

## 5. EGYPTIAN LOVER

Amira is heading the project. She is immediately appealing to Dan. She combines her European education and influence with a deep Mediterranean beauty. She is part of a progressive Egypt even if she is somewhat cut off from the roots of her culture. She is a mysterious grace from a time when traders first ventured out on their frail boats over the wide seas.

“I was educated at Cambridge in engineering and business.”

She is a very sure hand at the firm. She grasps the intricacies of engineering, but she also understands how to control the costs. In project after project, she has brought in under budget and on time. She perfectly understands the application of skilled labor on the job site.

From their first meeting, Dan can hardly conceal how he feels about her. Her breadth is a little intimidating. But Dan does everything that he can to keep up. For the present, her main project is to streamline the supply routes that guarantee parts for the dam come in from the Red Sea to Qena. Overall, this is a task that will take months. This means monitoring final delivery in Aswan as well.

Due to extensive nature of this work, Dan has to spend a great deal of time around her. He can hardly turn his back on his Estelle. He uses this as an excuse so that he does not let himself be overcome by Amira. This helps to smooth out the professional relationship. Even though there is this evident sexual tension between them it remains entirely manageable in the first weeks.

Dan does what he can to keep in touch with Estelle. But the difference in time zones becomes an easy excuse to decrease the frequency of the phone calls. He does seem busy all the time so that it becomes more and more difficult to adjust his schedule for a late night call. To make up, he sends her emails. But they lack the intimacy. The flow is constant, but over the months, they begin to decrease in frequency. It is almost as if he is maintaining a business contact. Estelle is hardly clued in to the change. Egypt just seems like some exotic locale where anything could distract her Dan. She has already resigned herself to such an outcome. Dan almost feels as if he has licence to do whatever he pleases. Inevitably, he does not hesitate to act out his desires.

Amira does everything that she can to maintain a professional distance. This is not the first time that a colleague has demonstrated romantic interest in her. She did not advance this far by giving in to such whims. She is friendly to Dan, but she knows how to draw a strict line.

Circumstances require them to spend a great deal of time together. Early on, this means long hours at the office in Cairo. If the planning for the dam's improvements are going to go smoothly, the computer model must be constantly tweaked to insure a smooth operation on application. They are constantly making adjustments to anticipate all the contingencies along the way. Trucks break down. Parts get held up in port. There are problems with labor. All the little details require a back up plan. New information is coming in all the time.

There are other project in the company that Amira has her hand in. Dan also assists her there. As they continue to bid on other jobs in the region, they need Amira's analytical skills to devise the most accurate bids. The company's livelihood depends on the up-to-date nature of her training. No one else has the same facility with modern procedures. She is so adept with the computer model that she has really given the company an edge over the competitors. Some of

their work seems as basic as that which served the time of the Pharaohs. But she has a grasp on organization that maximizes even the simplest task as part of a giant behemoth. They control the twenty-first century.

Once she has been pierced by his penetrating eyes, he give nary a thought to Estelle. She has never found anyone else that can keep up with her business reasoning. But Dan is the perfect collaborator. He understands every adjustment that she makes to the computer models. He is also on top of all the practical consideration that go into making any project work. He moves from an eager apprentice to a worthy partner for her endeavors.

As they perfect their craft, they are spending all their time together. In the professional context, they act as one mind. This is something so completely new to her. Even in romance, she has been used to holding back part of herself. At Cambridge the boys were at the top of their game, but even they lacked the same kind of mental dexterity that she brought to her work. One on one, they eventually gave out to the taxing character of her intellect.

Dan is a real find. He has never been challenged to the same degree. In some classes, he was forced to stretch his brain power. But Amira is taking him to new heights. He spends all his free time trying to construct some new way to impress her. Amira almost feels that he is her double. He anticipates what she is going to think next. His insights are the perfect complement to the seeds of thought that germinate deep in her brain. They begin to speak a language that only they can understand.

