sister) challenges me again," he grinned as he drew his bow back, "I have missed this."

He let fly his arrow and again hit the center. She followed and hit close to his but not close enough. He grinned and pointed, "I will set mine between the two of ours and if I do so, then you must say I am the better archer."

She nodded, "I will concede if you can do that, sen (Brother), but without knocking either loose."

He let fly and the arrows trembled as they were separated by his arrow, but they held, three arrows in a tilted row. She raised her bow and shot one more time, the arrow landing to the lower left

of the target. He began to speak but then stopped and smiled. She had added Sopdet to Sah.

Satisfied, she lowered her bow, "You were not withholding much for me, sen (Brother)."

"No, I did not," he grinned, "I still like seeing a strong woman stand up for herself."

She grinned back, "Then all is well. I have to ask, am I getting this attention because you are preparing to leave again soon?"

"I will be here for a while. I have much work to do," he nodded at their target that was now being tended to by the servants, "You gave me Sopdet."

She cocked her eyebrow, "I did. She follows Sah still."

They handed their bows to their attendants and started back to the tent.

"I am glad to hear this. I would like us to remain here for a while. We have all the comforts we need for several days," he took her hand in his as they walked, "You do not have any responsibilities to tend to, do you?"

She shook her head, "I do not, Amenhotep."

"Then let us remain. What we do not have, the servants will be able to get for us. I would like to simply ...be here and let us be as we have always been, tjaw n tjaw-j (Breath of my breath). I would like to talk but without an agenda," he paused, "It is not that I just wish for you to be the mother for Smenkhkare ... Kiya, I would also like to see you happy with your own child in your

arms," he turned to her, eyes searching her face. He softly finished, "our child."

She nodded, shy all of a sudden. Her duty to the throne was being called upon. He was asking her to give him an heir.

"I would ask one thing, Neb= .."

He placed his finger on her lips, "It is I, Kiya, if nothing happens then it is still I. There is no throne between the two of us."

She nodded, and he smiled, "Now what is this thing you ask?"

"That if we have a sA (son), he falls behind Smenkhkare for he is our first. "

He touched her face gently, running his finger along her cheek, "Yes, I would have it no other way. You are beautiful, round face."

She burst out laughing at the old insult, slapping his hand away and followed him with some more swats as he jumped back. He started laughing and dodged her. Mock yelling, he turned and ran toward the tent and she chased after him, their laughter filling the air. The servants surreptitiously watched the brother and sister until they both had disappeared into the tent.

And the days passed, where they were no longer required time and her memory flowed as effortlessly as they had, laughing, as they lay on the cushions, talking deep into the nights, relaxing in the desert heat of the days, and planning hwt-w (temples) for construction in 'Iwnw (Heliopolis), Men-nefer (Memphis), and Ipet-isut (Karnak) and

the smaller cities and towns. The ḥwt-w (temples) were to extend to the north as far as Silu¹⁹⁴, where the best wine flowed from the vines and south into Nehset (Nubia) until they reached Gebel Barkal¹⁹⁵. Thus, the rekhyt (people) of the Two Lands would be given ḥwt-w (temples) where they could come and worship. So, while Amenhotep worked on his building plans, they relaxed, quietly writing, sharing their poems and songs, stargazing, playing games, sleeping late, waking when they wished. Laughter filled the memory as he taught her of 'Re-Harakhty, who rejoices in the horizon, In His Name of Light, which is in the sun disc'¹⁹⁶, as he was led by Him. He constructed a šwt-r^e (sunshade)¹⁹⁷ for their daily oblations, singing hymns and reciting the qakh-w (prayers) he wrote for "In His Name of Light which is in the sun disc"¹⁹⁸. Music wrapped like blankets of warmth, time useless, as they learned together in the desert wilderness, a quiet

¹⁹⁴ Also known as Tjaru; (Hoffmeier, 190)

¹⁹⁵ Hoffmeier, 169

¹⁹⁶ Hoffmeier, 72

¹⁹⁷ Smaller alter for worshipping in the open under the sun

¹⁹⁸ Using nature's physical characteristics to name God (Murnane, 57.B, pg. 103) "Representation on the ground of likeness" thus external nature was used in descriptions - Massey, Gerald. *Ancient Egypt: The Light of the World*. London: T. Fisher Unwin. 1907. pg. 5; In other words, given the knowledge of the man who was seeing the vision, he was able to only explain and describe according to what he knew from his world around him. Thus his vision with God was the Light that is in the Aten (not the Aten itself) It has the attributes of the light within, rather like the vision of Paul when he saw Jesus, Acts 9:1-22 and the most current sun gods at his time were Re and Horus.

joy settling around them, bringing the memories to a quiet moment within the tent.

She was sitting, holding the smooth golden-brown handle of her mirror, a brightly polished bronze aten (sun disc) held by a half circle fixed to the handle, in her hand. She was carefully applying her eye paint but with difficulty. In coming with Amenhotep to the desert, she left behind Shadya, who usually helped her with such things. She realized she was being watched and looked past her shoulder, in the mirror, brown eyes meeting brown ones. By the look on his face, he was obviously having an inner argument with himself over something.

“What is it, Amenhotep?”

He smiled back at her reflection in the mirror.

“Here, let me.”

She swiveled around to face him as he rose from the cushions and came across the tent to her, where he kneeled at her feet. He took her kohl tube from her hand gently and she closed her eyes as he leaned into her. He worked silently, his touch light upon her eyes, except when he told her to open them or to look up. Briefly, time reversed, and she was a young girl again as he was showing her how to paint her eyes. She smiled, sitting patiently under his hands, eyes closed, face tilted up as he worked. Then she felt his kiss softly brushing against her forehead as he had always done when he was satisfied.

She opened her eyes and he smiled at her again, “When we are together, Kiya, I am unbothered by the isfet (chaos) that swirls around me. The answers to my questions are heard and I have hope where I did not. We have no secrets, you and I.”

She nodded, “It is the same for me, Huy, I know no other way.”

“You have never demanded to be acknowledged beyond what is between us, as others have. They struggle to have the world see them for what they are to me. When I must go, you simply wait, silently, for me to return to you. This silence between us brings me joy knowing we are as we are, and it does not matter with the world, heri.t sesheta=j (my Mistress of Secrets). Before you found me, I struggled so, there was so much sadness but then you simply were with me, as we have been now. I see now why I keep you close to me. The love you have given is the love from It=J (My Father), ‘In His Name of Light which is in the sun disc’. He gave you to me, a great gift¹⁹⁹, long

¹⁹⁹ ““Do you want me to tell you the story of how you found me?” – there has been some big debates of the meaning of Gen-Pa-Aten - whether “The Aten is Found” or “That which the Aten has found”. Three temples actually use the form of this verb *gmi* (to find) which means this was important. Hoffmeier focused on why Akhenaten had so many offering tables within his complexes, thinking he was reenacting the moment he experienced the revelation of G-d, which is possible. When I was writing, the words struck me as “odd” but it is as it was to be written ... “the story of how you found me” and now I am having the thought: this is the story of how He found him. This just came to me just now. Personal note 9.12.18

before He found me because I was not ready to hear him. All that you have done has helped me prepare for this time we are in now, this time that I am to sbayt (teach) rekhyt=w (our people) to know pa 'nh 'Itn (the Living Aten) so they too may know this love we share."

"I have been happiest with you, sen (Brother)," she said simply.

He sat back on his heels, his hands now resting on her knees as he looked at her, "You have always put me before you and for this reason what you think is important to me. "

She nodded, watching him.

"What you think of me as a man, as a sA (son), is very important," he paused, "you must know I follow it=w (our father) in all that he says and does."

She nodded again, her heart warmed by his words but now a little worried. Had he done something horribly wrong?

He chuckled and shook his head, "No, I have done nothing wrong. It is that I do believe it (Father) speaks to It=J (My Father), "Light that is in the Aten," and I need you to know in your heart," he touched her above her heart, "that what I am about to say is not against him in anyway. This is important to me. No matter what any may think of me, it is what you think that I carry in my heart."

She searched his eyes and then spoke softly, "I know you make no decision lightly and you lead with MaAt (Truth) forever in front of you.

I doubt none of your words for they are not spoken lightly.”

He relaxed a little and began to speak slowly, “I believe up to now it=w (our father) and I seemed to be hearing similar messages, but we differ in that he is even more determined that he is a netjer (god). Do you believe it is possible that he has heard differently than I?”

Nebetiah thought for a moment, “Would not what we desire change how we hear what a netjer (god) tells two different men? I have seen this happen with rekhyt (people) when they talk to each other. They can be saying the same thing but because their desires are different, they are hearing entirely different words from each other. It is not the netjer (god) who is saying something different. It is the person who is hearing with their desire interpreting the words. They cannot hear MaAt (Truth) because it is blocked by their wants or needs or even fears. You will not be able to turn aside those who do not hear. You will not be able to turn aside those who hear what they want to hear. The only way to hear the true words of the netjer (god) is to not have your desire in the way, to be open to MaAt (Truth) given by the netjer (god). But then ... how do we know we are hearing MaAt (Truth)? The way you know is the complete release of self, so you serve others with no desires for your own. You judge none because you see this leads nowhere, you harm none to gain for yourself because you know no man is put above another

man. The one who wishes to serve the will of netjer (god), will hear Him more clearly than those who serve themselves first.”

He nodded, relieved, “This is as I thought. The hem netjer (servant of god) must be pure in his heart, mind, and body so he will fully hear MaAt (Truth). I can see how this would change how I hear. If there is a desire that I hold, I will hear the netjer (god) but it will not truly be what the netjer (god) wants. It will be what I want because I interpret the Words the way I hear and then I will think it is given by the netjer (god),” he nodded slowly, in thought.

“In purifying my heart, I then have let go of all of my own desires so when I hear, I will know I have heard the Words of pa `nh `Itn (the Living Aten). I will know when I am on this path ... it is a memory that has awoken within me and I feel that I have known this my whole life,” he sighed and fell silent, thinking. Then realization dawned on Amenhotep’s face, “In my first maa (vision) It=J (My Father) said ‘Come, sA (son), that you may become a spirit through me.’²⁰⁰ As I follow His Will then I am being brought closer to Him. As My Father leads me, so will I lead those who hear. Dua netjer en etj, Kiya (Thank God for you, Kiya), you have given me the clarity I have been seeking. I will do what I need to honor it=w (our father) but still

²⁰⁰ Sons of God are led by the Spirit of G-d, so we may conform to God’s Will (Walvoord, John F.)

serve It=J (My Father), pa 'nh 'Itn (the Living Aten), as He wills me."

He shifted away from her now, to lie back on the cushions, tucking his hands behind his head, staring at the tent above them. Silence fell. She watched him as he became lost in his thoughts, a slight smile on his lips, as he wandered. This was something he had always done, always the one to stop and contemplate their words while she was moving forward swiftly to the next moment. He had always lingered so, and, as she lost her impatience of her youth, she had grown appreciative of his reflections. Now she waited for him to move them forward, knowing he would return to her when they were ready to continue. She caught her reflection in the mirror she still held in her lap and smiled to herself. He had put the eye paint on better than she could have done. As always, so she was not surprised. She gently put the mirror down. The noise of her movement seemed to bring him back.

"I ponder this peace within that I find when you are with me, Kiya, despite isfet (chaos) as it surrounds us. This love we live in can comfort in the darkest moments and I am not alone.... If we could remain here with no duties to call us back," he smiled at nothing above him.

"It is good to see no clouds at last, sen (Brother), that we could stay, but I feel there is more for you to do."

He rolled over and caught her hand, looking at her intently, "You are right. It is time for me to come to It=J (My Father), pa 'nh 'Itn (the Living Aten). As I do this you must realize that I will be absent from you. I have my work. Please do not think this means I have forgotten you nor what you have done for me ... for the throne, for our rekhyt (people). You have always given me hope, joy that is now even greater since It=J (My Father) has found me. Know in my heart any child given to me is a gift, be it girl or boy, Kiya. There will be no child unloved within the 'ah (palace) and none can change that. None. Do not forget this."

She nodded, surprised a little at his insistence, "I never questioned my service to the throne, sen (Brother). Djet ..."

He smiled and relaxed again, "N neheh. I just wanted to be sure you know in your heart how I feel. Thoughts of Waset (Thebes) but we will not stay there long. I will speak to Meryptah again but if he refuses, it is not their time. It is time for Men-nefer (Memphis) and then 'Iwnw (Heliopolis) for a royal sitting²⁰¹. I will build the hwt-w (temples) for 'Ra-Harakhty, who rejoices in the horizon, In His Name of Light, which is in the sun disc' in their nomes first. They are closer to Him. It is time for the royal sitting throughout the Two

²⁰¹ When the king announces a new temple building program, done when there is a new god, not simply a re-expression of an old god (Hoffmeier, James K. pg 76)

Lands so then I will go north. Then I will go south to Nehset (Nubia)."

He let go of her hand and rolled back onto his back to stare at the tent again, "We will travel with Parennefer, Nakht, Huy son of Aperiar, May, Ay and several other loyal nobles of the court so they may learn more as I speak with the hem-netjer-tipi-w (First Prophets of God) of the ḥwt-w (temples). I wish you with me, not as my sen.t (Sister), djet n neheh (forever and always), not as hem.t netjer n Aset (Servant of Aset), not as hem.t netjer n Neith (Servant of Neith), nor as hem.t netjer n Heka (Servant of Heka). I wish you to attend to me as maw n maa-w (seer of visions) heri.t sesheta n Hm=f (Mistress of secrets of His Majesty), who loves you²⁰². I ask you to remain with me as you have been, giving me guidance. I wish to have you with me, so I may speak with you as I need. Tell me you will do this for me. I do not command but ask."

She nodded, "Of course, sen (Brother), I will stay with you as long as you need me."

"Djet n neheh (forever and always)," he smiled.

She laughed softly, shaking her head, "Then it is so, Djet n neheh (forever and always)."

He nodded but was serious, "Keep this between us. For the others it will be because I wish you with me."

²⁰² Hryt sšt3 n mdw-št3(w) nw ḥm=f mrr=k

“Nefertiti...”

“Our child will be here soon, and she will not be able to attend,” he stopped a moment, “She is to understand she is not to order me in anything. For now, her place is behind me. When she is ready, I do want her next to me but only if she learns she must respect my will in all matters.”

“Am I a lesson for her?”

“No, I had this time for us planned before she started following my steps,” he smiled at her reassuringly, “She knew of this before my maa (vision) and played a hand that has been slapped. This was to please you, of course, but I spoke with her of this many times. You do not need to speak of our time here. You are heri.t sesheta n Hm=f (Mistress of secrets of His Majesty), sen.t (sister). If I decide she is to know, I will tell her,” he shook his head, “Her action simply gave us as many days as we wish to have, so that she has made it into a lesson for her is of her doing, not ours. Do not let this cloud our time together. I am happy I have this time with you, Kiya.”

He leaned forward and kissed her gently on her forehead again, the memory fading in the warmth of his love surrounding her. More memories surged forward, replacing it, as Nebetiah drifted through the hesep (garden), the ground moist under her feet, the trees slowly moving by her, their shadowy forms only half-registering in her mind, like an elusive dream, seen through a

mist, shading the memories drifting through her mind.

Rising in front of her were the stern faces of ḥem netjer tepi n imn (first servant of Amun), Meryptah, and ḥem netjer snnw n imn (second servant of Amun), Si-mut, during the royal sitting with Nsw (King) Neferkheperu-re Wa'en-re, on his return from the desert. He was speaking of the ḥwt-w (temples) of 'itn (Aten) he would build within the sacred grounds of Ipet-isut (Karnak). The steadfast refusals of the two leaders not deterring Nsw (King) Neferkheperu-re Wa'en-re's whose vision and determination kept him following the Will of It=K (His Father). Then the face of Nefertiti seeking to find out if Nebetiah was to bring a child to the throne and her anger at Nebetiah's silence, unknowing that Nebetiah had been ordered to remain silent with her rose to be followed by Nefertiti no longer seeking Nebetiah's company, and now refusing to see her when she approached. The silence now enveloping Nebetiah was not unknown for jealousy was a common emotion living within per-ḥnr.t (House of Royal Women). Nebetiah did not let her memories dwell on the anger of Nefertiti, knowledge she was fulfilling her royal duty, a legacy given to her from the moment of her birth was enough. It was the life of a princess as a ḥm.t nsw.t (royal wife) so she turned from the memories of Nefertiti remaining silent.

Memories roiled around her ... Nefertiti, more driven, pursuing the elusive rank of ḥm.t

nsw.t wrt (Great Royal Wife) as she sought to give a male heir to the throne. The young ḥm.t nsw.t (royal wife) staying at Nsw (King) Neferkheperu-re Wa'en-re's side as he allowed, learning all she could about pa 'nh 'Itn (the Living Aten) and the needs of Nsw (King) Neferkheperu-re Wa'en-re', showing him, she was indispensable as the woman who would lead the neseyte (kingship) with him.

The nsw (king) sitting with Ramose, Parennefer, Tutu, and the qed-w (architects), reviewing the renderings for the temples to be built in the North. Nsw (King) Neferkheperu-re Wa'en-re speaking to officials of his court surrounded by his twelve most loyal nobles²⁰³, of pa 'nh 'Itn (the Living Aten) and placing Smenkhkare under the guidance of Parennefer and Nakhtpaamun. Amid all of this that she watched silently, were the preparations of the caravan that would be taking them north.

More memoirs rose as she moved forward, returning to caring for the ill, the arrival of Meritaten²⁰⁴, daughter of ḥm.t nsw.t (royal wife) Nefertiti, filling the palace with joy and celebration, the jubilee echoing the young father's happiness with the gift of life from It=K (His Father). Nefertiti, speaking often and loudly of her second child being a son, clinging to her dream as she fought her disappointment. Nebetiah tending to the sick of the 'ah (palace) and attending Nsw (King)

²⁰³ (Murnane, William. *The Treasurer*, SUTAU. 186)

²⁰⁴ She who is beloved of Aten

Neferkheperu-re Wa'en-re as he requested, listening to the whispers of the per-ḥnr.t (House of Royal Women), smiling softly but remaining vigilant. Smenkhkare remaining hidden within the walls of the per-ḥnr.t (House of Royal Women), under the very noses of the ḥm.t-w (wives) who squabbled for the throne.

Memories flowed, memories of Nsw (king) Nebma'atre, often seeking his son, even as his health worsened. Nsw (King) Neferkheperu-re Wa'en-re sitting in counsel with the older king and master qed-w (architects), pouring over a table covered in renderings. Nsw (King) Neferkheperu-re Wa'en-re centering his attention as much as he could on his family, however, the Will of pa 'nh 'Itn (the Living Aten) driving him persistently as he worked late and rose early, overseeing the preparations of the caravan, which was to take them northward, and sitting in endless meetings within the usechet (audience hall). He was often seen with Meritaten in his arms or Nefertiti by his side, giving oblations to pa 'nh 'Itn (the Living Aten) or sitting with ḥm.t nsw.t wr.t (Great Royal Wife) Tiye as they spoke speaking with dignitaries or overseers.

Countless sittings with Meryptah, ḥem netjer tepi n imn (first servant of Amun) discussing the construction within Ipet-isut (Karnak) now focusing on Amun and the lesser gods to mollify the prophet, in the hopes that building these ḥwt-w (temples) would allow the building of the ḥwt-w

(temples) for pa 'nh 'Itn (the Living Aten) to proceed. If there were complaints voiced by the ḥem-w netjer (servants of god), they fell on deaf ears for Nsw (King) Neferkheperu-re Wa'en-re was deep in the work of It=K (His Father) and would let none turn him aside. Everywhere the young nsw (king) spoke, he sought to teach.

Even the artisans were disciples. Their brushes and chisels soon were showing the beauty of pa 'nh 'Itn (the Living Aten) as he spoke of how they were to portray his growing family on the walls of the ḥwt-w (temples) and buildings. He gave them creative freedom to be truthful in their art, to show their subjects naturally with flowing lines and curves, hiding nothing from pa 'nh 'Itn (the Living Aten)²⁰⁵ or His rekhyt (people). The freedom was new to them, but they found they enjoyed the expression they could now effect with their paintings and sculptures. MaAt (Truth) was important to Nsw (King) Neferkheperu-re Wa'en-re and he made sure it was alive in the 'ah (palace) and the rekhyt (people) around him.

The memories churned forward swiftly, full of camels, laden with their burdens, servants lining the courtyard, chariots and horses readied with the guard and military escorts waiting in rank, filling her vision. The caravan that carried Nsw (King) Neferkheperu-re Wa'en-re, Smenkhkare, Nebetiah, and twelve nobles of his court was

²⁰⁵ (Murnane, 129)

almost like a small city moving to Men-nefer (Memphis) and then ʿIwnw (Heliopolis). Calls of men and horses crying out occasionally as they rode forward during the days and by nights, they gathered in the main tent to rest and eat before retiring to their own tents. Nebetiah, with Shadya at her feet, spent many hours on the journey enjoying the talk over their meals at night between Nakhtpaaten²⁰⁶, May²⁰⁷, Parennefer²⁰⁸, Ahmose²⁰⁹, Tutu²¹⁰, Ay²¹¹, Suty²¹², Meryra²¹³, Penthu²¹⁴, Panhesy²¹⁵, Any²¹⁶, Nsw (King) Neferkheperu-re

²⁰⁶ “Strong is the Aten”; half-brother of Akhenaten; Overseer of the city and vizier (tjatj/tjaty); responsibilities included supervising the security of the palace and king by overseeing the comings and goings of visitors, also ensured the king’s families’ safety in Akhet-Aten; hereditary prince and count

²⁰⁷ General of the Lord of the Two Lands; Sole companion of the King; in his tomb he speaks of how Akhenaten helped him from humble beginnings to become a prince of the court

²⁰⁸ Now Royal Butler; he was Akhenaten’s advisor when he was a child

²⁰⁹ Ahmes also; Fan-bearer on the King’s Right Hand, Steward of the Estate of Akhenaten, Follower of the two feet of the Lord of Two Lands (he follows the teachings), True Scribe of the King, Superintendent of the Court House of the Lord of the Two Lands

²¹⁰ Chief servitor of Neferkheperu-re Wa’en-re (the King) in...(damaged text)... of the Temple of the Aten in Akhet-aten, Overseer of all works of His Majesty, Overseer of silver and gold of the Lord of the Two Lands

²¹¹ Fan-bearer on the King’s Right Hand, True Scribe of the King, Overseer of the Horses

²¹² Regiment Commander of the body guard for the King – Standard bearer of the gild of Neferkheperu-re Wa’en-re

²¹³ Greatest of Seers of the Aten in Akhet-aten

²¹⁴ First Servant of the Aten in the Mansion of the Aten in Akhet-aten and Chief of the Physicians, Chamberlain

²¹⁵ First Servant of the Aten in the House of Aten in Akhet-aten

Wa'en-re, and Paamunemheb²¹⁷. She spent time with Smenkhkare when he was not sitting with the men, listening as they talked. These moments were few for Nakhtpaamun and Parennefer were taskmasters with his learning, but she did not quarrel. She saw he relished the hard work and long hours like his older brother, it=F (his father).

They arrived in Men-nefer (Memphis) first settling into the 'ah (palace) and holding an audience with the High Steward of Memphis, Ipy²¹⁸, son of Amenhotep-Huy²¹⁹ and nephew of Ramose²²⁰, tjaty (vizier) of the South. The nsw (king) convened the royal sitting several days later to allow the wab -w (priests) of the hwt (temple) to prepare for their audience with the court. The royal sitting was well received by the hem-netjer-tepi n ptah (First Servant of Ptah) of Hut-ka-Ptah (Enclosure of the Ka of Ptah), who was warmly congenial. Nebetiah sat silently during the royal sitting, seated behind and to the right of Nsw (King) Neferkheperu-re Wa'en-re who was seated

²¹⁶ Royal Scribe ; Scribe of the Offerings of the Lord of the Two Lands; Scribe of the Offerings of the Aten; Steward of the House of Aakheperu-re (Amenhotep II)

²¹⁷ Paatenemheb; General of the Lord of the Two Lands, Overseer of the Works in Akhet-aten

²¹⁸ High Steward of Memphis until Year 6 of Amenhotep IV's reign then became Overseer of the Inner Palace of Pharaoh in Akhet-aten

²¹⁹ Vizier under King Nebma'atre until he died before first heb-sed for King Nebma'atre; High Steward of Memphis succeeded by son Ipy; Vizier succeeded by Ramose for the last 10 years of King Nebma'atre

²²⁰ Vizier under both Amenhotep III and Amenhotep IV who also continued under Akhenaten. We really don't know if he was N or S.

at the table with his entourage and the wab-w (priests). Shadya silently attended her, providing her with her refreshments and food as the hours passed while the men talked.

The days flowed smoothly as they settled into a rhythm. Each day she assessed the men around the table as the nsw (king) spoke of 'Ra-Harakhty, who rejoices in the horizon, In His Name of Light, which is in the sun disc' and the new construction for ḥwt=F (His temple) within the city. Nsw (King) Neferkheperu-re Wa'en-re led them in the daily oblations to 'In His Name of Light which is in the sun disc'. She listened as the nsw (king) and the nobles spoke over their evening meal and then, after the men all dispersed for the evening, she and the nsw (king) would walk in the hesep (garden) of the 'ah (palace).

He would listen in silence as she gave her thoughts of the sitting and men, how his words were being received. He would ask questions and then they prayed together as the sun set for the evening. Every morning he would bring the men together, and they would greet pa 'nh 'Itn (the Living Aten) with qakh (prayer to G-d) or song and the day would start again. Soon the officials of Men-nefer (Memphis) and the wab-w (priests) of the temples were also asking questions and listening to Nsw (King) Neferkheperu-re Wa'en-re as he spoke of pa 'nh 'Itn (the Living Aten). The visit to Men-nefer (Memphis) was successful for the wab-w (priests) were accepting pa 'nh 'Itn (the

Living Aten) and the construction of the new ḥwt (temple) would be begun. Nsw (King) Neferkheperu-re Wa'en-re would return for the "Stretching of the Cord"²²¹ ceremony in the months to follow. The wab -w (priests) of Hut-ka-Ptah would continue with the worship of Ptah uninterrupted, serving all the gods, including pa 'nh 'Itn (the Living Aten). Nsw (King) Neferkheperu-re Wa'en-re was pleased It=f (His Father) was well received as they moved on to 'Iwnw (Heliopolis).

The nsw (king) received the same congenial reception in the city of 'Iwnw (Heliopolis) and again, the caravan of nobles settled into the local 'ah (palace) of the nsw (king) for several days before Nsw (King) Neferkheperu-re Wa'en-re held his royal sitting with Pawah, hem-netjer-tepi n Re (First Servant of Re). Nsw (King) Neferkheperu-re Wa'en-re spoke of 'Ra-Harakhty who rejoices in the horizon, In His Name of Light, which is in the sun disc' to Pawah and soon there was a deep discussion between the two men. Their audiences were extended to other wab -w (priests) and the nsw (king) took pleasure in speaking of pa 'nh 'Itn (the Living Aten) as Pawah continued to ask questions and their conversations turned to teaching. The plans for the new temple for pa 'nh 'Itn (the Living Aten) were gladly accepted with anticipation. The nsw (king) was pleased. The

²²¹ Ground breaking ceremony of the Ancient Egyptians conferring protection of God on construction and building

building of a temple for pa 'nh 'Itn (the Living Aten) would begin with Nsw (King) Neferkheperu-re Wa'en-re would return for the 'Stretching of the Cord' when it was time.

The success of each royal sitting drew Nsw (King) Neferkheperu-re Wa'en-re northward even further as he continued to move from nome to nome, instituting the new temple constructions. They were in the city of Smabehdet²²² in the nome Anpu²²³ on their last night before they would start southward again and thoughts of returning home were strong. They had been away long enough for everyone to now be looking forward to their return, feeling fulfilled, for the nsw (king) had been well received by all nomes.

The memory that surged, shifting her forward, was of the night Amenhotep and she were taking their customary walk in the hesep (garden), within the walls of the king's resting place²²⁴ in the little town. The night was lit lightly by the stars and the air was cool as they strolled quietly, hand in arm. Nebetiah was ready to return home like most of the men and even Amenhotep was feeling the call. He was planning to visit Nehset (Nubia) even before he had started on the journey home, although he was no longer consumed with plans

²²² Behdet; in 1200 BC it was named Paiuenamun or Island of Amun

²²³ Hill, Jenny. 2010. 12 September 2018. "Map of Ancient Egypt: Upper Egypt". *Ancient Egypt Online*.

<<https://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/nomesupper.html>>

²²⁴ Not as big as a palace but he had places to stay as he traveled the country

for ḥwt (temple) construction. Urgency gone, he knew they would be done and he could release the work to his overseers now. The welcome and agreeable reception he had received in the north had renewed his determination and calmed his urgency. He would begin the construction within Waset (Thebes) despite the reluctance of Meryptah, ḥem netjer tepi n imn (first servant of Amun). He was pleased with his conversations with Pawah, who had kept him long after all others had fallen asleep, talking to him of his maa-w (visions). While his thoughts were still full of pa 'nh 'Itn (the Living Aten), he was also missing Meritaten and Nefertiti. He was speaking of them more and more often with Nebetiah and she listened as she used to when they were younger, quietly smiling as they walked along.

She had news herself, but she held her silence to wait for a time that he was no longer absorbed with the work he had at hand, knowing it would not be until they were turning back to Waset (Thebes). Now his mind was turning to his family and she did not wish to disturb his thoughts because she enjoyed his stories of her niece and sen.t (sister). It was her silence that made him pause.

"I feel there is something on your mind, sen.t (Sister). I talk too much so you are not able to speak," he looked inquiringly at her as they walked.

She shook her head, "I enjoy listening to you speak of Nefertiti and Meritaten. It is like I am there with them."

He patted her hand where it rested on his arm, "I am sorry, Kiya, that Nefertiti is so harsh to you. I can ask her to respect my time with you, but I cannot get her to see that you love her as much as I do."

Nebetiah laughed, "Perhaps not as much as you, sen (Brother), but I do wish sometimes this was different. It passes though so do not worry on it."

"I will always worry on it, Kiya, for it is sad for me to see my two most beloved are separated again," he sighed, "but you are right in there is nothing I can do other than I have. Let us speak of other things, then. What is it that you need to tell me?"

He smiled down at her in the dark. She looked up at him. He was thoughtful but pleased. He had a sense of calm about him because he had accomplished what he was supposed to do for It=K (His Father). There was still much work to be done but he had been met with warm acceptance in the North, a very different reception from Waset (Thebes) and it had settled his mind. The darkening night did not make it easy to see his face, but she sensed he was at peace.

"I do need to speak to you on another matter, Huy."

He nodded, "I am listening."

“It may be wise that I do not travel with you to Nehset (Nubia),” she paused, “You are to be it (father) again.”

She felt his hand tighten on hers. He said nothing for a moment as they continued to walk. When he spoke, his voice was thick, so he cleared his throat. He was crying. She raised his hand and kissed the back of it.

“Are you ...?” he asked softly.

“I am happy, Huy,” she smiled, “I am happy that I have been allowed to give you this child.”

He stopped walking and turned her to him, so he could look into her face in the starlight, “You have the eyes of a n’rw (dove) and ib n ib-j (heart of my own) within you. I am given a great gift with your love, Kiya. I would prefer that you come with me to Nehset (Nubia) to be as you have been for me,” he paused again and then spoke softer, “and also so I know you are well.”

She opened her mouth, about to tell him she was when she realized he was speaking of Nefertiti. Her anger would be harsh, “Would it be wiser to bring Nefertiti with you on this journey?”

He shook his head, “It is not time yet, for her. I have need of you because you settle me by simply being with me. You are here for me. You bring me MaAt (order) with your love. For Nefertiti, I need to have my maa-w (visions) in place and the work of It=J (My Father) clear to all. We are not there yet but almost. Then it will be her

time. She will not understand this, but I know you do.”

Nebetiah nodded. She had not been sure where she should be, but he had guided her decision, “I follow you, sen (Brother).”

He smiled, relieved, and they started walking again, his hand now resting over hers on his arm, “As we move forward, I need not tell you to guard all that we speak of well, heri.t sesheta (Mistress of Secrets), for there will be more anger and not just of Nefertiti.”

She kissed his palm, “You are of me, sen (Brother), and I will walk above it.”

He turned to her again and lifted her chin to make her look at him. He was very serious, “You must take greater care than you do now. I know there is anger in Nefertiti, and I have hope that she will see that she is only fighting against herself. If only she could see that she is dimming my happiness,” he leaned his forehead against her, and fell silent for a moment and then whispered, “But you have made me very happy, Kiya, and this helps me move forward with Nefertiti.”

“My heart rejoices to hear this, sen (Brother),” she whispered back.

He tucked his arm around her shoulder, in their childhood embrace, “Djet, Meryt=j (Forever, my beloved) ...”

“N neheh (And always) ...”

Her whisper faded away like a rose petal falling, as the memory swirled away and others

that Nebetiah carried close to her heart, surrounded her, following each other swiftly, as she trailed along in the hesep (garden), oblivious to her surroundings as she wandered. The moments of their father, Nsw (King) Nebma'atre who was increasingly sick, spending much of his time speaking to maw-w (seers) and being seen by sau²²⁵ (doctor) for remedies, no longer with his son.

As Nsw (King) Neferkheperu-re Wa'en-re bore forward, following the Will of 'Ra-Harakhty, who rejoices in the horizon, In His Name of Light, which is in the sun disc' with renewed energy, the will of men was like a crushed sheet of papyrus under his heel. He began building on the land outside Ipet-isut (Karnak). The first structure, Per 'Itn (House of Aten), a large sacred complex, facing eastward, greeting the rising re (sun) rose quickly, ironically blocking Ipet-isut (Karnak) from the first morning stwt (rays) of s'nḥ (life). The increasing indignation of Meryptah and Si-mut, complaining

²²⁵ S3w; Physician who uses holistic approach with emphasis on prayer so combined medicine and spiritual healing which included prayers, amulets etc.. We call it magic but is it magic: aroma therapy, prayer, wearing of medals of saints, acupuncture? Today research has shown there is a positive result when including prayer in healing; Native American's had maunêtu who healed with prayers to the spirits only and pawwau (powwow) who healed with prayer and medicine which are called shaman by most. A relevant example? Jesus healed with prayer only, not medicine which would make him a pretty powerful magician by our own definition, right? No hypocrisy ...

of the usurping of the Temple of Amun, fell on deaf ears but continued unabated as the construction neared completion.

