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The coronation of Nefertiti
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I wish I could be as beautiful as Nefertiti.
Even if I had just a fraction of her beauty, I'd be content.

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It's a very special day today. I shouldn't really be here, but I don't care. There's no way that I could miss this. If I get caught, my mum could lose her job. I hate this all. This never ending system. Around here, it's either you're born into power or you're a measly peasant who's life's purpose is to serve the rich and the wealthy. It's so unfair! Since my mother is a maid to Nefertiti and I am a maid's child born out of wedlock, everybody sees me as inferior. Even when I was just a small child people would make a face of disgust whenever their eyes fell on me and hold their noses when they see me. They think they're better than me. They think they're superior. They think that I should be worshipping the ground they walk on. But they're not, and I don't. I try not to cause scenes and keep my head down, for the sake of my mother and the sake of myself. Yet this time, I have failed. If my mother could see me now she would pinch me by my ear and exclaim, "What do you think you're doing? Do you want me to lose my job?" At this point though, I just don't care. I love my mother dearly and would never want to hurt her, or jeopardise her job and our home (if you could even call it that) but I just have to see her. I need to. *I must.*

The coronation should be starting soon so I won't have to be here too long. I'm sure nothing bad will happen. I'll be fine. There's no need to worry. I'll be in and out as quickly as possible. The festivals and ceremonies prior to this event have been so beautiful. I was not permitted to join them but I would watch the wonders from the windows of the maid's chambers. They were extraordinary, indescribable even. However, now I get to see the most important part up close and I'm sure that it'll be more wonderful than anything my eyes have ever set on. Immediately, the court begin to gather into the temple of Hathor. It's so ironic that she's the patron of beauty, love and joy. It fits Nefertiti so perfectly. The sight of the crowd makes me beam brightly.

Then she appears.

She is mesmerising.

The soon to be queen is dressed from head to toe in fine linen, with luxurious jewellery covering as much of her body as humanly possible. She walks with such grace and poise, every single step as delicate as the next. She looks like a gift from the gods, so heavenly that it seemed like there was a constant, shining light following her as she advances. I feel so incredibly lucky that I'm able to see the temple from here. That I'm looking at the soon to be queen with my own eyes. Even if it is just from a distance.

The ceremony is starting!

The first thing I see is Nefertiti being anointed with sacred oils and perfumes. The best part is coming up now. The presenting of the crowns.

The Crowns of Upper and Lower Egypt. The part I've been waiting for!

The magnificent crown of Upper Egypt. This white crown stands tall and conical, it is made of beautiful white linen and adorned with a uraeus, symbolising the goddess Wadjet. The magnificent crown of Lower Egypt was so different. It was a royal red colour and was flat and circular. It looks like red leather and is also adorned with a uraeus but it seemed like it also has a sun disk. Despite these two crowns being separate, they combine to make a pschent. The two beautiful colours of the crowns complimented each other amazingly and the red and white made me think of evil and good. How combining the two signifies eradication of bad and makes room for the good to rule. It was as if the coronation was showing unity and peace between Upper and Lower Egypt and the power and authority the queen has which is why Nefertiti is wearing it. She looks stunning, absolutely breath-taking. As the conjoined crowns are placed on her head, I feel a sense of joy. Joy because of the beautiful event that I get to witness. Joy because this is the most extravagant thing I've ever seen in my life. Joy because Nefertiti is going to become Queen of Egypt. But I feel something else too. This dreary feeling in the pit of my stomach. I don't know what it is, or why it's there, but I can definitely feel it.

I think its jealousy.

Nefertiti looks like a work of art, being ordained the ruler of the nation and the leader of the country. And I am just me, a lowly servant, dressed in cheap cloth with streaks of mud permanently imprinted into my skin. How pathetic. What am I even doing here? I'm risking my mother's job and risking my own life to watch the rich become richer while the poor stay poor. But I can't stop watching. It is as if her beauty has hypnotised me. Like my eyes have become permanently glued to the scene. I try to look away but I just cannot. What's wrong with me? All of a sudden, I hear a roar of applause. This must mean that the ceremony is coming to an end. Queen Nefertiti is being escorted out of the temple, into the palace where she will indulge in her royal feast. My mother is attending that, as a lowly maid obviously. As the court begins to disperse, I let out a loud sigh. A moment later, the sound of a heavy stomp enters the air. Someone is coming! I have to hide. Quickly, I attempt to hide behind a curtain. This is the most still I have ever stood in my entire life.

Fortunately, whoever it was didn't see me. If I had been caught, I don't know what would've happened. And I don't want to think about it. Ever!

A shouted whisper interrupts my train of thought.

"Nebet! Nebet! Where are you silly girl, I need some help with the royal feast!" I recognise my mother's voice instantly. I immediately reveal myself from behind the curtains. I am not looking for a slap.

"I've scoured the palace looking for you! Come with me, we need to attempt to make you look at least slightly presentable." she murmurs.

"What for mother?" I ask curiously.

“Three of the maids are sick with Yellow Fever so you’re going to have to serve at the royal feast.”