Due to the abstract foundation of their union, it seems easy to ignore the physical pull that draws them together. Amira's beauty is much more mature than Estelle's. Dan hates making the comparison. Amira is so stunning that he can barely reference anyone else in her presence. Even when he is apart, her image has burned deep into his brain. Under the circumstances, there is really nothing that he can do to advance the attraction. But their time together radiates with a constant fire.

There is almost a perverse side to Dan's obsession with Amira. He applies his mathematics to try to figure out what will be the tipping point that finally draws them together. When he is not thinking about a new engineering project, he is constantly running the numbers on his new abstraction. It makes him feel that he can touch her with his mind. When she looks back at him, he almost believes that she knows what he is doing.

On the long lonely nights when he lies in his bed, he imagines Amira creeping in with him. His fantasies have relegated Estelle to the past. Amira emerges from a world of phantoms. The more that he has been in the country, the more that he has become acquainted with the myths first hand. He almost feels that there is an element of truth to these suspicions. It helps explain Amira's charm. She seems to tap this deep well of mysticism. Of course, he realizes how strange is his belief since she is so captivated by European customs.

In Cairo, he has not strayed too far from the modern city. But though his journey, he has come to know the reverence that is still coded in muted whispers. He can sense danger. It is not so much a danger to the person. It is the appeal of murkier impulses that become so sanitized by so-called civilization. He can sense that the ancient culture was much closer to our real emotions of desire and jealousy. This is why there is such a power in the tombs, the spirit that continues on long after death, In her arms, he seeks to return to that primeval origin. In their science, Dan and Amira try to harness the power of nature. But there is something much more fantastic that

remains beyond their grasp.

Once he has explored this supernatural side of his fantasy, he feels that he has somewhat exhausted his resources. He can't give in any more without jeopardizing his professional relationship. From this point on, he considers Amira model of purity. He tries to arrest his fantasy.

It has been almost a month since Dan has been gone from Georgia. His sexual fantasies have only created feelings of guilt for him. This prompts him to write a letter to Estelle. He tells her that he misses her. He also expresses regret that he left so suddenly. He suggests that if he had to do it over again, he would not have pursued this course.

From this point on, the tables turn. Where Amira had been so professional with Dan, she now does everything in her power to let him know how she feels. She gives them these long glances. She touches him on the shoulder to make a point when she talks. She drops hints about her desire for him. She does everything but come straight out and tell her how she feels.

Dan is wise to her intentions. He does everything that he can to avoid her coming right out and saying something. But he seems to live off of her attention. For a while, he pretends that her actions are a hindrance to the job that he has to do. On the other hand, he knows that he'd die out here if it wasn't for her. She makes these long lonely nights bearable. Neither one minds putting in all these extra hours.

If they take time off, it's only for long relaxing dinners. They have just returned to Cairo from Aswan. It has been a particularly back-breaking week. To celebrate their successes, she invites him to her favorite restaurant. It has a bit of a European flair while still trying to serve Egyptian cuisine. Dan has pigeon on rice. As they slowly dine, he realizes how much she really does appeal to him. By trying to ignore her, his dilemma has worsened. In the candlelight, there is a fierce glow that radiates off of her face. Her dark eyes are mesmerizing. He does everything that he can to avoid their gaze. He feels they are deadly.

She wonders, "Are you still missing America?"

"I was homesick like crazy when I first got here."

Dan is trying his best not to say anything about Estelle. Amira wants to know how he feels.

"Is your friend still doing OK?" She deliberately doesn't mention Estelle's name. But it sounds almost silly when she asks about her. It simply makes no sense. She is almost asking about a sick friend at the Cairo hospital.

"We do our best to stay in touch."

She asks, "Have you talked with her on the phone?"

He wants to tell her that he has talked with her last week. But he realizes that it has been weeks ago. All this was before his long letter to Estelle. Dan now attempts to imagine how she has reacted to the letter. He hasn't heard from her since he sent it. His last few emails have gone unanswered.