The memory of the sadness of their father, Nsw (King) Nebma'atre, passing did not linger long as her memories flowed past the anger of the wab-w (priests) growing within the neseyte (kingship). They carried her swiftly like the water of the h'pī (Nile) past those of the excitement of the flurry of celebrations, guided under the watchful eye of ḥm.t nsw.t wr.t (Great Royal Wife) Tiyi, as alliances across the land with the surrounding kingdoms were renewed with marriages of Nsw (King) Neferkheperu-re Waren-re to some of his father's widows.

More memories of strife rushed by as Nefertiti grew more demanding as her desire to be his ḥm.t nsw.t wr.t (Great Royal Wife) seemed precarious now. It was no longer only Nebetiah who stood in the way, now the per-ḥnr.t (House of Royal Women) was filled with beautiful princess ḥm.t-w (wives) who had not been there before and had caught the eye and, possibly, the heart of the young nsw (king). These women were a threat to her ambition because they were not just fulfilling a duty to the throne, they were chosen by the new (king) himself.

The images were shifting quickly again, ḥm.t nsw.t wr.t (Great Royal Wife) Tiyi guiding the neseyte (kingship) as she always had, now unobtrusively behind Nsw (King) Neferkheperu-re

Wa'en-re or next to ḥm.t nsw.t (royal wife) Nefertiti. As the nsw (king) became immersed, sitting in the usechet (audience hall), surrounded by officials and royals who wished to hear him speak his sbayt (instruction) of 'Re-Harakhty, who rejoices in the horizon, in His Name of Light, which is in the sun disc', Nefertiti was learning to lead as she once said she would.

Always by his side, were his two wives, Nebetiah as confidante of his heart²²⁶ and Nefertiti as muse of his love. Images of Nefertiti, by his side in public, their affection and attention to each other symbolic of the love of pa 'nh 'Itn (the Living Aten), the life growing between them with each child, now waiting for the birth of their second, a symbol of life everlasting. This memory was swirling with memories of the young consort blossoming into her role as the favored ḥm.t nsw.t (royal wife). Nefertiti followed Nsw (King) Neferkheperu-re Wa'en-re with song and happiness, focusing her attention on fulfilling her role as mother of the kingship's heir and his royal consort. Artisans were regaling her beauty on the walls of buildings and in (temples), by his side as his chosen wife and she glowed. As she grew in her confidence, she also grew in Nsw (King)

²²⁶ Heart was considered by the Egyptians be both the heart-haty, heart muscle, and the ib, center of spiritual knowledge, thought, intelligence and memory = person' character. Ziskind, Bernard and Halioua, Bruno. Heart design in ancient Egypt: Concepts of the heart in Ancient Egypt. *Medicine/Sciences*. 2004: 20:367-73

Neferkheperu-re Wa'en-re trust and he gave her more leadership, slowly removing ḥm.t nsw.t wrt (Great Royal Wife) Tiyi.

So, while Nefertiti walked with Nsw (King) Neferkheperu-re Wa'en-re in the sunlight, it was Nebetiah who walked in the moonlight with him. They would meet under their heter ished-w (twin perseas) after all were asleep, one of them whispering while the other listened. These moments helped Amenhotep with his arguments with the wab-w (priests), for he was able to hold his restraint out of respect and turned to Nebetiah to find common ground. The times he felt overwhelmed and needed to talk through the maa-w (visions) and thoughts to help him clear his mind, he spoke with Nebetiah. As the resistance of the wab-w (priests) in Ipet-isut increased, he spoke more often with Nebetiah. She would listen as he spoke of his thoughts, maa-w (visions), and concerns, offering guidance as she could or simply listening, as he needed.

Preparations for the first heb-sed for the Aten²²⁷ began and Nsw (King) Neferkheperu-re Wa'en-re was in constant sittings with his tjaty-w (viziers) Ramose and Aperiar, his overseers of his works and craftsmen Parennefer, Tutu,

²²⁷ Very shortened name, used in prayers when addressing Him directly. Amenhotep eventually stopped using the word "god" because G-d was not part of the gods they were worshipping. He was above them, different and Amenhotep did not want to include Him with the others because He is the only G-d (Hoffmeier, 227) (Murnane, 114)

Paamunemheb, May, his advisors Ay, Meryra, and Nakhtpaamun, and the qed-w (architects). They were all involved with the renderings for building ḥwt-w (temples) within the walls of Per 'Itn (House of Aten). The Per 'Itn (House of Aten), would contain the Rwd-mnw (Enduring of Monuments for Aten forever)²²⁸, the Tni-mnw (Lofty are the Monuments of Aten)²²⁹ and the larger ḥwt (temple) of Gm p3 'itn (Gem-pa-aten)²³⁰ that would contain ḥwt bnb (Mansion of BenBen)²³¹ and a smaller Sh-n-itn m Gm p3 'itn (The Booth of Aten within Gem-pa-aten). These were the ḥwt-w (temples) he was building all over the Two Lands and the heart of the worship was to be in Per 'Itn (House of Aten).

With the constructions of the ḥwt-w (temples) within Waset (Thebes) underway, preparations of the caravan to carry them south to begin the royal sittings in Nehset (Nubia) were completed. They were to travel as far south as Soleb, Sesebi²³², Kerma, and Gebel Barkal, bringing to life the plans he had spoken of those nights in the desert. Nsw (King) Neferkheperu-re Wa'en-re prepared to leave with Nebetiah, May, Nakhtpaamun, Smenkhkare, Parennefer, Tutu, Ay

²²⁸ Rwd-mnw-n-itn-r-nhh; Enduring Monuments of Aten Forever

²²⁹ Tni-mnw-n-itn-r-nhh; Exulted Monuments of Aten Forever

²³⁰ Gm(t) p3 'itn – Actual translation is uncertain; possibilities are That Which the Aten Found or The Aten is Found (gm meaning found or locate) (Hoffmeier, 142); temple outside the walls of Karnak

²³¹ Ḥwt bnb; The Mansion of the Benben; where Nefertiti officiated without Amenhotep IV

²³² In the area of Sesebi or Kawa of Nubia, Amenhotep IV built another Temple of Gem Pa Aten (Hoffmeier, 144-146)

and Meryra to begin his royal sittings. During the preparations, he officially brought Nefertiti to his side as his chosen wife, ḥm.t nsw.t tpt (Chief Royal Wife)²³³ Neferneferuaten-Nefertiti²³⁴. With the final constructions starting in the south, the reign of ‘Ra-Harakhty, who rejoices in the horizon, In His Name of Light, which is in the sun disc’ would be extended to all who came into in the lands of the nesitye (kingship), to all who stwt=K (His rays) of s’nh (life), through the Aten²³⁵, reached.

Her memories continued to shift, the journey southward as the caravan traveled, as it had in the north, from temple-town to temple-town, the nsw (king) speaking with the hem-netjer-tipi (first servants of god) of the temples and setting plans for the return of Parennefer, May and Tutu to begin the constructions. He was joined by Tutmose²³⁶, viceroy of K3š (Kush) who was to ensure the work was coordinated for the overseers and facilitate the return of the nsw (king) for the “Cutting of the Cord”. Nebetiah was as before, silent and watching, every night walking with Amenhotep in the gardens of his resting places in each temple-town they visited.

It was one of these moments that now bubbled up out of the mist of the hesep (garden)

²³³ The Metropolitan Museum of Art. *Goblet Inscribed with the Names of King Amenhotep IV and Queen Nefertiti*. 2000-2018. 14 September 2018. <https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/works-of-art/22.9.1>

²³⁴ Beautiful are the Beauties of Aten, The Beautiful One has Come

²³⁵ “Shining in the orb (= Aten) during the day” (Murnane, 113)

²³⁶ Born of the god, Thoth

into the darkness surrounding her. A darkness that was unveiled by the light of the iah (moon), as the men slept, when she joined Amenhotep. He was standing, staring up at the stars, lost in thought so he did not hear her approach. She moved beside him, startling him and he jumped.

He recovered himself with a soft chuckle, smiled, placing one hand on her now rounded belly, "How are you? Do you have all that you need? Is the child well? I see you every day in the sitting, but I can only speak with you in the light of iah (moon)."

She smiled and placed her hand on top of his, "This is not such a bad thing, sen (brother). You see illumination under re (sun) and hear wisdom under the iah (moon). We are fine."

He was silent a moment, looking down at their hands and then seemed to mentally shake himself, "I always wonder what it would be like if Nefertiti did not anger so but then those thoughts turn me to the anger. I wish to remain above this and bring her to me instead of becoming as she is," he tucked Nebetiah under his arm as he had always done, and they turned, to start walking. "I brought you for two reasons this time, Kiya. First to be with me as you have been but the second was so I knew Nefertiti would not anger when she realized you also carry a child," he paused, "I have been blessed as both my wives bring me a child but I do not think Nefertiti will see this as I do. I did not want to leave you alone with this anger of hers. This is

something I will guard you against until she sees she has nothing to fear. I hope with her as my chosen wife, she will be of a wider heart when we return.”

Kiya squeezed his hand. She felt relief. She had thought this was so, but she waited for her brother to tell her. The news Nefertiti was to have another child also thrilled her, “I am happy for you. I will pray that a son triples your blessings for you and Nefertiti.”

He shook his head as they moved to a bench and sat down, “It will be as it should be. Then there are the web-w (priests) who have my concern. I also have hope for the ḥem-w netjer n imn (servants of Amun) Meryptah and Si-mut who only grow more infuriated. I have May, ḥem netjer ḥmtnw n imn (third servant of Amun-Re) and Amenemhat, ḥem netjer jfdw n imn (fourth servant of Amun) who are not so outspoken so perhaps they are listening and will speak with the others,” he sighed, “I hope. The temple of Gem-pa-aten will be completed for the heb-sed of It=K (My Father) as will the others. Meryptah and Si-mut feel the Per ‘Itn (House of Aten) is encroaching on the sšts (sacred) ground of Ipet-isut (Karnak) and the ḥwt n imn (Temple of Amun). But you know this already.”

She nodded.

“We will have ḥwt (temple) constructions in Nehset (Nubia). The ḥwt-w (temples) in Men-nefer (Memphis) and ‘Iwnw (Heliopolis) have begun

receiving their offerings and have their wab-w (priests) in place. I have been north many times for the “Stretching of the Cord” for the other ḥwt-w (temples) being built. Even our brothers from the kingdoms around us send offerings for pa ‘nh ‘Itn (the Living Aten). It is only the wab-w (priests) here in Waset (Thebes) who refuse to hear the Words of It=J (My Father), but I will continue to lead them as I am told,” his attention had turned back to the stars above him, but he held her hand as silence settled between them. The moonlight lit everything in a beautiful silver light.

He looked at her finally, “I thought if the wab-w (priests) still had their god, Amun, and I simply commanded ḥem netjer tepi n imn (first servant of Amun) Meryptah to send those who wish to serve in the ḥwt-w (temples) of pa ‘nh ‘Itn (the Living Aten), then he would do so. This has been done in the other cities by the other ḥem-w netjer tepi (first servants of god), but here in Waset (Thebes) he has refused. Never have I seen such a refusal. It did not used to be this way.”

Nebetiah smiled wryly in the dark, “This difficulty with the wab-w (priests) was there with it (Father). I remember mewet (Mother) and it (Father) speaking of this and how the ḥem netjer tepi n imn (first servant of Amun) Ptahmose, then ḥem netjer tepi n imn (first servant of Amun) Meryptah were beginning to question it (Father). Remember, when it (Father) made Ptahmose tjaty (vizier) and Meryptah became ḥem netjer tepi n

imn (first servant of Amun)? This only moved the man, not the reluctance. You remember how much it (Father) built? The wab-w (priests) still were quarrelsome, demanding more for the netjer-w (gods) so he did more in hopes it would appease them. Now I am not sure if he was trying to appease the netjer-w (gods) or the wab-w (priests).”

He nodded as he settled back against the bench, drawing her with him, then sighed, “I remember that now. I had forgotten. I will admit I have been feeling like this was all new. This is something that has been in place before me. Perhaps this is why It=J (My Father) speaks to me now. I have been chosen as hem-netjer-tepi n (First Servant of) ‘Re-Harakhty, who rejoices in the horizon, In His Name of Light, which is in the sun disc’ and I will walk this path. I understand this will be hard. I will face them as guided by the Will of It=J (My Father). They fear the change but surely they will see shu=K (His Light).”

Nebetiah shook her head, “Those who can see the shu (Light) will be the ones who believe. You will know them for they gladly kneel, with no fear or need to be in control. Perhaps this is the very reason the wab-w (priests) of Amun are afraid. They fear their loss of power. It is not about the gods. If it were about the gods, then would they not have resisted Re? Ptah?”

Amenhotep was studying the stars again, “You ask a good question. Pa ‘nh ‘Itn (the Living

Aten) is taking away their power and I am simply doing His Will. As more come to pa 'nh 'Itn (the Living Aten), bringing their offerings, the less the wab-w (priests) of Amun have in the offerings that have built their wealth. If they do not bring pa 'nh 'Itn (the Living Aten) into their world, they will lose their power in both worlds. Do they not see this?"

She let silence fall between them. He seemed lost in thought. She watched him, simply holding his hand, waiting.

"The hem-w netjer n imn (servants of Amun) have grown strong. They do not listen to me. I know we want the same thing for our land, for it to prosper and grow. The hem-w netjer n imn (servants of Amun) stand against pa 'nh 'Itn (the Living Aten), telling me I am not hearing the words of pa 'nh 'Itn (the Living Aten) clearly and to listen to them because it is Amun who speaks to me but I am not to listen to men. I do not serve them. They are servants who are to obey my commands as the High Priest of All Temples. This has not changed. And yet, I do not want to cause a division."

He stopped, frustrated.

She softly reminded him, "But it is not you that causes the division, sen (Brother). The nesyte (kingship) is given to you by It=K (Your Father), pa 'nh 'Itn (the Living Aten). The nesyte (kingship) is divine. You are tending it, as a shepherd²³⁷ tends

²³⁷ "...kings had long ago been given the role of 'herdsman of mankind.'" – Barry Kemp as quoted in Amarna

his flock, as you have been told to do so as the Master to his shepherd. Nothing has changed within this neseyte (kingship). You are the mediator between the two worlds, not the wab-w (priests). The division has come because these wab-w (priests) have forgotten they are to obey your command, they are to follow you, and it is only by your command they may speak with netjer-w (gods)²³⁸. The question is what is causing the division. You know this answer.”

He nodded, “They are so adamant that they are right that MaAt (Truth) gets clouded with their fear. Thank you for reminding me, sen.t (Sister). The call of wealth has grown so strong. The hem netjer tepi n imn (first servant of Amun) Meryptah, cannot hear for the want of this greed and power, for the fear of loss of power and wealth. For this desire, he leads the wab-w (priests) astray and in this fear and greed they have strength together. The hem-w netjer n imn (servants of Amun) think they can speak as the nsw (king), to the netjer-w (gods) for the rekhyt (people). This was a concern from before it (father) but he could not be heard over their fear and now they do not listen to me, even with It=J (My Father) with me. All of this has led us nowhere but to the coffers of the hem-w netjer n

Project..“Understanding Amarna: An Interview with Barry Kemp”
AmarnaAnniversaary, 21 March 2017. 16 September 2018.
<https://amarnaanniversary.wordpress.com/2017/03/21/first-blog-post/>
²³⁸“I am a prophet. It is the king who has commanded me to see God.”
 = ink hm-ntr in ny-sw.t wd wì r m33 ntr spoken by the hm- ntr”

imn (servants of Amun) in the ḥwt n imn (temple of Amun). "In His Name of Light that is in the sun disc" has come forward to lead us back to MaAt (Truth) for their disavowing has caused the tipping into chaos to begin. This is the strife that is surrounding us from their usurping positions they have not been given. It is time for us to become one under 'Re-Harakhty, who rejoices in the horizon, In His Name of Light, which is in the sun disc'. It is time to unify all men. Instead the ḥem-w netjer n imn (servants of Amun) seek to take the neseyte (kingship) from the nsw (king)."

"Have they said this?" Her heart thudded in her chest.

"Not to me they will not say this, but it is shown by their actions. It (Father) is not the only nsw (king) they ignored, and this struggle has grown. As a boy, I was taught the issues of the neseyte (kingship) so I may be prepared to face them. Now I am ignored by the men who taught me, but I follow pa 'nh 'Itn (the Living Aten) who wishes to keep all together. I still seek how to do this with wab-w (priests). I do not wish to fight them, but I do because they block the Will of pa 'nh 'Itn (the Living Aten). I pray they will hear and come of their own to hear Him."

He fell silent as she absorbed his words. She could feel his frustration, the uncertainty, but also his sadness. He was shouldering the anger of men, the disobedience of the wab-w (priests) who were to obey his commands, respect his words, and

support his decisions. The men who were supposed to be his arms and legs within the ḥwt-w (temples) were placing their wishes above that of the rekhyt (people) because their desire had led them to believe they were to lead. He was fighting his own wab-w (priests).

She closed her eyes, letting the silence fill the spaces between them, hearing in between those spaces, “You hear ‘Re-Harakhty, who rejoices in the horizon, In His Name of Light, which is in the sun disc’ and you are led by Him. Those who hear you are led by you. You choose to follow His Will in your heart and work each day to do so. Those who choose to follow your will, which is His Will, will work each day to follow you and thus Him. Already you have your court of officials who hear the words of pa ‘nh ‘Itn (the Living Aten). You are not alone in this work. It=K (Your Father) knows that you will do what you can as you can. He would not set a path before you if you could not do as He Wills. He will show you a way.”

He was staring down at her hand, small in his, both darkened by their time in the sun. Nefertiti’s hand was a lighter color from her absence in the sun and Nebetiah felt a little twinge of embarrassment because a woman was considered beautiful if she was light skinned. She did not think of this as she worked in her herb garden but then she realized it did not matter. She enjoyed the closeness she felt with pa ‘nh ‘Itn (the Living Aten) as she kneeled among the plants. It

was this joy that Amenhotep needed to remember when he was faced with those who did not see the shu (Light). He needed to remember to surround himself with Him.

“The shepherd cannot save every of his flock if they decide to not follow or he will lose his whole flock for chasing one. You have those in the ḥwt-w (temples) who do follow your commands. As more come to you, those who do not now may follow when they see they are alone.”

She watched him as he turned her hand over and traced her palm lightly with his finger in the moonlight.

“Sen.t (Sister), you heal my heart each time I come to you broken and guide me when I am lost. Dwa- pa ‘nh ‘It n (Praise the Living Aten for) your wisdom.”

She reached out and lifted his head gently, so he was looking at her, surprised to see tears, sparkling in his eyes, “I am always here for you, sen (Brother), to make your heart whole. It has always been this way and will be djet (forever) ...”

“N neheh (And Always), Ibui (ibwi)²³⁹,” and he folded her into a deep, warm embrace which she returned.

After a moment, he sat back, tucking her under his arm again to keep her warm in the chilled night air. Sah rose above them with Sopdet

²³⁹ Heart of Hearts

following and she smiled. She felt him sigh, more than she heard him.

“When I was younger I wanted to be next to my father. I was tjaty (vizier) beside my brother and the three of us worked hard on the temples of Ipet-isut (Karnak). I did not dream of all of this without Djhutmose ...,” he shook his head, “I did not dream of this at all. What is this ... where the netjer (god) of another is not accepted by wab-w=w (our priests)? Wab-w=w (Our priests) refusing to listen to the nsw-twy (King of the Two Lands)? Never have I seen this. It is offensive, and I keep praying to keep this offense from burdening my heart²⁴⁰,” he whispered, “Never did I think I would be fighting my own wab-w (priests). They are the ones who taught me. Do they not think I would only wish to speak MaAt (Truth) for rekhyt=w (our people)?”

She shook her head, “When one walks the path of MaAt (Truth), one does not have many with them because there are many who are afraid of MaAt (Truth). They are afraid because it brings them too close to what they do not know, which makes them afraid, so they fight it, especially when it does not lead where they wish to go. MaAt (Truth) is a path we take alone for it is for each of us to choose to keep our world in MaAt (order). That we do this alone first, only guided by this knowledge to remain light in heart by doing

²⁴⁰ (Murnane, 78)

nothing that causes grief to another, even if we gain from it, so we may come to live continually under the stwt (rays) of pa 'nh 'Itn (the Living Aten), is a choice. If we chose to take this path, that is difficult, then this allows us to walk in MaAt (Truth) together because we all come together on the same path in our choice. This is the success of our lands because we have attained this moment. But if we chose to not take this path, then we remain alone, each in their struggle with chaos. Remember we must choose to not be in chaos for the self first before we can chose for our land. We have not always been together. The hearts of men have clouded the way of MaAt (Truth) before so it can happen again because each of us must keep our heart light, free of the arrogance that hides us from the sight of akh (eternal spirit). MaAt (Order) depends on all of us individually to come together as one."

He nodded, and looked up at the stars, "You speak well. It is a choice and I can only show them," he sighed again, "I am then blessed for I do have those who hear as I do," he tightened his arm around her shoulders, "Ra-Harakhty, who rejoices in the horizon, In His Name of Light, which is in the sun disc' is with us. I will meet in peace each who chooses to not hear and perhaps this will help those who do not see, to see."

They fell silent again, now both looking up, watching the stars, and the darkness of the night deepened until the memory was lost amid others

shifting like the dunes of wind-blown sand, blending one after the other. She smiled at her memories of love, elation, and happiness surrounding the birth of Beketaten²⁴¹, her first daughter, after their return from the successful royal visit in Nehset (Nubia). Also, Nefertiti gave her second daughter, Meketaten²⁴² but instead of celebrating, the young woman's antagonism swirled darkly around Kiya which perhaps would not have been so had Nefertiti had a son. Kiya's heart went out to the young mother but soon she forgot Nefertiti because she was too busy falling in love with the little girl she held in her arms.

As the ḥwt-w (temples) within Waset (Thebes) were completed, memories of beautiful paintings, sculptures and etchings filling their halls and decorating buildings flitted by, the outrage of Meryptah and Si-mut increasing when they saw the work. The name of pa P'Itn (the Aten), written in cartouches, followed by smaller cartouches of the king inscribed on walls and paintings²⁴³ infuriated them, as did the grand statues of Nsw (King) Neferkheperu-re Wa'en-re lining the walls of the Gem-Pa-Aten with carved cartouches of the Aten

²⁴¹ Handmaiden of Aten

²⁴² Protected by the Aten; Lowery, Zoe and Susanna Thomas. Akhenaten and Tutankhamen. New York: The Rosen Publishing Group Inc. 2017

²⁴³ Name written in a cartouche is indicating the status of a King, larger leading the smaller indicates the greater king with his subordinate son (Hoffmeier, 125)

decorating his body²⁴⁴ as preparations for the heb-sed continued. Their outrage grew when they saw the two large statues of ‘m rn.f m 3h m itn (In His Name of Spirit of Aten)’²⁴⁵, portrayed with Amenhotep becoming one with Nefertiti, melding into unity of one standing under the rays of pa ‘nh ‘Itn (the Living Aten), the Father, ‘Ra-Harakhty who rejoices in the horizon, In His Name of Light, which is in the sun disc’. Amenhotep had finally expressed the symbolic unity of all rekhyt (people), man and woman, king and queen, becoming one under the love and beauty of pa ‘nh ‘Itn (the Living Aten)²⁴⁶ but it fell on the deaf ears of the wab-w (priests).

The two hem-w netjer n imn (servants of Amun) believed they saw a total and complete break from the centuries of traditions of their gods as Nsw (King) Neferkheperu-re Wa’en-re prepared to celebrate the First Heb-Sed for ‘Re-Harakhty, who rejoices in the horizon, In His Name of Light, which is in the sun disc’. Nsw (King) Neferkheperu-re Wa’en-re seemed to not hear the rumblings, as he moved forward, directing his officials of favor²⁴⁷ to begin readying for the great celebration. Ipy, now High Steward of Memphis,

²⁴⁴ Indicates close relationship between Amenhotep and G-d (Hoffmeier, 127-128)

²⁴⁵ (Hoffmeier, 205)

²⁴⁶ Androgynous colossus of Akhenaten

²⁴⁷ (Murnane, 77)

was also the overseer of the jubilee²⁴⁸ that was to be held not just within in Waset (Thebes) in the Gem-pa-aten but, now that all of the temples of the Two Lands had been completed, held across the kingdom. Ipy was seen everywhere with the nsw (king) as excitement grew along with the resentment. The 'ah (palace) was in conflict with the hwt n imn (temple of Amun).

Her memories swirled forward, sweeping away the darkness with bright sunshine, laughter, singing, feasts, dancing, music, and hymns to the pa 'nh 'Itn (the Living Aten) rising to the heavens as the first of the continuous heb-seds for Him was held. The celebration of the 'Lord of Heaven, Lord of Earth ... the Father, [Re-Harakhty, who rejoices in the horizon]/[In His Name of Light²⁴⁹, which is in the sun disc]²⁵⁰, great Living Aten who is in jubilee]²⁵¹, and sA=F (His son)²⁵², the King of Upper and Lower Egypt, who lives on MaAt, Lord of Two Lands, Neferkheperure-Wa'enre, the Son of Re who

²⁴⁸ Dodson, Aiden. *Amarna Sunrise: Egypt From Golden Age to Age of Heresy*. New York: The American University in Cairo Press, 2014

²⁴⁹ When an individual does something "in the name of" another, this indicates a union: legal, life, love. Legal in which one has been given all the privileges going with the power of the Name; love in taking the name as a bride takes the name of the bridegroom, one then has certain rights and privileges in virtue of the fact that they have taken a new name - (Walvoord)

²⁵⁰ Cartouche name (Hoffmeier, 122) Indicate Kingship – King of All

²⁵¹ (Murnane, 73)

²⁵² "In the Name of Light": union in life, the union of father and son (Walvoord)

lives on MaAt, Lord of Crowns, Akhenaten²⁵³ marked the re-birth of the nsw (king). Amenhotep was no more, he had taken the name of It=K (His Father) and was Akhenaten²⁵⁴. The jubilee that ensued was a grand celebration of the son coming to It=K (His Father), King of Heaven and Earth, and joyfully bowing to His Will. The celebration continued every day that followed, with Akhenaten riding with ḥm.t nsw.t tpt (Chief Royal Wife) Neferneferure-Nefertiti, a beautiful glowing emblem of the creation of life as she was again with child, by his side to the Gem-Pa-Aten where they gave oblations to pa 'nh 'Itn (the Living Aten) at the height of the aten's (sun disc's) journey across the sky.

Nefertiti's bitterness rose as her dream of securing her position with a son was dashed for a third time with the birth of her third daughter, Ankhesenpaaten²⁵⁵ despite Nsw (King) Neferkheperu-re waren-re's joy in his littlest princess. Her increasing ill temper, that she seemed to lose herself in, was filling the per-ḥnr.t (House of

²⁵³ Ka nakht mery Aten (The strong bull, beloved of Aten), Wer nesyt em Ipet-sut (Great of Kingship in Karnak), Wetjus ren en Aten (Who has elevated the name of Aten), Nefer kheperu Ra, wa en Ra (The beautiful manifestations of Ra, unique one of Ra), Akh en Aten (Living Spirit of Aten)

²⁵⁴ Living Spirit of Aten; (Murnane, 74) "In the Name of Light": union in love in taking the name as a bride takes the name of the bridegroom, one then has certain rights and privileges in virtue of the fact that they have taken a new name - (Walvoord)

²⁵⁵ Living Through the Aten (Tyldesley, Joyce. *Nefertiti: Egypt's Sun Queen*. London: Viking Penguin Group. 1998.)

Royal Women). Her displeasure was swelling its walls.

A brief respite was granted, as artisans began depicting Nefertiti equal to the nsw (king) as ruler as they etched and painted in the ḥwt-w (temples). The peace returning to the per-ḥnr.t (House of Royal Women) enveloped Nebetiah, welcomed and warm, but these memories of peace did not last long. They faded quickly, as the attention of the nsw (king), always trained on completing the ḥwt-w (temples) for pa 'nh 'Itn (the Living Aten) turned to the south again, leaving the neighboring kingdoms with ḥm.t nsw.t wr.t (Great Royal Wife) Tiye and his tjaty-w (viziers), Ramose and Aperiar. He left the 'ah (palace) affairs, and thus the per-ḥnr.t (House of Royal Women), for the guidance under ḥm.t nsw.t tpt (Chief Royal Wife) Nefertiti.

She descended on the per-ḥnr.t (House of Royal Women) like a sand storm, dark and abrasive, using her considerable influence on the royal officials of the court, regardless if she ruled over them directly or not. Dismay rose as edict after edict filled the ears of princesses of the per-ḥnr.t (House of Royal Women), edicts that further removed the princesses from the attention of the nsw (king). Artisans were allowed to only record the Royal Family, who consisted of Nsw (King) Neferkheperu-re Wa'en-re, ḥm.t nsw.t tpt (Chief Royal Wife) Nefertiti, their three sa.t-w (daughters), her sister, Mutnedjmet and ḥm.t nsw.t wr.t (Great

Royal Wife) Tiyi, with the nsw (king) in etchings or paintings. Only the members of the Royal Family would be given public acknowledgment in any communication for the rekhyt (people).

Huya²⁵⁶, overseer of the pr-ḥnr.t (Royal House of Women), could do nothing but comply with her commands. Messages from the ḥm.t-w (wives) who sought the company of the nsw (king), were given to ḥm.t nsw.t tpt (Chief Royal Wife) Nefertiti. She had finally perfected an interception she had already practiced with Nebetiah, effectively removing the women she saw as competition from her husband's attention. The ḥm.t-w (wives) had no one to whom any could speak for ḥm.t nsw.t tpt (Chief Royal Wife) Nefertiti was the chosen partner of the nsw (king) and her rank and prestige were being displayed for all to see and snd²⁵⁷ (fear). Nsw (King) Neferkheperu-re Wa'en-re began receiving messengers bearing complaints from several neighboring kings, his father-in-laws, in which they spoke of not hearing from sa.t-w=sn (their daughters), but the complaints were ignored as a trifle. It did not occur to him there was any one in his 'ah (palace) who would stop a daughter from writing her own father. So, he remained focused on completing his work for 'nh 'Itn (the Living Aten)

²⁵⁶ Also the Overseer of the Double Treasury of the Great Royal Wife and Steward of Great Royal Wife, Tiyi

²⁵⁷ Fear as in reverence – awe, respect, not afraid; biblical use of the word “fear”

and left, ironically, ḥm.t nsw.t tpt (Chief Royal Wife) Nefertiti to deal with the inquiring fathers.

Through all this, Nebetiah continued her healing the sick and tending to her healing hesep (garden) with Shadya as she settled back into her life as a ḥm.t nsw.t (royal wife), watching sat.w=s (her daughters) grow quickly. Although she could no longer sit in the hesep (garden) under their heterished-w (twin perseas) because she was no longer allowed to move beyond the hesep-w (gardens) of the pr-ḥnr.t (Royal House of Women), she now watched Sah and Sopdet from her window, sending her love and waiting for her brother's return to the 'ah (palace). Days ran into each other, the memories, bursting with laughter, loss, love, tears, brightened by the occasional visit from Smenkhkare, flowed uninterrupted, visions of mothers gathering under the trees of the hesep (garden) of the per-ḥnr.t (House of Royal Women) while children were running and shrieking among them.

It was one of these memories on which she lingered now, one day of the many, in which mewet-w (mothers) were sitting with their babies and toddlers, talking quietly while the mn'-w (nurses) sat behind them or tended to the fussy babies. Nebetiah was among the wives, sitting with another wife, Princess Nadera²⁵⁸of Kerma²⁵⁹. It was

²⁵⁸ Ancient African name; Exceptional, rare, uncommon, unique, peerless

²⁵⁹ City in Nubia

a rare occasion Nebetiah was not needed among the ill and they were enjoying their companionship that had grown over the months. They were watching the children run and play in the hesep (garden), Nadera contentedly resting her hand on her large rounded belly as she half reclined on pillows, while Nebetiah had Menḥitaaten lying on the covering before her, watching the baby trying to pull herself across the mat. Beketaten was toddling around with the other little girls while Maia²⁶⁰, daughter of Aperiar and Wriai, mn't (nurse) for Nebetiah's children, stood nearby the child, attentive to the little girl. Nebetiah and Nadera were laughing at Menḥitaaten, who was trying to roll herself over, when Abayomi²⁶¹, a young servant girl, timidly approached the group of princesses carrying a red bundle and basket. She stopped, looking around them while the women, one by one fell silent, watching her expectantly.

“I seek Kiya,” she softly said.

The women looked around them, confused.

“We have no one named ‘Kiya’ with us,” called one princess.

Nebetiah shook her head, surprised for this was the first time her brother used her childhood name in front of others, “It is me. A name I was called when I was little. I am Kiya.”

²⁶⁰ Titles: “Wet nurse of the king” (King Tutankaamun) “Eucator of the god’s body” and “Great one of the harem”

²⁶¹ Bringer of Happiness

Relieved, Abayomi moved forward, bowing while holding out the red bundle to her, "I was told to say "Sah looks for Sopdet tonight but until then, words of his heart will flow for you."

Nebetiah took the proffered bundle. It was light.

Abayomi then held out the basket, still bowed, "and his heart song surrounds you so you know his joy."

She blushed as a soft "ahhh" rose from all the women seated around her and the resounding sound caught the attention of other nearby women who began joining them to see the cause of the murmur. Nebetiah took the basket from her and placed it on the ground next to her.

"Dua=j en ek (My thanks for you), Abayomi. Please tell Neb=j (My Lord), that I thank him for these gifts and I wait for him tonight," she replied.

The young girl bowed lower and then backed away carefully, leaving the women to crowd around Nebetiah. Now the entire hesep (garden) of women were settling around Nadera and Nebetiah. Curiosity was strong and questions started to rain on Nebetiah. Nadera was laughing at her for she looked bewildered. She was not used to the attention.

"Have you another who wishes your time?"

"Are you not afraid the nsw (king) will find out?"

"So bold to send this to you in front of us!"

“You will see him tonight!”

“We must help her sneak out!”

She broke across the woman, “It is sen=j
(my Brother), Neb=w (our Lord) Wa’enre.”

Exclamations were bursting now from the
princesses.

“What are they?”

“Open them!”

“We wait to see!”

“Does he come?”

“Will he see me, too?”