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“You look lovely, my daughter,” my mother exclaims with a smile. She smudges her thumb against my cheek to wipe off a speck of dirt.

She is right. I do look lovely. My hair is up in a bun with a white ribbon around it, meaning you can actually see all of my face for once. I’m wearing the finest linen I have ever touched in all of my 14 years of living, with a little bit of beading around the waistline. I look like my mother.

“You look like I did as a young girl, my love,” Mother says as if she has peeked into my mind and opened up my brain to see all of my inner thoughts. She gently kisses my forehead and embraces me swiftly afterwards. I rarely get hugs from my mother. She’s always very busy with work.

Quickly after, we make our way to the grand hall of the palace to set the tables for the big event. I lay down the fancy cloth I have been told to put on the table and straighten out any wrinkles. I do this for the remaining tables too, with the help of the other maids.

“The Queen and her guests are on their way!” I hear one of the maids say, “Hurry and retrieve the food from the kitchen!” she says, as all the maids begin to scatter down the decorated corridors.

Carefully, I make my way down the hallway, making sure not to slip on the flawlessly clean floors that have been polished to perfection. They’re so shiny that I can see my face in them. I look down and see my reflection and all I can think about is how beautiful Nefertiti is going to look as she enters into the hall. She will walk in like she’s floating on air, with elegance in every step and a courteous smile upon her lips. I try to imitate her grin but all that comes out is a lopsided smirk. Out of nowhere, I hear a voice calling my name. I look up, brutally snapped out of my daydream. It is only my mother, telling me to get a move on or else. I don’t know what else I could have expected. Of course it was her. Of course that was what she was saying.

I quickly run to catch up with her and the others, and my mother scolds me for dawdling, obviously, I take no notice. She walks on the head of me mumbling something under her breath and enters the kitchen closing the door shut behind her. I saunter up to the door gaping at the beautiful painted designs carved into it. How intricate! I have no idea why the door of the kitchen needs to be so embellished, but if you have the money I guess you may as well use it! Cautiously, I open the door, not wanting to alter any of the designs on it, and the scene that I walk in on is chaos. The chefs are frantically cooking, screaming all sorts of nonsense to each other that I do not understand. These are probably the names of all the fancy foods that the royals and other noble guests are going to be eating. Meanwhile, the maids haphazardly try to collect all the finished first dishes. The first thing coming out of the kitchen is the meat. There are beautiful lines of all different varieties of meat. I feel like drooling just looking at them. I didn’t think food could dazzle but these are proving me

wrong. There is a wide selection of beef, lamb and fowl and even a selection of fish, which is not meat but I guess it's all the same to the royals.

They are on amazing pottery bowls and plates and a few on platters of gleaming gold. I assume that those are the ones for the Queen. It's the same for the cutlery and cups too, all of them are made out of amazing types of pottery and stone except a few. Somebody, I don't know who, hands me a wooden platter and tells me to take it to the grand hall. It is quite heavy but I'm sure I can manage. I attempt to straighten my back as I try my best to walk with poise, like a true princess would.

If only I was a princess. I would be the most sophisticated princess anyone has ever seen. Even though I'd be so rich that I could help whatever I wanted whenever I wanted, I would never flaunt my wealth. I would be extremely humble and everybody in the kingdom would adore me. They would gaze in awe just at the sight of me and they would feel faint just from being in my presence. I would be wise, knowledgeable and most of all glamorous and irresistible. It would be spectacular. Stupendous.

I'm the last maid to arrive with the food and mother reprimands me again. But all is well because I'm just so excited to see the Queen up close, even if it is just as her servant. I'm about to burst! I never thought I'd get the opportunity to be in the same room as royalty. Well, we won't exactly be in the same room, but I'll get to see her.

Delicately, I place the platter onto the table and step aside looking at the beautiful scene. A scene that I've had a part in creating and I feel a sense of pride inside of me, like I've actually done something good for once. I feel...good. I feel good. Or at least better, better than I have in a while.

"You, girl! Get out! The Queen and her guests are swiftly approaching," a woman shouts at me rudely. I'm flabbergasted.

"But I thought I was going to be able to see the Queen!" I reply slightly startled. She scoffs like I have just said the most idiotic thing ever spoken before. "Of course you are not! Whatever made you think such a foolish thing like that? Now shoo, before somebody sees you. Go back to wherever it is you dwell!" she says this with a certain tone of voice, a mix of supremacy and repulsion, like she is dismissing me, as though I am an ant she has just stepped on. This is a tone of voice that I know very well. Disheartened, I trudge my way to the maid's quarters. I don't know what I thought was going to happen but I shouldn't be this shocked. Why on earth did I think that I would get to meet the Queen or even lay my eyes upon her up close?

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This coronation has been astounding, like nothing I've ever seen before. Nefertiti is the depiction of beauty. But even after all this I am still left the same. Nefertiti's life and status

and power has been altered by just one day, but I don't think my life will ever change. I don't think I'll ever be anything besides a servant. A slave.

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Even if I had just a fraction of her beauty I'd be content.