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Egyptian Adventure

By Isham Tannamala

There I was, standing on the scorching sands of Egypt. My back ached as the sun beat down. Every single day, all I did was drag gargantuan bricks. Could my day get any worse? Just then, the wail of a horn echoed through the air, signalling that it was time for a lunch break. Abruptly dropping the brick, I ran to the camp where we ate our daily meal of the moulded scraps of the pharaoh (may he die a painful death).

All I did was steal some cattle. And what did the pharaoh reward me with? Imprisonment as a slave. Just thinking about it made anger rise up in my stomach like a volcano threatening to explode.

Suddenly, a war horn made the air ripple. A dozen guards came rushing in. Hastily, they told us that we would have to fight. Life drained from my face. I had never held a weapon—how could they expect me to fight?

Fastening my torn, ripped, smothered linen loincloth, I went out, prepared for whatever fate had in hand for me. Mustering my courage, I grabbed the handle of the ashen, iron-tipped spear, its point catching the sunlight, giving off a faint, stubborn gleam.

Cautiously, I stepped onto the battlefield. Something caught my eye. It was my mother and sister, lying dead on the floor. An arrow pierced through each of their hearts. A storm brewed in my mind. I lashed out, blind with rage. I wouldn't stop until I had the head of the person who murdered my mother. They would pay the most—I would tear apart their body with my bare hands.

Until then, I hadn't understood what the term bloodbath meant. Now I was literally wading through one. One by one, they each fell onto the ground. Dead. Slowly, we held their forces back.

We were winning.

Relief flowed over me. Shortly after, realisation hit me like a blunted arrow: my mother and sister had died. I had no family—no one who mattered.

Then I knew.

I was no slave. I was no ordinary boy.

I was a born fighter.

Shortly after, the pharaoh came stumbling by, his white kilt stained by a crimson red river of blood.

The pharaoh stumbled towards me, unaware of who I was. Rage consumed me. Without hesitation, I raised my spear and charged. All the pain, all the anger, all the loss poured into that single moment. I didn't think—I just acted.

When it was over, I stood there, breathing heavily. The battlefield fell silent around me.

But something didn't feel right.

In that moment, I realized revenge is a hollow victory, feeding only on pain, grief, and bitterness. Still, the realization offered no comfort. The silence that followed was total, leaving a void nothing could ever fill. I killed the Pharaoh, and in doing so, signed my own exile.

I looked back on my life and saw only a vast, empty space where achievements should have been. It was pointless. I could not do anything. Every breath I'd drawn, every hardship I'd endured—all of it, for nothing. I sat in the silence, waiting for a purpose that I knew would never arrive. I wondered if I was ever truly meant to be more than a mere tool, I felt less like a boy and more like a discarded fragment of a world that no longer had a place for me. The silence wasn't a sanctuary; it was a mirror reflecting the terrifying truth that I was now responsible for a life I never learned how to own.

Ibis wings beat the air above me, as **scarab beetles** scuttled through the dust at my feet. In that moment, a spark of hope flared within: Egypt may have turned its back on me, but the gods have not.

With a silent plea to **Ra** and **Thoth**, the king of gods and the keeper of wisdom, I stepped forward to carve my own destiny from this treacherous path. The question still remains: will I survive through this vast world or perish like the others?