

SCENE 1: HAKOR STANDS UPSTAGE IN FRONT OF DINNER TABLE THAT MUSTAFA, NENET, BAKARI, KHALIA, AND MOTHER ARE ALL SITTING AT. SLAVES ARE OBSERVING FROM A DISTANCE STANDING STILL.

HAKOR

Long ago there was a proud kingdom called Qita. Despite it's small size the nation was able to fend off intruders from enemy states and became prosperous. The pharaoh was deeply loved by his people and therefore all was well.

HAKOR pauses and sighs

HAKOR

However despite the pharaoh's love for his people his council, a group of men he trusted with his very life betrayed him; along with his own wife. These men worked tirelessly to tarnish the good pharaoh's name and when that was done they brought an end to his very life. After the pharaoh's death his greatest friend and advisor, the royal vizier, who had dealt the final blow, took over not only his role as pharaoh, but as a father as well. His name was Desta. Having now gone mad with power Desta brought ruin to the kingdom in the worst of ways, agitating their allies, invading neighboring nations, and abusing the very citizens he had sworn to protect.

HAKOR steps to the side and motions to MUSTAFA who freezes.

HAKOR

Once he turned 19 the true pharaoh's eldest son Mustafa was able to take back the throne, but having been raised by the corrupt vizier he had no guidance and continued the horrible cycle.

KHALIA rests her hand on MUSTAFA's chest and freezes.

Mustafa was forced into a marriage for the sake of an alliance with a foreign nation. She had no respect for their customs or traditions they held dear.

MUSTAFA and KHALIA unfreeze. NENET freezes.

HAKOR

The man's second eldest and only daughter had taken after him with her wit and quick tongue. Nenet was well aware of the type of kingdom

her father led, but being a woman she was not given the same respect or power as her brother.

NENET unfreezes. BAKARI jumps to his feet angrily and points to MUSTAFA who looks away annoyed. They freeze.

HAKOR

This is Bakari, the pharaoh's nephew. Despite the fact that his father was a part of the council he had a fiery spirit. He believed in equality, despised the monarchy, and most remarkable of all fiercely opposed slavery. Of course this has caused him and Mustafa to butt heads quite often.

They unfreeze. MOTHER throws garbage on the floor and motions for slave to pick it up. MOTHER freezes

HAKOR

And that fine specimen was the former pharaoh's lying, conniving, and cheating wife. If you haven't noticed I'm not too fond of her. She was a key conspirator in her husband's death. She had an affair with, you guessed it, Desta and influenced her children to do her bidding. Quite the narcissist. Family, if you say your's is perfect then you're lying.

They all unfreeze and begin shouting.

MUSTAFA

You know what I think?

BAKARI

What do you think, huh? Please bestow your holy knowledge onto us, oh great pharaoh. I beg you!

MUSTAFA

Watch your tone, I don't care who you are. Cousin or not I'm going to be respected Bakari.

BAKARI

Respect is something you earn Mustafa and I know slaves who are more deserving of it!

NENET

Bakari, Mustafa, can we please just eat and have a peaceful dinner
for once?

BAKARI

Nenet, no offense, but either take a side or stay out of it.

MUSTAFA

Don't talk to my sister that way!

MOTHER

Mustafa dear, just grow a backbone and kick the boy out.

AHMOSE enters

AHMOSE

Sorry I'm late!

BAKARI & NENET

Ahmose!

MUSTAFA

Right, that's just what I need; another idiot to join the fray.

BAKARI slams fist in the table and looks at MUSTAFA. They all freeze

HAKOR

How could I forget? Ahmose, the pharaoh's youngest baby faced boy.
Being the youngest he was promised no throne or considerable status
and despite this he inherited the most important quality of his
father. He was kind.

AHMOSE walks over and greets the slaves

BAKARI

Ahmose I know you agree with me. If your brother actually pulled his
head out of his-

NENET

Careful.

BAKARI

Sorry, what I mean is he's completely out of touch with reality.

AHMOSE

Bakari just let it go. Come on, you know it's not worth it.

AHMOSE joins family, he and BAKARI sit down.

HAKOR

However despite his royal status he was treated more like a glorified servant than an actual prince.

HAKOR exits. MOTHER scoffs.

MOTHER

You'd think that at least today you could manage to show some courtesy and show up on time! It's your brother's birthday for heaven's sake!

AHMOSE sits down sheepishly

AHMOSE

I'm sorry I lost track of time and-

MUSTAFA

Don't worry about it mother the real disappointment is that he actually showed up. Why did you even come here Ahmose?

AHMOSE

Why did I come?

AHMOSE laughs

AHMOSE

You're my brother. Come on Mustafa I-

MUSTAFA

That's *pharaoh* to you and don't remind me Ahmose, I live with that harsh reality everyday.

AHMOSE

We're family...I just thought I should be here with all of you. We hardly ever get together like this anyway. I know we have our differences, but happy birthday.

AHMOSE raises glass

MUSTAFA
(scathingly)
Thanks.

BAKARI
So, why were you late?

AHMOSE looks around and lowers his voice

AHMOSE
I was at the soldier's barracks.

BAKARI
Doing what?

AHMOSE
Just looking around, I read some of their battle strategies and they could use a little fine tuning.

BAKARI
Don't even think about it. There's no way Mustafa would let you work in the military, you're lucky he even gave you a council job.

AHMOSE
I hate working with the council, all they talk about is politics and laws; it's boring. I'd rather be out of the palace leading a troop of men, defending our empire.

MOTHER
Ahmose, please tell me I'm hearing you incorrectly? Is that really why you were late, so you could go off and play soldier?! Were you even authorized to be down there?!

AHMOSE
Well that is, I, uh...

MUSTAFA holds up hand

MUSTAFA
It's fine mother, I don't know why you expect any more from him; as

long as he doesn't seriously believe he could do any real work there
it's nothing to worry about.

MUSTAFA stands

MUSTAFA

You don't actually think you could be of any use to the military, do
you?

AHMOSE

No, of course not. I was just interested, but it was stupid.

MUSTAFA

You're absolutely correct. Well I'm stuffed, let's take a walk in the
gardens; I want to show you all my new statue.

They all stand

MUSTAFA

Ahmoose, Bakari you two stay.

BAKARI laughs

BAKARI

As if I planned on attending. I'll talk to you later Ahmoose, I'm
going out into town.

BAKARI exits

KHALIA

That brat has a horrible attitude.

MUSTAFA

Let's just go

MUSTAFA, KHALIA, and MOTHER exit.

AHMOSE

You're not going with them?

NENET

I am... I just wanted you to know that I think you'd do great in the
military.

AHMOSE

Why didn't you say any of that before when everyone was here?

NENET
I just-

MUSTAFA
(O.S.)
Nenet, hurry up!

NENET
I'll speak with you later, love you.

NENET exits

HAKOR enters and stands beside AHMOSE.

HAKOR
I know what you're thinking, he's a punk, but believe me behind this meek exterior there's an idealistic boy with an unquenchable thirst to prove himself on the path to become a man.

HAKOR rests hand on AHMOSE's shoulder

HAKOR
He just doesn't know it yet.

HAKOR exits.