Dan is fearing the worst. Even though he is holding on to his love for Estelle, it is seeming more and more a thing of the past. Amira is here right now giving him this longing look. He wants to invite her back to his room. He can already feel the world shake in her arms. But he is doing everything that he can to think about something else.

His pigeon is delicate and tasty. He finds that he is drinking more wine than usual at the

meal. It would be so easy for Amira to reach over and kiss him. There is no way that he could resist her at this moment. He is searching for something, anything to support his resolve. He doesn't want to feel himself slip deeper under her spell. He looks under the table for a moment. Her dress outlines Amira's legs. He can feel his hands travel up the outline. She kisses him deeper.

Dan takes another sip of his wine. He wonders what is getting in him. He is still committed to Estelle. But he finds it so natural to follow along his passion for Amira. This is no longer about his faith in Estelle. Amira is simply overwhelming.

For dessert, he has um ali served hot. He finds the cake a pleasant complement to his entree. He concentrates all his sensual enjoyment on the flavorful sweet. The raisins come alive in his mouth.

Amira realizes that they are hardly saying anything to each other. She knows how Dan feels. She has gone out of her way to accommodate his relationship with Estelle. But she recognizes that Dan is only using it to put up a wall between him and Amira. Behind that wall she knows that passion is raging. Behind their civilized manners, they want nothing but a steamy romance. As he sips his potent coffee, Dan feels that he is drinking from her potent kisses. Her eyes again meet hers. He feels paralyzed.

Their parting is full of suggestion. But neither one will take the fateful first step. As he is about to leave her at her door, she put her hand on his arm. Her lips are so close to his. Her warm breath is only magnified by the heat of the day that is still lingering on this evening. He wants to touch her in a provocative way. Her dress is even more flattering as she stands close to him.

Even when he shared his affection with Estelle, there was always something raw about their physical contact. With Amira, he feels the connection of the minds. He wants her to become part of his spiritual journey. He has come to Egypt to do work. But now he feels that he is part of something bigger. His concerns at home were so materialistic. Now he is starting to really live.

Dan had begun this adventure in the hope that he could build a foundation for his life with Estelle. Since she did not accompany him, it is becoming harder and harder to keep that spark alive. With Amira beckoning to him just inches away, that light now burns so intensely.

As he readies himself for bed, his company of earlier in the night seems to echo in his soul. He is trying to avoid its influence. It is a more powerful narcotic than the coffee of his meal. Dan lies on his bed and watches the ceiling fan. He is wearing only a pajama bottom. His firm muscles are relaxed across the starched linens. Even resting, his body seems to vibrate with a rhythm coincident with hers. He has tried to deny his desire for Amira. It is only more powerful.

Amira seems to walk in his dreams. He follows her to a cave deep in the ground. The air is cool and musty. Her body is warm and comforting. He melts with her kisses. The two of them wrestle in the darkness. She is a cunning spirit. A sorceress. This is about more than a kiss or an embrace. He is coming to possess his soul.

He wakes rested, but the longing is now deep within him. He is living on her attention. The fact that they work together only makes it easier for him to sustain his attraction for her.

They are looking at a architectural plans together that morning. He puts his hand on hers

as he reaches for a ruler. She looks up at him. He quickly drags his hand away. As long as they are in Cairo, they can keep up this cat and mouse game. But the professional decorum needs to be maintained. They can hardly reveal themselves to coworkers.

“Dan, we’re going to have fly down to Aswan this weekend.”

“I thought that I was going to have some time to myself.” Of course, he does not hope for such an outcome. He acts as if they are heading away on holiday. No one will monitor their time together while they are away. She hopes for some miracle to move things along. For his part, he almost dreads what he feels is inevitable.

Once they settle themselves in Aswan, Dan and Amira are briefed by the company’s chief project engineer down there. There is a need for Dan and Amira to drive out to another site about 60 kilometers away. It seems like no big deal. But there are warnings about sandstorms.

