

THE PHAROAH'S SON

By Martin A. Follose

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THE PHARAOH'S SON

A Full Length Comedy

By Martin A. Follose

SYNOPSIS: Madu, the Pharaohs long lost son has returned. His untimely return has upset the plans of the Pharaohs daughters for one of them to become Pharaoh. They now have to prove that Madu is an imposter before he's crowned Egypt's next ruler. When they find that Madu really is their brother, they solicit the help of their cousin, to send Madu into the afterlife. After three attempts on his life and with the help of his slave friends, Madu escapes his sisters' attempts only to find out that he isn't the Pharaoh's son after all. Fearing death if the Pharaoh's daughters find out, he decides to continue as the Pharaoh's son, until he learns that he cannot marry the girl he loves, as she is a slave. Now he is faced with the ultimate decision: become Pharaoh or marry the slave girl he loves.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(9 female, 6 male, 1-10 extras)

MADU (m).....	A slave who is the long lost son of the Pharaoh, or is he? <i>(174 lines)</i>
KEKET (f)	A slave and friend to Madu. <i>(83 lines)</i>
ZIYAD (m)	A slave and a friend of Madu. <i>(46 lines)</i>
PHARAOH (m).....	Present Pharaoh, he is old and feels that his time is near. <i>(77 lines)</i>
MASIKA (f).....	An assistant to the Pharaoh. <i>(17 lines)</i>
JAMILA (f).....	Oldest daughter of the Pharaoh. She thinks she should be the next Pharaoh. <i>(116 lines)</i>
DENDERA (f)	Second daughter of the Pharaoh. Forceful, snotty, says what she thinks. <i>(106 lines)</i>

TAKARA (f).....	Another daughter of the Pharaoh. Thinks she should be the Pharaoh. <i>(49 lines)</i>
MAKRA (f).....	Yet another daughter. She also thinks she should be the Pharaoh. <i>(47 lines)</i>
PILI (f).....	Youngest daughter of the Pharaoh. Always late and very much an airhead. <i>(44 lines)</i>
PRINCE TOOT (m).....	Young nephew (three times removed) of the Pharaoh. <i>(77 lines)</i>
WALIDA (f).....	Head slave. Oversees the slaves of the viewing room. <i>(23 lines)</i>
HESRA (f).....	A slave girl. <i>(3 lines)</i>
HERU (m).....	The Pharaoh's daughter's personal male slave. <i>(49 lines)</i>
GUARD (m).....	The big silent type. <i>(Non-Speaking.)</i>

EXTRAS:

SLAVES (m/f)..... *(Non-Speaking.)*

DURATION: 80 minutes.

SETTING

The play takes place in the Viewing Room of the Pharaoh. The area is a place for the Pharaoh to watch the completion of his pyramid. In the beginning the stage is mostly bare and the slaves bring in items to complete the area. One large window is up center where we can see a pyramid in the distance. A bench is below the window. On each side of the window are pillars and curtains. This allows MADU to hide behind them. Just off center stage left, is a chaise lounge. A Pharaoh's chair is against the wall stage right and near it on the wall is a plaque containing two swords. Also along the right wall is another chair or stone bench with another optional bench along the left wall. Other small tables, vases, plants can be placed on stage. All of the props and chairs can be brought on during the first scene, if possible.

SYNOPSIS OF ACTS

ACT ONE

The Pharaoh's viewing room
Ancient Egypt

ACT TWO

Several hours later

ACT THREE

Scene 1: The next day
Scene 2: Several hours later

COSTUMES

Madu enters with a pharaoh's robe on, which consists of only a long tunic with gold trim. Later a pharaoh's neck piece, sash trimmed in gold or jewels, matching wrist cuffs, and a Pharaoh's head piece will be added. The Pharaoh and Prince Toot are dressed the same but in different colors.

The daughters wear typical Egyptian, Cleopatra type long brightly colored satin dresses with capes that are attached at their shoulders, forearms, and wristbands. A gold or similar color apron drop is at their waist. They also wear a jeweled or beaded headpiece, and bracelets on their wrists. They wear sandals and must appear very elegant and royal. In Act II Pili wears a large pair of wings and an aviator's cap with goggles.

All of the slaves wear dark colored tunics with belts (rope or similar material). They also wear sandals. Walida, since she is the slave overseer, may wear a headpiece of a single dark color. The Guard is dressed as a gladiator and carries a sword. Ziyad later wears a mummy costume that consists of a jump suit wrapped with gauze or strips of cloth. A ski mask, gloves and socks, also wrapped with strips of cloth will help cover the entire body. This costume could be tea dyed to get an aged look. The head covering needs to be easily removed and replaced. Heru begins in slave attire then later changes in and out of several costumes: a mailman's uniform with blue shirt, blue shorts, a mailman hat, white socks, black shoes, and a mail bag; a long dress similar to what Jamila might wear; a gambler with black pants, white long sleeve shirt, garter on his arm, visor, black shoes, he also brings on playing cards; as cupid with bow and arrow, red sash, and laurel leaves as a crown.