She smiled and shook her head, giving up.
The princesses would be excited. They had not
heard from Akhenaten in months, although looking
around, there were a good number of women who
were waiting for their child to be born so he was
not forgotten by them.

Nadera scooped up Menhitaaten, laughing
at Nebetiah’s discomfort with the attention, “Here,
sen.t (sister), now you have room to share your joy
with us.”

Nebetiah smiled, still shaking her head. She
would have preferred to have opened them alone,
but the women were so excited she could not tell
them no. Nadera was not helping her either. She
could see it was as if they themselves were
receiving the gifts. Since these were the first
communication any of them had from the nsw
(king) since he left, it was only right to share the
gifts with them. This moment would make all of
them feel as if the nsw (king) had not forgotten

them. She started with the small red linen bundle first, drawn to it because it was her favorite color. The wrapping turned out to be a beautiful deep red cloth trimmed in silver that she could use to swaddle Menhitaaten. She handed it to Nadera who let the little baby girl play with it. The women closest to Nadera were cooing over it as Nebetiah examined the small wooden stylus case ²⁶² that the cloth had concealed. It was beautifully decorated on the outside with two ished-w (perseas) carved into it and above them was an inscription: "The Wife and Greatly Beloved of the Lord of Two Lands²⁶³, Neferkheperu-re Wa'en-re, Kiya".

"You should read this so they can hear, sen.t (sister)," Nadera gently prompted.

She nodded as she opened the small wooden box, knowing she was going to find a scribe's palette within it. She was deeply touched, and her eyes misted as she gently touched the stylus reeds that rested in their hollowed space beneath four small holes filled white, red, black and brown paints made from mineral, gum and oils. These were for her to write with by dipping the reed tips in them, one for each color. The wood was smoothed and beautiful. It was a gift that she instantly loved, and she could not wait to use them

²⁶² Actual belonging of Kiya if a pen case would indicates she was a scribe/could write which took a great deal of training so she was schooled as a noble or royal (Murnane, 45B, 90)

²⁶³ I inserted "Of the Lord of the Two Lands". There was not a complete inscription on the case. Usually he has this on his name.

to thank him. She smiled, closing it again and traced the inscription with her finger.

“Read it to us, sen.t (sister)! Please!”

She nodded and raised her voice, so the group could hear her, “It is a stylus for my writing and it reads: “The Wife and Greatly Beloved of the Lord of Two Lands, Neferkheperu-re Wa’en-re, Kiya”

“Ohhs” and “ahhs” ran around the group.

“The words of his heart will overflow for you ... Neb=j (My Lord) is a poet himself and loves you much,” a woman whispered.

Nebetiah looked at the woman who spoke. She was a beautiful girl, close to Nebetiah’s age, a little younger, perhaps. Her eyes were large in her face and she looked somewhat sad.

“He loves all who are a part of his life, Princess Tadu-Heba²⁶⁴,” she smiled as she answered.

The princess shook her head, her dark hair falling about her face, “Hm=f (His Majesty) does love us all,” she smiled and gently patted the bottom of her daughter, Sadaupaaten²⁶⁵, who lay sleeping in front of her, “but he only adores the few.”

“You are perhaps lucky to have his attention again,” said Princess Kidin-Adad²⁶⁶, as

²⁶⁴ Princess and daughter of King Tušratta of Naharin (Mitanni) and widow of Nsw-twy (King of the Two Lands) Nebma’atre

²⁶⁵ Sd3w (precious): Precious of the Aten (constructed by me)

²⁶⁶ Princess of Babylonia (Moran, William L,Ed, EA12, pg 24

she leaned forward over her swollen belly and touched Nebetiah's knee and smiled.

She was another younger, beautiful woman with long black hair and deep, dark eyes.

"Nsw (King) Neferkheperu-re Wa'en-re is a handsome man," continued Princess Kidin-Adad, "but if the ḥm.t nsw.t tpt (Chief Royal Wife) hears of this, you will not be so lucky."

Nebetiah smiled at her and looked at Nadera holding Menḥitaaten. The little princess was happily gnawing on the silver trimmed cloth, as it covered her fist. Maia was holding Beketaten, so she would not get into Nebetiah's lap and play with the stylus that she now held in her hand. Both Beketaten and Menḥitaaten had their father's eyes as did little Sadaupaaten and this reminder that they were sisters made Nebetiah feel a wave of love for the women surrounding her. She smiled at the women, including Maia who ducked her head gently.

Maia was not part of her brother's house. She was of the court, sa.t (daughter) of the highly honored family of Aperiar, now tjaty (vizier) and bak tpy n 'itn²⁶⁷ (first servant of Aten) in Memphis, and Wriai, his wife, honored for their years of service to the nsw (king) and his family. Maia now served as they once did, as a mn'.t (nurse) to the

²⁶⁷ "B3k tpy n 'itn m..." Note b3k is servant as is ḥm, which also means majesty (for king or god). Up to this point of studies, I had only seen ḥm for servant, which has been confusing since it is also a reference for "wife"

king's children under Heqareshu, who now served as Overseer of the mn'-w (nurses) of the nsw (king). Maia, too, was very pretty, like the women here with Nebetiah now.

Nsw (King) Nebma'atre had been known to ask for the prettiest of the kingdoms when he requested hm.t-w (wives) and Nebetiah did not doubt he received them for she lived surrounded by beautiful women within the 'ah (palace) her entire life. She never thought about it before this moment. Her brother had inherited some of his father's beautiful hm.t-w (wives). Nebetiah began to wonder if Nefertiti was not just jealous about the love of their husband but perhaps she was afraid she would lose her beauty to one of these younger and beautiful women. This was a worry Nebetiah could see Nefertiti having, if she were looking behind her to see who was waiting to take her place.

"The hm.t nsw.t tpt (Chief Royal Wife) has more important things to do than worry about presents sent to me from sen=k (my brother). He must love me, he is sen=k (my brother)," she smiled gently at the women now crowded about her, "If she complains I will simply ask sen=j (my brother) to speak with her. It is not a concern of mine."

She watched as the women sat back now, shifting uncomfortably. This was the usual response of others when someone challenged Nefertiti. The tongue of hm.t nsw.t tpt (Chief Royal Wife) had a reputation now.

“None have been allowed to speak with him, sen.t (sister),” Tadu-Heba reminded her.

Nebetiah smiled and continued, raising her voice so all could hear her, “Neb=w (our Lord), Hm=f (His Majesty) has said he will come tonight. While he is here, I will speak to him of our not being able to speak with him. He will not tolerate this within his ‘ah (palace) for it is not the way of pa ‘nh ‘Itn (the Living Aten), It=F (His Father). I have been taught by Neb=j (my Lord) that he only tolerates those who are straight forward and true, for this is the way with pa ‘nh ‘Itn (the Living Aten).²⁶⁸ He has said for those rekhyt (people) who are this way, straightforward and true²⁶⁹, by following the words of Hm=f (His Majesty) that we will be rewarded by a lifetime of happiness²⁷⁰ and old age in peace.²⁷¹ We will be judged in our walk here by Hm=f (His Majesty) so [Re-Harakhty, who rejoices in the horizon]/[In His Name of Light, which is in the sun disc] may grant us a long life time of continually seeing Him.²⁷² Be one who has MaAt (Order) within your body and hold detestation of falsehood,²⁷³ be devoid of rapacity, do not confuse words or neglect your conduct²⁷⁴. Hm=f (His Majesty) loves all humankind and

²⁶⁸ (Murnane, 111)

²⁶⁹ (Murnane, I, 118)

²⁷⁰ (Murnane, 59.3, 112)

²⁷¹ (Murnane, H, 118)

²⁷² (Murnane, 80.3, 181)

²⁷³ (Murnane, 144)

²⁷⁴ (Murnane, 117)

changes the ill-disposed to into peaceful ones²⁷⁵ as guided by It=F (His Father). Be righteous, do not tolerate falsehood, live only by worshipping his Ka²⁷⁶, following him everywhere, and you too will find joy with Neb=w (our Lord) and It=K (His Father)²⁷⁷, [Re-Harakhty, who rejoices in the horizon]/[In His Name of Light, which is in the sun disc]. It is not just I but you also that he wishes to have with him. You will not be poor, here within his 'ah (palace) or ill-treated for he will tend to your concerns if you follow in his footsteps. I will speak with him when he comes and Neb=w (our Lord) will tend to you. I speak with authority, I am sen.t=f (his sister), Kiya."

She heard a murmur run around the gathered women when she finished. She was beginning to see her brother through the other women's eyes. The beauty she saw in him was different because he was her brother who she had told her secrets to, who held her when she was sad, and who laughed with her when she was happy. His beauty for her came from his heart. These women did not know this of him, so they saw the man he was, tall, handsome, strong, but unreachable because Nefertiti had placed herself between them. This would not remain as it was once Akhenaten heard from Nebetiah. Maia was staring at her with wonder on her face. The young

²⁷⁵ (Murnane, 156)

²⁷⁶ (Murnane, 118)

²⁷⁷ (Murnane, 122)

girl had not known her long enough to know she would not remain quiet, even for ḥm.t nsw.t tpt (Chief Royal Wife). She smiled at Maia and turned to Tadu-Heba and Kidin-Adad.

“Neb=j is sen=j (My Lord is my brother). I think he must love me but you, he chooses to have here with him. When he is here, I will tell him you wish to speak to him also so that you no longer carry this sadness in your eyes, but joy. He would want this, and he will want to hear you. Once he hears, he will make sure no one brings sorrow on you again.”

Tadu-Heba and Kidin-Adad nodded at her, also a little startled. She smiled at them and then looked around at the women again. They were quiet, watching her. She felt a sense of anticipation now and the feeling was lighter, happier. The wives were not so subdued. She wondered how many women needed to speak with Akhenaten and she almost laughed. He would be surprised if there was a line of women wishing to see him, but this would lie at Nefertiti’s feet. She would make sure her sisters were given the time they were denied.

“Do not forget the basket, sen.t (sister),” Tadu-Heba said softly.

The women murmured again so she turned her attention to the basket that sat in front of her. It was an ordinary basket, latched closed. She carefully unlatched it and immediately she was glad she was careful, for inside were two white n’rw-w (doves). They looked up at her with their

dark, warm eyes as she gasped. He had sent her his favorite birds. As a little girl, she had always tried to get permission to keep one in her room, but their mother did not allow it. She had settled for just watching the ones in the garden. No longer did she have to wish for them. The woman all pressed forward as much as they could without disturbing the babies that lay among them. She held up her hand.

“Wait,” she looked up, “I will bring one out for you to see.”

“What is it?”

“Show us!”

“What did he give her?”

“If the first were of words then these will be of songs!”

She smiled and nodded, lifting one n’rw (dove) up gently and closing the basket. Its calmly beating heart told her the n’rw-w (doves) were tamed already. The women all “oohed” as the little white n’rw (dove) looked around it.

“I have always wanted a n’rw (dove),” she explained, “Sen=j (My brother) remembered this.”

“His heart song surrounds you so you know his joy. The words he sent were of love missed, sen.t (sister),” Tadu-Heba said, “I believe he loves you very much.”

Nebetiah tried not to blush as the women made noises of agreement. She was among women who did love her brother or were here from duty,

as she was. It was overwhelming to have so many eyes on her as heads nodded in unison.

“As he all of you,” she replied, “I look around at all of your beautiful faces and know that when he comes tonight, he will forget me to sit with you,” she placed the n’rw (dove) back in its basket.

A happy laughter rippled through the women.

“I think I speak for all of us, sen.t (sister) when I say it is not needed that we each speak to Neb=w (our Lord) because we know you will speak with him for us,” Tadu-Heba looked around her as she spoke and there were nods among the women. They did not want to draw Nefertiti’s attention to them.

Nebetiah bowed her head to them, “I am honored and will do so for you, sen.t-w=j (my sisters). We will be graced with nsw=w (our king) again.”

The women murmured among themselves, with words of “Thanks” to Nebetiah as they moved away, the presents now seen. The princesses Kidin-Adad and Tadu-Heba thanked her before they gathered their children and moved away also. Nadera pulled Nebetiah to her with her free arm in a hug while she still held little Menhitaaten who had fallen asleep clutching the cloth.

“Your heart is wide, sen.t (sister), and I thank you for sharing your love with us,” she whispered.

Nebetiah hugged her back, "It is love returned that you have given me, sen.t (sister). I am the one who is honored."

Nadera smiled and looked down to pull the cloth from Menhitaaten's mouth as Nebetiah handed the basket of the doves to Shadya. Maia was jiggling Beketaten on her hip. The women surrounding them were talking among themselves again, drifting away as the memory shifted forward and she was alone in the hesep (garden), bent over a papyrus, writing, when she heard someone coming. She looked up to see her brother striding across the hesep (garden) his face set and determined. It was not evening yet, so she was surprised but smiled at him as he approached her. While he answered her with a smile, she could see he was angry.

He sat down next to her on the bench under the fig trees.

"I could not wait until this evening. This has been burning a hole in my heart. It is sA=w (our son) who tells me that you have been trying to speak to me, not a courier."

She blinked at him. She had sent a message to him through Smenkhkare on his last visit several days before, knowing Akhenaten would receive it but had been worried about Smenkhkare being caught. Smenkhkare had laughed and said he was sure the of hm.t nsw.t tpt (Chief Royal Wife) would not dare to do anything to him. Then she realized

Akhenaten had sent the gifts to let her know he had heard her.

She nodded, "I have."

"Tell me honestly, Kiya. Is his message the first you sent?"

She shook her head, "No, and there will be others who have need of your attention who have also been denied their messages. I am glad our sA=w (our son) was able to speak with you although I did not like making him a courier."

He fell silent and looked away. He was angry. She smiled hopefully at him and touched his hand as it lay on his knee, "I do not bear her ill will, sen (Brother). She is young,"

"Youth is no excuse for causing anguish in another. ḥm.t-w=j (My wives) need to speak with me?" he rounded on her tersely.

"Yes," she did not want to overwhelm him, "Most to ensure they can speak with you and they are in your graces."

"Then we will have a celebration and ḥm.t-w=j (my wives) will be at my table with Nefertiti serving them."

She blanched, "Sen=j (My brother), this would not be the way to ..."

He looked at her then, his eyes were dark and his brow furrowed, "You are right. She will sit furthest from me and you shall take her seat with ḥm.t-w=j (my wives) between us. The children will eat below us at the tables with their mn'w (nurses) so ḥm.t-w=j (my wives) can sit with me and enjoy

the entertainment that she will provide. We will be together until all ḥm.t-w=j (my wives) have had a chance to speak to me. I ask that you are by my side in this, Kiya.”

She raised her eyebrows and looked at him for a moment, “I had thought you would be angry once you found out that we ...”

“You,” he cut her off, “I am angry because you have not been able to speak to me caused by a child who does not understand herself.”

“Do not be too hard on her, Huy,” she reverted to his childhood nickname, hoping it would soften him, “She was simply trying to ...”

“I will not let you defend her. Had you thought she was right, you would not have sent your message through sA=w (our son). That you had to send a message through sA=w (our son) angers me even more. This is not how we treat each other, and Nefertiti will learn this once and for all.”

She put her hand on his chest, feeling his heart pounding, and looked into his eyes, “I only ask that you take a deep breath and let me tell you about these wonderful gifts I received from sen=j meryt (my beloved brother).”

He caught her hand in his and released a deep breath, heavily, bowing his head. Then he looked at her again, “I have released the anger, sen.t (sister), as you wish,” he smiled finally, “You did receive the gifts?”

She smiled, “I did, and I write with the one you gave me as we sit here,” she held up the stylus,

“Our doves, Šfyt²⁷⁸ (Majesty) and Asrt²⁷⁹ (Heaven) are loved dearly by sa.t-w=n (our daughters) and Maia.”

“Are you not angry with her?” he seemed mystified.

Nebetiah shook her head, “I know you love me, Huy. It is she who struggles with this knowledge because she does not know you love her. She does not even believe it even after all that she has been given. Between the two of us, I feel sadness for her that she struggles so much after all this time to see what we all see, and she is by your side. Do you not see how sad this is for her?”

He stared at her for a minute, “You are beautiful,” he finally said softly.

He took a another deep breath and let it go, sitting back now, taking her hand in his from where she had rested it on his knee, “I would like to see sa.t-w=n (our daughters) and the n’rw-w (doves) when we are done,” he paused, still thinking and then spoke again, “So the messages you send do not reach me.”

It was a statement and although her stomach dropped, it was not a question, so she was relieved she did not have to answer.

She did not lose her smile, “I had wondered that. As a ḥm.t nsw.t (royal wife) here, I cannot do much to see Neb=j (my Lord) but send a message. You know this.”

²⁷⁸ Also means respect

²⁷⁹ Also means sky

“I did not know this only because this had not happened in my lifetime, but it is time to change that also. I have need of you to be where we can talk easily, you to me as much as I to you. I am vexed! Doubly so! One is easy to solve but the other ...,” he had moved on, satisfied at last, “The ḥem-w netjer (servants of god) refuse to listen to me. They still forget that I am High Priest of Every Temple of Amun and Re-Harakhty, the Good God²⁸⁰. They forget I command them. Instead, they still try to tell me what my maa-w (visions) mean, when I am not going to them for interpretation, but for them to do as we are asked to do. I understand clearly what I am being told. I pray on this constantly, that I am open, hearing MaAt (Truth) and speaking only the MaAt (Truth). This is the Will of It=J (My Father), ‘In His Name of Light which is in the sun disc’. The ḥem-w netjer (servants of god) do not seem to understand and only continue to grow angry.”

Nebetiah was reminded of when they were little, and he was venting about a wrong that someone committed. He had always been aligned with the MaAt (Truth).

“I have removed ḥem netjer tepi n imn (first servant of Amun) Meryptah. He has angered me once too often and he grows more quarrelsome as

²⁸⁰ Good God. The king is the divinely chosen representative of the nTr aA/Great God but not a god himself. Priests are not divinely chosen as they are appointed by the king. They are of man’s choice therefore gods would not talk to them. Kings are chosen by the gods through lineage thus they were acknowledged by the gods.

he grows older. May²⁸¹ is now ḥem netjer tepi n imm (first servant of Amun) for he is less quarrelsome than Si-mut, ḥem netjer snw n imm (second servant of Amun). He has been allowed to begin quarrying for stone to build another temple for Amun within Ipet-isut (Karnak). Once it is completed, Nefertiti and I will celebrate this temple for them. I am hoping this will appease them, so they see I am not trying to take anything from them. They still do not understand I do as I am told. This is Will of It=J (My Father). I do not act with malice. Pa 'nh 'Itn (the Living Aten) is without another except for Him²⁸² so His temple must stand alone, glorified in His Light. It was they who made this happen and yet it is they who are angered at it."

"Change can make one afraid and if one fears, one cannot see or hear clearly. So, hey aim their anger at you when it is of them."

Akhenaten remained silent for a moment, "Then they live in the darkness if they do not see this. They are no longer ḥem-w netjer (servants of god) if they do not follow my will for my will is His will. Pa 'nh 'Itn (the Living Aten) is in my heart, there is no other who knows him, except I, sA=F (His son).²⁸³ I alone know His Will. They do not

²⁸¹ May/Maya served as First Prophet of Amun under Amenhotep IV at King Nebma'atre's death replacing Meryptah who became First Prophet of Amun when Ptahmose became vizier under King Nebma'atre

²⁸² (Hoffmeier, 227) and (Murnane, 157)

²⁸³ (Hoffmeier, 212) Line 12 of the Great Hymn

hear His Words because fear deafens them. These statues for these gods they hide in the Holy of Holies are falling apart. They are made of man, of man's hands.²⁸⁴"

A part of Nebetiah would have cringed to hear him talk so bluntly of the netjer-w (gods) who had been keeping them safe all these years but now she believed her brother and followed [Re-Harakhty, who rejoices in the horizon]/[In His Name of Light, which is in the sun disc] and was not disturbed with his words. Akhenaten was not one who would be led astray easily. His belief in living and speaking the truth was only rivaled by her own commitment to living in the truth. They had both been this way since she could remember.

"How can I sbayt (teach) if they do not want to hear? They see this as a removal of Amun to a new god which it is not. I have not told them to leave Amun. I have told them to also worship pa 'nh 'Itn (the Living Aten) and then they will come to see Him as He Is. As He truly is, not in a body we make but His MaAt (Truth) which shines as the shu (light) which is as bright as the Aten. How do you sbayt (teach) this to those who are more concerned with their power, their being right, than hearing the MaAt (Truth) because it does not give them what they want? How can you show them it will give them what they need? If they were to do

²⁸⁴ Living G-d versus an idol of man

this, Amun would be no more by their choice, no other.”

His frustration was clear in his voice but before Nebetiah could speak, he went on, “Not only have they lost their ability to hear His Words, so they have lost their way. I would not be so irritated if they did not attack me or It=J (My Father) at every turn. I pray every minute to let them go but they are leading rekhyt=w (our people) down a path we do not belong on. I will speak to them again, so we can work together to bring rekhyt=w (our people) closer to pa ‘nh ‘Itn (the living Aten) as He has said, but soon the way will be closed.”

“If you had another to stand with you? We spoke of this before, but you said she was not ready. Perhaps now, united with your hm.t nsw.t tp.t (Chief Royal Wife) Nefertiti ... this would show following you is not be feared?” she offered.

He was silent a moment and then chuckled, “I am not sure that it would show it is not to be feared as she is fearless,” he raised his hand as Nebetiah opened her mouth in protest, shaking his head, “I am amused but you are right, and I have been considering this. She has wanted to be more involved with my duties as hm.t-nejter²⁸⁵ (God’s

²⁸⁵ God’s Wife the highest rank of a prophetess/priestess but honestly it also means female servant of god. B3k is another word for servant and we use hm.t for wife. ... SO the wives are servants of the Good God (King) and priests are servants of God hope that makes all this translation make sense.

Wife) and this desire could be It=J (My Father) speaking to me. She had not indicated this desire before."

He leaned forward, elbows on his knees, "She will need to learn to walk with a lighter heart and perhaps this will help her for she will have to carry the teachings closer," he looked sideways with a half-smile at Nebetiah, "She is to have our fourth child soon. Perhaps she will have the boy she seeks, and she will be happy."

Nebetiah smiled back, happy to hear of the new child-to-come, "I will pray that she is given this gift for you."

He nodded, "I expected no less, sen.t (sister). Nevertheless, you are right. She has learned as you have and can perform the functions with me and both Meritaten and Meketaten grow old enough to join us also. Yes, we should lead rekhyt=w (our people) for we are all of pa 'nh 'Itn (the Living Aten) and there is nothing to fear, even our children praise him. Then, perhaps when the hem-w netjer n imn (servants of Amun) and rekhyt=w (our people) see this then they may be hear pa 'nh 'Itn (the Living Aten) ..." he was thinking now, "She could begin in a temple for her alone, giving oblations within the hwt bnbn (Mansion of BenBen), with our Meritaten and Meketaten."

Nebetiah could feel he was relaxing, now that he had a direction to move that offered a new way to speak to the rekhyt (people). She smiled and

nodded, looking up at the stars that were coming out as the sun set. He looked up also and then put his arm around her shoulders, tucking her against him, as they sat back.

“Enough of talk. The stars are visiting us tonight and I wish to see them with you. It has been far too long since we have done this.”

He fell silent and they sat there, faces lifted to the heavens, watching as one by one the stars twinkled into their vision. The sleepy twittering of the birds scattered among the calls of the insects that were just waking up for their night forays. She snuggled up against him, her head against his chest, as she used to when she was little, settling in as the evening darkened. His heartbeat was steady under her ear as she felt the rise and fall of his breathing.

His voice rumbled in his chest as he whispered, “Are you sleepy?”

She shook her head.

He squeezed her shoulders briefly, “Good, I would like to sit here a while longer. I am probably too late to see sa.t-w=n (our daughters)?”

She laughed, nodding her head and whispered, “This time they will be asleep, but you can look at them if you wish.”

“I wish to play with them. Tomorrow will be for the children and then the celebration for the hm.t-w (wives). Perhaps if you wish, even Smenkhkare will join us. Tonight is for us.”

She nodded happily.

“You will not make Nefertiti serve hm.t=k (your wives), will you?” she asked with a little trepidation, sitting up to look at him.

He laughed, “No, I do not think she would obey even if I ordered her to do so. No, but she will not sit beside me. I will have you where she sits and will have her tell me where all wives are to sit. Where ever she places you, she will sit.”

“And you wonder why she hates me? Sen (Brother), you cannot do that!” she stiffened in indignation.

Akhenaten laughed again, a deep happy laugh drifting away as the memory faded. Nebetiah was smiling. Celebrations filled her memories with happy cries of new mothers, wailing newborns, and cooing mn`w (nurses) as babies started filling the kap (nursery) of the `ah (palace). Again, the call of her profession kept her busy and joy seem continuous with the new life. Soon heard among the cries of the new arrivals in the kap (nursery), was the good news that once again hm.t nsw.t tpt (Chief Royal Wife) Neferneferuaten-Nefertiti would soon bring her fourth child to the world. The hm.t-w(wives) of the pr-hnr.t (House of Royal Women) all prayed for a son to grace her arms as they were celebrating their own joys, but the laughter was not to last long for the ways of men are often wrought with grief.

And so it was, like turning a corner on the hesep (garden) path, her memories turned into the darkness that was slowly growing, shifting at the

edges of the happiness that surrounded her and all that she knew with in the 'ah (palace). She could not keep a deaf ear to the growing complaints and derisive talk about the daily worship of 'In His Name of Light' celebrated and led by Nsw (King) Neferkheperu-re Wa'en-re and now, ḥm.t nsw.t tpt (Chief Royal Wife) Neferneferuaten-Nefertiti. Increasingly, mocking words were directed at the newer art forms that were on the walls of the temples that were being erected and she listened. She would sit in the evenings with him and speak of what she had heard with the growing knowledge of a separation of officials within the 'ah (palace), the officials of favor and the officials of the outside²⁸⁶. She was again called to his side as his heri.t sesheta (Mistress of Secrets) and maw (seer) as the darkness grew and he drew his officials of favor around him. Guards of the Medjay were increased within the 'ah (palace) unobtrusively and they began shadowing the nsw (king) and ḥm.t nsw.t tp.t (Chief Royal Wife).

Abruptly, the images were shattered with the memory of Akhenaten bursting into her room as she was writing, scaring her, and sending Šfy (Majesty) and Asrt (Heaven) frantically beating their wings against their cage. Immediately, with her heart in her throat, she thought of Nefertiti and the new princess, Ankhesenpaaten, but realized this was a rage that rolled off her brother in waves.

²⁸⁶ (Murnane, 77)

He was not in anguish or fear but wrath.

Akhenaten had begun sending her messages, when requesting her time or an audience, so very polite which always made her smile because they had never stood on formality before his reign but since the interception of messages, he had done so. Now here he was staring at her, ready to do battle for although his face was calm, his eyes, full of a fury she had never seen before, were cold and hard, calculating. Wordlessly, he motioned for her to follow him and turned to hold the covering of her door back for her, waiting for her to pass. She returned her stylus to its box, closing the lid and passed through the door. She knew from experience that Nefertiti, as much as she did try his patience, she did not ever cause this anger. It was not his Love. She knew. This was the darkness that had finally caught him in its web. She followed him as he led her down the hall. They did not speak until they were free of the *pr-hnr.t* (House of Royal Women). His guard, those of the Medjay²⁸⁷, were waiting for him in the hall outside the door of the 'ah (palace) and fell into step behind him. She threw a quick look at them and then turned her attention back to Akhenaten. They did not usually keep so close to the *nsw* (king) within the 'ah (palace) and they, too, radiated a tension.

²⁸⁷ Elite police force who served as desert scouts or protectors of Pharaoh's special interest; Nubian mercenaries

“Sa.t-w=n (Our daughters) are within the kap (nursery)?” he asked curtly as he strode down the hall.

She nodded as she half ran to keep up with him, “Yes, Wa’enre²⁸⁸.”

He nodded, “I will send word to your mn’t (nurse), what is her name? that you will return. She is to tend them until then.”

“Maia,” she was concerned now.

“You will ride with me this morning,” he looked at a Medjay captain who was positioned near him, “Tell Mahu²⁸⁹ I need a message to the kap (nursery) to Maia, the mn’t (nurse) of Hm.t=s (Her Majesty) Kiya, telling her to remain with the children of Hm.t=s (Her Majesty) until she returns. I want guards on the doors of the kap (nursery), pr-ḥnr.t (House of Royal Women) and with the ḥm.t nsw.t tp.t (Chief Royal Wife) and sen.t=s (her daughters). Tell ḥm.t nsw.t tp.t (Chief Royal Wife) that I return quickly but It=J (My Father) calls me.”

The man bowed and dropped back to speak to one of his guards who spun on his heel, sprinting back to the ‘ah (palace). She watched him go and then focused back on Akhenaten.

“As Sopdet follows Sah, so I follow you, Neb=J (My Lord).”

²⁸⁸ (Murnane, Initial Appearance and Speech Made by the King, 74) His shortened Throne name that will be used in casual conversation with close officials – Unique One of Re

²⁸⁹ Commandant of the Medjay/Mazau; becomes the chief of Police of Akhet-aten and remains the Commandant of the Medjay of Akhet-aten

He was very heated, "I have never seen such an abomination as I have this day. Never have I heard what I have heard. Never."

She nodded. He was slowing in his stride now that they had left the 'ah (palace). They were now heading toward the stables for the chariots and horses.

"We ride alone."

She realized this really did not mean they would be alone. They would have his guard with them. He meant there would be no others with them on the ride. It was serious for the guard did not usually accompany them when they were together. She nodded and mounted the waiting chariot with him. He whipped the horse and they were off with a jolt. She hung onto the side of the chariot. She saw, as the scenery moved past them that they were going, to the Gem-Pa-Aten. Her tunic fluttered in the warm wind and the re (sun) beat down on them as they drove. Silence and anger rode with them while the Medjay ran alongside them. He pulled the horse up so their chariot stopped outside the walls of Per 'Itn (House of Aten) and he helped her out of it. He did not let go of her hand as he lead her through the entrance of the enclosure. Then he stopped.

"The hem-w n imn (servants of Amun) have refused to listen. They have spoken against [Living Re-Harakhty, who rejoices in the horizon]/[In His Name of Light, which is in the sun disc], with speech that has never been said before ...I have

allowed this because men are allowed their thoughts and I am not the one who controls their tongue. Each of us makes this choice.”

“In speaking their words, they have built their belief that only they know what the nsw (king) knows, and in doing so they have become dead to life. This is what happens when men decide they know what another should know,” he gestured with his free hand and arm in a sweeping arch over the temple’s ruins, “They believe what they hear from their god (netjer) is what all should follow. Then they try to exert their will against the very MaAt (Order) of our world and become Isfet (Chaos) themselves. They will justify this action saying their god (netjer) called for it when I know their god (netjer) only calls for MaAt (Order). MaAt (Order) is not from exerting on others so it injures them but exerting on one’s self to find the highest path to walk with a light heart. I worshiped in their ḥwt (temple) built at my command with my renderings, gave oblation to their netjer-w (gods), gave Amun, ruler of Waset (Thebes)²⁹⁰, his oblation as they wished²⁹¹. I did not deny their netjer-w

²⁹⁰ (Murnane, 58)

²⁹¹ Murnane, 57-59 30B Scenes from the South Side of the Entrance Passage: Inscribed with two scenes of Amenhotep IV. One in which he is offering to his father and mother, King Nebma’atre and Queen Tiyi. The other is which he is offering to Re-Horakhty in a great prayer written in a crossword grid in which he speaks homage to Amun-Re, Horus, Atum, Re-Khepri, Manu, Kamutet, Re, Aten merging them all together with the final part of the prayer on both grids bringing them all together in Aten from my rereading repeatedly what remains. IMO

(gods), I did not demand they turn from their netjer-w (gods) and only worship It=J (My Father). I only ask that they listen, so they can hear It=J (My Father). And yet they try to deny me the right to snsy (worship) and offer waḥwt (oblation) to It=J (My Father) ...” and his voice faded away.

She stared, aghast. Gem-Pa-Aten had been defaced. The statues that lined the walls were still standing but the faces had been disfigured. At the entrance, where the two statues of of ‘m rn.f m ʒḥ m itn (In His Name of Spirit of Aten)’ stood on either side, each now with a broken uraeus and the eyes, nose and mouth hacked away. This also had been done to the statues of Akhenaten and Nefertiti that lined both sides of the wall of ḥwt (temple). The remains lay at the feet of the statues. She turned to Akhenaten, her eyes filling with tears but wordless. He stood staring at the ḥwt (temple) that he had built for It=K (His Father), the ḥwt (temple) within which they had celebrated the neseyte (kingship) of It=K (His Father), the very people who had been entrusted to him to care for and guide them had raised their hand against him. His face was relaxed now as he stared at the ḥwt (temple).

“We can repair them,” she whispered.

“This was done because the words of a ḥem netjer (servant of god) have stirred the fear of those who do not see. This is their fear before us ... a useless exertion of wish for power to control

he was not trying to replace gods, he was trying to lead those who would hear to G-d because he was told to do so. Unifying Prayer.

another's knowledge. So they try to suppress MaAt (Truth) with violence and destruction. Do they think, in destroying something of man, they will be able to strike out the MaAt (Truth) of pa 'nh 'Itn (the Living Aten)? Do they not understand that man cannot touch shu=K (His Light) no matter how much they quarrel on the earth? Never have I heard of this offense, not in my lifetime. Not of that in the lifetime of it=j (my father) or it=f (his father) or the father before him²⁹²"

"If I hear a report in the mouth of an official, in the mouth of a **netjer (priest)**, in the mouth of a **ahati (warrior)**, in the mouth of a Nubian, in the mouths of any people **who speak** against my Father to **me or behind me**, they will be offensive. **But this will not keep me from MaAt (Order) and will not take me from It=J (My Father)**. I will not leave **while** saying, "It was offensive" until it is not offensive²⁹³. As for the offensive things **that are living** in every mouth, saying "I will commit an offense against the lord of Akhet-Aten, my father, 'Re-Harakhty, who rejoices in the horizon, In His Name of Light, which is in the sun disc' **who has arisen shall not have any place within my heart**, nor shall I hear **the offense** from it either."²⁹⁴

²⁹² (Murnane, 78) paraphrased not direct words. He listed his ancestors.

²⁹³ This is their spiritual training: The Declaration of Innocence that we now call the Negative Affirmations but are really Positive Affirmations of rising above the reactive to become peaceful.