Amira scoffs at the threat, “I’ve been through the worst. I’m a pro.”

He is a little hesitant about her bravado. But he feels that he is in sure hands. When they first head out, he believes that the warning have been exaggerated. What’s a little blowing sand. He has seen that before. Once they get on site, he is certain that there is no risk to them. It is rather ironic that the company is also involved in a project to plant vegetation to minimize some of the effects of the blowing sand.

After spending a couple of hours there, Amira suggests that they get back to Aswan. “I don’t want to be driving in the dark.”

They still have a couple of days. It is quite a warm day. The air conditioning in the Range Rover is a welcome relief. Dan settles back under her able hand.

On the way back the blowing sand becomes worse. She tries to outrace the storm.

“We’ll be back in no time. We have nothing to worry about.”

Dan tries to follow her advice. The sand is now blowing off the hood of their SUV. She keep focused on the road. Her headlights are on. He feels as if he is on the ocean, and his tiny ship is being tossed by heavy winds. They continue their progress.

The sun has not gone down, but a dark night descends on them. She is now guiding herself on sheer wits. He trusts her intuitive sense. It is a skill that she has honed over the years. The car has some trouble staying on the road. But she maintains her forward progress. She cuts back on the speed but continues to move forward.

The drift in front of them are getting larger. She uses the four-wheel-drive to cut through them. Dan has done the same thing in the Massachusetts winters as he has made his way through snow. It is getting a little tense. He can feel the vehicle shaking as it tries to stay on course.

He is getting a little scared. But he doesn’t want to let on. The sand is getting deeper. She tries to accelerate so that she doesn’t have to give in. For the moment, her strategy is successful. They persevere.

He wants to reach over and touch her hand. He realizes that he is afraid, and he wants to live off of her confidence. She looks over briefly and smiles. Even if she experiences fear, she is not going to tell him.

The pace is brisk. It is becoming more difficult to maintain traction. But she doesn’t let herself be affected by the storm. It is almost as if she has discovered an inner compass that helps her complete the journey.

All of a sudden, the Range Rover hits something. It feels as if they have hit a wall. Both

of them are shaken in the car. They simply cannot move anymore. The sand has become too deep. The car just comes to a stop. And the sand continues to blow around them.

Their fear is now real. He doesn't want to say anything to upset her worse.

She works to reassure him, "I don't think it's going to stay like this much longer." They had completed more than half their journey. But at this point they are stuck. Nothing that they can do can prevent the effects of the storm. She has tried to outrun the blowing sands. She has given it everything that she had. But now she is helpless. She feels that all the work that she has done in her life only reminds her of that same weakness that she had experienced as a girl. That was why she had found refuge in technology. She refused to submit to customs that made her feel subservient. She used knowledge to create her own destiny.

The storm has been a personal affront. That is why she underestimated its threat. She pretended that only those caught in superstition would actually give in to its influences. She has tried to remain above such illusion. But Amira has gambled against probability and lost. She works to accommodate her defeat. There is little that she can do.

"They know where we are," she claims. "They'll send someone out for us."

Her phone has no reception. She realizes that her protected world is crumbling. But she won't give in to her desperation.

She again comments, "This won't last that long. We'll be able to drive out of it.

Even if the vehicle is not completely covered, they're going to go nowhere. Dan has heard stories about people getting lost in winter blizzards. His only consolation is that they are not experiencing sub-zero temperatures.

The storm subsides. But the SUV is still buried deep in sand. There is no way that they can open any of the doors. The sand is still blowing intermittently around them.

As the night settles in on them, she huddles closer to him. She can no longer sustain herself with her science. She only hopes that they didn't get off the main road as the storm became heavier.

The sun has already gone down. They need to accommodate themselves to their desert exile.

"I feel like an idiot. We didn't have to try to make it back. I just didn't want to stay in that town," she is making an effort to apologize. Her perfume becomes more affecting than ever now that they are settled down here.