PROPS

ACT ONE:

- Stage props
- Clothes
- Baskets
- Throne
- Vases
- Benches
- Small table with a paper and feather pen
- Chaise lounge
- Plaque with two swords, etc. (SLAVES)
- Wooden sword (TOOT)
- Jamila's dresses (HERU)
- Material for possible dresses (PILI and SLAVES)
- Shower cap and bath brush (MADU)

ACT TWO:

- Mailbag (HERU)
- Clothes pin (HERU)
- Body, dressed same as Pili (falls by window)

- Wings and aviator's cap with goggles (PILI)
- Bag of scarabs (HERU)

ACT THREE:

- Food and drink for Sisters (SLAVES)
- Scarabs [gummy bugs/candy] (MADU)
- Toy bow and arrow (HERU)
- Swords taken from the plaque (JAMILA and DENDEARA)
- Arrow (PILI)
- Crown (WALIDA)

SOUND EFFECTS

Single horse galloping past. Single horse galloping past ending in a crash and a horse's whinny. Fanfare for processional.

PRODUCTION NOTES

CHARIOT SCENE: During the scene when TOOT and MADU ride past the window on a chariot, make sure that the window is not too low so that we only see the upper part of their bodies. Both actors can ride some type of wheeled cart by the window, pushed by a stagehand. A horse's head could be attached to the front of the cart, if desired. The actors bounce up and down to simulate riding a horse. The sound effects should cover the sound made by the cart.

ACT ONE

AT RISE: *The viewing room of the Pharaoh. The stage is basically bare. As the scene progresses, the SLAVES enter the room with items to make the room presentable, adding a throne, chairs, small tables, plants, etc. A plaque is placed on the wall that contains two swords, which can be easily removed. MADU, who is a slave, enters alone, walking as a Pharaoh. He is dressed in a Pharaoh's robe but none of the other usual dress of a Pharaoh. In the opening scene, MADU switches back and forth from his slave character and pretending to be the Pharaoh.*

MADU: *(As PHARAOH.) Enter the Pharaoh. (As SLAVE. Looks at the audience, puzzled.) People usually kneel when a Pharaoh enters a room, (Pause, realizing they are not going to kneel.) but since you're sitting, I guess that's close enough. (As PHARAOH.) A Pharaoh is the leader of Egypt, the King and the link between his people and the gods. (To audience. As SLAVE.) Which makes me as close to a god as you can get. Only I can't part a sea or turn the Nile red. (As PHARAOH.) This is the viewing room for the Pharaoh. (Indicating the room.) From this window a Pharaoh, (As SLAVE, to audience.) like myself, (As PHARAOH.) can watch the completion of a great monument, a monument that will last forever, a pyramid to honor (As SLAVE.) me. (As PHARAOH.) In the pyramid is a tomb where a Pharaoh will be placed when he moves on to the afterlife. (To audience, as SLAVE.) Which, I am in no hurry for. Being wrapped up and put in a small stone box, well, sends shivers up and down my spine. I'm a little claustrophobic. (As PHARAOH.) A Pharaoh's tomb is filled with gold, weapons, even chariots, everything he will need in his next life. It's not an easy task to build a pyramid and all the things a Pharaoh may need. So a Pharaoh has thousands of slaves to do his work. They toil to build his obelisks, they cook his meals, and they even wash his feet.*

HESRA and another slave enter.

It's a life of luxury, a life of privilege.

HESRA: May we wash your feet, Your Grace?

MADU: Proceed. *(They start washing his feet. To the audience. As slave.)* See what I mean. *(To the SLAVES.)* Careful, I have an ingrown toenail. *(He laughs.)* Hey, that tickles.

The SLAVES finish washing MADU'S feet.

HESRA: Your feet are clean, my Pharaoh.

MADU: *(As PHARAOH.)* Then leave me.

The SLAVES rush out. KEKET and ZIYAD enter. They watch MADU. ZIYAD has items for the room. KEKET has pillows for the lounge. MADU speaks to the audience.

I love it when I say leave, and they rush out. Makes me feel powerful.

ZIYAD: Hey Keket, Madu is dreaming again.

They speak loud enough for MADU to hear them. MADU gets upset at what they say.

KEKET: Madu lives in a world of fantasy.

ZIYAD: I think you are right, Keket.

KEKET: Ziyad, do you think Madu really believes he might be Pharaoh some day?

ZIYAD: No, not really.

KEKET: *(To MADU.)* Madu, tell the truth.

MADU is upset that KEKET and ZIYAD have interrupted his dream. KEKET and ZIYAD freeze as MADU speaks to the audience.

MADU: Okay, maybe it didn't happen quite like that.

The same SLAVES enter with the same items, this time MADU is in their way.

HESRA: Step aside Madu. We must prepare for the Pharaoh's arrival. I am sure the Pharaoh will want to wash the dust from his feet when he arrives.

SLAVE: Must you always be in the way, Madu.

WALIDA enters with other SLAVES who begin to prepare the room for the Pharaoh's arrival.

WALIDA: *(Noticing that he is wearing the Pharaoh's robe.)* Madu, do you think you are the Pharaoh? You were to carry the Pharaoh's robe not wear it. Take it off! Now it must be cleaned again.