²⁹⁴ (Murnane, 78) The translated text is here and it was not complete. I have bolded the words I have surmised may be possible where they

He stared at the temple silently and then spoke again, "I have been told many things that have been offensive. Each year the words against [Living Re-Harakhty, who rejoices in the horizon]/[In His Name of Light, which is in the sun disc] have grown worse. The words against me have grown worse. I have waited to let these things said, that are offensive, to fall away but the hearts of the men who live within this city have grown foul. They are heavy with darkness."

He looked at her, the anger was gone now, and he was calm. He looked so serene. His face was now filled with peace.

"This is the way it is to be, Kiya. It is pa 'Itn (the Aten), It=J (My Father), who desires the House of Re **to be** taken like **His own and** any from this city who follow. I shall do **His Will and it shall be** sealed for Akhet-Aten.²⁹⁵ He has told me I am to begin a new city for Him. The time here is done. He said I would know. I do not have to argue with those who are deaf and blind. They have had their moment to come. I have been shown where the city is to be built²⁹⁶. I will take us there and those who want to come with us will come."

had blanks. Changed tense from past to present as he was speaking of something that had happened and we are in that moment of which he speaks.

²⁹⁵ (Murnane, 78) The translated text is here and it was not complete. I have bolded the words I have surmised may be possible where they had blanks. Changed tense from past to present as he was speaking of something that had happened and we are in that moment of which he speaks.

²⁹⁶ (Murnane, 2. Initial Appearance and Speech by the King, pg. 74-75)

He sighed, letting go of her hand, and walked forward, to push at the remains of a uraeus with his toe, “The ḥem-w n imn (servants of Amun) have chosen to not hear and fight me²⁹⁷. The wrath of [Living Re-Harakhty, who rejoices in the horizon]/[In His Name of Light, which is in the sun disc] is upon their gate. We are to leave from the land they have defiled²⁹⁸ with their isfet (chaos),” he looked at her, “The exodus had begun.”²⁹⁹

Nebetiah nodded, absorbing his words, “As always, sen (Brother), I walk with you. What is it that I may do to help?”

He smiled, gently, “Be as you are, sen.t (Sister), hekai.t =j (my priestess of heka) and heri.t sesheta-j (my Mistress of Secrets), forever loving and guiding me when I am blinded. Now is the time I need you the most.”

She nodded again. He turned back to the ḥwt (temple), “Yes, this will be repaired. Today. It will not be hard to repair. Guards will be here to ensure those who are lost do not try to lead us astray again.”

He held his hand out to her, “Kiya.”

“Yes, Akhenaten,” she stepped forward and took his hand in hers and he started walking them back to the chariot.

²⁹⁷ Murnane, 22, pg. 50-51

²⁹⁸ Murnane, 37.1, 73-77.

²⁹⁹ This song came on while I was writing this section and I was searching for his words. *The Exodus Has Begun* by Prince.

“Even with all this, I feel as if I could fly now that the anger is gone,” he smiled at her, “I would like you to ride with me today. We are to go north, and I will know when we have reached our destination. So now let us return to the ‘ah (palace) to speak to Parennefer³⁰⁰, Tutu³⁰¹, Bak³⁰² and Ay³⁰³ so they may begin work on the hwt (temple) and security. While I speak to them, ready yourself and come to the usechet (audience hall).”

She nodded. He helped her back into the chariot and then turned to the guards. As the captain of the guard and nsw (king) stood in the sun, speaking quietly, their voices murmuring in the heated air, Nebetiah looked out across the land. The damaged temple stood gracefully against the backdrop of sky and earth. She was stunned. Never had she seen an attack on a hwt (temple) by their own people. Akhenaten climbed in beside her and took up the reins. He looked at her, geed up the horse, and they moved forward.

“You have not said much, Kiya,” he looked concerned but smiled reassuringly at her, and then turned his attention back to the road.

She nodded, “I wonder what will happen to those who are responsible for this.”

He looked back at the temple, “I will not kill them if that is what you wish to know,” he shook

³⁰⁰ Overseer of all the craftsmen of the King

³⁰¹ Overseer of all the works of His Majesty

³⁰² Sculptor who worked on temples for Akhenaten

³⁰³ Overseer of All the Horses of His Majesty

his head, **“I will affect the expulsion of the *hem-w netjer n imn (servants of Amun) and their* people with the *mse*³⁰⁴ (army) in its entirety.³⁰⁵ *Hem netjer tepi n imn (First servant of Amun) Maya, hem-netjer snnw n imn (second servant of Amun) Si-mut and hem netjer hmtnw n imn (third servant of Amun) Amenemhat* will all be removed, but I will not close the *hwt-w (temples)*. I will just remove those who have attacked His *hwt-w (temples)*. The offering from the *hwt-w (temples)* will now come to the father³⁰⁶, ‘Re-Harakhty, who rejoices in the horizon, In His Name of Light, which is in the sun disc’.”**

She felt relieved for she knew violence met with violence would only bring more and they would be plunged into isfet (chaos). That Akhenaten was rising above this settled her heart even further.

She nodded, “This is a wise decision and a strong one. I will pray for your guidance by [Living Re-Harakhty, who rejoices in the horizon]/[In His Name of Light, which is in the sun disc],” she breathed in deeply and then let it go, “There is much to take in, Akhenaten. I would like to see *sa.t-w=n (our daughters)* before we leave and perhaps I

³⁰⁴ The temples did have an army: RTE. *Ancient Tomb of Egypt Temple Guard Amenhotep Found*. 3 March 2015. 9 September 2018. www.rte.ie <<https://www.rte.ie/news/2015/0303/684241-ancient-tomb-of-egypt-temple-guard-found/>>

³⁰⁵ (Murnane, 81) use present tense because he spoke in past tense and the bolded are where I inserted because they did not have them.

³⁰⁶ (Murnane, 81)

should prepare to be out for longer than the rest of the day?"

"Yes," he flicked the horse, "We will ride until I am where It=J (My Father) tells me to be."

She nodded.

"You should have time at the 'ah (palace) to prepare. I will need to speak with Ramose, Aperiar, and Nakhtpaamun also. Just ready yourself, I will have everything else tended to for us."

She nodded again and stared out at the land speeding by them. The wind brushed her face, kissing her, as she stared out. She raised her face to the sun and let its warmth drink into her skin, closing her eyes and letting the memory swirl away, to their ride north, the chariot wheels turning rapidly, along the rocky ground. They had been riding for hours, not talking. Her bow was against her back and she had changed into a sturdier tunic, the heavier cloth she used when practicing her weaponry. The guard, a squad of fifteen Medjay followed them, carrying the supplies. This was not a leisure trip so they were traveling light. Akhenaten concentrated on the road ahead of him and she stood by his side, watching the ground speed forward to meet them. Wind blew against their faces as they rode north, lifting her khat³⁰⁷ slightly from the nape of her neck,

³⁰⁷ Or Afnet (fn.t); ḥ³.t; head covering, veil; kerchief; Simpler headdress worn by nobility to cover the head, hanging down open in the back, sometimes made of linen. Eaton-Krauss, Marianne. "The "Khat"

cooling her as they rode. Akhenaten pulled them to a stop when the re (sun) began dipping below the horizon.

“We will sleep here,” he called out while helping Nebetiah down from the chariot.

As the tents were being put up, Nebetiah removed her khat and rinsed her head with some water, shaking the it out if her eyes. She kept her head shaved since she was a hekai.t (priestess of heka) and swnw.t (doctor), and usually wore a wig of Nehset (Nubia) when she was not performing one of her duties. Now, however, she was serving Akhenaten as a hem.t-netjer (priestess) and maw (seer). She lifted the shawl she had wrapped around her face and upper body to cover it from the sun above while they were driving and settled it around her shoulders and draping it over her head so she was covered. Now, in the cool evening air, she would use it to keep warm. Pleased, she looked up to see Akhenaten watching her as he crouched next to the tent he had erected. She smiled at him and wandered over to him. He sat back on his heels and looked up at her.

“Are you putting up your tent?” he asked.

She laughed at him, “I come to the deep of the desert with you and you also wish me to put up a tent?”

He laughed, his deep low laugh and it was like the morning had not happened. She was a

Headdress to the End of the Amarna Period”. *Studien zur Altägyptischen Kultur*. (1977): 21-39

young girl again, on another adventure with her big brother.

"You will be here with me. We are traveling light. The tent was brought for you otherwise I would be outside with the men."

She raised her eyebrows and looked around now noticing that there was only one tent.

"I could have slept as you..."

He shook his head, "No, I asked you to come so the least I could do is cover you from the insects."

She dipped her head in thanks and pulled back the flap, "But we will be able to sit outside to see the stars?"

"Something we shall not miss. Our meal will be light but it will be hardy. I hope you like hard bread and water."

She nodded, no longer sure if he was serious or not. He grinned and stood up, ducking, he entered the tent, leaving her to follow. She ducked even though she was short enough to fit without ducking. Akhenaten reclined on the cover on the ground, his hands behind his head, looking at the ceiling.

"They will let us know when the meal is ready. We should sleep soon because we will be up earlier than the sunrise."

She nodded. She had already gathered they would continue until he saw what he was told to see. He was not concerned, and he was not even

trying to plot out their route. He was waiting to hear.

“Are we riding as you are shown?”

He looked at her, “Yes.”

“I thought so.”

He seemed to be waiting so she raised her eyebrows, “Is there something else?”

“No, I was waiting for you to tell me that it was not a good plan.”

She laughed, “You are waiting to hear from pa ‘nh ‘Itn (the Living Aten). It is not my place to say anything. It could be weeks before you know. We can only wait for the time He speaks to you.”

He rolled over on his side, “See, this is why I bring you with me. Others would have thousands of questions and then still be worried, but you simply accept it as it is.”

“Only when I know it is MaAt (Truth). If you said anything that did not sit well with me, there would be more questions.”

He laughed and their talk turned to her work within the ‘ah (palace). The meal eaten, and it was not hard bread and water but bread, cheese and a dried meat with wine, the evening oblations for pa ‘nh ‘Itn (the Living Aten) completed, they settled under the stars to watch them while listening to the men laughing and talking over the campfire they built. When she could not keep her eyes open he led her to the tent and she fell instantly asleep.

Nebetiah woke the next morning to find Akhenaten had already risen. She began wrapping her khat as she moved to the doorway of the tent and stood in it, looking around for him. It was still dark and the re (sun) was just breaking in the sky and then she saw him, a dark shape, recognizable by his shoulders, standing, watching the horizon. She walked up to him and he silently reached for her hand as he stared at the two mountains in front of him, sinking to his knees. She followed him, feeling the energy radiating from him, his face turned to the horizon of the two mountains, eyes watching in wonder, his lips silently moving. She watched with him, feeling the sense of wonder grow and flow around her as the re (sun) slowly moved higher. The re (sun) was rising perfectly between the mountains, as if set within a cartouche by [Living Re-Harakhty, who rejoices in the horizon]/[In His Name of Light, which is in the sun disc] Himself, showing with His glory ablaze, through the aten (sun disc), in a landscape of pinks, golds, and purples above the mountains.

“Lord of heaven, Lord of earth, great living Aten who illuminates the Two Banks, Father, [Living Re-Harakhty, who rejoices in the horizon]/[In His Name of Light, which is in the sun disc], – great living Aten who is in jubilee within the House of Aten in Akhet-Aten and sA=k (your son), Ka nakht mery Aten³⁰⁸, Wer-nesut-em-Akhet-

³⁰⁸ Horus name: The strong bull, beloved of Aten

Aten³⁰⁹, Wetjus ren en Aten³¹⁰, Neferkheperu-re Wa'en-re³¹¹, Akh en Aten³¹². Akhet-aten³¹³ has been found. I have come," he whispered, and she closed her eyes, letting the wonder flow through her, crying, as she followed him, bowing forward in reverence.

Akhenaten rose to his feet, the early morning sunlight bathing his face and helped Kiya stand. He smiled at her for the first time since the destruction of the temple, truly smiled, a deep peace settled within him.

"Kiya, It is time to make Akhet-Aten as an estate for It=K (my Father) in its entirety and His sA=F(his son)³¹⁴, the King of Upper and Lower Egypt, who lives on MaAt, Lord of Two Lands, Neferkheperure-Wa'enre, the Son of Re who lives on MaAt, Lord of Crowns, Akhenaten³¹⁵." ³¹⁶

³⁰⁹ Nebty(Two Ladies) name: Great in Kingship at Akhet-Aten

³¹⁰ Golden Horus name: Who has elevated the name of Aten

³¹¹ Prenomen: Beautiful are the manifestations of Re, the Unique one of Re (Not changed)

³¹² Nomen: Living Spirit of Aten (new birth name, son of the father)

³¹³ Horizon of the Aten

³¹⁴ "In the Name of Light": union in life, the union of father and son (Walvoord)

³¹⁵ Living Spirit of Aten; (Murnane, 74) "In the Name of Light": union in love in taking the name as a bride takes the name of the bridegroom, one then has certain rights and privileges in virtue of the fact that they have taken a new name - (Walvoord)

³¹⁶ Ka nakht mery Aten (The strong bull, beloved of Aten), Wer nesyt em Ipet-sut (Great of Kingship in Karnak), Wetjus ren en Aten (Who has elevated the name of Aten), Nefer kheperu Ra, wa en Ra(The beautiful manifestations of Ra, unique one of Ra), Akh en Aten (Living Spirit of Aten)

He spun around quickly calling to the men in the camp to wake as Nebetiah closed her eyes and raised her face to the sunlight.

She opened her eyes to mist that had settled there among the trees of the hesep (garden). She was once again surrounded by the wondrous peace of that moment as she walked in the memory. It was on his return to the 'ah (palace) that by Nsw (King) Neferkheperu-re Wa'en-re was greeted with the news that Nefertiti had given birth to their fourth daughter, Neferneferuaten Tasherit³¹⁷ and he had refused to let Nefertiti darken the new little life that greeted him on his return. Instead, he invited his court and officials to also begin new with him by taking the name of the Father and many did, among them was Nakhtpaamun who became to Nakhtpaaten³¹⁸ and Horemheb who became Paatenemheb³¹⁹. It was also the last day Nebetiah was to ever hear her birth name on another's lips. He had gifted her with two beautiful white stone vases with the cartouches of the great living Aten and his own followed with the dedication "The wife and greatly beloved of the King of Upper and Lower Egypt, who lives on Maat, Neferkheperu-re Wa'enre, the beautiful child of the living Aten who shall live forever continually: Kiya".³²⁰ She had become Kiya.

³¹⁷ Beautiful are the Beauties of Re, the younger one

³¹⁸ Strong is the Aten

³¹⁹ Aten is Present in Jubilation

³²⁰ (Murnane, 45, 90)

Nsw (King) Neferkheperu-re Wa'en-re had given a great oblation and moved forward in the greatest peace Kiya had ever felt flowing from him, advancing him, unfaltering in his work. She felt that peace now lingering from the memory, as if she was walking on air, the peace so gentle, moving her forward once more, watching memories tumbling past her, memories of change, sadness and even for some, despair for the destruction of Gem-Pa-Aten had far reaching effects. Akhenaten did not react immediately after the attack on Gem-Pa-Aten but instead considered carefully what needed to be done to restore MaAt (Order). He sequestered himself within Rwd mnw n itn r nhh. He spoke to no one, emerging from his isolation, determined, and yet saddened. He did not seek Kiya for advice but only to listen.

Akhenaten told Kiya he wanted all to understand that he and now the neseyte (kingship) was to follow the [Re-Harakhty who rejoices in the horizon]/[In His Name of Light which is in the Aten] but he was not closing all temples. Pa 'nh 'Itn (The Living Aten) had not been attacked outside of Waset (Thebes) so a heavy retribution was not needed except in Waset (Thebes). The hwt-w (temples) within the land were the livelihood of the people and the Two Lands received her sustenance from these hwt-w (temples). It was not they who had lead against [Re-Harakhty who rejoices in the horizon]/[In His Name of Light which is in the

Aten] so no retribution was to be levied against them.

In time, he expected to see a shift to the ḥwt-n ḥt'n (temples of Aten) he had built for the people within their nomes, as they had already begun, but forcing them would simply be bringing isfet (chaos) to all of the Two Lands. It was only within Waset (Thebes), those who had led the attack who were to feel retribution. Thus, since the attack was ultimately by the hands of the ḥem-w n imn (servants of Amun), it was there that he needed to restore MaAt (order) first. Then he was to remove Amun from the rest of the Two Lands to prevent any other rekhyt (people) from being led into isfet (chaos).

He called his council of officials of favor, seating her with them: Merye, Greatest of Seers of the Aten in the House of Aten in Akhet-Aten, Parennefer, Overseer of Prophets of All the Gods, Ramose, tjaty (vizier), Tutu, First Servant of Neferkheperure-Wa'enre in the House of Aten in Akhet-Aten, May and Paatenemheb, generals of the two lands, Ay, Overseer of All the Horses of His Majesty, Ahmose, Superintendent of the Court House of the Lord of the Two Lands, Penthu, Chief servitor of the Aten in the house of the Aten in Akhet-aten and Panehsy, Second Servant of the Lord of the Two Lands Neferkheperu-re Wa'enre.

Nsw (King) Neferkheperu-re Wa'en-re had the Medjay bring the ḥem-w n imn (servants of Amun) to him, May, Si-mut and Amenemhat. He

listened to their words. They told him Amun had spoken to them of cleansing Waset (Thebes) of the Aten. They completed the task set before them. He listened and then he spoke.

He spoke of how their actions were of isfet (chaos) for they led in anger, no longer with MaAt (order) within their hearts for they had been destructive in their actions. Amun had brought isfet (chaos) within the city of Waset (Thebes) and to the Two Lands with his words to them. The *hem-w n imn* (servants of Amun) had become deaf when they chose to close their ears to the Words of the [Re-Harakhty who rejoices in the horizon]/[In His Name of Light which is in the Aten] and in acting in harm against another they, themselves, were no longer able to hear any netjer (god). They had fallen into isfet (chaos), whether or not their netjer (god) had been the one to lead them astray, they chose to follow isfet (chaos). He had been told by [Re-Harakhty who rejoices in the horizon]/[In His Name of Light which is in the Aten] to show mercy to them by granting them time to bring themselves back to MaAt (Order) and turn aside from the one who had led them there.

Thus, they were judged and the purge of Waset (Thebes) begun. Nsw (King) Neferkheperure Wa'en-re ordered the Medjay to expel the *hem-w n imn* (servants of Amun) and the guard of the *hwt* (temple) from Ipet-isut (Karnak) who had acted on their orders. The Medjay, a force stronger than the *hwt* (temple) guard even if they had been ready for

them, swiftly executed the expulsion. The tolerance for the *hem-w n imn* (servants of Amun) was over but Nsw (King) Neferkheperu-re Wa'en-re did not act in anger. He made it clear It=F (His Father) wanted nothing of Amun to remain³²¹. He ordered the removal of Amun, not the destruction of the temple, simply removal of the god's name and any naming references to this god's ogdoad in Ipet-isut (Karnack) . He wiped out any and all references to "netjer-w" ("gods") to ensure there was no reemergence affected and to show there was no longer an ogdoad but one "sole god without another beside Him"³²².

The other netjer-w (gods) were to be left alone, deemed not a threat to MaAt (Order) for only one had attacked It=K (His Father), and it was wished to allow those who were to come to do so without strife. The wab-w (priests) who effected the care of Ipet-isut (Karnak) were allowed to remain, thus allowing these hwt-w (temples) to still function for the other netjer-w (gods) and rekhyt (people) but the hwt of imn (temple of Amun) was closed. There needed to be no destruction because Nsw (King) Neferkheperu-re Wa'en-re already knew the statue of Amun would fall apart in time, at the Will of It=F (His Father). That statue would remain in the darkness of its holy of holies, alone.

³²¹ Jeremiah 46:25 G-d's battle against Amun continued. The Priests of Amun came back into power after Akhenaten's death and were actually Pharaohs of Egypt in a later Dynasty.

³²² (Murnane, 114)

Once Nsw (King) Neferkheperu-re Wa'en-re had cleansed Waset (Thebes), he was turning his attention back to the site of Akhet-Aten and the Will of It=K (His Father). The new city was to be built in the land where no netjer-w (gods) had been, no man had been, a virgin soil, sitting at the base of the two mountains of Akhet-Aten.³²³ as found for him when he went into the desert. The royal sittings began, and he gathered his best qed-w (architects) with Ramose, Nakhtpaaten, Parennefer, May, Tutu, Bek, and Ay with others and he began the renderings for the city, telling the men how the city was to be completed for It=f (His Father).

From that moment, Nsw (King) Neferkheperu-re Wa'en-re was moving forward quickly and all in the 'ah (palace) worked hard to keep up with him. He divided his time between Waset (Thebes) and Akhet-Aten, living in a tent in the new city while visiting each construction site while multiple buildings were being erected at the same time. His army was already at work but a huge work force of rekhyt (people) was needed to build. And they came. The rekhyt (people) of Waset (Thebes), newly displaced by the closure of the Temple of Amun, were the first to follow him there, looking for work. He had the hands and backs of the rekhyt (people) to help build his vision and he left their care in the hands of the overseers.

³²³ (Murnane, pg. 74-75)

The move of the nsw (king) to Akhet-Aten did not stop all life in Waset (Thebes) but as the work force within the city dwindled, plans to move the rekhyt (people) of the ‘ah (palace) to Akhet-Aten were under way. Ramose and ḥm.t nsw.t tpt (Chief Royal Wife) Nefertiti managed the state affairs from Waset (Thebes) while Pharaoh³²⁴ Neferkheperu-re Wa’en-re was in Akhet-Aten with the other officials overseeing the simultaneous constructions of four main buildings to effect this move.

The first building completed was the sunshade “He builds the Horizon for the Aten in Akhet-aten”³²⁵, the sunshade for Pharaoh Neferkheperu-re Wa’en-re. Then Per-aA³²⁶ (Great House) was finished with purple and red statuary filling it, followed by the completion of the King’s House³²⁷ and Per Neferkheperu-Re³²⁸, then Per Wa’en-re³²⁹. Workman villages were built within the city’s limits and Akhet-Aten began taking shape as the new religious city of the Two Lands. When the per-aa-w (palaces) were ready, his wives and children were brought to the city, leaving behind the memories of a past that lived in Waset

³²⁴ This title first began its use during this time

³²⁵ ṣwt-Re m ḳdw.f ʒḥt n ‘Itn m ʒḥt-‘Itn

³²⁶ ³²⁶ Pr-‘3; Great House; palace; from which the title Pharaoh was derived during the reign of Akhenaten

³²⁷ pr n sḥtp-Itn

³²⁸ House of the Beautiful Manifestations of Re

³²⁹ House of the Unique One of Ra

(Thebes), the clutter of men lost to themselves.
Waset (Thebes) was abandoned by the Pharaoh.

Despite the darkness of the actions of the *hem-w n imn* (servants of Amun), and the difficulty of the changes that came from their choices, the *neseyte* (kingship) did continue. Another memory was rising, bright and warm this time, a welcome change from the darkness that had filled her. A memory, loving and comforting, in a garden familiar to her, as she looked around, to see Akhenaten watching her expectantly, his face, bright and happy. They were standing together, the hot, full sun above, and green lush flowers and trees surrounding them in a new 'ah (palace), in the new city of Akhet-Aten. Looking around the *hesep* (garden) that surrounded them now, Kiya saw a beautifully carved bench, depicting the two of them, she and Akhenaten, under the Aten with *stwt=K* (His rays) of *s'nh* (life) surrounding them, as they sat, holding hands, looking at each other. The bench, itself, sat beneath an *ishedty* (double persea), that began with one trunk but split into two trees about a third of the way up. She gave a soft cry of enjoyment and moved forward to the bench, touching the painted figures lightly with her fingers. Inscribed on it, below where they sat, was "The Favorite, the Wife and Greatly Beloved of the Lord of Two Lands, Neferkheperu-re Wa'en-re, Kiya³³⁰."

³³⁰ (Murnane, 45B, pg. 90)

She turned to look at him, amazed.

He was grinning happily, "I welcome you to Per Wa'enre m zht-Itn³³¹ (House of the Unique One of Ra in Horizon of Aten), hmt-mrrty-'3-n-niswt-bity (Doubly Beloved Main Wife of the Dual King)³³², Kiya, so that you and our children may live in comfort and health for thousands of years."

"Shhh, Nefertiti would be so unhappy with those words, Akhenaten!" but she could not help the sheer happiness that filled her eyes with tears.

He saw her tearing up and pulled her into a hug, reassuring her softly, "She has no choice in this now. She will accept that my sen.t (Sister), my thoughtful guide in life, heri.t sesheta-j (my Mistress of Secrets) and maw (seer) of my dreams, will be living her life as she should have been, as a hm.t nsw.t (royal wife) in her own per-nswt (royal house) with our children playing in a hesep (garden) as we once did. You shall not be hidden away in an ipet (harem) any longer," he released her but kept an arm around her shoulders as they both looked around the hesep (garden).

"You remember the day we drove here, Kiya, the day It=J (My Father) told me to come to Him that He may show me where to build His Monument? This is where we spent the night. This garden is the very place of our tent and the view

³³¹ North Palace

³³² I have lost the source of this name but still used it, not because I believe it was actually written but mainly because I was given it for a reason, something I have learned, to listen.

you see every morning is the one we saw together the first day It=J (My Father) reveled where His Monument was to rest when He told me to come to Him³³³. You followed faithfully,” he smiled and looked at her, “You live within my arms now, Per Wa’enre m 3ht-Itn (House of the Unique One of Ra in Horizon of Aten), within our memory of that day.”

She was crying, tears softly falling as she listened to him and looked around, “You have given a great gift of your heart, Akhenaten. This is so beautiful, the walls painted as if we are outside and out here, in the hesep (garden), our bench! Our tree! This is beautiful. Dwa-nejter n twt (Praise God for you)! Oh!”

She broke off with a cry and ran forward as he watched her with a smile. She had seen the n’rw-w (doves) within the garden, around the pond that lay among the fig trees, nehet (sycamore), and ima-w (date palms). The pond contained fish swimming lazily among the reeds and the white and blue seshen-w (lotuses). The seshen-w (lotuses) were open, drinking in the sun above, as they had in Waset (Thebes), the white ones rising above the water on their stalks like bnw-w (herons) while the blue ones floated on the water surface, petals spread wide as the sky above them, little floating mirrors of the sun. Their fragrance was light on the breeze. She looked up at

³³³ (Murnane, 74)

the n'rw-w (doves) as they sat among the branches, softly cooing to each other. They were wonderfully caged among the trees so they were able to fly among the branches of several of them and move about the ground as they wished. There was a bench near them where she could sit and listen to them call to each other. She blinked back more tears and turned to Akhenaten.

He followed her more slowly, smiling deeply at her pleasure, "Here are your very own ... so that they will carry messages for us."

"These will travel to you?" She was breathlessly happy.

He nodded and laughed, "Yes, *ib n ib=j* (Heart of my heart) and mine will return to you. I wanted to make this as much a reminder of our old life but still something new for you to build into something for our family. There is more, *Kiya, ishedty=w* (our double perseas) ... look at the tree."

She ran back to the bench under the *ishedty* (double perseas), wondering what to look for and then saw it. There, on the trunk of one tree, her name had been carved. She cried out, tracing "Kiya" with her finger, and then on the branch, she saw "Beketaten," on another branch was "Smenkhkare" and a third branch bore "Menhitaaten." She moved to the other tree, finding similarly carved on each branch the names of *sa.t-w=f* (his daughters), Meritaten, Meketaten, Ankhnesneferibre, and Neferneferuaten Tasherit. She turned around, now not trying to hide her

tears. Akhenaten, still smiling, moved forward again, to join her back under the trees and took her hands in his, looking down at her. His eyes were also bright with tears.

"I wanted to see my family together," he said gently.

"It is beautiful, sen (Brother), "she whispered, "Nefertiti should be here with us also."

He smiled and wiped a tear from her cheek, "I would like to see her here, sen.t (Sister), but I waited for you."

She laughed softly through her tears, "You did not need to wait, sen (Brother), you already know. She goes here," she stepped forward, touching the trunk of the other tree on which the names of sa.t-w=f (his daughters) now lived, "and you, dearest love, are here and she touch the lower trunk of the tree where the two trunks merged into one. This is our family, together through you, even if separate in life. Do not be sad, sen (Brother) because one day they will touch again like these branches," and she pointed up to where the branches had grown around each other. Djet."

"N neheh, Kiya. You have a gentle heart that cries for love. I have never seen you cry for sadness, only love and this is what keeps me going when I feel I cannot go on. You are my sanctuary bringing me htpw (peace). It is as if you know me before I do. You and I are each of the other, like this

tree m awt djt³³⁴ s'nh (of eternal life)," he looked up at the ishedty (double perseas), "We are this way djet (forever)."

"N neheh (And Always) ... You have always been with me and now your love will be everywhere I look around me. I am so happy," she paused, "But all this Nefertiti will ..."

He stopped her from talking with his finger on her lips, "Is it too much for me to know you may now sit in hesep=w (our garden), on our bench, under ishedty=w (our double perseas), and watch our stars to your heart's content, with our children around you, Kiya? Is it too much for me to know you are listening to n'rw-w=k (our doves), even when I am not with you?" he smiled, shaking his head, "No, it is not too much, Imi-ib (Heart's Desire), you have always put yourself last with other rekhyt (people), with me, with Nefertiti and it is time I put you where you belong – first in my heart and in my home."

"Sen, (Brother)! Nefertiti should be first in your heart!"

He shook his head again, smiling softly, "You always argue with me. She is hm.t nsw.t tpt=j (my Chief Royal Wife), hm.t netjer (priestess), and consort in my reign but she has never been one who has loved me as you have. You have never shown you had a negative thought for her while she has tried to fill my heart with her trivial injuries

³³⁴ In perpetuity

from you. It has not gone unnoticed, little one. There are many Loves in our lives, but the deepest Love is not always who you marry, but it is of those who love you without thinking of what they may get in return, whoever that person may be. It=^J (My Father), pa ʿnh ʿItn (the Living Aten), Lord of Love³³⁵, has shown this to me with His Love. For this great gift of love, you are the “Wife and Great Beloved of the King of Upper and Lower Egypt, living in Truth, Lord of Two Lands, Neferkheperure Waʿen-re, the Goodly Child of pa ʿnh ʿItn (the Living Aten), who shall be living for ever and ever, Kiya”³³⁶. Here we shall continue to meet, play with my children, because no more will you be held separate from the royal family.

“I wish for you to begin tutelage of all of sa.t-w=j (my daughters) so they may grow in grace and kindness to be hm.t-w nsw.t wr.t (Great Royal Wives) one day. Nefertiti already knows of this and sees the benefit for sa.t-w=n (our daughters), as they are now four with little Neferneferure Tasherit³³⁷ with us,” he smiled, “This will allow her to continue to be at my side as my hm.t nsw.t tp.t (Chief Royal Wife) serving the Aten (sun disc) and rekhyt=w (our people) with all the power she wants, to keep her happy. This duty of our children’s learning falls to the one woman I trust with my life and so trust my children to her – you.

³³⁵ (Murnane, 164)

³³⁶ (Murnane, 90)

³³⁷ Most Beautiful One of Aten, Junior

And it ensures that you, Beketaten and Menhitaaten are able to see them without any interference. I do not like my children separated.”

She nodded her head, “I will happily guide sa.t-w=n (our daughters), but, Wa’enre, what of sen.t-w=j (my sisters) within the ipet (harem)? Your wives? Nadera? Tadu? If ...”

He shook his head, silencing her again, “I have appointed Apy as Overseer of the Inner Palace of Pharaoh in Akhet-Aten,” he smiled at her surprised face, “Nefertiti no longer tends to the ipet (harem). It is why I have given her her own ‘ah (palace). When I am in shtp-‘Itn (House of the King), they are close by in the Pr-³ (Great House) so I may visit with them. Apy will be sure to keep me apprised of their needs and allow all messages to me. He also knows that you also are allowed to see them,” he smiled and kissed her forehead, “This is the love of which I am not worthy. You have given me much and I am only starting to return all that you have given. I hope you do have time to spend with me today for I need to take you to Pa-maru-en-pa-aten³³⁸ (Maru Aten) so you may see where you may worship Pa ‘nh ‘Itn (the Living Aten) privately and where you and I will continue together, with our children, all of them.”

Kiya was relieved. She nodded, “I miss Nadera already,” he nodded, smiling, as she

³³⁸ Sun temple for worship of Aten; p3 M3rw-n-p3-‘Itn; Maru-Aten; meaning The Viewing Place of Aten

continued, "And Smenkhkare? Bring him also when you return next time."

Smenkhkare was now beside Akhenaten, still not formally announced as his chosen heir because Nefertiti was, again, with child and hope still burned in her heart for a son.

"Of course. It will be perfect to have the three of us together again," he bent his head in a small bow and offered his hand, "Now let us proceed with our day for I wish to show you the rest of Per Wa'en-re. Then we shall take the chariot to Maru Aten, where we will give our oblation to It=J (My Father) for the love and life he has given us. Then perhaps we may have a celebration tonight with sa.t-w=n (our daughters)? I wonder how they are faring with Maia?"

"Happily. They are showing her all of the 'ah (palace)," Kiya smiled at him and took his hand, letting him lead her out from under the ishedty (double persea) that now lived in her own hesep (garden), the memory fading as he tucked her under his arm, bending his head to her in a reply that drifted away with the memory..

She smiled. Akhenaten had elevated Nefertiti to ḥm.t wr.t (Great Wife)³³⁹ soon after their conversation. Kiya was sure it was because she had been correct, Nefertiti had not been pleased with Kiya's new status, and her husband needed to mollify her once again because he had forgotten the

³³⁹ (Murnane, 164)

one most important rule. Nefertiti is always first. She shook her head, smiling, and her thoughts returned to her own hesep (garden), where she wandered now, among her trees, her doves, her flowers, her lake, free of any other. He had given her a winery and a market place and her workers, so she could tend to her own finances. That he had done this was deeply appreciated because her work as a swnw.t (doctor) was not enough to handle the expense of her own 'ah (palace) and would have needed support. Support she would have had to request from Nefertiti. Now she was no longer dependent on the state to provide for her and she could even bring money back into the state. This sense of freedom from Nefertiti made her feel a little guilty but she could not deny the happiness that filled her heart. She would miss her sen.t-w=s (her sisters) of the ipet (harem) but Akhenaten, when he stayed in Shtp-ʿItn (House of the King), was across from them where they lived in the ipet (harem) of the Pr-ꜥ3 (Great House). He was close to them now and she liked the thought that he would be seeing them more often as he was working. She softly laughed. They would like him seeing them more often.