"It's not your fault. I remember getting lost in the snow with my brother."

She smiles, "In the snow."

"We went off to go tobogganing. And it was a fun day. But then the snows became worse. We could barely see in front of us. My dad came looking for us; otherwise, we would have become icicles.

She laughs, "Icicles?"

"I think that we would have just wandered around in circles."

He wishes that his father could just find him now. He has been taken out here by an able guide, but her skills are now shown to be limited. Now, they will have to make their way on their wiles.

It is starting to feel cooler. She moves closer to him so that she can share his body heat. After a while of resting on his shoulder, she climbs on top of him. It all seems so innocent. She

just wants to cuddle. She wants forgiveness for her gamble. She needs to feel his body against hers. That is enough to remind her that everything will be all right.

She looks down at him. It is their common fear talking. They can think about nothing else. She kisses his lips. They are brief, tender kisses. He tries to restrain himself. But she tastes so good, like tangerines. The tenderness is now replaced by a brewing passion. She kisses him deeply. She is lulled by him. She can't hold back.

He can feel her body surround his. He brings his hands to rest on her hips. He is wearing tight jeans and running shoes. Now they are thinking about nothing else but their affection for each other. They are no longer lost in the desert. They have been found in each other's arms.

He reaches under her blouse to caress her gentle skin. For a moment, he hesitates. Then all feelings of guilt vanish. They are moving way beyond an accidental kiss. They are still dressed, but she can feel their bodies merge. She has been waiting for this moment, but she has been so afraid.

The intensity of the passion now guides them. She recovers her old confidence. She is no longer the maid in distress. She works to show him things about her knowledge that she has never seen before. They now move together rhythmically. She is getting more and more turned on. There is no longer any confusion about their intent. The storm has offered the opportunity to put the rest of the world behind them. They are protected in this temple to their desire.

He feels that this is now his forever. Estelle has been banished to a distant past never to return. Nothing will stand in the way of his attraction for Amira.

She moves her hands under his shirt. She opens it and now is kissing his bare chest. She pulls his hips so that they are close to hers. She can feel his excitement as she works to arouse his desire to its height.

Their kisses are almost savage. They have shared this spiritual connection all this time, but now they give in to a more animalistic frenzy. They are blinded by the glare of their pleasure. Even if the quarters are cramped, they give them just enough freedom of movement to concentrate their focus on each other.

Nothing can hold them back now. Her tender flesh yield to his thrusts. They erase every memory so that their only reference point is the physical expression between them. As things become more intense, she wants to show him how much she can speak with her body. Even in the cool night, they have worked up a sweat. They exert their bodies so that they are pushed to edge of collapse. This only encourages her more. She will not give in. They discover another layer to their passion. The bodies stretch and expand. They have channeled these phantoms before. Now they assume full form.

As the night progresses, they rest in each other's arms. They have taken the storm as an opportunity to speak for their earlier silences. Their sleep is deep and secure. They are protected.

When the day breaks, the car is not as covered in sand as it had been. They still can't open the doors. They both sit up and adjust their clothes. He pulls her close and kisses her. He doesn't want to think that last night was just a mistake of the moment.

She tells him, "They send a truck for us with a plough. We'll be out of here sooner than you know it."

When help finally arrives, one of their co-workers comes along with the driver.

“You both were pretty lucky,” she tells them. “There were actually some people killed in the storm.”

He is none the wiser about what happened to them. They are actually able to get the car free. They start it without any problem. They have brought them some gas just in case. It only takes a half hour or so to drive back. They skip going to the office and go directly to their hotel. Amira invites Dan to her room. They spend the morning in the bath together. She feels that the sand has penetrated every pore.

After the bath, they share a light breakfast with champagne. Then she again collapses in his arms. It is so easy to express themselves in a real bed. They tease each other about the night in the Range Rover.