MADU: Who knows, I may be Pharaoh someday.

All the SLAVES on stage, pause, look at MADU and then laugh, ad lib.

WALIDA: And I will grow wings and fly away. Now do as I ask.

KEKET and ZIYAD move over to MADU.

KEKET: Madu, you are a slave and slaves do not become Pharaoh.

MADU: You crush me, Keket.

ZIYAD: If the Pharaoh sees you wearing his robe, you will surely be crushed, between two stones of the Pharaoh's pyramid. *(They laugh.)*

KEKET: You were told to put the Pharaoh's robes in his room. Why can't you do as you are told?

MADU: Can't a man be allowed to dream for a better life?

ZIYAD: Dreams are just that Madu, dreams.

WALIDA: Madu! I told you to take that robe off! *(She continues to direct SLAVES as they set up the room.)*

KEKET: Madu, just take off the robe before Walida has the guards take a lash to you.

KEKET and ZIYAD join the other SLAVES in preparing the room. MADU follows them around.

MADU: Ziyad, did you notice how perfectly the robe fits and how it brings out the color of my eyes.

ZIYAD: Yes, mud brown.

KEKET and ZIYAD continue to work as MADU follows.

MADU: I like to think of it as mocha. *(To KEKET.)* Keket, I am destined for greatness. I know it. I feel it in my bones.

KEKET: The only thing you feel are the bites that you have from the fleas you sleep with.

MADU: *(Putting his arm around ZIYAD and pulling him down stage.)*

Ziyad, have you ever had a feeling that something is not right, the feeling that you belong somewhere else, in a different life?

ZIYAD: *(He thinks for a minute.)* No.

MADU: Well, I do. *(To KEKET. ZIYAD follows.)* I know that I belong somewhere else, almost like I am lost and have yet to be found.

ZIYAD: The only thing that is lost is your mind.

KEKET: And I fear that it will never be found. *(They laugh.)*

MADU: *(Moves center stage.)* Fine, laugh in my face, but I will get the last laugh. You will be kneeling at my feet some day. Then, I will be the one laughing.

KEKET: Until then, will you take off that robe and help us prepare the room? The Pharaoh is right behind us.

ZIYAD exits.

MADU: Don't worry, I will take it off before the Pharaoh arrives. Until then, just let me dream a little longer.

KEKET: You are hopeless.

WALIDA: *(Loudly.)* Madu! Take that robe off!

MADU: All right, I will.

ZIYAD enters.

ZIYAD: *(Announcing to all.)* The Pharaoh's daughters have arrived.

KEKET: *(To MADU.)* They are worse than the Pharaoh himself. It would be best if they didn't see you in the Pharaoh's robe. They would surely have you put to death.

MADU: Good point and I do like living.

WALIDA: Hurry now, we must prepare the sleeping quarters.

All the SLAVES exit. As WALIDA exits.

Madu, take . . .

MADU: I know, take the robe off. Okay, okay.

Everyone exits. JAMILA, DENDERA, TAKARA, and MAKRA enter. They are arguing.

JAMILA: I don't know how you can say that, I am the oldest, so I should be Pharaoh.

TAKARA: Jamila, you always say that to get what you want. Age only means you have more wrinkles.

JAMILA: I do not, Takara. My skin is as smooth as a baby's bottom.

TAKARA: Yes, a baby monkey.

JAMILA: How dare you.

MAKRA: Will you two please stop arguing? You know they say the Pharaoh has to be a man.

TAKARA: Who said that, Makra?

MAKRA: Everyone says it, Takara.

DENDERA: Well, maybe it is time for a change. There is nothing wrong in having a woman Pharaoh.

MAKRA: I agree, but Egypt has not changed for centuries.

DENDERA: So it is up to us to make Egypt change.

TAKARA: Egypt may have to, since there is no male heir to the throne.

JAMILA: *(With slight sarcasm.)* Father still prays that his long lost son will miraculously appear.

DENDERA: He has been praying for that since our little brother went . . . missing. Just how long until he gives up?

JAMILA: You know father; he will never give up.

MAKRA: But it has been almost 20 years since our dear little brother . . . left us. Surely father doesn't think there is a possibility that he will return after all these years.

JAMILA: He's gone for good. Isn't he?

They all look at TAKARA.

DENDERA: Takara, are you sure that our little brother will never return?

TAKARA: Of course, there is no way he will ever return. I set him a drift on the Nile myself. He probably drifted out to sea or sank to the bottom.

DENDERA: Good. Nothing must stand in my way of becoming Pharaoh.

JAMILA: Stand in your way? Don't you mean my way? After all, I am the oldest and the wisest, so it is I that should be made Pharaoh.

DENDERA: A Pharaoh must be strong and capable of leading, with force if need, and that is I. I should be the Pharaoh.

TAKARA: I am the one who got rid of our little brother. You were all incapable of doing what needed done so, I did it. Therefore, I should be Pharaoh.

DENDERA: Tell that to father and see where it gets you.

MAKRA: I was the only one to vote not to get rid of our little brother, therefore, I should become the Pharaoh because I showed compassion.