She looked up, not really seeing the trees above her in the mist, just content, happy, and grateful to Akhenaten's thoughtfulness. Certainly, placing her only a mere distance south of the Per Neferkheperu-Re where Nefertiti and their sa.t-w (daughters) lived enabled him to see both of them

more easily, but it also allowed the sa.t-w (daughters) to move easily between the two domiciles to see each other also. And she was closer to the Pr-^{c3} (Great House) so a visit to see sen.t-w=s (her sisters) or Smenkhkare was a simple drive and one she could take any time she wished in her own chariot. She no longer had to gain permission. Her pleasure deepened with the thought.

She often sat under the tree, reading the names that were written upon it. Nefertiti was now on the other trunk and Akhenaten joined them together. They had talked about Mutnedjmet who was living with Nefertiti in Per Neferkheperu-Re³⁴⁰. He had said this was because as Nefertiti wished to show him she was not opposed to all women, but he did not change his resolve on moving Nefertiti away from his other wives, as much as he wished to believe her. His love swirled around her still, warm and comforting, and her eyes flooded with tears again. She was surprised she still cried from the love that surrounded her, all these years later. She sighed and shook her head.

Looking around her, she slowly realized she had not found their bench yet as she wandered in the hesep (garden). It seemed vaguely strange to her but as soon as the thought slipped in it was gone. It was not that she was looking for their bench but the hesep (garden) was not that big that she could lose it. She would come upon it soon

³⁴⁰ Per Nefer-hprw-R^e House of Beautiful Manifestations of Re (Hoffmeier)

enough and then she could linger beneath the branches of their ishedty (double perseas) with her memories.

Her thought whispered away just as quickly as her memories returned, fluttering around her like butterflies trying to find a place to land. There was Smenkhkare bending over her shoulder as they worked through issues with the wine fields, watching him with Beketaten, Menḥitaaten, Meritaten, and Akhenaten as they sat over a meal, laughing and talking, walking the hesep (garden) with Maia, heads together, arm in arm. Meritaten visiting more and more often to sit with her as they wrote poems and songs, now it was Smenkhkare who was finding them under the tree and reading the poems back to them, as she used to with Akhenaten. Worshipping at the Maru-Aten with Akhenaten and all nefer sa.t-w=sn (their beautiful daughters) together, Meritaten, Meketaten, Beketaten, Ankhesenpaaten and Menḥitaaten and sometimes even little Tasherit and memories of sitting in her room, listening to the n'rw-w (doves) call to each other softly as she wrote poems and songs to sing to Menḥitaaten and Beketaten, these all filled her vision.

She saw Akhenaten more often now, bringing sa.t-w=f (his daughters) with him to enjoy a meal, sitting in the garden watching their children playing and as the evenings approached,

everyone singing prayers to [Living *Sun*³⁴¹, Ruler of the horizon, rejoicing in the horizon]/[in His Name in *Sun*, the Father, who has come as the sun disc]³⁴². Evenings with Akhenaten sitting under the stars, arm in arm, tucked against each other or sometimes holding the girls in their arms sleeping if she allowed the girls to stay with them to watch the stars. The joy of Nefertiti becoming a mother again with her fifth daughter, Neferneferure³⁴³ shadowed only by Nefertiti's disappointment of no son,

³⁴¹ (Murnane. 84. B, 183) Live/Living sun tells me Akhenaten knew he was not seeing the sun or sun disc which he knew was not alive: "You are in the sun" (Murnane, 68.1, 143) so he knows what he speaks with is something more – but not one of their gods (no god diminutive). This was something beyond their knowledge also that awed him. He had no name, just what he saw looked like the sun and the sun disc – very bright strong light.

³⁴² [' nḥ re ḥk3 ʒḥt ḥry m ʒḥt]/[m r. f m re ti ii m itn](Hoffmeier, 205) Still a teaching name, so again describing G-d by what he understands. "Re" is not written with the diminutive for god so Re means sun, not Re the god per Hoffmeier et al. There is not god diminutive used for Aten either so simply the sun disc which supports using visuals to describe by Akhenaten. The misnomer on "re" sent me into research and I found, according to Gardiner's list the hieroglyph Aa13/15 translated as "in" is still unknown which means they are still guessing (also per Mr. Hoffmeier). It is transliterated as "m" phonetically an "m" or "im" which can be several meanings among them: in, with, for, as, from. If they have figured it out, I have not found the information. Note "m" is an owl and NOT present in the hieroglyphics. I am using only one of the translations of the teaching name (and I changed "Re" to sun) but they are all similar. My point – there was no name for G-d. Akhenaten continued to find a way to describe Him, and it changed over time as he tried to get closer to the truth of what he was experiencing so he could teach others. Persecution resumed after Akhenaten's death under the guidance of Ay. Rejoicing = h'y has also been translated as acclaim.

³⁴³ Most Beautiful One of Re

working in her healing garden with Shadya, sharing stories of their childhood, and laughter shared with Nadera as sa.t-w=sn (their daughters) ran among the trees chasing the ducks. Heads bent together with Kidin-Adad over her newest little baby boy, tickling his tummy and laughing, Tadu-Heba reclining in the lounge, waving her hands at sa.t-w=sn (their daughters), as she called out the steps, teaching them a dance with menat-w (castanets). The memories were soft and beautiful, and she wandered among them, quite happy, watching sa.t-w=sn (their daughters) being able to play with it=sn (their father) and sen.t-w (sisters) as he increased his time with them. The girls scampering off to play in the hesep (garden) as she and her brother once did when they were young while she and Akhenaten sat and talked, ḥm.t nsw.t wr.t (Great Royal Wife) Tiyi arriving in Akhet-Aten to visit. Tasherit and Neferneferure were toddling around with the young princesses Beketaten, Meritaten, Meketaten, Menḥitaaten, and Ankhesenpaaten. Beketaten refusing to leave her grandmother's side and Kiya giving in, letting her go while happily listening to her daughter tell her of the exciting things she did with her grandmother. ḥm.t nsw.t wr.t (Great Royal Wife) Tiyi demanding the presence of her granddaughter in the royal sittings or she would cease visiting the home of Nefertiti, thus Beketaten was in some portraits with the royal family with her grandmother. Kiya felt a twinge of satisfaction as

the memory of the standoff swept by with Nefertiti relinquishing to the older woman. Her daughter would be treated with respect while under the wing of her grandmother.

Slowly, since he began nearing the completion of the construction of the city, Akhenaten's stays had begun to extend with them, turning from days into weeks. She did not ask for the reason but simply enjoyed the time she now had with him, and as they began to return to their outings, sa.t-w=sn (their daughters) joined them. Chariot rides out into the desert were their favorite, as they drove from stela to stela, marking the boundaries of the city, Akhenaten describing what they were seeing and the girls listening breathlessly to him. The thrill of seeing may-w (lions), baboons, cheetahs, antelope, gazelles watching them as they passed, with the ever-present guards, they saw on the trips and different places at which they stopped never tired the girls. Driving chariots with Meritaten and Akhenaten with the younger girls divided among them, sometimes Smenkhkare joining them and the younger ones fighting over who was to ride with him. Journeys on the h'pī (Nile), sailing up the down the river to Men-nefer (Memphis) where they would stay at the 'ah (palace) there, visiting Smenkhkare or sailing further to 'Iwnw (Heliopolis).

It was one of these trips on the h'pī (Nile) that was floating up from the memories drifting by her. She was half watching sa.t-w=s (her daughters)

with it=sn (their father), as she was leaning on the railing of the ship, and half watching the water from which db-w (hippopotamuses) were guardedly eyeing them as the ship sailed past, or the msh-w (crocodiles) who were swimming alongside. Because they were going north, the only rowing was the occasional oar dipping to maintain their heading as the current carried toward the sea. If they wanted to go faster, then the men would be rowing but, she looked at her brother, this was a leisure cruise. He was bent over with the girls looking at something in his hand. This was time with her that that no other could interrupt. He was definitely spoiling her. She had not gotten this much attention since before he became sA-nsw smsw (son and heir). She was far from complaining.

She smiled and looked back at the water, sighing as she leaned forward again. She only missed Meritaten, Meketaten, Ankhesenpaaten, Tasherit, and Neferneferure who had remained with their mother so they could attend her as she was soon to give her sixth child to the throne. Kiya prayed this time Nefertiti would have the son she sought to give to Akhenaten from the moment she saw him all those years ago. Then the ḥm.t wr.t (Great Wife) would be fulfilled and perhaps she would then accept Kiya into her family. She turned to watch Akhenaten with sa.t-w=f (his daughters) once more.

They were crowded over something, staring intently at their father's hand and talking quietly to each other. The girls were no longer pressed against him every minute he was with them, having grown sure that he was now staying, instead of leaving quickly. They already had several weeks of laughter and surprises in which Beketaten and Menhitaaten were tucked under his arm or on his lap, whispering secrets in his ear or beguiling him to play hide and seek. Kiya would join but often she ended up laughing too much so she would sit and watch them. And, as he had done when she was little, he danced with them, all three of them now, and the years fell away as they danced. Sometimes the girls would stop to watch them dance and then they would pull them back in again. The evenings passed just as pleasantly, laughter amid the meals, ase^{b344} (20 Squares) and thsm-w and sab-w (hounds and jackals) were the girls' favorite board games to play at night and she had also seen Akhenaten amid their dolls with them, though she had to promise not to share that with anyone. She smiled. Then Maia would tuck the two girls into their beds, gently chiding at them for being overly excited, while she and Akhenaten would wander outside to watch the stars. Being on the ship had changed nothing but the view which was beautiful.

³⁴⁴ Ancient Egyptian version of "The Game of 20 Squares"

Their present journey was spur of the moment as he had just told them this morning they were leaving but she did not find this unusual. After all their time together, he knew she would follow wherever he led and she rarely asked. It had always been that way. She turned her attention back to the beautiful evening that was promising an even more beautiful night with the gentle motion of the ship rocking them, the wind blowing gently in their faces, making it a pleasantly cool evening with no insects. They were expecting to land in 'Iwnw (Heliopolis) the next day, having already left Men-nefer (Memphis) where they had spent several days with Smenkhkare, as he could. They had been unannounced so he was not able to leave his studies, but they saw him at meals.

"The girls are going to sleep now, Kiya," she heard him call to her softly.

She turned and raised her hand to her brother who was coming toward her as Maia went inside the state rooms with the girls. He joined her, leaning against the railing of the ship.

"If they sleep at all. They are always excited so when we are heading to the shore of the sea," she murmured as he leaned down.

"Then a moment for us," he whispered, his breath warming her ear, as he settled his shoulder against hers as they leaned forward, "What is it that has captured your thoughts, sen.t (Sister)?"

Both were now leaning on the rail of the boat, watching the water flow by. The stars were

starting to come out, twinkling around Sah, high in the sky like a beacon showing the way home. Silence, except for the occasional oar dipping in the water and the river itself, was filling the spaces between them. She smiled, drifting along as they floated downstream. Akhenaten reached out and took her by her hand. The warmth from his hand drew her attention back to him.

“I only think how having you with me again, as we were little, has been a treasure, sen (Brother),” she smiled at him, “I am glad sa.t-w=n (our daughters) have been able to see you as I know you. Their joy has grown.”

He tucked her under his arm, warming her chilled shoulders, “Something I should have done much sooner than this. I had forgotten my promise”

She shook her head, “You have had much work to do and there is no man who could have done better than you.”

He laughed, low and deep in his chest, “Always my champion, tjaw n tjaw=j (Breath of my breath). I think I could kill someone with no cause and you would find a way to defend me, beloved (mery.t) one.”

“That is not true, Akhenaten!” she pulled back from him, looking at him in mock shock, “Always I try to keep you on the path of lightness within your heart. I would feed you to the msh-w (crocodiles) for that!”

He was laughing, "Wide in heart like the beautiful h'pī (Nile) and fierce as the may.t (lioness) for MaAt (Truth). I am glad you are happy, Kiya. Too often I have seen your smiles hidden in solemn thought," he paused for a moment, "I have brought you here for a reason, meryt=j (my beloved)."

She looked at him in the twilight of the night, the moon just beginning to shed her light on them. He definitely was calm, happy but something lurked behind his eyes, "One that makes you happy?"

"Do you remember the day of the ḥwt (temple)?"

She nodded. He was speaking of the day Gem-pa-aten in Waset (Thebes) had been damaged. It was not something she wanted to remember but the shock of it would always remain with her. She still did not understand the anger that drove men to attacking another's god... to lose control of the self over the belief of another was just unfathomable but fear was a strong master and men were weak if they chose to be so.

"It is time for me to finish the removal from the rest of the land of the one who brought isfet (chaos) now that Ti=j (My Father) is pleased with the work I have done with Akhet-aten. I will be journeying northward first and circling to the south with our army, making appearances for the people. This is not something I should leave to another to do. Our people should see me, so they understand

this is at the hand of pa Ti (the Father)³⁴⁵, then May and Paatenemheb will continue with the army. It may be some time before I return.”

“What of Nefertiti? She is soon to have the child?”

He nodded, “She is settled with me leaving. I cannot put Ti=J (My Father) aside. It is to be done.”

She nodded, still watching the water. It did not bode well for those around Nefertiti, but she and the other wives were removed from the ire of the ḥm.t wr.t (Great Wife) who lived in Per Neferkheperu- Re. They would weather his absence well and Nakhtpaaten, tjaty (vizier) of Akhet-aten and the south, would stand in for Akhenaten in the state affairs while he was gone. Nakht’s loyalty to his brother had rewarded him.

“What is to happen?”

“The removal of the name of the one-who-brings-isfet-(chaos) from ḥwt-w (temples) and state buildings will be finished. They shall be cleansed of Amun. The rekhyt (people) themselves are not accused ... I will not do what was done to me and destroy ḥwt-w (temples) and statues nor will I judge another’s beliefs. These are left to the Will of Ti=J (My Father) for Him to do as He wishes with

³⁴⁵ “Ti” in his didiatic name has replaced “it”. Scholars still read “ti” as “father”. If following Akhenaton’s desire to keep separate from all others non-divine, then this is separating The Father from human fathers and idol gods. It is also mirror image - are we not to be a reflection of G-d?

them. I am to bring MaAt (order) to the ḥwt-w (temples), remove that which caused isfet (chaos) so the rekhyt (people) may find their way to come through me to Ti (Father). They will not follow if I am harsh in judgment for something done by those already punished," he paused, as if in thought, watching the water, "This was a wise lesson. I was taught the judgment of one destroys the tranquility of another. One is not to judge when the other is not acting in harm against a third. This is a very important lesson," he looked at her, "I am learning that it is much like climbing a stair to come to Ti=j (my Father), the living sun, lord of love³⁴⁶.

"He wishes that as I come through Him to become ʒḥ (spirit) so then others come through me, the teachings, and thus then they will be able to see Him, so we may all be ʒḥ-w (spirits) with Him eternally³⁴⁷. The more we walk with MaAt (Truth) the higher we will go and receive "incense and libation³⁴⁸ from the 'staircase of the living one', Aten"³⁴⁹. Each of us begins, by learning the greatest abomination in the inner most being (self) is wrongfulness³⁵⁰. It is only the righteous things which elevate, and this is reflected by a voice that is not loud, the body that does not swagger, the heart

³⁴⁶ (Murnane, 71.3, 164)

³⁴⁷ Murnane uses "continually" which is synonymous with "eternally" – *One Song*, Prince

³⁴⁸ Incense and libation are offerings to the Aten and here rewarded to the person who is raising him/her self above the wrongdoings

³⁴⁹ (Murnane, Middle, 120)

³⁵⁰ Disgrace (Murnane, 192)

that does not accept the reward of wrongdoing from repressing MaAt falsely. To do what is righteous, acting only as told by pa Ti (the Father), not misleading others falsely with our knowledge, this how to walk up the 'staircase of the living one'. I rise early each morning to teach this to those who wish to learn so they may follow this throughout the day and make it their life, so they live this way. Only then will it become the inner most (self) of each of us. In this are joy, love and jubilation as pa Ti (the Father) welcomes us in His Joy.

"It is beneficial to be straightforward and true in knowledge and those who see me will be fulfilled, given a long life in prosperity and eternally breath the sweet north wind and be given continual Ka (eternal spirit) in the Living Aten³⁵¹. We know this, but we do not stay with it and this is the difficult part. In order for us to come to pa Ti (the Father) we must climb towards Him at all times. It is not easy path we are given. I judge those who follow me so that they may know if they will be continual (eternal) in the love of the Aten.³⁵² This is what I will be teaching to the land when I go out³⁵³ and illuminate His name," he sighed, "Even though I was struck in my heart with the attack on Gen-pa-aten, I am thankful I was given the moment so I can walk, carrying this in my heart for my people. I will not forget it," he stared out at the

³⁵¹ Paraphrased (Murnane, 192)

³⁵² (Murnane, 192)

³⁵³ (Murnane, 194)

river, "I am told those that have heard Ti=J (My Father) are coming to the ḥwt-w (temples) of Ti=J (My Father) already. To strike in anger now would only drive them away. That is not MaAt (order). So there is no strike against any other but Amun."

"A strong decision, Akhenaten," she sighed wistfully, "Part of me wishes I may go with you and be with you in this time."

He squeezed her shoulders gently with his arm that hugged her, "Wr.t mery.t (Great Beloved), I have thought about it for I would like you with me, but you are needed here now and thus why I have come to you. One more adventure for us, before I leave on this journey, because I wish to carry you in my heart."

She smiled, "I am always in your heart, mery.t=j (my beloved) as you are in mine. A thought does not pass that does not bring me back to you. This," she gestured around them, "is more than I would have thought to ask for. Thank you, sen (Brother)."

They looked back out across the water, listening to it lapping against the ship. He pulled her closer to his side and the silence drifted between them like an old companion until Akhenaten shook his head.

"I should have done this much sooner, Kiya."

"You said this before. What do you speak of, sen (Brother)? Something more bothers you than simply going on a journey."

“That you had this time with me.”

She laughed softly and patted his hand but knowing he was not telling her everything, “Have you forgotten so quickly of all the nights we used to sneak into the hesep (garden) under a moon as full as this one to play? Or the days we were chased out of the halls of the ‘ah (palace) by Parennefer? Or our walks into the desert? The nights we spent on the roof counting the stars and thinking of ways to reach them? If I do remember you were going to try to train many menet-w³⁵⁴ (swallows) to pull a chariot like the aten (sun disc) so we could ride to Sah.”

He chuckled softly, shaking his head, “No, those days are always close in my heart. I should have not let them stop as I did.”

“I would not ask for anything to change, sen (Brother),” she turned to him, “There are no regrets, no wishes for something different, ib n ib=j (heart of my heart). Keep the love as it should be. All that we have been has been for a reason and it is our journey. I have found joy in every moment and would not trade one of them because it has brought me here, to this moment with you.”

He hugged her again, “And again, you lift my heart, tjaw n tjaw=j (Breath of my Breath).”

Silence enveloped them as they watched the water below.

³⁵⁴ Sacred bird that souls can transform into when dead and fly to the stars

"You remember the day of the sꜣꜣ (scorpion)?" he asked softly.

She nodded, "Of course."

"It was that day that I knew you were to remain at my side."

"Then it took you longer than I, Neb=j (My Lord)."

He lightly tapped her cheek with a finger, "Shush, round face, I am being serious for a moment."

She subsided so he could continue, "It was that day ..." he paused and then took a deep breath, "I cannot help but feel that I am missing something that will come between us, Kiya. I hesitate to say this because I do not wish to darken our time now, but I look for what it is that I feel, so I may stop it."

"Now you are hr ʿ3=j (my seer)," she smiled, trying to cajole him out of this seriousness. He shook his head, so she continued more seriously, "I do not feel this way. There is no worry in my heart, sen (Brother). We are djet (forever)."

"Ne neheh (And Always)", he whispered.

He stared at the water and she could tell he was not convinced.

"Akhenaten, I know it is not anything that comes from between us. Perhaps, it is something from another," she realized she was not helping him because he could not control the actions of another. She hurried on, "I will promise to not

leave the Per Wa'enre without a guard, no matter the reason."

He nodded, looking at her in relief, "Within Per Wa'enre you are in my arms," he smiled, "and outside I would like to know you have guards at all times. I thank you for giving me that, Kiya. I would like to take you with me, sen.t (sister), but we have to travel light."

She laughed, "And you say I could not?"

He shook his head, "You could, mistress of the bow," ducking as she tapped him lightly in reproof, "but sa.t-w=n (our daughters) could not and I do not think you would want to leave them for long."

She nodded, "This is true. When do you leave?"

"When we return to Akhet-Aten. I will be there only long enough to prepare and then we go," he was watching the river again.

Her happiness was dampened a little. While she knew their time together would end, she had been enjoying the moment.

It was his turn to chide her gently when he saw her face, "And have you forgotten so quickly that all you have to do is look to Sah, Wr.t mery.t (Great Beloved)," he looked up and she followed his gaze to the stars, "and we are together now, you and I, wherever we are?"

She smiled, watching the stars sparkle in the dark, "I wait for you forever in the heart of the moon, who sleeps not, until you return to me. No,

sen (Brother), I have not forgotten for I have walked my lifetime in the hesep (garden) at night, watching Sah, knowing we are held together by his arms and it is there we are together when we are parted. Djet (Forever)."

He turned back to her, "N neheh, ib n ib=j (And always, heart of my heart), that is the answer I needed to hear," he kissed her forehead gently and tucked her back under his arm, "The truth is these things we talk of need to be said so I know you and sa.t-w=n (our daughters) are taken care of and I may concentrate on the work to be done. Otherwise I will be distracted."

She laughed, "Then perhaps I should work on distracting you rather than being capable."

He groaned, smiling nevertheless, "Please, I can only sustain one distracting woman in my life."

She laughed, pleased that she had finally gotten him to truly smile, and settled quietly against him, "I will listen to you then and be no distraction."

"Good! Now, I have decided Smenkhkare will be coming with me and then staying on as my emissary. Otherwise I would ask him to come stay with you," concern shadowed her face and he clucked at her, "I may stop telling you anything if you will be worried. Do not be dismayed. It will make me worry even more than I have done for myself."

She put her hand on his cheek, "I am not dismayed, just spoiled by you. Smenkhkare is a

strong man, a wonderful sA (son), and I know we will see you both soon enough," she smiled up at him.

He relaxed and smiled back, "I am thankful for him. He is close in my heart and all know he is under my protection," relief flooded her face as he continued with his plans, "I will ask our brother, Nakhtpaaten to watch over you. You know he is the overseer of our security, but I want closer protection on you, so I will ask him to do so for my comfort. There will be those who are angry when the cleansing of the ḥwt-w (temples) begins and there will be those who try to strike back, perhaps. This must be the concern I feel," he nodded, "We will be prepared. Ay, Commander of the Charioteers, will remain here with General Paatenemheb while General May and I move north.

"May will return as we will return here at which time May will stay and Paatenemheb will join me as we continue south of Akhet-Aten. Chief of Police Mahu will have the Medjay, except for my guard, here with the charioteers of Ay and this will be the army for Nakht while I am gone. I feel my wives, rekhyt=j (my people), all of them, you, mery.t (beloved), will be safe," he paused thinking and then continued slowly as if thinking out loud, "Of course I expect Ay to watch over Nefertiti, she is his daughter, and sa.t-w=n (our daughters), but it is because I know there are those who will automatically care for her that I only worry for you. I could not mention it to any and she would be

tended. You," he squeezed her shoulder, "are close in my heart but hidden to most. I am selfish this way to keep you to myself, but it is as I like and you never showed me you wished more."

She shook her head, "I have not wanted more. I enjoy being able to walk among rekhyt=w (our people), healing them and they are no wiser to who I am. To them I am simply hryt (mistress) swnw.t (doctor). I leave the adulation to Nefertiti who has lived for it and wish simply to serve as I can."

He was relaxing. She could feel the tension leaving his body now, "Then I will entrust you to Nakht, who adores you, while I am gone. If you have any needs, go to Nakht first. He already looks forward to seeing you. There is also Ahmose, steward of all within my house and Superintendent of the Court House, do not forget him," he grinned at her, "he does not forget you with your healing garden and needs of strange things. I will speak with both of them, so you have two to watch over you. I am pleased you are willing to accept more guards. Yes, this eases my mind."

"Good, I wish for you to not worry. Just know any who are assigned to watch over us is welcomed company. Will we need to speak to sa.t-w=n (our daughters) ... perhaps an increase in guard will not be noticed?"

They had traveled with guards ever since the attack on the temple, so the children had grown up seeing the Medjay surrounding them wherever

they went. It was not unusual for them to see guards.

“We will speak to them, *ib n ib=j* (Heart of my heart). It is wiser to be open than to hide *MaAt* (truth) from them,” he sighed and the last of his tension was gone.

He wrapped his arms around her and she snuggled against him as she used to when she was little. Silent now, they watched *Sah* and *Sopdet* twinkling above them, sounds of the river as the ship cut through the water, mingling with the occasional calls of animals from the shores, drifting away as the memory faded and she was watching the stars under the trees of the *hesep* (garden) in which she wandered, feeling the warmth of his love still surrounding her. She smiled and closed her eyes.

Her memories sped forward again through the end of the major constructions in *Akhet-Aten* and Pharaoh *Neferkheperu-re Wa'en-re*, with his generals, *May* and *Paatenemheb* by his side, sweeping forward with the army, erasing *Amun's* name where they found it, while the pharaoh spoke to *rekhyt=k* (his people) of the [Living *Sun*, Ruler of the horizon, rejoicing in the horizon]/[In His Name of *Sun*, the Father, who has come as the sun disc].

Hm.t wr.t (Great Wife) *Nefertiti* gave a sixth daughter, *Setepenre*³⁵⁵, to *Akhenaten* who welcomed her arrival with an expansive celebration

³⁵⁵ Chosen of Re

when he returned to Akhet-Aten as he swept southward. He folded his newest princess into his arms with as much love as he had, not once letting any think he had wanted anything other than the little princess and then he was gone again not looking back as he traveled the lands during the time of expulsion. Whispers of Nefertiti slumping into a dark mood rippled through the walls of the per-aa-w (palaces), even reaching Kiya in Per Wa'enre.

Kiya did not have time to think of Nefertiti's disappointment for soon she was learning she, too, was to bear another child for the throne. The dark whispers swirling around her now gave her a feeling of foreboding, so she kept the news close to herself, only sending a message to the pharaoh that would chase him as he moved across the southern nomes. She would hold this child close to her as long as she could, telling only Maia and Shadya of the coming child, for there was anger within the court.

She heard reports of the growing displacement of rekhyt (people) as the remaining ḥwt-w (temples) of Amun were closed and they began to come to the new city of Akhet-Aten drawn by a promise of a new life in prosperity. Also heard were reports of moments when overzealous troops erased more than Amun, causing outcries, requiring the pharaoh to continue with the army, to stave off the excess of their actions for he was responsible even if he was not

aware of their actions. She hoped that soon the time of expulsion would be over and he could return.

As with all memories, there were the ones that were reminders of the harshness of life and these, too, rose bumping in among the laughter until one was nudging its way into her thoughts, sobering her as she wandered in the hesep (garden). It was a memory of the day Shadya came to her with a soft request for her look at sen=s (her brother) who was in severe pain. The sun was strong above them as Kiya, who was wearing her simple garments she wore when healing. Her bare head was covered against the strong sun by a shawl that also draped down over her now softly rounded belly, obscuring her figure so she was looking much like her servant. She walked with Shadya to the village of workers where her family lived. She was now simply hekai.t (priestess of heka) and swnw.t (doctor).

The worker's village was a neat little village of houses surrounded by a wall with only one gate for entry and exit, set well outside the city itself. Kiya had offered to drive the chariot but Shadya had been reluctant and would only say no, it was better if they remained unseen. Kiya did not press her for her concern, thinking it was because her servant only wished to keep Kiya's identity hidden since they were not bringing a guard. Shadya seemed withdrawn, unusual for her, but Kiya did not press her. She believed it was concern for sen=s (her brother) that quieted her.

On entering the gate of the village, Shadya told the guard Kiya was a swnw.t (doctor) as he inspected her basket of healing herbs and eyed her bald head. She said nothing but smiled at him as he stared at her then he nodded curtly, allowing them to enter. They walked down a wide street and then turned up a smaller street several rows down and entered a small house. A woman sat in the front room, weaving, and she stopped, running to Kiya to kneel at her feet, thanking her repeatedly. Kiya helped the woman up, surprised to see tears rolling down her cheeks. She looked at Shadya who looked down and bowed.

“I am sorry, Neb.t=j (My lady), Mewet=j (my mother) did not think you would come.”

Kiya shook her head “Em Hotep, Mewet (With Peace, Mother). I am here. Please do not kneel for me. I am a mewet (mother) like you. Where is sA=k (your son)?”

“Dua netjer en etj (Thank God for you), Neb.t=j (My lady), Dua netjer en etj (Thank God for you), he is here,” and she led Kiya and Shadya to the central room of the house.

He was a well-built young man, just into manhood, strong and yet lay in pain so severe he could not move. He was lying on a reed mat in a makeshift bed in the family area because he was unable to climb the stairs to go to the bedrooms. He could not move for a dull but intense pain that started in the middle of his back and spread to his arms and legs. As she examined him, she learned

his name was Tarik, he was a stone carrier, like his father, and they were attached to the Per 'Itn (House of Aten).

The laborers, stone carriers, would carry large stones, weighing about the weight of a man, on their back. Sometimes they had to carry them a mile or more, depending on where the stones needed to be moved from the riverside storage house. Many of them ended up as Tarik. Some got better if they remained still for several weeks but then what little food they brought home to the family would stop coming in and they still had to pay the tax collectors or suffer the consequences which were severe.

All rekhyt (people) had to pay taxes once a year to the neseyte (kingship) to fund the building and other provisions the neseyte (kingship) provided to the rekhyt (people), like grain in the time of famine. Each household paid, whether rich or poor but the poorer the household, the less leeway they had in how they could pay. The laborers, like Tarik, were paid in grain or bread and beer which were not only the food for their family but how they also paid their taxes and bought things they needed. If they had any livestock, they could pay their taxes with them but then they would lose the food source. A garden with vegetables or fruit could be used, or even their work itself, especially if a weaver or a potter, even children as young as seven would be put to work to work off the debt. Their food was their way to

buy the things they needed so if there was not much food, the family went hungry. A laborer, even a weaver or potter, may even have to become a slave to work off his or her debt. Not being able to pay their taxes meant a punishment ranging from a beating with swords to death, depending on the severity of the tax owed or the official collecting it.

She listened as she continued her examination of him, horrified with the desperation of his words. This young man-boy spoke as if he had already lived half his life. He talked quickly, wincing and holding his breath as she poked and prodded him, of how he needed to get back on his feet quickly. He was obviously concerned as he worked faster than his father who was old, so it was Tarik who was keeping the tax collector at bay and still feeding the family.

If they did not have a lot of food, then what food they did get would go to the tax collector, so his father would not be beaten because they still owed taxes, and already sen-w=k (his brothers) and sen.t-w=k (his sisters) were not eating well. If he did not get to work, then sen-w=k (his brothers) and sen.t-w=k (his sisters) would go hungry. Shadya sent what she could but the taxes had just been raised again. Kiya looked at the five little children who were crowding the doorway of the room, staring at her. They were going hungry already for they were thin.

Kiya, who was kneeling next to him, looked at him from where she bent over his leg as she moved it and smiled reassuringly at him, "We will make sure you are not starving."

He stared at her for a moment as if deciding to say something when Shadya made a sharp movement.

"He is in pain, Neb.t=j (My lady), and does not know what he says half the time."

Kiya sat back on her heels to look up at her servant who was watching her with concern. Something was not right. Shadya was hiding something and sen=s (her brother) was holding back with his words.

"I am concerned. Has it always been like this, Shadya? I wish to have the truth for I am seeing it with my eyes," she said gently.

Shadya hesitated and then nodded her head as she crumbled to the floor next to Kiya, "I did not say anything to you because I did not think you could help. Tarik has begged me to talk to you, but I have put him off. It is my fault he is like this now. He has been working so hard to keep us from losing sen.t-w=w (our sisters) and sen-w=w (our brothers) or keep it (father) from being beaten."

Mewet=s (Her mother) made a soft noise from the doorway where she stood with her three younger sa.t-w (daughters) and her two sA-w (sons).

Shadya was fighting her tears, "It was not until we came here but there was no food in Waset

(Thebes). I told mewet (Mother) and it (Father) that if they followed me, we would have more because Hm=f (His Majesty) had always spoken of the bountiful love 'In His Name of Re, the Father' would show us. I have listened to you and Hm=f (His Majesty) speaks so many times of the love of pa Ti (the Father) for us. Tarik used to be a goat herder for the hem-w netjer n imn (servants of Amun) but when the hwt (temple) was closed, the goats were taken. So, he convinced mewet (Mother) and it (Father) to come and he would have the same job only for the Aten (sun disc). But Tarik and it (Father) were given jobs as laborers instead because that is what was needed, and it is less than we had before. Our men have always been goat herders. Then the taxes keep rising and there is not enough work to pay these taxes."

"This has happened to others?"

"We are not alone in this. There are many here in this village and in the other parts of the city who are here because they do not have their life work and seek to find it again, so we may pay our taxes and eat. We wish to do our part but all we have here is work to carry stones and must choose either to eat or pay taxes because the taxes here are always more than what we have."

"And your food?"

"We are given food based on how much work is done in a day. If you work hard, then you get more food but even that is not a lot for a family

as ours because the taxes are half of what we bring home now.”

Shadya looked at her mistress, trying to speak without crying but she could not, “I have been sending food here so they have food but sen.t-w=j (my sisters) and sen-w=j (my brothers)...,” she was now crying so Kiya could not understand her and her brother groaned as he reached for her hand.

Kiya’s eyes flooded with tears as she watched the younger brother take his sister’s hand in his, trying to comfort her through his pain.

“We eat well enough,” he said to Shadya, “You have sent us enough.”

Kiya was reeling from several different emotions. She was ashamed for she had never thought to ask of her servant’s family. She knew they were outside the ‘ah (palace) because Shadya would go home at times and then return. She had ignored this young woman who took care of her and assisted her in the care of others. She was shocked that the people were so ill, hungry, and being taxed so much and she could not believe sen=s (her brother) had allowed this to happen. She knew from her learning that this was not the way it was to be done. Even the least was important for MaAt (order). Yet they were suffering as they should not. He would be as angry as she was, she knew this in her heart.

She was confused why those closest to this suffering, the ones who were supposed to be caring

for the rekhyt (people) to ensure this did not happen, did nothing but let it happen and even allowed it to be worse. Perhaps the overseers' silence needed to be changed because their words could help these rekhyt (people) if they spoke to Akhenaten. Sen=j (Her brother) needed to hear. She took a deep breath and reached out to put her hand on theirs, clasped in Shadya's lap. Her eyes were blurred with the tears that threatened to fall, and she breathed out, softly. Then she looked at Tarik.

"You shall not get up until you do not feel pain," she raised her hand when she saw his panic, "Your family shall not go hungry. I give my word. There will be food today and I take you under my care. There is no payment for my services."

She turned to Shadya, "We cannot move him. You will stay here with sen=k (your brother) and make sure he does not rise. You will be paid for you are doing a service for me."

Shadya nodded, her face still wet with her tears. She looked lost.

Kiya turned back to Tarik, "I have found you have a pain in the bone of your back. You have said that you carry stone upon your back. It is possible that this has caused the bone of your back to break and this would affect all of your body when you move," she paused, thinking, as they watched her. She could not tell him now that he would not be able to return to the work he had done. She would find a place for him at Per Wa'enre but that would wait. Settled she

continued, "You must be willing to hear me, so I may heal you."

"I, Tarik, am a sufferer with a broken bone of the back,"³⁵⁶ he said clearly, completing the ritual acknowledgment that he was to be healed.

She nodded, turning to her healing basket from which she removed two small bowls, a grinding pestle, and two vials, one of white thick spn (poppy) liquid and the other of a brown liquid. She looked at Shadya, "I will need water."

Shadya rose, left the room while Kiya took two cloves of garlic from her basket, and began cutting them into small pieces, which she then crushed in the bowl, adding a little brown liquid from her vial. The smell of garlic and vinegar filled the air as she carefully added a small drop of the spn (poppy) vial and mixed it. Shadya returned with a flask of water and waited, watching. Kiya turned to Shadya for the water, adding it and stirring until completely mixed.

She put it aside and reaching back into her basket, she brought out a small scarab of the Aten. Leaning forward she placed the scarab on Tarik's chest and placed her hands, one palm down on top of his chest, over the scarab. The other she slid under his back, gently, to the middle of it where she had located his pain, palm against his skin. Bowing her head, she began praying the prayer of heka.

³⁵⁶ Jayne, Walter Addison. *The Healing Gods of Ancient Civilizations*. 1925

“O, you nobles, who are in the presence of the Lord of All, behold I come to you. Respect me in proportion to what you know. I am she whom the Sole Lord made before there came into being the two meals on earth, when he sent his sole eye when he was alone, being what came forth from his mouth, when his myriads of spirits were the protections of his companions, when he spoke with Khopri, with him, that he might be more powerful than he, when he took authoritative utterance upon his mouth.

“I am indeed the daughter of Her who bore Atum. I am the protection of what the Sole Lord commanded. I am she who cause the Ennead to live. I am ‘If she-wishes-she-does’, the mother of gods. The standard is high, the god is endowed in accordance with the command of Her who bore Atum, the august god who speaks and eats with his mouth. I have kept silence, I have bowed down, I have come shod in the presence of the Bulls of the sky, I have seated myself in the presence of the Bulls of the sky in this my dignity of Greatest of the owners of doubles’, heir of Atum.

“I have come that I may take possession of my throne and that I may receive my dignity, for to me belonged all before you had come into being, you gods; go down and come upon the hinder parts, for I am heka.”³⁵⁷

³⁵⁷ Unknown Egyptian. “Spell 261 Faulkner, R. O. *The Ancient Egyptian Coffin Texts*. Oxford: Aris & Phillips. 1973. 199-200 (I changed “he” to “she” in this prayer. Heka= magician in our words

She picked up the bowl that sat on the ground with the liquid. Lifting Tarik's head, she held him steady while he drank the remedy she had mixed up. She then placed her hands back on him as before and intoned again.

"Welcome, remedies, welcome that which destroys the trouble of this body and in these bones, take from him the pain in his back, the numbness of his limbs, begin again flow of matter which will bring him movement again. May you heal together, bones of the body, mend into strength, pushing out that which weakens the body, that which breaks the bones, that which fractures the skull, that which hollows the marrow, that which causes pain in all movement."³⁵⁸ [O Living Sun, Ruler of the Horizon, rejoicing in the horizon]/[In His Name of Sun, the Father, who had come as the Sun Disc], by the king who lives on MaAt, the Lord of Two Lands, Neferkheperure-Wa'enre, may You grant the healing needed of this body You created."

She sat back and began collecting the medicines, "I will make some more of the remedy for you, Tarik, and send it to you. Shadya? Did you see how I helped him drink? You will need to do this for him to drink and eat."

Shadya nodded, looking a little worried, "Neb.t=j (My Lady)."

³⁵⁸ Jayne, Walter Addison. *The Healing Gods of Ancient Civilizations*. New Haven: Yale University Press. 1925

She turned to Shadya, "You need to stay here, Shadya, to make sure he does not get up. He will not feel pain soon and will think he can rise. He cannot. This is very important."

"I promise I will not rise, Neb.t Swnw.t (Lady Doctor)," Tarik interjected. Already his eyes were closing. He would rest a while.

Kiya smiled and turned back to Shadya, "Stay and remind him of his promise to me."

Shadya looked worried, "You should not walk alone, Neb.t=j (My Lady). Already we did not bring the guard and it is not safe for you to be alone."

"Take Mesu with you, Hry.t (Mistress)," Tarik roused himself once more, "He is small but strong. He can guard your steps."

Their mother stepped forward from the doorway with the taller of the younger boys in front of her, "This is Mesu. Let him be your guard. He is a strong boy."

Kiya looked up at him and he smiled. He was a handsome boy but very thin. She would feed him when they returned to the 'ah (palace) and then send food back with some servants for the family. She nodded and stood up.

"I will need to know how much it is you have to pay in taxes..." she paused, looking at the mother, unsure how to address her.

Their mother blushed, "I am Webkhet, Neb.t=j (My Lady)."

Kiya smiled, "Webkhet, I will send your taxes to you so the food your husband earns is for your family. I will also send the food that Tarik would have earned had he not been hurt so you will have that food also to eat. And then, sen.t (sister), I will send what I have decided needs to be fed to you and your family, so you grow strong again for I have taken you under my care," she patted the small cheek of the littlest girl, "and these little ones have need of something more than bread and milk."

"We have not had milk these past months. We gave our goat to pay our taxes, so my husband would not be beaten," Webkhet whispered.

Kiya felt a flash of anger, "Then I will send you a goat also, sen.t (sister), three as a gift which you may share with your neighbors."

Webkhet's eyes filled with tears, "We cannot, Neb.t=j (my Lady), they will come and tell us there is a tax to be paid..."

"And then I will pay the tax myself, so they may know you are of my household. This will stop," she smiled reassuringly at Webkhet but the anger within her burned brightly. She needed to speak to Akhenaten and he was not here.

Webkhet nodded and Kiya patted Shadya's arm. The girl looked worried.

"I will be back," Kiya reassured her softly, "Wait for me here and tend to sen=k (your brother)."

She left Shadya kneeling next to Tarik who now was sleeping the heavy sleep of the drugged. In the front room of the per (house), Webkhet stood anxiously whispering to Mesu, no doubt giving him last minute warnings for he was walking with a ḥm.t nsw.t (royal wife) of the Per-aA³⁵⁹ (Great House). Kiya smiled to herself and took Webkhet's hand.

"Mesu will be fine, Mewet (Mother), I will not be ill with him if he forgets something. You and your family are now under my care. He is safe with me. I will send him back with my servants who will bring all of which I spoke."

Webkhet shook her head, tears in her eyes, raising Kiya's hand, she bowed and touched Kiya's hand to her forehead, "Dua Netjer en etj, Hm.t=k (Thank God for you, Your Majesty)."

She nodded and raised Webkhet, "Webkhet, I will return to see Tarik tomorrow. Mesu will return this afternoon with my servants after I walk in this village. I wish to see for myself all that is here."

Webkhet kept her eyes downcast, "You are welcome to walk among us, Neb=j (my Lady), but our streets are not clean."

Kiya smiled, "I am not afraid of dirt, Webkhet, I too have played as a child and angered my mother with my play."

³⁵⁹ The official palace in Akhet-Aten where official business took place and the House of Royal Wives (harem) was located

Webkhet looked quickly at her and then returned to her downcast gaze, "Mesu can walk with you."

She nodded. She wanted to look around and see how many families were in the village. This kind of hunger was not something she believed Akhenaten would allow. She smiled at Mesu, "Let us take a walk first and then we will begin our way back to Per Wa'enre."

She followed the young boy outside into the sunlight and they walked silently around the village, among the houses as she looked and watched. Children, some with stomachs already protruding from hunger and thin arms, were sitting as others thin arms and legs were still playing quietly in the dirt. There was no laughter or music among the people. The older people were working inside and there were even some young ones hard at work. There were people who were ill, their smiles garish with teeth bared by gums that had wasted away. Kiya was angry. It was not one house but over seven times ten. Akhenaten would know as soon as he returned. She turned to Mesu and beckoned him to follow her as she began walking to the guard gate to leave. Behind them, children played quietly in the dirt.

The afternoon was a flurry of activity unusual for the people who lived and worked within Per Wa'enre. Kiya had returned and thrown all into the work of readying a wagon to carry food for the village, not just for the family of Shadya.

She dispatched a messenger to Akhenaten, telling him she needed him to return home, even before she had sent Mesu to the kitchen to eat.

Kheruef, steward of Per Wa'enre, was a stoic and efficient man who soon had the servants and workers bustling around in preparation of the return. Mesu was fed while he waited with Kiya, amazed at the expansiveness of the 'ah (palace) and the food that was put in front of him. Messengers were sent running to the city Per-aA (Great House) and Nakhtpaaten's house that rested in the southern part of the city, carrying Kiya's request for Ahmose and Nakht to come speak with her.

Soon Kiya was standing in the entrance of Per Wa'enre, surrounded by Beketaten, Meritaten, Meketaten, Menhitaaten and Ankhesenpaaten and Maia, arms around each other, watching the wagon bearing Kheruef and Mesu swaying down the road, full of lentils, eggs, melons, pomegranates, cucumbers, garlic, olives, dates, figs, bread, beer, cow and goat milk and cheese, and tied to the back were three goats walking behind, bleating occasionally, as the sun cast his arms over all of them. She squinted against the strong afternoon rays, as she stood shielding her eyes, watching, slowly rubbing the low of her back which ached. She knew Kheruef would do as he was asked and not only ensure the delivery was given to Shadya and the people of the village, but he would make certain any taxes levied were sent to her estate.

She sighed, watching the wagon grow smaller in the distance. Still she had wanted to be returning with Mesu with the next medicinal dosages for Tarik to be given to Shadya. The young boy also carried a small papyrus of instructions and some of Shadya's belongings gathered for her stay with her family. Kiya smiled, he could be trained as a messenger in her household.

When Kheruef returned she would set him to finding a place for both Tarik and his father. The children would be given schooling as the parents wished but she would ask for Mesu specifically for he was a bright young boy. She nodded, watching as the wagon slowly disappeared around the distance and then drew in her breath sharply as she felt a cramp. From the corner of her eye, she saw Maia look at her sharply, so she shook her head and gently rubbed her swollen belly. She was tired and needed to rest. She should not push herself. Kheruef would serve her well. He was a good man who listened. Maia slipped her arm around Kiya and spoke brightly to Beketaten.

"Mewet (Mother) is tired. Run and put up her footstool in the garden so she may sit outside for a little and rest."

As Beketaten ran off, Meritaten took Kiya's other arm and the rest of the girls followed behind, quietly speaking among themselves as the two young women guided Kiya between them. Beketaten nodded and ran off. Kiya began to laugh.

“I am not dying! I simply need to rest. I have overtired myself today.”

“Then lean on us so we may help you, Kiya,” Meritaten smiled at her, “It is time for us to help you after all you have done for us these years.”

Kiya shook her head, still smiling, and submitted to the girls. Soon they had her settled comfortably on cushions within the garden, her feet washed and resting on more cushions, and they were gathered around her, softly playing music with their harps, flutes and lyres, while they awaited the return of Kheruef. Maia sang softly as she worked on a papyrus in her lap. Kiya’s mind turned to the littlest princess whom she still had not met. Setepenre was getting bigger every day, even more beautiful than any of them, she was told, and yet Nefertiti was still in a dark mood, according to the girls. Kiya was not sure if Nefertiti knew of the child Kiya was carrying now that she was showing the roundness of belly.

She assumed there was no word given to her because if she carried a little girl, there was no concern for the ḥm.t wr.t (Great Wife). There was no need to worry her while all waited for the birth. If she carried a boy, then any anger, if there was any, would be saved for the moment of birth and she would enjoy this time of silence. Kiya also had, in the darker corner of her mind, the knowledge that Nefertiti could wish to adopt any child brought into their lives and effectively take the

little one away from her if the baby was a boy. It was against this thought that she steeled herself, reminding herself daily she had her two daughters and her first duty was to the throne.

Kiya's mind wandered to the daughters, Tasherit and Neferneferuaten, who were missing from the group seated at her feet on cushions under the trees. Tasherit and Neferneferuaten had remained home with Nefertiti. Their schooling was divided between the houses and soon, as Meritaten, Meketaten and Ankhesenpaaten began their royal duties to the throne by marrying their father, the younger girls would come to her to complete their training as royal wives. Beketaten and Menḥitaaten were not expected to marry their father but they were of the court as royal princesses and already there were several young royals who Akhenaten had mentioned to her as possible marriages.

She smiled. Another rite of passage was beginning and soon she would be watching the daughters becoming wives. She winced as another twinge of pain rounded her belly and she released a soft breath. Maia lifted her head from where she sat at her feet, concerned. Kiya smiled at her and shook her head slightly, rubbing her back again. A little rest and she would be fine. As she closed her eyes to rest, the soft strains of music drifting around her, the last thing she saw was Maia returning her smile with a worried look in her eyes.

Kheruef returned with the empty wagon and stood in front of the women gathered in the garden as he made his report to Kiya, woken gently from her nap by Maia. He spoke of only a little difficulty of unloading it for the villagers. The guard at the gate had tried to stop them from entering but Kheruef demanded the overseer, Huy, one of the scribes of the recruits for the village³⁶⁰. Maia had sat up at the name of the scribe. After further questions, they learned it was Huy, her brother and son of Aperiar, who was now tjaty (vizier) of Men-nefer (Memphis), since Ipy came to fulfill his position as Overseer of the Inner Palace of Pharaoh.

Kiya was pleased to hear they had someone this close to her, so she could enlist further help while she waited to speak to Akhenaten when he returned. News, Kheruef said, spread quickly because Neferkheperuhersekheper, himself, governor of Akhet-Aten, had come and watched as Kheruef directed the guards in giving the food to the villagers. It was to Neferkheperuhersekheper that Kheruef spoke in regards to any taxation they wished to levy on the villagers, telling him the goods had already been taxed so there was not to be another tax levied against them. He was to consider the village was now under the care of Hm=S (Her Majesty).

³⁶⁰ This position oversaw the enlistment of both military and civilian workers according to a couple of sources.

Neferkheperuhersekheper had said nothing but his eyes had widened so Kheruef was sure there would be no reprisals on the villagers, but he was not sure how the officials would respond to her. She could tell he was worried, but she felt at ease. The village had been put back on the right path and would now serve as an example to Akhenaten when he returned, if he was not pleased. She doubted that he would be displeased. She nodded and sat back where she rested, reclining under the shade of the trees, satisfied with the news.

The girls had been silently listening, their instruments quiet in their laps, to the conversation. Beketaten now looked up at Kiya from where she sat with a small harp in her lap, "Mewet, was the whole village hungry?"

"Yes, sa.t (daughter), the whole village but tonight they will eat," she smiled at Kheruef, "We will continue this for them until I may speak with the Pharaoh. Shadya has the medicine?"

Kheruef nodded, "Yes, Hm.t=s (Your Majesty). She was pleased to have it and sends her thanks to you. Tarik, she said, sleeps well for the first time and they have hope for him finally."

"I am satisfied for now," she relaxed again, absently rubbing her belly. The baby kicked and then pushed against her hand, making her wince and smile. She was not aching so much, but she still did not wish to move.

“Kheruef, I will need you to accompany me tomorrow. I feel I will not be able to walk to the village again”

“If you allow me to speak, Neb.t=j (my Lady)?” he asked.

“Yes, please, Kheruef,” she said gently.

“You should not have walked today. This was a long ride,” he admonished her gently, “and perhaps I should also prepare some guards to accompany us,” he did not raise his head, but she heard the reproach in his voice for not having them earlier and smiled.

“Yes, Kheruef, guards for my escort also,” she acquiesced, smiling at him, “I thank you for your care today. I would like from this moment forward anyone who needs to go the village should also have a ride for if I cannot walk it then others cannot.”

He bowed, “It will be done, Neb.t=j (my Lady), and I will have a chariot ready for you tomorrow.”

“Thank you, oh, and, Kheruef, I have sent out messengers. One is for Nakht and the other is for Ahmose. I expect Nakht first, of course, so please be sure we are ready to receive any who arrive,” she leaned back pleased, “and I have found myself without Shadya. I will need someone to assist me. I am not feeling so well at the moment. Would you send someone to be at my side this evening?”

Maia reached up and touched her knee from where she sat next to her on the ground, on a cushion, "I will, Neb.t=j (my Lady). I will tend to you tonight."

Kiya looked at her startled. They had become friends and over time she had forgotten that Maia was indeed also an atyt³⁶¹(nurse) like Shadya. She met her friend's gentle dark brown eyes and saw they were clouded with concern, so she smiled. Giving Maia comfort by allowing her to care for her tonight was the least she could do for her friend.

"Dua Netjer en etj, sen.t (Thank God for you, sister)," she nodded in acquiescence, "Then, Kheruef, I think that is all we will need until it is time to eat. I think I speak well for all of us that we would like to eat here, within the garden, if that could be arranged?"

All of the girls happily nodded with murmurs of acceptance.

Kheruef smiled and bowed, "Yes, Neb.t=j (my Lady)."

He began backing away as the girls picked up their instruments and one by one the music started again, as if never interrupted, lightly playing like the wind as the memory drifted away.

She could still hear the strains of the music as she returned to the hesep (garden), light and soft on the air, eerily haunting in the dark and mist that

³⁶¹ atyt

surrounded her. She smiled to herself as the memories flowed, ebbing around her like the waves of the sea against the shore on which she had once stood with sen (Brother), watching the children run, laughing. Memories lapped at the edges of her mind, bringing her back once more to walk among them.

It was not Nakhtpaaten who had come to her but Ay waiting for her after she returned from the visit to the home of Tarik. They had driven swiftly, Kheruef, by her side, with Maia, who refused to let her go without her, saying she was to ensure Kiya did not overexert herself. Maia rode in the chariot with a guard followed by two more guards in chariots escorting them. Kiya was dressed as she had the day before, in her garb of swnw.t (doctor) and hekai.t. (priestess of Heka) and upon her arrival this time, the guard had not inspected her healing basket. Instead, he bowed low as she entered and then she was being greeted with deep bows by mothers, fathers, and children who were gathering to thank her as she walked to the house of Tarik.

Because of the greetings she was inundated with, the visit took longer than she anticipated but she allowed every person who had gathered to greet her, a moment. Some were sick and for a while she did tend to them but soon had to tell them she would return the next day. She spoke to Kheruef and told him she would need another

swnw.t (doctor) or two to tend with her for tomorrow.

The visit with Tarik had gone well and Shadya was much happier as she tended to her brother, who was definitely no longer feeling pain as he remained dosed with medicine, so Kiya left her with more medicine, the restated orders for absolute stillness, and the promise of her return the next day. She spoke to Mesu and Webkhet about her thoughts of his becoming a messenger which brought much happiness to the young boy. He would need to start schooling but if he decided to, he needed to present himself the next day at Per Wa'enre to her. The visit left her with a sense of relief and she was feeling much better on their return to Per Wa'enre. She was tired when they returned to find Ay waiting for her in the usechet (audience hall).

She took a few moments to change and Maia helped her wash and dress, donning her Nubian wig, with the final touches of freshening the kohl around her eyes. Ay was not someone who she spoke with at all, but he was one of her brother's close advisors and had been since before Nefertiti had become a wife. He was also Nefertiti's father but how much of that he allowed into his thoughts she did not know. She did know he was the first man who had given the world to Nefertiti and this was why she expected all others to do the same. It was curious that he was here. She had not sent word to him at all because he was not needed.

Nowhere was his role part of the running of the city or recruits. He was the imy-r (Overseer) of All the Horses of His Majesty, just under the generals. Perhaps he wished to commandeered some of the chariots assigned to 'ah=s (her palace).

She settled into her throne as she looked at Ay who had bowed when she entered the room which was already shrouded with heaviness. He was bowed low to the ground, a common sight for her today, and she let him remain there as she considered his presence, watching the top of his head.

"I am happy to have your company today, Imy-r (Overseer). Please, make yourself comfortable and share with me the reason for your visit," Kiya felt a sense of tension with him and his eyes, although they met hers, were not welcoming.

She lifted her chin slightly. He was not here for a pleasure visit. The lines across his brow told her he was under some tension and his mouth was tight. He reminded her of Nefertiti when she was not pleased. The heaviness emanated from him. She waited silently, relaxing back in her seat but watchful.

"The Hm.t wr.t (Great Wife) sends her well wishes. She has heard of your coming child. I will be glad to tell her how you are faring," he finally replied, a smile accompanying his words, but it was empty.

She did not allow her surprise to show and was even more certain this was not the reason for

his visit. He would have only learned of the child within in the last day. She had not been outside the walls of the 'ah (palace) before her first visit to the village. She was aware they were not alone in the usechet (audience hall) and for once she was glad for the many people who moved around. Beketaten and Menḥitaaten had joined her as they did every day to observe how she dealt with the management of Per Wa'enre, guards stood both inside and outside the door, part of the increased protection requested by her brother, and Kheruef sat to the side of her throne dais, with a scribe in front of him, both waiting for when they were needed. Servants moved in and out as their duties required so there were a number of people with their eyes on the man standing before Kiya.

She smiled, "Tell sen.t=j (my sister) ḥm.t wr.t (Great Wife) Nefertiti I send my well wishes to her and sa.t-w=s (her daughters) and thank her for her inquiries. If I have any need she will be the first I come to. But I find it hard that she has made you her messenger, Imy-r (Overseer)."

His eyes flashed briefly, and she felt his anger just as quickly before he extinguished it. She stared at him passively, her face blank, but watching him carefully now. He was not a friend of her throne.

"You are astute, Neb.t=j (my Lady), I come because Neferkheperuhersekheper has asked me to speak to you on his behalf with a concern that has

occurred within Akhet-aten. Would it be possible to have an audience alone?

She smiled and nodded, "There is nothing here that I need to speak alone with anyone. All that I do is open to all eyes," she waved her hand nonchalantly at those seated around her, "All are aware, however, I have noticed that it is time for my daughters to join their music tutor," she looked at Beketaten and Menhitaaten who were now confused, "and we have no need of the scribe, guards or servants at this moment. We are among friends of the throne."

She nodded again, and the two girls rose and slowly walked from the room, looking very confused, leaving with the others. They had no lessons. She would speak with them later but for now she needed them out of the room. It had grown dark within and she felt the heaviness surrounding her.

She looked back at Ay, smiling, "You may speak freely. It is the tjaty (vizier) who I had sent a message to in regards to the village. I would like to know why my brother has not come himself.

"He is busy with other concerns among the city and asked me to approach you in his stead," Ay replied smoothly, his eyes once more flashing and his fingers twitched.

"And then why is Neferkheperuhersekheper unable to speak with me himself? I am not that frightful to approach."

Again Ay's eyes betrayed his anger but his words were smooth, "It is not that he did not wish to speak with you, Neb.t=j (my Lady), but that he was taken to other more pressing business of the city, also, so I told him I would approach you in his stead since I was coming for Nakhtpaaten."

Kiya continued to smile at him, relaxed but inside she was now on full alert. Nakhtpaaten would have never sent Ay to her because he knew she was not comfortable around the older man. Since they were little, and she had first made her acquaintance with her uncle she had not liked him. She had never been able to explain it to her brothers but once she became a wife of Akhenaten, the Pharaoh had asked Nakht to always be his second when he was not here, so she did not have to speak with the man. And yet here he was. Nakht would have sent a messenger if he could not come right away, as he had done before, if he had gotten the message. Kiya, still smiling, waited and after the silence continued, Ay began speaking again.

"It concerns the generous gifts you brought to the village of workers to the east of the city," he paused, and she remained silent, "The governor is afraid that a precedence has been set that the rekhyt (people) will now expect more of the 'ah (palace) and he will not be able to repeat your generosity."

"I am not sure why the governor is worried on this as I have been told by a reliable source the governor himself was told I am fully responsible

for the village now. This will be taken up with the Pharaoh when he returns. I have sent him a message on this very subject."

She saw Ay's finger twitch but otherwise he remained relaxed, "You have sent a message to the Pharaoh regarding the village, Neb.t=J (my Lady)?"

She inclined her head slightly.

"Might I inquire what the message said?"

Kiya smiled, "Of course you may ask, "and then she became serious again, "but you shall not be told, Imy-r (Overseer). I still fail to see where your interest is in this village."

He bowed low, "There is no interest in the village, Neb.t-j (my lady) but an interest in keeping the peace of the city so others when they hear of this wondrous gift you gave, they do not come down on the 'ah (palace) for their own."

"Which brings me to the question why it is not Mahu, Chief of Police or Nakhtpaaten who is speaking to me now?" she repeated.

Ay shifted, "Neither were able to break free from their business to address such trivialness."

"But it is of enough interest to send the imy-r (Overseer) of All the Horses of His Majesty?"

Ay blanched visibly now, "We only wished to know your thoughts on the village."

"You have no need of my thoughts, Imy-r (Overseer) but I will remind you I have given my thoughts already. Kheruef, did you not speak to Neferkheperhersekheper himself and tell him?"

Kheruef bowed, "Yes, Neb.t=j (my Lady)."

She looked archly at Ay who fell silent and bowed, "I did not mean to anger you, Neb.t=j (my lady), I only thought I could persuade you to let me handle the concerns of the rekhyt (people) so the Pharaoh and tjaty (vizier) could deal with the greater problems."

Kiya sat back and considered the man in front of her. He was trying to find out how much she told pharaoh and tjaty (vizier) now. He had not known about the message to the pharaoh. He had known about the message to the tjaty (vizier). She looked past Ay to the guards at the door. She had charioteers here within her walls, men who served this man and suddenly she felt chilled and turned her attention back to the man bent before her. She needed to move slowly and not let them know anything she knew. It was a matter of life and death with this man. She could feel the heaviness rolling off him and finally understood why she had never liked him.

"Then I will remind you, imy-r (Overseer), I have the ear of both the pharaoh and vizier any time I wish it. That I do not exercise that right every moment of the day means I should not be second guessed when I do. If you wish to address the concerns of the rekhyt (people), you may join me when I meet with the pharaoh who had told me he will give me an audience when he returns so we may finish discussing it," and his fingers flinched again.

She imagined he wished he could strangle her if the flash of his eyes before he looked down was any indication. She was now sure he was involved with the heavy taxation and that this money was not going to the neseyte (kingship). He was too vested, and his twitching had shown his discomfort with the little knowledge she had shown him.

“But my dissuading the pharaoh to not return is out of my hands. He returns even now as we speak with the intent to continue our conversation. All discussion will have to wait for his return as he expects to see me immediately on his return,” she just told him any harm to her would bring the Pharaoh on his head.

“You have heard from him?”

Ay seemed triumphant until she smiled, “Birds are swifter than men, imy-r (Overseer) and no one can interfere with them.”

Ay bowed again, his fingers had clenched into a fist, but he was smiling smoothly, “I will tell the governor of your advice so there does not need to be any action with my men.”

Kiya sat back. The cat and mouse were in a standoff for the moment and his men would stand down. He would let her live to speak to the pharaoh only because he did not know she had told him nothing. If he knew this corruption was safe, she would be dead before Akhenaten returned and no one would be the wiser. It would be blamed on an unknown attacker ... or an unknown illness.

She looked at Ay now, thinking of Djhutmose and how his daughter, Nefertiti, had been spurned by her brother, how Ay had advanced so smoothly within the hah (palace) once Akhenaten was the heir to the throne and the heaviness grew around her.

She knew that her messengers were now being watched and intercepted. She also knew the messenger to Akhenaten had not been stopped. He had gotten through somehow. For that one fact she was safe for the moment for they would not strike against her if she had alerted the pharaoh or he would know where to look for the traitors. They did not hide their tracks very well if she was able to find them this easily. If they made any move, they may be exposing themselves even further.

She smiled ruefully. Ay was also aware now that she knew this was something they did not want told to the pharaoh which meant Akhenaten did not know that the people suffered, and her heart lightened with happiness even as it grew darker around her. He was not part of this greed that betrayed the rekhyt (people). She also knew this standoff would not last long and she prayed Akhenaten would heed her plea to return as soon as he could for she had need of him immediately. She was alone.

“I hope it does not need to go beyond this conversation because the wrongs will be righted for the people (rekhyt) when I speak to the pharaoh. You do understand what I am telling you?” she

met his eyes directly, just as hard as his and it was a few minutes of staring before he bowed and assumed the position of service again.

“I understand, Neb.t=j (my lady),” he intoned.

She inclined her head, “Then I thank you for your time, Imy-r (Overseer) and send you on your way with greetings to the governor. Tell my sen.t (sister) I send her well wishes and hope that she may see me soon. Em hotep nefer (In great peace), senebty (farewell), Imy-r (Overseer).”

“Em hotep nefer, senebty, Neb.t=j (In great peace, farewell, my Lady),” Ay bowed low and backed his way out of the usechet (audience hall).

Kiya waited a moment and then waved back the guards who were beginning to return to within the hall.

“I wish the hall cleared of all except you, Kheruef,” she said quietly.

Her steward looked at her solemnly, “Yes, Neb.t=j (my lady).”

She sat back, her hands shaking, and gathered herself again as she watched the steward clear the hall. She had just walked into a nest of spiders weaving their sticky webs around her and she no longer knew who she could trust. She had just remembered who it had had been to get her second messenger. She watched the man who had always stood in the background, helping her guide her estate to the business it was today. He was a father to her in many ways and yet it was Kheruef

who had gotten the second messenger for her. The first messenger had been brought to her by the servant who she had met in the hall on her return with Mesu. He had brought her the messenger and then after tending to Mesu she had sent him for Kheruef. Heart thudding, she steadied herself once more as her steward turned back to her with his gentle smile.

She returned his smile, her eyes filling with tears, "Kheruef, I want to thank you for all of the assistance you have provided to me. You have warmed my heart," he looked pleased and bowed low, "I have one more request to ask of you."

"Anything you wish, Neb.t=j (my lady)," he answered.

"Bring Nakht to me," she said quietly.

He blinked, "Neb.t=j (my Lady)?"

"There is a person within my house who speaks to those who are on the outside and even may not be loyal to our pharaoh. I know I am watched. You are the only one who I trust, outside of my daughters. I need to make changes within Per Wa'enre and that is for the tjaty (vizier) to oversee," she took a deep breath, "I ask you to bring him to me. I need your help to reach him."

He bowed, pleased, "I will gladly do so."

She sat back and watched him carefully.

The sticky web was being spun around her and she needed to make sure it did not close in on her or her family before the pharaoh returned to them.

She smiled at him gently, "I am glad for your loyalty."

And the memory spun away leaving queasiness within her stomach that remained with her as she moved forward in the hesep (garden) with more of her memories of waiting for her brother to arrive spinning around her, no longer memories of happiness and peace but of darkness and isolation. She had been allowed to speak to Nakhtpaaten as she had known she would. Not doing so this time would have exposed their deepest accomplice so it remained that they did not know she had identified him. She wanted her guards changed, all charioteers removed from Per Wa'enre, and the reason she gave was the one given to her by Ay himself, he had come to her worried about an uprising caused by her generous gifts to a village that were not going to stop. She was returning his men to him.

Nakhtpaaten had chided her for acting impulsively and after trying to placate her by telling her Ay was being over cautious because rekhyt (people) were satisfied, he had complied, humoring her. His words did nothing to let her know if he was also part of this unseen force that was surrounding her or not. She had to wait, as much as she loved Nakht, until Akhenaten returned because she could not be sure of him. She had already seen how the fingers of the arm that wielded the corruption were still hidden and she needed to move slowly. Her first necessity was to

make her family safe as much as she could. In the hopes the Medjay were firmly loyal to their pharaoh and knew her better than the charioteers and so would transfer that loyalty to her, they were now the guards within Per Wa'enre. Only Kheruef remained, and she smiled on him every day, giving him the gift of thanks for the loyalty he showed to her, knowing his heart was dark. And every day she prayed to pa Ti (the Father) for His light of love to guide her through the darkness so she would remain within MaAt (order) despite the isfet (chaos) swirling around outside her. She felt protected within the arms of Per Wa'enre now and waited for her sanctuary to return.

She continued to visit the village, providing her services to the ill and bringing food with her as needed. Once Tarik was able to walk again, she brought him to Per Wa'enre employing him within the kitchen which provided much lighter work. Mesu began his training as a messenger and had to work hard to move quickly forward in his studies but he blossomed under her protection and often she was seen teaching him the bow and arrow. Tchanun, Shadya's father, became one of the goat herders for Per Wa'enre, none too soon for his older body was worn down, and the younger children came into the kap (nursery) as children of favored rekhyt-w (commoners), where they began their lessons while Webkhet became a weaver for Per Wa'enre, providing linens. Shadya returned, much to Kiya's delight, assisting as she had before

and learning from Kiya. Kiya's heart rose from the darkness for now she had both of her closest confidences again, Maia and Shadya, but the darkness continued swirling around her.

She raised her hand against the memory, as if to block the darkness now blocking her path in the hesep (garden), struggling to move past it but she was held back by a strong long clamp of a pain encircling her stomach, clenching her so she could not breathe, blinding her even more than the darkness itself. She cried out and broke the surface of the darkness into the memory of her bedroom and caught her breath as another pain was immediately wrapping itself around her, squeezing.