DENDERA: Compassion will only get you a thank you, not the Pharaoh's chair. Beside, you are as guilty as we are, Makra. You knew that if we didn't get rid of our brother that he would be Pharaoh and we would get nothing. You may not have voted yes, but you have kept the secret from father for all these years. You are hoping to profit from it as we all are. Only Pili was not in on the plan, she was too young to know what was going on.

TAKARA: She still doesn't know what is going on.

PILI rushes in. She is winded and upset.

Well, speak of the devil.

PILI: I told you guys to wait for me.

TAKARA: If we had waited for you, Pili, we would still be waiting.

PILI: But I had to do my hair . . . and my nails . . . and then the dress I had on wasn't right for traveling so . . .

TAKARA: And you wonder why we didn't wait.

PILI: I had to travel through the desert without an escort.

JAMILA: Painfully sad story.

DENDERA: I'm so tearful.

MAKRA: Grief stricken.

PILI: I could have been kidnapped.

DENDERA: We would never be that lucky.

PILI: And held for ransom.

DENDERA: I'm so sorry. I'm all out of gold coins.

TOOT enters. He is play fighting with a small, wooden sword.

TOOT: Stand aside or I will cut you to pieces.

PILI screams as he goes after her with his sword.

JAMILA: Prince Toot, stop that before you hurt someone.

DENDERA: Hopefully, yourself.

TOOT: That is Prince Tut to you.

DENDERA: Not as long as we can smell you coming. *(Waves her hand in front of her nose.)*

TOOT: It wasn't me.

DENDERA: Of course not. Maybe it was Pili?

PILI: *(Appalled.)* What?

TOOT: *(To JAMILA)* Jamila, can I borrow your chariot?

JAMILA: What's wrong with yours?

TOOT: I have a mini chariot with a pony. I need a big chariot and a big horse. I have a need for speed.

JAMILA: There is no way you are using my chariot.

TOOT: Takara?

TAKARA: No.

TOOT: Makra?

MAKRA: No.

TOOT: Dendera?

DENDERA just stares at him.

Never mind.

TOOT crosses and starts to sit in the Pharaoh's chair.

DENDERA: Do not even think about it. That is the Pharaoh's chair.

TOOT: It's just a chair.

DENDERA: No one sits in the Pharaoh's chair, except the Pharaoh.

TOOT: Just for a minute?

DENDERA: No!

TOOT crosses to the plaque on the wall with the Pharaoh's sword displayed on it.

TOOT: Can I play with a real sword?

DENDERA: No!

TOOT: Man, I can't do anything around here.

TOOT exits. WALIDA enters.

WALIDA: My ladies, your quarters are prepared. Would you like to see if they are acceptable?

JAMILA: Yes, I believe I would.

DENDERA: As would I.

JAMILA: *(Calling.)* Heru.

HERU enters.

HERU: Yes, my lady.

JAMILA: Bring my belongings from my chariot to my quarters.

HERU: At once. *(He begins to exit.)*

JAMILA exits.

TAKARA: And bring my belongings from my chariot to my quarters.

HERU: Yes. *(He begins to exit.)*

TAKARA exits.

MAKRA: And my belongings from my chariot to my quarters.

HERU: *(Becoming sarcastic.)* Why not? *(He begins to exit.)*

MAKRA exits.

DENDERA: The same for me.

HERU: *(With anger.)* Hey! There is only one of me.

DENDERA: I can have you cut into several pieces if you think that will help.

HERU: If you did, you would be getting your own belongings.

DENDERA: Move!

HERU rushes out. DENDERA exits. PILI is not paying attention and then, as all the other SISTERS are gone, she looks around and sees they have left.

PILI: Hey, wait for me.

She rushes off. WALIDA, shaking her head, follows. Moments later MADU, still in the robe, enters. He looks around and sees no one. He then goes to the Pharaoh's chair and begins to sit as KEKET enters.

KEKET: Are you wishing for a short life? Walida has told you several times to take off the robe.

MADU: I will. I will, sooner or later.

KEKET: She's not kidding. She will call the guards and have them take a lash to you.

MADU: I am not afraid of Walida.

KEKET: Fine, but don't come whining to me when your back is scarred from the lash. And remember, the Pharaoh's daughters have arrived and if they see you in the robe, well you know what will happen. *(She exits.)*

MADU: *(Calling off stage to KEKET.)* Okay. I'll take it off.

MADU starts taking the robe off over his head when he hears the PHARAOH and MASIKA enter. He pulls the robe back on and hides behind the curtain. PHARAOH and MASIKA enter.

PHARAOH: Masika, will you help me to my chair?

MASIKA: Yes, My Grace. *(She helps the PHARAOH to his chair.)*

PHARAOH: Traveling takes it's toll on an old body.

MASIKA: You are not so old, my Pharaoh.

PHARAOH: It is kind that you say that Masika, you are a good attendant but a bad liar. I have a bad case of the vapors, a hip that sometimes locks in place, and an ingrown toenail. I am near death. I can only hope that my tomb is finished before I am.

MASIKA goes and looks out the window, up center.

MASIKA: This observation room gives you a good view of your pyramid.