She was in labor and it was too soon. She felt the panic welling again as waves of hard labor overwhelmed her, it was too early for the child, but the birth was imminent. She weakly pulled herself up and calling out, feeling the wet warmth of her blood surrounding her body and this time she used her strength to cry trying to raise someone to hear her, instead of deadening the pain so while she succeeded she also was overcome with the surge of pain and collapsed. It was a servant who ran away after listening, calling loudly for help and returning with Maia and Shadya. Her labor progressed hard and fast, taking all of her energy and strength, while the two women rushed to help her. She learned later from Akhenaten that he had returned to Akhet-Aten during that same hour, coming

straight to Per Wa'enre to be met by a house in a panic as it struggled awake to help Kiya with a birth of her child that was too soon.

He had waited helplessly, in the darkness of the night, as he listened to the struggle within her room, silent and immobile outside as he prayed to Ti=f (His Father), vilifying himself for his slow return and thanking Ti=f (His Father) for allowing him to be present. When the baby came, and her cries fell silent, his heart stopped beating and time was suspended as he listened for any sound. Any life from within the room and then the thin wailing of a baby that grew in volume to a full-blooded cry, yet he still did not move, waiting to hear the sound his heart needed to beat again. And then he heard the soft murmur of Kiya, weakly asking to see the baby and the soft reply of,

“Neb.t=j (My lady) here is sA=k (your son).”

The pharaoh sank down on his knees, crying.

It was much later, as she lay, now washed, comfortable in new bedding, with Maia tending the new little prince when Akhenaten came to her room. His eyes were shadowed and his face as wan as Kiya's as he stood in the doorway, watching her. Maia, placing the little boy in Kiya's arms, had bowed and left the room, leaving them alone. He did not move but remained in the doorway watching Kiya until she smiled at him and held out her hand. Then, like a little boy with his mother, he was across the floor, kneeling at her bedside,

holding her hand, tears in his eyes, as he looked at the mother and child.

“This is sA=k (your son), sen (Brother),” she whispered.

He nodded and gently touched the small head of dark hair of the little sleeping boy.

“Had I lost you, sen.t (Sister), my joy would be over,” he whispered, and it was then that he told her of how he had stood outside her room, praying for her to live.

She smiled gently, “I am not that easy to get rid of, sen (Brother).”

And he laughed, gathering her and the baby in his arms, holding them, “That I can hold you safe within my arms djet, sen.t (Sister).”

“I am so in your heart, n neheh, sen (Brother).”

He smiled and closed his eyes as he held her and their son, whispering a prayer of thanks to Ti=k (His Father).

The memory swirled away in the deep warm comfort of his love surrounding her and kept her safe as more spinning memories flashed by, memories of her regaining her strength as Akhenaten began preparations for a grand jubilee for celebration. He had much to celebrate for Ti=K (His Father). The land had been cleared of isfet (chaos) and now the rekhyt (people) would be given a chance to hear the words of pa Ti (the Father) with the cloud of confusion cleared away and [Living *Sun*, Ruler of the horizon, rejoicing in

the horizon]/[in His Name of *Sun*, the Father, who has come as the sun disc] was shining through the receding dark so all could see Him.

As the whole city readied for the grandest series of celebrations, Nefertiti struggled with the news of the son of the Pharaoh being born to Kiya, slumping her into a dark mood that cascaded into the halls of Per Wa'enre and no further because Kiya did not have time to think of the bitter despair of the younger wife. She was resting under the ishedty (double persea), with her daughters and Maia as they watched the little prince sleep the sleep of the innocent, counting the fingers and toes of her own gift to the throne, a little boy named Tutankhaten³⁶².

Memories of her listening to Akhenaten telling her stories of his journey across their land, watching him as he held his son under the ishedty (double persea), their daughters joining them, singing and dancing, their laughter and love surrounding her, pushed the darkness back. Listening to the stories told to her of the celebration thrown by the Pharaoh for she was too ill to attend, smiling with the descriptions of the grandeur of the jubilees brought to the rekhyt (people) all swirled around her as her memories continued to rise, she missed nothing of her sitting in the hesep (garden) beneath the ishedty (double persea) and watching Maia tending to her new little charge and all the

³⁶² Living Image of Aten

daughters singing him lullabies. She watched the triumph of Akhenaten riding down the street of appearances to the Per-aA (Great House) and Per ʿItn (House of Aten) from the doorway of Per Waʿenre, seated in her own regal throne, as if at her own viewing.

She saw the rekhyt (people) of the city of Akhet-Aten lined the street, cheering the pharaoh as he rode with his hm.t wr.t tp.t (Great Wife), hm.t nsw.t (royal wife) Neferneferuaten Tasherit³⁶³ and his five daughters, celebrating [Living *Sun*, Ruler of the horizon, rejoicing in the horizon]/[in His Name of *Sun*, the Father, who has come as the sun disc] and His reign. She heard the cheering crowds welcoming ambassadors from Nehset (Nubia), Libya, the Near East, the Mediterranean Islands and vassal kings of surrounding kingdoms coming to celebrate with the pharaoh in dancing, singing, oblations, feasting lasting for days.

She heard about the grandest reception culminating with the splendors of tributes of women, chariots, gold, and horses for Pharaoh Neferkheperu-re Waʿen-re. All the while little Tutankhaten grew bigger and stronger as his mother watched. Her attention turned once again

³⁶³ (Murnane, 70.2, 153) There is a painting with inscriptions on the North Wall, West Side of Meryre, Greatest of Seers, showing Nefertiti, with King's Wife and Daughter, Tasherit and remaining four daughters (only, not married): Meritaten, Meketaten, Ankhesenpaaten. The marriage only makes sense time wise around this time and then Setepenre dies in the next couple of years so she is not in this image. Tasherit was his first daughter he married and Meketaten is still alive

to the concerns of the rekhyt (people), their plight had once more been forgotten as the neseyte (kingship) moved forward in the light of pa Ti (the Father). She slowly resumed her practice within the village of the people and once again the eyes of the darkness turned toward her, wondering at her tenacity and relishing the opportunity to end her interference.

The tumult of memories faded as another began to shape, still poignant with happiness filling her heart. This memory was newer, clear in her heart's eye as if it had only happened moments before. The ishedty (double persea) sheltered someone sitting on its bench as she approached it, scent of the flowers of the hesep (garden) wafting around her as the n'rw-w (doves) cooed their bedtime seta (prayers) settling in to sleep in the twilight as she glided forward. Her heart leaped with the realization it was Akhenaten. He was sitting hunched over as if in pain on their bench under the ishedty (double persea).

He did not see her approach and in that moment the scene shifted and there he was, a little boy once again, sitting dejected on the bench, waiting for it (father) to see him because he had a model of a per netjer (house of god) to show him. Tears misted her eyes and she blinked, blurring him back to a grown man, dejected, not a father celebrating the birth of a prince and the kingdom of Ti=k (His Father). She could feel his dejection for he carried it heavily. It rose from the fear of failure for

he believed he had failed to be with her when she needed him the most. Her heart ached for him, as he sat waiting for her. His unhappiness was palpable, and she wanted to simply take it all away from him. She moved forward quickly, knowing it was all the more important for them to speak of the undercurrents of Nefertiti, if only to lessen the tension between the pharaoh and the ḥm.t wr.t (Great Wife).

She could feel the impending doom in the air which made it very hard to remain light of heart. It had been like a dark panther watching for the moment of weakness, ever vigilant since her returned to the village with her ministrations. Tonight, this feeling of doom was overwhelming, as if it stood right behind her. She moved forward, fighting the impulse to look over her shoulder. At that moment, he turned, and she was shocked at how haunted he looked. She caught the sorrow in his eyes before he smiled at her, bringing the little boy back to his face.

“I am happy that you have come, sen (Brother),” she sat next to him on their bench.

The stars were above them once more and the darkness seemed to recede.

“For you, ka n ka=j (soul of my soul), I will always come. I heard you call through our stars last night and knew I needed to come but I could not last night,” the pain of failing her filled his face, “We walk different paths sometimes but love always brings us together.”

She smiled back at him and touched his face gently, trailing her fingertips down it, "You were with me already, sen (Brother), I felt you answer my call last night and all was well. Djet (forever)."

"N neheh (and always)," he caught her hand in his, his voice choking on his words, "I have needed to see you."

"I am always here, sen (Brother)," she said gently, "You know I am always here, and I would not have this any other way. Please, sen (Brother), do not cry for our love is of happiness and it is what I wish to have between us."

"I am torn apart that I have to live two lives because one cannot love the other. That Nefertiti would know the joy you have given us, but she only sees this anger and it is coming between us now. I cannot fight her anymore," he buried his head in her shoulder as she gathered him as she used to when they were younger.

His shoulders shook from silent sobs. She held him, gently, as he cried.

When he fell silent, she kissed his head and whispered, "You have a good pure heart, Akhenaten, and you do your best to make all happy. There is none who would say otherwise."

"I need to hear that it is you who would not say otherwise, Imi-ib (Beloved)," he whispered, raising his head and looking at her.

She smiled, "Your love is strong with me today as it was when we were children, sen (Brother). I will always love you and I am always

with you, even when you cannot be with me. I would not say otherwise, and I would silence any who would try."

She gently dried his tears, kissing his cheeks and forehead, "I happy that you are here now, sen (Brother). I have missed you. I hope Nefertiti is doing well beside this anger she carries? The princesses have told me how Setepenre has grown so it is as if I have seen her with my own eyes. She is strong and beautiful. I look forward to seeing her when I am allowed."

He smiled, "I am bringing her to you. This is part of the anger Nefertiti has with me. Nefertiti is well in health, but her heart is lost to me. I cannot reach her anymore. Her jealousy of you has filled her heart and she cannot be happy for the sA (son) you gave us. She claims you are now stealing her daughters because they continue to come to visit you even after she has forbidden them," He shook his head, "She has closed her heart to so much love. But," and his face lit up again, "Setepenre has grown so much that Tutankhaten will need to eat much to catch up with her."

She laughed softly, "He would have to eat a great deal. She is older by almost a year. Maia cares for him as if he was her own and he grows stronger every day. Are you happy with him?"

He spoke quickly to reassure her, "Very much so! He reminds me of how I was when I was little. Are we not the same?"

She smiled, "So much that I hug him all the tighter because he is so like you."

"I am sorry, Kiya, that I have not come as much as I should have," he took her hands, "There is no excuse and I dread that I have hurt you."

"Akhenaten, I am not hurt. I am just sad that we are so divided when this should be a time of happiness. My heart breaks for Nefertiti that it was not she who gave you sA=k (your son), yet I am happy you do have him. It is such a conflict of emotions for me,"

"It should not be, Kiya. You should be happy as mother of sA=w (our son) and know that I am beyond pleased with him and you. He is the greatest gift you have ever given me and for that I dwa-Ti n twt (praise Father for you). Nefertiti thanks you also even though she has not found that in her heart yet."

He reached down next to him and picked up a cloth that was wrapped around an object and handed it to her, "She does not understand that you do not seek the throne. I have hope that this is a chance for her to understand the depth of the gift you have given us."

"I, too, sen (Brother), for my set-w (prayers) have always been that she is happy, so we may one day be friends," she looked down at the object.

It was linen of a beautiful color prp³⁶⁴ (purple) trimmed in gold, "This is beautiful, Akhenaten."

"It is for swaddling sA=w (our son) when you carry him. I had my artisan combine the color you like most red with the color blue of mine for sA=w (our son)."

She blinked back the tears that threatened to fall. He was telling her that sA=sn (their son) would be remaining with her as he grew up. She had thought he would be moving to the Per Neferkheperu-Re to be cared for by Nefertiti, adopted as her own sA (son). She smiled at Akhenaten through her tears. She had not realized until that moment how much she had dreaded giving Tutankhaten to Nefertiti. It had meant never seeing him again. That he was allowing him to stay with her was almost her almost her undoing.

He shook his head, "No, Kiya, I could not see you cut from his life with all the love you have given her. This is how it will be, djet."

She nodded, speechless, as she struggled to hold her tears back. He pulled her to him and held her until she was calm again.

"It is beautiful, sen (Brother), dwa-Ti n twt (Praise Father for you). It will keep sA=w (our son) comfortable," she whispered against his chest.

³⁶⁴ I made this up

“Inside there is one more gift ... for you that I feel has been long overdue also,” he whispered back.

“Sen (Brother), you have given me so much already. I do not need more for my heart will burst with happiness.”

He smiled over her head, “You always cry for love, sen.t (Sister). It is because of your happiness that I have found joy in my life. I could not ask for more, so I will keep making you cry because it brings me joy. Please, I had my finest artisan craft this for you by my direction.”

She shook her head and sat up again, touching the golden double heart amulet that hung around her neck, “This gift was beautiful and dearly loved all these years, sen (Brother).”

“As is mine,” he said, lifting his shen amulet from his chest, “but we are now beginning a new part of our journey and I give you this in my thanks and set-w (prayers) for many more years of laughter and love.”

She bent her head and began unwrapping the beautiful linen from around the object as it lay in her lap. It gleamed in moonlight as she gasped with surprise and pleasure. It was the most beautiful piece of jewelry she had seen. It was a wesekh³⁶⁵ of solid gold about half a hand’s length wide. The gold was inlayed with silver³⁶⁶ stars that

³⁶⁵ Broad collar necklace worn by royalty and elite; also used for funerary

³⁶⁶ Silver was more expensive than gold

seemed almost haphazard in their placement, but only if you did not look to the stars at night. As she gazed at it, she traced the design with her finger.

“It is Sah and Sopdet,” and she was crying.

“And now Sopdu³⁶⁷, their sA (son). SA=w (Our son),” he fell silent a moment to clear his throat for he also was close to tears, “You have been here for me without question or complaint. You have given me the greatest gift a man could ask for and I know tonight you were ready to give me sA=w (our son) to take home to Nefertiti, without a word to dissuade me. You ask for nothing, only that I and Nefertiti are happy while Nefertiti heaps abuses on you still today,” he put his finger under her chin to gently lift her face so he could look into her eyes, “I have not been the best sen (brother) for I have taken your love and guidance for granted but you have always been close in my heart.”

She nodded for she knew they were never far apart. It was the reason why she did not need to seek him out. She knew he would hear her and come when it was time.

“I know it does not seem like it because I have not been here for you. You have been all I can think about and it is for you that I stayed away for so long. Please know I am trying the best I can.”

³⁶⁷ Meaning Sharp One; Son of Sah and Sopdet in Pyramid Texts; Protects the teeth of the king; Lord of the East protects eastern border of Egypt

“I know, sen (Brother), and truly, I have never doubted you,” she whispered as she leaned forward and hugged him, “I know you protect me with all that you do,” she felt so warm and loved in his arms as he held her, “I do not feel that I cannot reach you. I wait because I know you have much to do and when you can, you will come to me.”

She heard the rumble of his voice as he spoke while he held her close, “I think I understand, sen.t (sister), but I do wish you would come to me more often if your only concern is I have much to do,” he pulled back and looked at her admonishingly, “You are important to me, so please come to me. I have said this often and you do not hear me.”

She nodded, and he lifted the wesekh from her lap to fasten it around her neck for her. He sat back and looked at it.

“It reflects your beauty of heart, Kiya,” he said simply.

She touched it and smiled at him, “I feel I have been given so much,” she began folding the linen in her lap, hesitating and then pressed on, “I do need to talk to you.”

For the first time since she sat down, the smile reached his eyes, “You, of all, have never feared to speak your mind to me and you, of all, know that I appreciate your truthfulness and yet you are the last to tell me when you are concerned. It is then that I need to know, so I may take care of you as I should.”

“It is my love for you that makes me so forward. The Truth begs to be heard and I enjoy sharing it with you although you may not wish to hear me,” she smiled softly and looked away again, “There are things I need to speak of to you that weigh heavy on my heart, things that I have overheard and things I have sensed.”

“I am here,” he said simply.

She smiled at him, “I have watched you balance two women like you have balanced the needs of the Two Lands. You have worked to bring unity of rekhyt=w (our people) with our one, pa ‘nh re (the Living Sun), so we all may be one rekhyt (people) under Him as you have struggled to bring two women to be united in one family,” she pressed on more quickly as the words seemed to just flow from her without thought, “It is in the struggle that you have forgotten you cannot make rekhyt (people) chose to follow you. You can only present their choices to them and they have the right to choose or not. We have always been a land that has been accepting of others and this applies within your house also.

“I am the Lower and Nefertiti is the Upper. I know where you are told to go with your maa-w (visions) and knowledge of pa Ti (the Father) who loves and cares for all of us, this Nefer ‘nh ʒh n mrwt (Beautiful Living Spirit of Love) who is of no man, who we only see by a reflection of Him in the sun disc. Nefertiti only knows of what she has learned and experienced, only that which she can

hold and measure in her hand. She has not reached the place in her heart where she can see. This is so like the rekhyt (people) who do not know how to move to the union with pa ʿnh re (the Living Sun) they cannot see. She does not know how to move to a union with love, a feeling she cannot touch or see. She is like these rekhyt (people) who need to feel, touch and in that solid contact know she is loved.

“As you have given them a re (sun) to see so they could understand of what you speak, so you have given her love to see and yet as there are those who are still blind, as is she. Thus, in the blindness, if she sees another receiving the love she wishes for, she grows afraid as so do the people who are lost. In being lost, they live in fear. While, those who see, like I, when we cannot feel the love we seek, we simply reach out and find it ourselves, as I. If I cannot feel you with me, I simply reach out and feel your love myself. It is the same with pa Ti (the Father). I reach out to Him also now and I feel Him. We do not fear.”

Akhenaten stared at her, “And the possibility of unity?”

“It will be one day as each person decides they can move from needing the sight, the touch, the sound of the solid netjer (god) in front of them, the need to have someone tell them they can reach out. They will learn to reach within themselves to find Him who is such a beautiful light that gives life to all of us. Each of us moves at a different speed and understands in different ways. It is not

for you to make someone understand. It is for you to show them the way, to walk the path before you and lead them so they see it is possible. Guide them. Give them hope.

“It is the same with Nefertiti. She needs your guidance more than ever for she has not found this within herself yet. I do not need your guidance for I have found you already. Just as you have guided me to pa Ti (the Father) and I now walk in His Light because I followed your footsteps and the others within your court who are also found. So, it is with the rekhyt (people).”

She stopped talking because she realized her brother was now staring at her with a strange look, “Akhenaten? Am I confusing?”

He stared a moment longer before answering, softly, “You are not, imi-ib (beloved), you have given me great wisdom in how I am to lead both my house and my land. I have struggled to hear for so long. I should have just come to talk to you. My path is so clear now.”

She smiled, relieved, “I am not sure if I would have been of help before this. What I said came to my mind as I spoke. I really did not know what I was going to say to you, sen (Brother), just that I needed to talk to you.”

He touched her face, “Wrt imi-ib (Greatly Beloved), you speak your heart as you always have and tonight “In His Name of Sun, the Father,” has blessed you with His knowledge,” he took her hands in his again, “I do listen. I needed to reassure

Nefertiti that her place by my side is not threatened by our wonderful sA (son) that you have given us. I have struggled that she cannot see how you have only done your duty to the throne as you should have, with only love in your heart for me and for her. She just does not understand," he paused, thinking, "This is the difference between you two – you, who are wide of the heart and she, who is narrow of the heart. This may be because she has not come from the lineage as you and I have so she does not understand our ways. I do swear sA=w (our son), our Tutankhaten," he took her hand, "SA=w (Our Son), yours and mine, will be loved by all in his family. I do swear this to you."

She smiled as he continued.

"I am sorry I have left you so long without my company. It was not right of me to treat you this way after you have honored the throne with gift of Tutankhaten. Tomorrow we celebrate you as we should have, and all of the family will be in the Per Neferkheperu-Re to share the joy. I will not force Nefertiti to join but I am bringing my newest beautiful sat (daughter) to meet her sen (brother) so they may grow up together in love as we have."

Kiya did not try to stop the tears that flooded her eyes again, "We will be honored, sen (Brother), to attend the celebration of the newest princess and prince of the Two Lands. There are some other things of which I did want to speak you, if you have time?"

Akhenaten clucked his tongue and wiped the tears from her cheek, "Such a gentle one you are always crying for love. Of course, I am here and was planning on staying with you, so I may spend time with you and the children. That will surprise Beketaten and Menḥitaaten, will it not?"

"They will be excited as they have not seen you in such a long time," she sighed, reluctant to continue but she knew she had to, "Sen (Brother), I have been needing to speak to you of a ... concern I have found within our city. I have been healing in the village of workers that sits outside the city to the east," she raised her hand to stop his protest, "I know you have asked me to not go outside the 'ah (palace) for my work but you know this is impossible. Rekhyt=w (Our people) are struggling outside the 'ah-w (palaces).

"They are ill, with little food and are given much work and it should not be like this. I have tried to speak to our officials and have been met with ... resistance, so much resistance that I have taken precautions to keep the children safe. There are only Medjay within Per Wa'enre. I have asked Maia and she has agreed to be mn't (foster mother) for Tutankhaten and I would like this to be so if anything happens to me," and again she raised her hand to stop her brother from speaking, "Either she or I are with him at all times. I have a guard outside his room also and two that walk with us when we bring him outside. The same for Beketaten and Menḥitaaten."

“What is this resistance? What is wrong within the village? Have you spoken with Nakht? He had not mentioned it to me,” Akhenaten was deeply concerned.

“I have not so he would not know to talk to you, Akhenaten. I did try but I was not allowed to speak to him, so I have waited for your return. I have not been sure of whom I could trust. Please do not blame him. I hope I am mistaken but I am afraid I may not be,” Kiya smiled sadly, “Even now I am still hoping I am wrong.”

“I cannot remember a time when you were wrong when you found something, Kiya, but if you were to be wrong, this would be the time and I pray that you are wrong.”

She put her hand on his and he held it.

She said gently, “I feel as I did when Djhutmose died. It is a heaviness that weighs me down, a darkness that wishes to cover me. It is back, and I am feeling that it will cover us this time,” she paused and then continued, “My heart tells me I am not wrong.”

“There has been a shift since I left. The change was here when I came back,” Akhenaten did not look at her, “What is it that you have seen?”

“Our rekhyt (people) are suffering in the city. There is severe hunger, heavy work and deaths that come quickly for the young.”

“Is this not what happens in every city?”

“Sen (Brother), I thought that at first also but now,” Kiya fell silent and spoke again, “I see

too many young men with backs broken from heavy labor, children who are hungry and thin, and mothers burying their children before they are grown.”

He fell silent and then he seemed to make a decision, “This is a dark conversation and one that must be done but it is late now. We will not be able to do anything at this moment and I did not want to end our evening with such darkness, so it follows us to our sleep,” he shook himself mentally, “We will continue speaking in the morning. We will sit down, and you will tell me all that has happened and then we will move forward from that. But now, we will settle our minds, so we may rest. Can you accept this, Kiya?”

She smiled and nodded.

“Perhaps we will have Mewet (Mother) come and collect sat=w (our daughters). They will be happy to spend time together,” he nodded, “We will make sure our little prince and princess are both safe.”

Kiya nodded in agreement, “I like this idea. I can rest easier knowing our children are safe. I hope I am seeing what is not.”

“Then that is decided,” he looked at her seriously, “I do not believe you are one who would see something that is not, sen.t (Sister), you have never been one to fear. You have been one to know when something was to happen, and this is why I listen to you.”

She felt like she was going to cry from relief that she was no longer alone, "I am glad you take me seriously."

"I believe you because I know you believe in the good of rekhyt (people). When you speak of an ill, this is not of you but of what you have been given. I do listen," he sighed, "Tomorrow we will finish this. I have taken this concern for safety and it will be dealt immediately," he tipped her face up, so he could see her, "You will be here, long after I am not, to see our grandchildren take the throne, like mewet (mother)."

Kiya smiled as she looked into his eyes, "I love you, sen (Brother), djet ..."

"N neheh," he replied, gently.

He pulled her into a close hug, "Feel safe, little one, because I am with you." He kissed her forehead and stood, holding out his hand "Let us go in. I will speak with your guard to take care of tonight and bring Nakht here tomorrow."

She took his hand and brought it to her cheek, "A moment longer for me, sen=j (My brother). Our stars call to me tonight, full of the love you have given me," she whispered.

He bent and kissed the top of her head, "Will I need to come fetch you from the roof, Sen.t (Sister)?"

She laughed softly, "No, sen (Brother), you have given me a beautiful view of the stars here from our bench. I will follow soon."

“Then I will be in the usechet (audience hall) with your captain of the guard. Sasobek, is it? Come for me when you come in, meryt-j sen.t (Beloved sister).”

She nodded and watched him disappear into the dark of the hesep (garden), striding back to the ‘ah (palace), a man on a mission, the spring back in his step so much like the way he walked as a younger man. She smiled and turned to listening to the calls of the insects, lifting her face to the moon. She sighed, stretching her legs out before her, and leaned back to looked up at the moon that shone down on her through the boughs of the trees. They made a ghostly pattern across her face, but she was unaware of it. Instead she was noticing that Sopdet was gone and it was only Sah in the skies, but his arms spread wide. She smiled.

She was happy for her worries were gone. Akhenaten had come to her and taken them from her. Knowing him as she did, he was following through now as he waited for her to return from the hesep (garden). He would ensure the safety of ... and her teeth were crumbling into her mouth, blinding pain shot through her skull, unable to understand, comprehend what was happening beyond she was choking, suffocating into blackness, and all was gone.

Silence..... Blackness without end..... Silence.

A new memory rose in her mind. Kiya felt a little confused, no, this was not of her mind. This was not a memory. She felt the air on her face and heard the night creatures in the hesep (garden). She was in the hesep (garden). She sighed in relief. She was not lost wandering endlessly in her dreams. Her feet had led her to the ishedty (double perseas) for she saw it in front of her with their bench, waiting. She was to be meeting Akhenaten although it was darker than she remembered. She must have lost track of time. She shrugged. He was not here yet so, no matter. She would wait. She was excited to be seeing him again for it had been a while and they had much to catch up on. She needed to talk to him about a concern that had grown over the past few months but even that seemed easily resolved now that he was coming. She smiled and looked up. The beautiful full moon hung above her, and the ground was so light and soft beneath her toes. She wiggled them in pleasure as she walked.

A noise, a scuffle, caused her to turn in time to see a bald, short man in a white tunic that shone silver in the moonlight, stumble out of the darkness of the hesep (garden) onto the path, carrying something dark and long in his hand. His face was indistinguishable in the nightfall and with one panicked look thrown at the 'ah (palace), he was running away, to the back of the hesep (garden). She was too surprised to call out to him and so let him go. Akhenaten would have someone look into

it when she told him. It was yet another item for them to discuss when he arrived. She was left alone, in the moonlight, under the ishedty (double perse), sitting on their bench, waiting in the lush, beautiful hesep (garden) for her brother to find her.

The man, shaved head and dressed a simple but luxurious tunic, was running down the road. He was being watched by a shrouded figure which waited alongside the road in the darkness of the shadows. As the running man neared the figure, it slid out of the shadows and stood in the road which brought the man up short, panting.

"Is it done?" the shrouded figure hissed at the running man.

The man, bathed in sweat, trembling, jerked. He seemed to become aware of the mace in his hand and threw it from himself violently.

"I have done as you asked," he panted and then looked back over his shoulder.

"The child too? It is for the protection of the neseyte (kingship) that you are sure of yourself."

"The child? The child lives for he was with the pharaoh and I dare not touch him for the pharaoh has taken him into protection."

The figure hissed angrily, "Both were to die. Did you not hear the instructions given to you? The good of the neseyte (kingship) rests on your success tonight."

"The usurper lies mortally wounded and if not dead, is dying. The threat is gone," the man

jerked backwards a few steps for the shrouded figure had jumped at him.

“The threat lives as long as the child lives, fool! It can bring the end to the throne as we know it should be. Even one has the power to do so! You must go back and kill the child.”

“Who made you ruler and judge? Are you going to strike me dead if I refuse? Do you think you can get away with killing me? Do so and you will be exposed to the pharaoh,” the man wrung his hands and looked behind him again, “These lies you have whispered in my ear are now coming to light, Ay. If only I had seen them before now instead of stealing around like a thief in a temple.”

The shrouded figure shrank back, hissing, “I do not seek to harm you but once the pharaoh hears of her death he will order you killed.”

“Hears?” his laughter bordered on hysterical, “He will be the one finding her. He will know to kill me only if he knows it was I and he will know it was you who whispered in my ear if he knows it is I,” the man hissed back vehemently.

“Hold your tongue or he will know who you are, I will see to it myself and he will not believe that I was with you in this. If he is hurt now, imagine his pain when he hears it was you who raised the hand. You would serve yourself well to forget my name.”

“I would that I could forget I knew you at all, Ay. This is an evil deed done. Oh! That I had

seen the Truth before!" the man wrung his hands harder.

"Comfort yourself that you have served the ḥm.t wr.t (Great Wife) even if you have not done it completely, Ahmose³⁶⁸."

"There is no comfort in serving the ḥm.t wr.t (Great Wife) for I lose my life in return. She will not step forward to save me any more than you would to save me. I am forfeit, banished by my own hand. I swear on the Ti (Father) I have deceived tonight that if the pharaoh hears of my ill done deed, then I will give him your name and you will die alongside me," Ahmose moved forward to face Ay, "If I served the ḥm.t wr.t (Great Wife), then she does not know of this path leading to darkness unless she is a deceiver also. I know it is you I have served, I have watched your greed lead you to the lap of the pharaoh. What did she have that threatened you so? No, it matters not. My heart is sick for what I have done for I see clearly now I have served a troublemaker, not pa 'nḥ Ra, Ti (the Living Sun, the Father). I do not know what more of this darkness you are hiding but you will find your end soon enough. It will not be by my hand. I have killed enough, wrongly and must now accept my path. That I have served the neseyte (kingship), I doubt, and if we are to ruin I carry this burden

³⁶⁸ Steward of the Estate of Akhenaten; Superintendent of the Court House; sole companion and first of the companions; Fan bearer on the right hand of the King; True king's scribe; Follower of the feet of the Lord of the Two Lands; Tomb TA3

with you. "In His Name of Sun, the Father", ka=j (my spirit) is darkened. I seek forgiveness, but it will not be given here!" and he turned and fled into the night crying softly, "Lies, lies, lies!"

Ay lifted a hand and pulled the cover from his head, exposing his face to the moon, staring into the dark long after Ahmose disappeared.

Kiya's heart lifted when she saw someone coming down the dark path and recognized Akhenaten by his strong shoulders and stride. She smiled and stepped forward to call his name, so he would see her, but then he stumbled over something lying in the path in front of him. She put out her hand and stopped, poised, for she heard his half groan, half sob, a horrible sound of a man dying from lack of air, and watched as he kneeled to lift a crumpled woman. She stared, trying to understand how a woman got into her hesep (garden) when the woman's head rolled back, and she recognized the gold circular earring that dangled from her ear as the one Akhenaten had given her so long ago.

She raised her hands to her ears. She wore the pair of them all the time and there they were in her ears now. She felt disconnected. The silver stars were around the woman's neck also. How did that woman get her earrings, her collar? Why was Akhenaten crying? She started to move forward, horror dawning on her as she looked more closely at the woman's face. Where was her face... and her

breath caught in her throat for now she recognized what was left of the face that was cradled so gently in her brother's arms. She jerked back, now feeling lost and confused, a strange feeling of seeing something that was not there but was.

"Mr en mr=j (Love of my love), ka en ka=j (soul of my soul), stay with me," Akhenaten whispered raggedly as he crouched next to their bench beneath their ishedty (double perseas), gathering Kiya into his arms, gingerly holding her head against him as he staggered to his feet.

He was shocked by the gaping hole where her mouth used to be, blood darkening her skin and tunic in the pale moonlight. He could hear her breathing coming in gurgles and gasps, a struggle, and he fought back his own choked cries.

She remained where she was, watching him as he rose, carrying her body, stumbling, turning blindly back to the 'ah (palace), calling for a swnw (doctor), whispering over and over, between his calls, pleas for her to stay. She could not move, frozen, trying to understand what she was seeing as he disappeared into the dark of the 'ah (palace). She felt disconnected, drifting. Then she was alone, drifting in the dark by their bench, under the moon lighting their ishedty (double perseas), with Sopdet above, waiting in the lush, beautiful hesep (garden) for her brother to return.

He had not left the side of her bed as Penthu and his swnw-w (doctors) worked over her. The only sounds in the room were of the swnw-w

(doctors) speaking in low voices, the struggling rasping of air as she breathed, and the soft cooing of the two n'rw-w (doves) he had given her. They had been woken with the activity of the room and now watched the strangers in it. Her struggles for breath began to slow and soon the swnw-w (doctors) were turning to him with despair in their eyes. They did not need to speak for he understood before they said anything. He had held out hope against what he instinctively knew until that moment. Wordlessly, he sent them from the room.

Outside the room Penthu shook his head at Smenkhkare who waited with Maia holding Tutankhaten, Beketaten, and Menhitaaten. The young woman and two girls began crying softly, holding each other and Smenkhkare moved inside the room. One look at Akhenaten and he knew Kiya was dying. He had lost his second mewet (mother). His eyes flooded with tears, but he held himself erect. He was needed now and needed to wait for his grief. Akhenaten did not look at sA=f (his son) from where he kneeled next to her bed, her hand in his.

“Bring sen=k (your brother) to us,” he whispered.

Smenkhkare nodded silently and withdrew again beckoning to Maia. He held the linen away from the door, saying nothing but she did not need direction to enter the bedroom. She saw Smenkhkare's face and knew. He watched her disappear inside and then, as a man determined,

turned to begin ensuring the safety of the rekhyt (people) within the 'ah (palace). The assassin was still somewhere, the grounds needed to be searched and guards set at all exits and entrances. Beketaten and Menhitaaten huddled together outside their mother's room, crying.

Maia walked slowly forward, her eyes focused on the pharaoh who knelt by the bed. She could not bring herself to look at Kiya as she laid there, the blood still on the clothes. She heard the rasping slow breaths that took an eternity to repeat. She fought back tears as she moved forward holding the sleeping baby to stand next to Akhenaten. He looked at her from where he kneeled and held out his arms, so she could lay the child in them. Then he turned from her and laid him on his mother's chest, so the baby could feel his mother one last time. Maia choked back a sob and moved back toward the door to wait outside but he caught her hand, stopping her.

"She would want you here with her, Maia. She often spoke of you with much love. You have been her sen.t (sister). You are sA=w's (our son's) foster mother now," he released her hand and she nodded and moved back a few steps.

He turned back to Kiya and resting one hand on his sleeping son, he took Kiya's hand in his again. He remained there kneeling, holding her hand as he spoke to her of the love and laughter they shared. Then he sang to her, he sang the qakh-w (prayers) they sang together when they made

their offerings to pa Ti (the Father). He sang softly to her the hymn he had written for "In His Name of Sun, the Father" as he stroked her damaged face. He whispered of her life in the next life where she would rise each morning with the aten and sing under the light of pa Ti (the Father) and enjoy the sunshine and butterflies, while sA=sn (their son) slept on her chest, under his hand. He kissed her forehead and whispered of sA=sn (their son) playing with his little sen.t (sister) in the hesep (garden) as they once did, under their ishedty (double perseas) and stars as she released her last breath and the child lay with his mother's slowing heartbeat beneath his ears, until she was no more.

Silence enveloped the room for even the n'rw-w (doves) had stopped calling to each other. As the silence grew in the room, Akhenaten bowed his head, gathered sA=sn (their son) in his arms and took her hand again and sat by her side until the dim of morning began. The sun never broke over the horizon which was covered with dark clouds and falling rain casting all of Akhet-Aten into a somber day. It was then that Tutankhaten started to wake with a cry and Maia stepped forward to gather the hungry child. He relinquished Tutankhaten to her, so she could feed him and took Kiya's hand in his again, remaining silent. His duties of the neseyte (kingship) were forgotten in the darkness that covered his heart and he saw nothing but Kiya. He spoke, for the first time since his words begging Penthu to save

sen.t=k (his sister) had passed his lips, to Maia as she turned to leave the room.

“Send me Smenkhkare and the wab-w (priests).”

Maia nodded silently and backed out of the room with Tutankhaten cradled in her arms. Smenkhkare had returned to the hallway, and now stood, waiting, his face haggard and drawn. He had sent sen.=k (his sisters) to bed a long time ago. He looked ill and she realized that she too looked just as devastated as he. They had lost their sister, their friend who had cared for them, loved them, laughed with them, cried with them over the years. She choked back her tears. Their eyes met, and she nodded silently to him. He nodded back, touched Tutankhaten’s face gently and then entered Kiya’s bedroom.

Akhenaten did not turn from Kiya as Smenkhkare entered.

“Sit with me, sA (son),” he whispered.

Smenkhkare sat next to him on the seat, not looking at his father’s face, struggling with his tears as he hesitantly looked at Kiya. She looked like she was asleep, with her face now partially covered. His eyes flooded, clouding his vision and he looked down. He felt the first embers of anger begin to burn within his chest.

“We cannot act in anger, sA (son),”

Akhenaten whispered, “It is not the way we walk with the “In His Name of Sun, the Father”,” he

stopped for a minute, gathering himself, “nor is it how she would wish us to be.”

Smenkhkare nodded silently as Akhenaten continued.

“I need you, sA (son), for there are only a few I would trust now. I do not know who struck my heart, but I do know who did not,” he now looked at him, “She loved you very much, Smenk, as she loved me and Nakht. You were perhaps the most important person to her for you were there when I was not, and you were there when I was. You have never turned your back on her as I have done,” his voice choked, and he had to stop speaking.

Smenkhkare lay his hand on his father’s arm, “It (Father), she never felt you left her. She always told me you were with her here,” and he touched his father’s chest above his heart, “She never felt she was alone because you were with her. She would want you to know this now.”

Akhenaten had bowed his head. He did not raise it but nodded, “She has said this many times,” he now looked at Smenkhkare, “I ask you to be by my side, speak my words to those outside this room. I cannot do this right now but you I trust to speak the Truth and not make me guard against any deceptions. There are only a few who I have this trust with, Smenk, and I want to gather them around me.”

Smenkhkare nodded, “I am here as you need, it (Father), for hm.t nsw=w (our queen), sA=k

(your son), and "In His Name of Sun, the Father".
Tell me and I shall do as you ask in all matters."

For the first time, Akhenaten seemed to relax a little.

"I will need many things to happen at once. The Per Neferkheperu-Re is to be closed and no one to leave or enter unless I command it. No one. I do not want to have to speak to any who may wish to come here. Do you understand?"

Smenkhkare nodded.

"Guards and tasters are to be with Maia and Tutankhaten at all times."

Smenkhkare nodded, "Done already, Neb=j (my Lord). I have also increased the guard here at every entrance and exit. None moves without eyes on them."

"Good. We will need Nakhtpaaten to come to me, so I may tell him I wish this done at the Per Neferkheperu-Re also. We need May for he will need to supply our guards. Bring sen=j (my brother), May and Parennefer here so we may speak. When they are here, I ask that you remain here with me as I speak to all in all matters," he looked at Smenkhkare who again nodded, "Nakht will be in charge of the Per Neferkheperu- Re. Parennefer will be our messenger between all of us, no other. May will be in charge of the security of the city and assist Mahu with the search for the killers. Make sure this search has already begun. I want this person found swiftly.

“Then I will need to have my wife Tasherit and her sister, Meritaten, brought to me but for now send word to them. Tell them I command that they keep her mother within those walls for I will not be responsible if Nefertiti leaves against my will. She will try to leave once she hears this ‘ah (palace) is closed. She will think she is needed here but I do not need her. She is the last person I wish to see now. She is not to leave the ‘ah (palace) so tell them this is not to happen if they value their mother’s life. None enter or exit this ‘ah (palace) without my word,” he fell silent and the energy seemed to drain from Akhenaten as he hunched back over his sister’s hand clasped in his.

Smenkhkare nodded again, “I go now, Neb=j (my lord).”

He stood and backed away from his father. Once back in the hall, he turned to the guards who stood outside the door.

“User, I will need your captain and all the royal messengers. Bring them to me in the throne room and then return here,” he said.

The man nodded and before he could leave Smenkhkare was gone. Within moments, Smenkhkare was meeting with Sasobek, captain of the guard of the Per Wa’enre. Messengers were sent to the Per Neferkheperu-Re with Sasobek and some guards to ensure the orders given to the messengers were carried out while Parennefer was similarly summoned to the Per Wa’enre. A messenger was sent to the south end of the city to

the house of Nakhtpaaten and his wife while another was sent to May. News of the death of the ḥm.t nsw.t (royal wife) was now outside the walls of Per Wa'enre.

As the Per Neferkheperu-Re was closed to all comings and goings, the Per Wa'enre became a center of activity, subdued and somber, so vastly different from the previous days when laughter and lightness ran as the undercurrent through all. The ḥm.t nsw.t (royal wife) Kiya was a joyous woman and this lightness had reverberated throughout 'ah=s (her palace) to even the rekhyt (people) who had come to know her. Hery-w heb³⁶⁹ (lector priests) and sem-w³⁷⁰ (funerary priests) gathered in the courtyard, waiting for their time to assume preparation of the body of the ḥm.t nsw.t (royal wife). Parennefer, May, and Nakhtpaaten arrived swiftly on the heels of the wab-w (priests). Nakhtpaaten was struggling with his feeling of failure for it was his responsibility to keep the families of the king safe throughout the city and she had spoken to him only months ago of needed new guards. He had not pressed her for a reason and now he was realizing he should have instead of listening to the ramblings of Ay in which he made her sound like she was being overanxious.

³⁶⁹ Recited the prayers during the mummification process; Belief in the Father meant simpler burial preparation, praying asking Pharaoh Neferkheperu-re Wa'en-re to grant them entry to eternal life in the presence of the Father, if he found they led a good life were more common in the tombs of those who followed him.

³⁷⁰ Prepared the body for mummification

That it was his sister who had perished under his responsibility made it even worse for him for they had grown up together in their father's 'ah-w (palaces). They had played, laughed and cried within the walls of their kap (nursery). He was devastated and could not look at Smenkhkare when he approached him.

Smenkhkare rose from the chair in which he had sat to wait for his uncle and hugged him in greeting when he first saw Nakhtpaaten. There were no words of comfort to offer. He, too, felt the heavy burden of failure since he had been in the 'ah (palace), oblivious to the attack on Kiya just as Akhenaten had been. The horror of the burden carried by Akhenaten was beyond their comprehension. He was the last to see her alive and to know had he stayed, he could have saved her was just too devastating to consider.

May was no less affected than the uncle and brothers. He was still struggling to believe she was gone, let alone attacked in her own hesep (garden). He had already begun the search for answers with Mahu and hoped to hear from the Chief of Medjay soon. All three men moved as if the world was underwater.

Parennefer followed silently behind the three rpat-w (nobles) as they moved down the hall. No one looked at each other as they waited outside Kiya's private bedroom as Smenkhkare went inside, the three men remaining outside within their own thoughts.

Smenkhkare spoke softly, "We are here, it (Father)."

Akhenaten jerked as if he had been asleep, but he had not been. He had been lost in emptiness as he held her hand, lost in the darkness that surrounded him now and Smenkhkare had pulled him back.

"I will have all of you with me," he also spoke softly but his voice was raw with emotion.

Smenkhkare nodded and turned back to the door to beckon the men to enter. Akhenaten straightened and turned on the seat, still holding Kiya's hand, to face the door as Smenkhkare disappeared back outside the room. Then his three companions came in slowly, bowing at the waist, eyes downcast. Parennefer followed last stopping momentarily when he saw Kiya's covered body on her bed. He bowed at the waist also, his eyes misting as memories of a pretty little girl, with this very group of young boys, exasperating him flitted through his mind.

Akhenaten waited until they were inside, "We do not need formality within these walls," and they lifted their heads, "She would laugh at us."

This brought tears and small smiles to everyone's face, but it also released them from the tension that held them. They were shocked with the change in Akhenaten's face. He seemed to have aged overnight. He was drained, exhausted, and yet there was still a strength within him, evident in his words when he began speaking.

“I will have Smenkhkare next to me in every meeting. This is not because I love or trust any of you any less than the other. This is because he has been the sA (son) of our sister who she loves as her own and my oldest sA (son),” and he smiled at the young man,” and he will continue as her chosen by my side, s3-nsw tpy (first born son), heir to the throne. He speaks my words. Parennefer, you will remain with me, as always, but I will also need you to be our messenger between us when we need to speak. There is no other that I will trust this to but you.”

The older man nodded, “Any command of yours is my will, Neb=j (my lord).”

Akhenaten nodded and looked at his brother and his friend, “I know you have your homes but for now I ask that you put them aside and do as I ask. You are to find this djdft (snake) that came into my garden and fed this tpH-tepeh³⁷¹ (apple) of isfet (chaos) to us,” he whispered savagely, “You will find this djdft (snake) who has struck my heart and brought this darkness into our world, who has become an interloper of truth, a deceiver of MaAt (order). I want the hand who smite the truth, the mouth who spoke the lies, the heart who chose isfet (chaos) and now sinks us into darkness, so deep that even pa “nh Re (the Living

³⁷¹ Brought to Egypt during reign of Hyksos or later; Dollinger, Andre. “Ancient Egypt: Fruit and Vegetables”. *An Introduction to the History and Culture of Pharaonic Egypt*. www.reshafirm.org.il. 2000 to present. Accessed 12 August 2018.

Sun), In His Name of sun, the Father” may not reach us. I do not care if it is the ḥm.t nsw.t tpt (chief royal wife) Nefertiti herself. I will know the truth, so I may do as I am commanded to do “In His Name of Sun, the Father”. Bring this djdft (snake) to me so I may cut off its head and trample its body.”

His rage was palpable in the room and it smothered any thoughts of despair at the need to arrest the ḥm.t nsw.t tpt (chief royal wife). They saw the anger that burned within him, heard it in his voice and saw the absolute dejection as he held the hand of his Beloved Wife, Kiya. It was their charge to bring the light back to the hesep (garden) that had once been untouched by man. Silently the men nodded in unison. He looked around at them and then seemed to relax a little.

“I wish, Nakht, for you to stay in the Per Neferkheperu-Re while May and Mahu search for this killer. Mahu will report to you and May all that he knows so you may tell me. I need you there, Nakht, to keep Nefertiti safe.”

The reason was very real, but each man knew Nakhtpaaten was being charged with keeping the queen from ignoring the pharaoh’s command to remain within the walls of her ‘ah (palace). She was placed under house arrest.

“All of you are to present yourselves to the ḥm.t nsw.t tpt (chief royal wife) as my words spoken. She is to understand if any of you speak to her,” he looked around at the men in the room, “it

is I who speaks. Hm.t nsw.t (royal wife) Tasherit and Meritaten are there now but they will be coming here for I have a place for them. My other sa.t-w (daughters) will accompany them for I want them within these walls. All of them.”

The men nodded again.

“PARENNEFER, you will be the one to speak this to Nefertiti when you return with Nakht and May to bring Tasherit, Meritaten and sa.t-w=j (my daughters) to me,” he looked hard at the old man, “All of them, even my youngest, Setepenre, are to come here. Bring them with plenty of guards but do not scare them. I wish them to be able to find happiness as Kiya would be sad to see that we have lost our smiles,” he fell silent.

The message he was clearly sending was that it was not far from the pharaoh’s heart that the person who was responsible for Kiya’s death was his very wife herself. Nakht was placing the whole Per Neferkheperu-Re on house arrest. The hm.t nsw.t tpt (chief royal wife) would see it was his daughters to whom the pharaoh was turning. They had taken her place she fought so hard to keep to herself.

Akhenaten shook his head, rousing himself, “May, I wish that you bring Ay to the Per Neferkheperu-Re also to remain with his daughter. You will provide Nakht with the guards needed to not only seal both ‘ah-w (palaces) but to have a guard on each of the royal family from my youngest child to Queen Tiye herself. I ask you give

Mahu all the help you can in the search for the killer. Make all resources available to him including the military. Smenkhkare, you will speak to the rest of generals for me, so they know of my wishes and move someone into Ay's position within the ranks of the charioteers. Someone we trust."

This speech seemed to drain all the energy from Akhenaten and he turned away from them, once again bowing his head to the bed. They watched him for a minute, at a loss to help the man and then backed out of the room. How they completed their responsibilities was up to them. He was now only concerned with sen.t=k (his sister) who lay before him. His numbness returned, and he did not hear the men leave the room.

It was Maia who brought him back to the world to care for sen.t= k (his sister). She finally entered the room, carrying Tutankhaten in her arms. She also carried with her a prayer Kiya had given her to give to Akhenaten. She had told Maia that she would know when the time was right to give it to him and Maia had put it away, waiting. She carried it now. The little papyrus was rolled up and clutched in her hand as she shifted Tutankhaten.

In the months that had followed Tutankhaten's birth he had grown much. Now he was a healthy weight, and watched everything alertly, his little hands waving, clutching happily at all within their reach. He smiled a great deal, Kiya's smile, and it was this that Maia knew her

pharaoh needed to see now. He needed to let sen.t=k (his sister) be taken of so she could begin her journey to the life eternal. He needed to tend to the living and let the hery-w heb (lector priests) and sem-w (funerary priests) tend to the dead.

She stood in the doorway, hesitating only because she knew his pain was raw and strong. She did not want to cause more but any talk of relinquishing sen.t=k (his sister) would no matter when it was addressed. She understood this but still hesitated. Little Tutankhaten grabbed her chin and she looked down. This little boy was the healing the pharaoh needed. Committed, she moved across the room to stand next to Akhenaten. He did not stir but sat hunched, his hands holding the hand of Kiya, her face partially wrapped, covering the damage made by the attacker. Her eyes were closed. Maia blinked back her tears. She needed to do as her friend and mistress had bidden her to do all those months ago when she spoke of her dreams of not living to see her son grow up. She needed to be Kiya's voice to bring Akhenaten back to their son.

She said nothing but placed the little parchment in front of Akhenaten and then laid little Tutankhaten on the bed next to his father's hands and mother's body. The movement made him jerk as if from a reverie and she watched as one of his hands slowly reached out to touch his son's chubby cheeks, one finger. His hand was shaking. The pharaoh was crying now.

Tutankhaten grabbed his father's finger with one little fist to pull it to his mouth and Maia backed away as the pharaoh's crying broke into heavy, wrenching sobs. He slid his hand under sA=k (his son) and gathered him to him, the practiced move of a father who had many loved children and brought him to his chest. He finally released Kiya's hand to cradle sA=sn (their son) against him, who reached up and touched his father's tearful face, happily babbling at him. This was the last Maia saw of the pharaoh, hmt nsw.t (royal wife), and prince as she backed out of the room to bring the wab-w (priests) for the preparation.

As Maia left the room, Akhenaten saw the small roll of papyrus. He tucked Tutankhaten neatly on one arm and unrolled it, his breath sucking in as he recognized Kiya's script. Her voice seemed to fill his head as he read her prayer:

“Let me breathe the fragrant wind which issues from your mouth, that I might see your beauty daily. This prayer of mine is that I might hear your sweet voice of the north wind that my limbs might grow young with life through your desire. May you give to me your two arms bearing your spirit, that I may receive it, that I may live on it. May you summon me by my name continually, without its being sought in your mouth, O my lord, you are here continually forever, living like the *Aten, greatly beloved wife* of King of Upper and Lower Egypt who lives on MaAt, Lord of Two Lands, Neferkheperu-re Wa'enre, the beautiful

child of the living Aten who shall be here, alive, continually forever, namely, Kiya, justified."³⁷²

He bowed his head and closed his eyes, letting the pain wash over him as he cried whispering her name to little Tutankhaten as the baby patted his face. This is how the wab-w (priests) found him when they entered the room.

He rose, handing them the prayer with only the words, "For her," and left the room carrying Tutankhaten.

The days following, Akhenaten drifted one to the other as if in a fog with the only clear thought in his mind that sA=sn (their son) was with him at all times. The child, and Maia, did not leave his side. At nights, in Kiya's room, while Maia and the baby were fast asleep under several guards' watchful gazes, Akhenaten would hear nothing but Kiya's laughter. In his dreams, as they ran through the hesep (garden) of their childhood, the soft lilt of her voice washed over him as she told him, "Jnk mr ntk, sen, djet (I love you, brother, forever) ..." over and over and he would whisper in return, "N neheh (and always)" to her.

They would dance under the ished-w (perseas) as they did when they were little, not speaking at all, bodies almost touching as they moved in the steps he had taught her so long ago. Other times he would hear her singing to him, like the wind in the leaves, and he would look for her.

³⁷² (Murnane, 211) Tried to fill in the blanks per author's notes; italics are my addition for sure

She always would call to him, "Djet" and he would awaken, his reply on his lips, expecting to see her next to him, for the sound of her voice was as clear as if she was there. His heart would stop beating only to begin again, full of pain, and he would cry again in the dark.

Each day passed in a stupor, alone except for Maia, Tutankhaten and the regular visits of Smenkhkare, Parennefer, May, Meritaten, Tasherit, and Nakhtpaaten. During the day he watched sA=k (his son) grow bigger, absorbing the smiles and gurgles like a starving man with a bowl of food and spent the nights chasing Kiya's voice in his dreams. Night and day became one as he lost count of them for time no longer mattered. He lived for the nights he could find her in the hesep (garden), running and playing in the sunlight. She was always waiting for him under their ished-w (perseas) sitting on their bench, smiling as he walked towards her.

Every day was also marked with a beseeching message from Nefertiti begging to be allowed to speak to him. He did not deny her the right to send him messages, but he did not respond to her messenger, simply sent the man back with nothing in reply. Maia, who sat with him as she tended Tutankhaten, watched silently every day as the messenger was sent away. It was after one such refusal to speak that she cleared her throat.

Akhenaten looked at her and smiled, "We have been together long enough for me to know the

look on your face, Maia. You have something to say but are not sure if you can," he nodded, "You and I are not nsw (king) and serving girl. You are the foster mother of sA=j (my son), chosen by sen.t=j (my sister), and thus sen.t=j (my sister). You are dear to her heart and dear to mine. Speak openly, sen.t (sister)."

She smiled back at him and then smoothed Tutankhaten's dark little head as he bobbed at her knee, clinging to it, as he pulled himself up.

"I have watched you turn the messenger of hm.t=k (your wife) away every day. Perhaps it is time to move forward."

He did not look at Maia when he responded, "I do not know what I will do if I were to look at her."

Maia nodded her head, "I neither, Neb=j (my Lord), but is it not that we are to find forgiveness within ourselves for those who have injured us, so we may continue to move forward? Kiya told me you taught this to her."

He was silent for a moment and then nodded.

"Then to find this forgiveness should you not listen to her words, so you may better know how to move forward? Perhaps we are never to know who took Kiya from us for it is not in finding the truth that we find the ḥtpw (peace). It is in the forgiveness without the truth that we find the ḥtpw (peace)."

Akhenaten smiled, "This is the teaching of the Ti (Father). Forgiveness is not in knowing. It is in letting go of the need to know so we can truly forgive," he looked at her now, "You speak the Truth, but that Nefertiti made the life of sen.t=j (my sister) difficult is enough for me to not wish to hear her voice. I have always allowed her to take me from Kiya. I should have stopped this so long ago instead of giving in to her," his voice broke, "It is time she must learn she cannot take me from her now. It is Kiya I wish to see, not her, and I am afraid her voice will chase meryt=j (my beloved) away from me."

"Neb=j (My Lord), I risk your anger when I say Kiya would say to not let the anger of another come between you and her. Meet hm.t=k (your wife) with grace and kindness so that your love is strong, and you will be with Kiya even when with Nefertiti."

He smiled and touched her face, gently, "You do not anger me, Maia. I see why Kiya loved you best. You are grace."

Maia put her hand on Akhenaten's to hold it against her cheek, "It is Kiya's love for you that allows me to see for you, Neb=J (my Lord). She is with you still."

He nodded, "Then send for Nefertiti to have an audience with me. I will listen to her words as long as I can."

Maia smiled and rose, scooping up Tutankhaten and placing him in his father's lap. "She will be here tomorrow, Neb=j (my Lord)."

He smiled as he gently kissed the top of sA=k's (his son's) head as he watched her leave. Maia had done just as Kiya would have done. Tears misted his eyes as Tutankhaten patted his face, bringing him back to the little boy who was now trying to put his fingers in his father's mouth.

He did not hold his audience with Nefertiti under the ishedty (double persea) but in Kiya's usechet (audience hall), with Smenkhkare, Meritaten and Tasherit at his side. It was the first time he had returned to the usechet (audience hall) since the attack on Kiya but it was a pleasant surprise for Smenkhkare. Akhenaten listened to the complaints of the day, messengers from vassal kings requesting gold or gifts or needing assistance, allowing Smenkhkare to speak as he had been doing. Nakhtpaaten handled most of the needs of the Two Lands, but he was still sending those messages of importance to Akhenaten who had left all of it to Smenkhkare.

So as the morning wore on, Akhenaten had taken to consulting with the young prince, allowing him to talk with the messengers and vassals while he guided and listened. Meritaten and Tasherit watched with a growing hopefulness that their father was going to come back to his throne. Smenkhkare found he enjoyed the pharaoh's guidance and hoped his father's presence would be

with him the next day. It was mid-day when Nefertiti was announced. Smenkhkare, Tasherit, and Meritaten began to move to leave but he held them back with his raised hand.

“I wish for you to stay,” he said softly, “all that we have to say needs to be said with others here.”

They settled back in their thrones to listen. Nefertiti swept into the room, bowing low, to the ground to stop at the base of the dais, a position she had never been in before. She was at the feet of her daughters, the wife of her husband, the son of another queen and her husband. They all looked at her solemnly. She realized that she would have to speak with Tasherit, Meritaten and Smenkhkare present. It was not as she wished but she was no longer in a position to ask for favors.

“Em hotep nefer, Hm-k (In great peace, Your Majesty),” she swept lower, “Dwa-nejter n (Praise God for) allowing me to come, Neb=j (My Lord).”

“Speak quickly, Nefertiti,” he responded.

“I have come to ask you what must I do to gain favor in your eyes again, Neb=j (My Lord). It is not that I wish to return to as hm.t nsw.t tp.t (chief royal wife) but I miss you, Akhenaten. This is the one punishment that is too much to bear, to be separated from you, from our children,” Her voice broke and she fell silent, her eyes brimming with tears.

Akhenaten was silent, watching her.

"Please, Akhenaten," she moved forward, kneeling at his feet now, on the stairs, "You are my heart and I cannot live without you."

"Then perhaps you should have thought of that before you took my heart from me."

"It was not I who struck you. I could not strike so viciously at my love!" she began crying now softly, "I did not do this to you."

"You know who did then because this has not been far in your thoughts."

"I am innocent of all of this," she managed to get out, "I know you think my father has a part in this..."

"We know it comes from the Per Neferkheperu-Re for Ahmose has gone missing. I only wait to hear if they have caught him," he paused and then continued, "She once told me I was a butterfly and you were one of my wings while she was the other. It was by the two of you that I would be able to fly home. She gave me hope when I was about to walk away from you," he touched her face softly as she kneeled at his feet, his face wet with tears now, "She was my wings and she gave you a part of her, so I would be happy and stay with you. You and your father have torn my wings from my body and I cannot fly any longer."

She sobbed, tears now falling on his knees where she had thrown herself.

“Why could you not simply love her as I did? She took nothing from you but gave you all she could,” he asked softly.

“I was brought here to be her companion and I found you instead. The moment I saw you I knew I was not here to be her companion. I knew this, Akhenaten. I knew the moment I saw you I was to be your *ḥmt nsw.t* (royal wife), to walk by your side, give you your children, and help you rule your kingdom. I was so much more than a princess’s companion.”

He stared at her, his stomach becoming queasy, “So all these years you have rejected *sen.t* (my sister) because you thought yourself above her companion?”

“I knew I was for you, Akhenaten. This was in my dreams for so long. But she had that place in your heart already, stolen before I even had a chance to take my place. I have tried all these years to be what she is to you and never have I had you look at me the way you look at her. She took you from me,” she choked back her sobs, looking up at him but he did not meet her eyes.

Instead he looked around the *usechet* (audience hall) he had painted for Kiya, every color, every picture planned to bring her joy as she worked. Nefertiti wanted him to look at her but she dared not say anything. This quiet, soft Akhenaten was different. She wanted his anger, not this gentleness. He scared her now.

He shook his head sadly, "You took me from you. You are always refusing the responsibility for your choices, Nefertiti. Your anger pushed me away. Your anger is isfet (chaos). Love is MaAt (order) at its greatest power and that is the gift she gave me. She is the beginning; I am the end and all things in between paradise therein. Even more so because she is now all around me. If you are the beginning, I am the end and all things in between are afflicted therein. You chose to follow Apep with your desires disguising his isfet (chaos). You had your time to be my beginning, but you chose your self. Did you even listen to all I have spoken of that we were given by pa Ti (the Father)?

"You stood by my side, saying the words of mrwt (love) and htpw (peace) but you do not carry these in your heart. How can you say you are a priestess of pa Ti (the Father) who sends his love to us, giving us life? Have you lied to me about knowing of what I speak? Do you even care? Love forever with me in all that I do. This is a joy that is unending, a moment of forever given to me to understand that only in MaAt (order) do we see eternity. Kiya was this love for me, here, where I could touch love if I needed to," he looked at her as if this was the first time he had ever seen her face, "You do not understand of what I speak of because you do not know this in your heart. Your heart has been closed by envy and hate."

He closed his eyes and lifted his head, "Do you not feel a love that fills your heart so deeply that you know no sadness but joy even in the worst of times? Do you not understand that I have spoken not of the aten but of the one so ancient that no man knows His name because He is nameless and so wondrous that I cannot even explain what it is like to walk in His Will? No man has created pa Ti (the Father) because He Is creation. It is this 'nh (living) ʒh (spirit) of heh (eternity) who is the source of this mrwt (love) that sen.t=j (my sister) lived in, bringing it to me. Do you not understand what is here now is only a moment of heh (eternity) and the choice you make in how to live will either allow you to become djet n neheh (forever and always) or cease to exist altogether?"

He fell silent, listening to her soft sobs, the cooing of the n'rw-w (doves) that sat in the corner of the room and smiled, "I am at htpw (peace) now. I know I will see sen.t (Sister) again because we are one and always will be even if not together here right now. She has not left me. You have only taken her from me physically but in doing so you have freed her to be with me everywhere I look, everywhere I am. She is here, in the hesep (garden), all around me, and I feel this mrwt (love) because she is with pa Ti (the Father) who Is. I do not have to punish you beyond how you have wounded me, so you have forfeited your right to me physically as does your father. You refused to be her companion

out of envy and I refuse to be your companion for I will not walk in your darkness.”

“I do not understand, Akhenaten, Neb=j (My Lord),” she brokenly whispered.

“I know,” he smiled sadly and looked at her finally, softly touched her face with one hand, running his fingers over her cheek, tracing its curve through her tears, “Perhaps one day you will, and I will be able to look upon you again.”

The pain he had been feeling, the loss, was gone and he could feel love enveloping him, as if Kiya’s arms were around him, warm and soft. He knew now, after years of feeling her like this, that she was with him, sitting next to him here on her throne. Now he understood, as the tears in his eyes made Nefertiti’s face blur, the joy surrounding him as overpowering as when he was in the company of pa Ti (the Father) who spoke to him.

In the sadness was joy because he knew how to find her and one day he would, he would see her again when it was time. Man had pulled them apart but Ti=k (His Father) who led them would bring them together again for it was their path to continue. He was to listen to her words of council to him and move forward with his rekhyt (people), those who choose to hear. It was not for everyone to hear but for each to hear when they were ready. He knew from his own studies the teaching had begun long before man had knowledge of pa Ti (the Father). The inspirations he himself had been given and shared with his

rekhyt (people) were the gift of hearing, to be shared as he had done. The knowledge would continue long after he was gone with those who heard, and they would carry it to those who would hear in the times to come if they sought the Truth.

He finally understood his path was not that he was to reign here in the world of men. It was to bring the medu neter (Word of God)³⁷³ to those who were ready to hear. He was the First Prophet giving sbayt (instruction) in the way, leading those who would follow. He smiled. The kingship of Two Lands and the throne of Geb were given to him for only a moment to sbayt (teach) what he was shown. It was up to the rekhyt (people) to choose to follow the way. He was to continue as he could, sbayt (teach) those who heard, saw, and not concern himself about the ones who did not. They, he was to let go. Their time would come by their choice or no choice.

The hem netjer-w n imn (priests of Amun) were the first of many who would be lost, led by greed and excess blocking them from hearing so they chose a path that would one day lead them to failure. It would not be in his lifetime because he knew now it was not his place to stop what Man had put into motion. Only Man could stop his forward motion. This had been his struggle all these years for he thought it was his responsibility for all. It was as if a weight was lifted from his

³⁷³ Words of God; divine decree

shoulders now understanding where he was to continue. This was the balance of MaAt (order) and isfet (chaos).

He looked at the guards and nodded. They moved forward and gently raised the ḥm.t nsw.t (royal wife) to her feet. Her words would no longer guide them. They chose to follow their Pharaoh Neferkheperu-re Wa'en-re, and those who sat next to him. They were somber but steady in their actions, respectful of the ḥm.t nsw.t tp.t (chief royal wife) but determined to not fail their pharaoh. They did not understand all he said either but something in his words filled their hearts with lightness and they wished to continue under his sbayt (instruction) so they could understand.

“Tell Ay I know, and it is only by pa Ti (the Father’s) will that he still lives. He should give his praise while he is able. I will not be drawn to the darkness by his hand. The death of Kiya will be avenged when it is time and I allow the will of [Living *Sun*, Ruler of the horizon, rejoicing in the horizon]/[in His Name of *Sun*, the Father, who has come as the sun disc] to work through me. Ay is cast from the hesep (garden) of which he once was welcome as you were. I wait for the day you find the way to redeem yourself, so I may look upon you again. Senebty (Be well)³⁷⁴,” he spoke so softly the cooing n’rw-w (doves) were heard over his voice.

³⁷⁴ A farewell

“No, Neb=j (My Lord)! Akhenaten! Hm=j³⁷⁵
(My husband)! Please!” Nefertiti cried, her hands
scrabbling for him as she was pulled away.

She began sobbing in earnest now as they
led her away, but she stopped struggling. He did
not hear her cries slowly dim as she was removed
from the palace for his thoughts had turned to
Tutankhaten. He had done enough for the day and
was emotionally drained. He wanted to spend the
rest of his day with sA=sn (their son) in the garden,
playing, with sa.t-w=f (his daughters) around him
and Maia seated next to him.

He stood and smiled at sa.t-w=f (his
daughters) and sA=f (his son), “I think I will retire
to the garden with Tutankhaten and Maia for some
rest. This has tired me, but I will gladly join you
tomorrow. Join me when you are ready and please
send my other children to me, so they may join us.
We plan our time for tomorrow. I am ready.”

Smenkhkare nodded, thrilled his father was
back, and the three young nobles watched him as
he left, moving quickly through the halls painted
with scenes of the hesep (garden) that had once
pleased Kiya and now would belong to another.
Perhaps Meritaten, if she were to wed Smenkhkare,
this would be their home and he, Tasherit, and
Maia would remain here with his children, playing
in the love of Kiya as she surrounded them. His
family would be together finally. He smiled as the

³⁷⁵ My husband!

sunlight greeted him as he came out of the 'ah (palace) and moved swiftly through the trees as he always had until he saw their ishedty (double perse).)

She was waiting there on their bench, the young woman chosen by sen.t (Sister) to keep him company while they were separated and to care for sA=sn (their son), sitting next to a small boy playing on the ground next to their bench. She raised her head, her gentle smile greeting him as the little boy looked up to see him and raised his arms to him as he came to them. He squeezed her shoulder affectionately and then stooped to sA=K (his son). As Akhenaten swung Tutankhaten up in his arms and held him, a breeze so light and warm brushed against him. It caressed his face, his arms, his chest as it swirled around him and he felt a tingle, an electricity wash through him, rushing up from his feet through his body, making him catch his breath as it rose up through to his face to surround him.

He hugged sA=sn (their son) close and breathed, "Kiya..."

He knew she was smiling at him and felt her brushing his lips in her gentle kiss, her hands touching his face. Time stopped for a moment, leaving him surrounded with the joy that left his tears threatening to spill. He pulled Tutankhaten closer to him and smiled.

I wait for you, sen, djet whispered in his ears, inside him, and around him like the fragrance of seshen-w (lotuses) on the wind.

“N neheh, Imi-ib, I will find you, sen.t,” he whispered back and then she was gone.

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