PHARAOH: How does it look?

MASIKA: I am no expert, but it looks like it is nearly finished.

PHARAOH: I must take a look. *(He goes to the window and looks.)*

MADU peeks out but hides again as the PHARAOH turns.

Ah, the Master Builder has honored himself. It is a magnificent monument. But the completion of my pyramid is not the important task at hand. Naming my replacement is. I do not have a male heir to leave the throne.

MASIKA: What about Prince Toot?

PHARAOH: He is my nephew three times removed, too young to lead, and smells funny.

MASIKA: Yes, you don't want to stand down wind of him.

PHARAOH: I cannot place him on the throne to lead the people.

MASIKA: How about one of your daughters?

PHARAOH: One of my daughters? As a female Pharaoh? I will not have such a thing. Besides, my daughters only think of themselves.

MASIKA: What about Pili?

PHARAOH: Pili? I don't think she thinks at all. *(Sighs.)*

MASIKA turns to the window again. MADU sneezes.

Bless you Masika.

MASIKA: I didn't sneeze.

PHARAOH: Oh, then bless me. I hope I am not getting a cold in my condition. If only my son would return to me, the choice would be clear as to who should follow me as Pharaoh.

MASIKA: He has been missing for so long, my Royal One. Surely you don't think he will return.

PHARAOH: Every night since he disappeared, I pray to the gods for his return. But my request has not been heard. It saddens me.

The PHARAOH and MASIKA look out the window again. As they have their backs turned, MADU starts to sneak out. When he is behind the PHARAOH, MADU sneezes, the PHARAOH turns around and sees MADU. MADU freezes.

Who is this intruder? *(Taking a closer look.)* Could this be? *(PHARAOH is overcome with joy.)* The gods *have* heard me. My son has returned.

MASIKA: What?

MADU: *(Looks around to see who the PHARAOH is talking to.)* Are you talking to me?

PHARAOH: Prince Alim, you have returned to me.

MADU: Prince Alim? I mean, yeah, it's me, Prince Alim. Wait, this has to be one of my dreams again. *(To the audience.)* Sorry, I am sure it didn't happen quite like that. This has to be where he sees me in his robe and has me put to death. Well, it's been nice knowing you.

PHARAOH: *(Puzzled.)* Who are you talking to my son?

MADU: *(He is puzzled and then realizes that this is not a dream. To the audience.)* Whoa! I think this is really happening. Maybe I should just go with it. *(To the PHARAOH.)* Hi, Pops.

PHARAOH: Where have you been my son?

MADU: Oh, you know, just kicking around.

PHARAOH: It doesn't matter, what matters, is that you have returned.

MASIKA: My Royal One, how can you be sure this is Prince Alim?

PHARAOH: I know.

MASIKA: But your grace...

PHARAOH: Speak no more of this, Masika. I know it in my heart and that is all that is needed. This is Prince Alim.

MADU: Yeah, don't question the big daddy. I am Prince Alim.

PHARAOH and MASIKA freeze.

(To the audience.) You know, I just have to stop here and say . . . WOW! Dreams really do come true. Can you believe it? I am the Prince of Egypt.

MADU clears his throat. To the PHARAOH. PHARAOH and MASIKA unfreeze.

(Dignified.) Continue father.

PHARAOH: We have much work to do. Masika, please go and bring my daughters. They will be so happy to know that their little brother has returned.

MASIKA: Yes, my Pharaoh. *(She exits.)*

PHARAOH: It will not be long before you are crowned Pharaoh. We must prepare you.

MADU: Me? Pharaoh? *(Dreaming.)* Pharaoh Madu.

PHARAOH: Madu?

MADU: I mean, Pharaoh Alim. I like it. I like it. It has a nice ring to it, don't you think?

WALIDA enters and sees MADU still in the Pharaoh's robe.

WALIDA: Madu, take that robe off! *(To the PHARAOH.)* I am sorry Your Grace, we will have your robe removed from this slave, by force if needed and destroyed. If you wish we can have him sent to the mud pits.

PHARAOH: Sent to the mud pits? Walida, you must be confused. This is not a slave. This is my son, Prince Alim.

WALIDA: *(Shocked.)* Your son? Prince Alim?

PHARAOH: Yes, the Gods have finally answered my prayers. My long lost son has been returned to me. You will treat him as you treat me.

WALIDA: But my Pharaoh...

PHARAOH: Speak no more of this, Walida.

WALIDA: Yes, my Pharaoh.

MADU: *(To WALIDA.)* I told you I would be Pharaoh someday.

WALIDA: *(To MADU.)* I don't know what game you are playing, but it won't work.

MADU: I do hope it's not chess, I never could understand that game.

WALIDA exits.

PHARAOH: Alim my son, I trust that you have been trained in the tasks of a Pharaoh.

MADU: Trained? Well, I'm potty trained.

PHARAOH: That's nice. But can you drive a chariot?

MADU: I was once run over by a chariot, does that count?

PHARAOH: No. Can you wield a sword in battle?

MADU: A sword? In battle? Most people don't let me handle sharp things, especially when I am near them.

PHARAOH: Can you lead people?

MADU: Lead? Lead them where?

PHARAOH: I can see we have much work to be done.

All the SISTERS, TOOT, and MASIKA enter.

JAMILA: You asked to see us, father?

PHARAOH: Yes. My daughters, I have good news. Your brother has been returned to us.

The daughters, except for PILI are worrying about her hair/nails, etc, are in shock and are frozen for a moment.

DENDERA: Say what?

PHARAOH: This is a glorious day. Prince Alim is home.

MADU: *(Waves to the SISTERS. A little afraid of them.)* Hi sis, and sis, and sis, well, hi all.

PHARAOH: Are you not overwhelmed with joy my daughters?

DENDERA: *(Without enthusiasm.)* Elated.

TOOT: I don't have to share my room with him, do I?

PILI: Who did you say he is?

ALL OTHER SISTERS: Our brother.

PILI: Oh. He's kind of cute.

Other SISTERS look at PILI with disgust and then at MADU with anger rather than joy.

MADU: *(With fear.)* I can see you are all overwhelmed with joy.

PHARAOH: It will take some time for the news to settle, my son. They will warm up to you.

TOOT: Let me just say, I am not sharing my room with him. *(He exits.)*

PHARAOH: Masika, I am very fatigued. The joy is more than my heart can handle. Please help me to my quarters to rest.

MASIKA: At once.

PHARAOH: *(Calling.)* Guard.

GUARD enters.

Stay with Prince Alim and protect him as you would protect me.

GUARD growls.

Yes, I am pleased too.

MADU is puzzled because the PHARAOH understood the GUARD'S growl. To MASIKA.

Masika.

MASIKA helps the PHARAOH. They exit. The SISTERS, except PILI, slowly approach MADU. MADU is afraid.

DENDERA: Just what do you think you are doing?

MADU: Completing the family?

JAMILA: Family? You are not our brother. Who are you?

MADU: Well, just like daddy said, I'm Prince Alim, your brother.

TAKARA: That is impossible.

DENDERA: You are not going to get away with this.

JAMILA: We will have you put to death once this deception is exposed.

DENDERA: Why wait? Let's do it now.

PILI: You mean this is not our brother?

ALL OTHER SISTERS: No!

PILI: I'm confused. *(She exits.)*

He starts backing up away from the SISTERS, they follow.

MADU: Ah, I don't think pops would be happy if you hurt his only son.

DENDERA: He'll get over it.

MADU: *(Loudly, to the GUARD.)* I think this is where the guard comes in and protects me.

The GUARD steps in front of MADU keeping the SISTERS from him. He growls.

I didn't know having siblings could be so dangerous.

JAMILA: Come sisters, let's have a little talk with father.

They eye MADU as they exit. MADU steps in front of the GUARD. He has his back to the GUARD.

MADU: Wow, I don't know what you said to them but it worked. *(He turns and is now looking at GUARD, slowly looks up into his face. MADU is fearful of him.)* You are really big.

GUARD growls.

I wish I could speak Guard.

KEKET and ZIYAD enter.

KEKET: Madu, what is going on?

MADU tries to quiet them before the GUARD finds out that he is not ALIM.

Walida says you are pretending to be the Pharaoh's son.

MADU: Shhh. Just a minute. (*To the GUARD.*) Hey, big guy. Can you give us a minute?

GUARD growls.

MADU cowers.) Isn't it time for a coffee break?

GUARD growls again.

I order you to protect me from on the other side of the door.

He growls and steps near MADU.

(MADU cringes.) Pretty please.

The GUARD growls again and then slowly exits.

Wow! He is really scary.

ZIYAD: He's a guard. He's supposed to be scary.

MADU: Well, he's doing a good job.

KEKET: Madu, what is going on?

MADU: What do you mean?

KEKET: You know what I mean.

MADU: Well, the Pharaoh thinks I'm his son, Prince Alim.

KEKET: Why would he think that?

MADU: Well, I was hiding when he came in because I didn't want him to catch me in his robe. And then when I tried to sneak out, he saw me and started calling me Prince Alim. Maybe it's because the robe fit so well or that we have the same eye color.

ZIYAD: Mud brown?

MADU: Daddy and I like to think of it as mocha.

KEKET: We have to get you out of here before they find out you are not the prince and have you put to death.

MADU: If the Pharaoh thinks I'm Prince Alim, why not let him?

KEKET: Because you are not.

ZIYAD: And they will find out sooner or later.

KEKET: And then it might be too late for us to save you. Come on, let's go.

ZIYAD and KEKET freeze.

MADU: *(To Audience.)* Have you ever had someone who doesn't see your potential? Who writes you off before all possibilities are considered? That's me, my whole life. Who knows, maybe I'm a diamond in the rough, a bud just waiting to bloom, a candle just waiting to be lit.

ZIYAD and KEKET unfreeze.

ZIYAD: *(To KEKET.)* He's dreaming again.

KEKET: *(To ZIYAD.)* Only I think this time it's going to turn out to be a nightmare, a real nightmare.

MADU: Have you ever thought that maybe I am Prince Alim?

KEKET: I haven't considered it.

ZIYAD: Hasn't crossed my mind.

MADU: Listen, I was told that I was found as a baby floating down the Nile. I always thought it was just a story they made up, besides I never did learn to swim. *(He gets side tracked.)* You would have thought after floating down the Nile, I would be able to swim, but I never did learn.

ZIYAD: You don't know how to swim?

MADU: No, I tried once and sank straight to the bottom.

ZIYAD: What did you do?

MADU: Well, after swallowing half the river, I had to crawl my way to the . . .

KEKET: Madu, get to the point.

MADU: Oh, sorry. Maybe the baby prince was set adrift on the Nile and I was that baby.

ZIYAD: Madu, do you know how many babies are set adrift on the Nile?

MADU: I don't know, how many?

ZIYAD: *(Hesitates because he doesn't know.)* Ah, Ah, I really don't know, but more than one. A lot more!

MADU: I know it sounds crazy, but there is a chance that I could be Prince Alim.

KEKET and ZIYAD just stare at MADU.

Okay, a small chance. *(They continue to stare.)* A tiny chance?
(Stare and fold their arms.) Okay, almost impossible.

KEKET: Come on, let's leave while we still can.

MADU: But I can't leave, it would break the Pharaoh's heart. He needs me.

KEKET: The Pharaoh needs you? A slave?

MADU: He needs Prince Alim and right now he thinks that's me. I am staying for the Pharaoh.

KEKET: Just once see reality as it is. You are not the prince and when they find out, and that is *when* and not *if*, they will put you to death. I don't want to see that happen.

MADU: You care about me?

KEKET: Of course I care for you. I have known you since we were kids.

MADU: That's so touching, but I have to do this. This may be my only chance of making something of myself. And for us.

KEKET: Us?

MASIKA enters.

MASIKA: Prince Alim, the Pharaoh requests your presence.

MADU: *(To KEKET and ZIYAD.)* I will be right there.

MASIKA exits. A bit smug.

I'm sorry, but I must go, the Pharaoh, you know, the big guy, requests my presence.

MADU backs up as he speaks and the GUARD enters from the opposite direction then he exited. As MADU finishes, he turns and runs right into the GUARD.

MADU: You again. Didn't you leave that way?

GUARD growls.

ZIYAD: What did he say?

MADU: I have no idea.

MADU exits followed by the GUARD.

KEKET: This is not going to end well.

ZIYAD: What are we going to do?

KEKET: We have to protect Madu.

ZIYAD: From who?

KEKET: From himself. Once he finds out how much power he has, there is no telling what he might do. And it will only get him in trouble. Let's keep an eye on him.

They exit. Moments later the SISTERS, except for PILI enter.

DENDERA: I can't believe father wants us to help prepare this imposter to be Pharaoh. I should be Pharaoh.

JAMILA: I think you mean, I should be Pharaoh.

TAKARA: You mean me.

MAKRA: No, me!

JAMILA: Maybe we should agree that whomever becomes Pharaoh, will not forget the others? We each have the same goal to get rid our little brother. We should all share in the outcome, don't you think?

The SISTERS look at each other.

Well, do we all agree?

MAKRA: Agree.

TAKARA: I can agree.

DENDERA: As can I.

JAMILA: Then we have an agreement.

TAKARA: What about Pili?

DENDERA: What about her?

JAMILA: She's in the dark, leave her there.

TAKARA, DENDERA, and MAKRA: Agreed.

WALIDA enters.

WALIDA: My ladies, I have come to speak to you. In confidence.

JAMILA: In confidence? About what?

WALIDA: I have been told not to speak of it, but I feel that I must.

DENDERA: Speak of what?

WLAIDA: Prince Alim?

SISTERS become very interested.

DENDERA: And by whom were you told not to speak of Prince Alim?

WALIDA: The Pharaoh himself.

JAMILA: You have our confidence, speak.

WALIDA: Prince Alim is not who he says he is.

TAKARA: And you know this how?

WALIDA: Prince Alim is really Madu, a slave.

MAKRA: Why would our father think this slave is Prince Alim?

WALIDA: Madu was to carry the Pharaoh's robe to your father's quarters, but instead he put the robe on. When the Pharaoh saw him in his robe, he believed Madu was Prince Alim.

TAKARA: All we have to do is tell father of this.

WALIDA: I tried, but he forbid me to speak of it. I do not want to see Egypt ruled by a slave, especially Madu, for this reason I have come to you.

JAMILA: You will be rewarded Walida. You may go.

WALIDA: Thank you, my ladies. *(She exits.)*

MAKRA: We must inform father of this.

JAMILA: But father seems so sure that this slave is Alim, it will not be easy to convince him otherwise.

DENDERA: Yes, you know father. There will be no changing his mind without some proof.

TAKARA: Maybe we need to make this imposter disappear as we did our little brother.

DENDERA: Let's just drown him in the Nile and be done with it.

JAMILA: No, it can't be that blatant. People and father would become suspicious. We don't want anyone pointing a finger at us.

TAKARA: Why not just expose him for what he is, a fraud? That way we would be hailed as heroes for exposing a crime against the Pharaoh and the people of Egypt.

JAMILA: That would keep us in the clear, but how can we prove that he is not Alim?

MAKRA: I just remembered something, our dear brother had a birthmark.

DENDERA: He did?

MAKRA: Yes, I saw it myself.

JAMILA: Does father know?

MAKRA: Yes. It's similar to a crescent moon, right on his backside.

JAMILA: Where?

MAKRA: Right about there. *(She points to her backside.)*

JAMILA: One of us is going to have to take a look.

DENDERA: What? Not me.

TAKARA: Or me.

MAKRA: Nor I.

JAMILA: We will have to find someone else to look for us.

TOOT enters.

TAKARA: *(She sniffs the air.)* What's that smell? *(Notices TOOT.)*
Of course.

TOOT: Hey, it wasn't me.

JAMILA: Prince Toot.

TOOT: That's Prince Tut.

JAMILA: Whatever. We have a little job for you to do.

TOOT: Job? I'm a prince. I don't do jobs.

JAMILA: We will let you sit in the Pharaoh's chair.

TOOT: You will?

JAMILA: For a little while.

TOOT looks at the chair, ponders.

TOOT: What is the job? *(She whispers in his ear.)* What? You want me to look at his...

JAMILA: *(Interrupting. Trying to convince him.)* It's a very cushy chair.

TOOT: *(Ponders again.)* Okay! But, I want you to know that I'm young and very impressionable. I just hope this doesn't scar me for life.

JAMILA: Just be waiting and ready, beyond that entryway.

TOOT: Okay. Boy, the things I have to do around here for a little fun.
(*He exits.*)

DENDERA: Now, all we need to do is get father in here before we expose Prince Alim as an imposter. (*Calling off stage.*) Heru!

HERU enters carrying JAMILA'S belongings.

HERU: Yes, my lady.

DENDERA writes a note and hands it to HERU.

DENDERA: Give this note to the Pharaoh, immediately.

HERU: But my hands are full of Jamila's belongings.

DENDERA: Do not give me excuses, do as I have ordered!

HERU drops all their belongings.

JAMILA: (*Upset.*) You have allowed my clothes to touch the floor.

HERU: So I did.

JAMILA: Pick them up.

HERU: Sorry, but she's scarier than you are. (*He takes the letter from DENDERA.*) I can't deliver this, there's no postage.

DENDERA: I can have you delivered to the mud pits.

HERU: Fine, I'll deliver it postage due. Maybe the Pharaoh will pay up.

JAMILA: What about my clothes?

HERU: Pick them up yourself. (*He exits.*)

JAMILA: Did he just . . . ?

DENDERA: Yes, he did, Jamila.

PILI enters with WALIDA and several slaves. Some slaves are carrying large amounts of cloth.

PILI: Hurry now.

JAMILA: Some of you slaves, pick up these things and have them washed.

The slaves pick up JAMILA'S clothes and exit.

PILI: *(To the other SISTERS.)* Since my little brother will be crowned Pharaoh soon, I am having the tailors fashion a special dress for me.

PILI takes one cloth and HESRA and WALIDA hold it up. The cloth needs to be in front of the entryway so that if someone enters, it covers the middle section of their body.

How about this one?

DENDERA: Don't you think it is a little bright? After all, the focus should be on the new Pharaoh not you.

PILI: Are you sure?

DENDERA: Yes, it is too bright.

PILI: No, about the focus not being on me?

DENDERA: Yes!

PILI: *(Appalled.)* Well it should be, after all, I'm his sister. *(She starts looking through the material as the others continue the conversation.)*

JAMILA: Where is Prince Alim right now?

PILI: Oh, he told me he was going to take a bath.

JAMILA: Perfect.

DENDERA: Now we just have to get Prince Toot to take a peek.

TAKARA: And have him announce it to everyone that Prince Alim...

MAKRA: ...is not Prince Alim.

PILI: How about this one?

Again the cloth is stretched in front of the entryway.

JAMILA: That color just isn't right for your mud brown eyes.

PILI: I like to think of them as mocha. But, maybe you are correct.

PILI returns to finding the right material. Others return to their conversation.

TAKARA: I think I know how to get Prince Alim out of the bath.

DENDERA: We must wait until father arrives.

TAKARA: *(She looks at MAKRA.)* Just give us the word.

She and MAKRA crosses over near the entryway. The PHARAOH enters with the letter.

PHARAOH: What is the meaning of this letter? *(Reading.)* Make your brown eyes blue?

JAMILA: It will all make sense in a moment, father. You insist that Prince Alim is your true son but we have information that he is an imposter.

JAMILA says the last part for all to hear. Everyone reacts.

PHARAOH: I will not allow this.

JAMILA: But father, it is our duty to expose this deception. *(She nods her head to DENDERA.)*

DENDERA: Now Takara.

TAKARA: *(Shouting.)* Fire. Fire.

By this time HESRA and WALIDA have another cloth up in front of the entryway. MADU rushes in with a shower cap on, no shirt, and a bath brush in his hand. He stays behind the stretched cloth so that the audience thinks he is not wearing anything. TOOT rushes in behind him looking at MADU'S backside.

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