“Maybe we could jump back in the passenger seat to see if we can work the same magic,” Amira says.

He answers by kissing her. They remain in the kiss for the longest time. This is now their forever.

When they wake the next day, they know that they must get back to business. But now the furtive glances speak volumes. They work to hide their affection from everyone else. To look at their faces is to realize how deeply they are committed to each other.

That evening the two of them are sitting together in the courtyard of their hotel. The night breezes have such a different meaning than the night before. They welcome its soft embrace. They hardly speak. The darkness says it all for them. When they retire to their room, they can barely control themselves. Her movements have an incredible boldness. She wants more than caring, more than affection. They are stripped of any supposition. They cannot pretend to hide in their tenderness. They again give in to the frenzy. The breeze cools the sweat on their naked bodies. This only emboldens them more. With the strength that they have saved, they go at each other with the same fierceness. When the ardor fades, they take comfort in the silence. They dare not move and stir the utter perfection of the moment.

When they are not in bed together, a deep rich glow warms their hearts. They are already part of one another. Any other distraction is quickly dispelled from their minds.

The one evening night that Dan is separate from Amira, he is forced to lie in the cold stillness of the night. He is haunted by the presence of Estelle. She seems to punish him for his terrible transgressions. He feels that he needs to make sacrifice to atone for his offense. But his longing for Amira is so intense that he refuses to let go of his new obsession.

When Amira returns, he makes love to her with a new abandon. His guilt only makes him seek deeper refuge in her arms. There is a relentlessness to his passion. It is now so completely motivated by appetite. After they make love, he lies in perfect comfort with her. Nothing else matters. He has found paradise. He wants to be with Amira until his dying breath.

Dan wonders how he would react if Estelle showed up this moment. He knows exactly what he would do. He would send her home. He wonders why he is so cruel. But so much has happened since he has arrived in Egypt. Dan is no longer the same person.

Amira wonders, “Would you ever take me with you back to America?”

“The way that I feel now, I never want to return to America.”

It doesn't make sense that he would turn his back on his homeland. But the love that he feels is so overwhelming that there seems to be no other way. He drinks deeply of her passion.



He kisses the back of her neck. Her body comes alive. The muscles tense up and then relax. He welcomes her close to him.

He is amazed that he survived before he drank from such a fresh oasis. His contact with Estelle seems so stale. Her inhibitions were always interfering with her desire. Amira is not that way. She is totally free to experiment.

They now are like sacred felines. They live for the darkness. Even in the daytime, they are the omens of the darkness. They have learned a stealth to their ways. They hardly come and go anymore. They pass through walls and fly through the air.

They transform into these ancient gods and renew the holy grounds. It is preposterous that these two scientists have been transformed so thoroughly by the supernatural. Such is the stuff of love. It has a secret which burns brightest at the darkest moment of the night.

Dan spreads Amira's arms across the bed. He wraps his body around her. They melt in their lascivious kisses. They lock out any other influence.

Dan is afraid what might happen if she abandons him. He holds her tighter than ever. He realizes that they have this fragile moment together. He will not let it go. She looks up at him and sighs. This is only the beginning of another endurance-challenging night.

Each worships the other's ability in its ability to unlock deep secrets of the spirit. The pleasures are so overwhelming that they can only be revealed by a profound devotion. This is way beyond touch and the physical world. They have learned the harmonies of each other. They first made their temple in the desert. There they died and were reborn. Now, nothing can stand in their way.

Dan feels that they have gone so far out in this imaginary world, that it all must come crashing down. It is like the storm in the desert. They are trying to outrun the whispering sands. But that fear only make him turn to Amira with more fervor.

Dan almost feels as if he will never have to eat again. He can live off her sweet kisses. He can draw his respite from her soul. She is his succor. Amira is his daily bread.

He faces the bleak reality after they have pushed their bodies to the point of exhaustion. But once he has feasted on real nutrients, he is ready for the food of love.

They have ordered from room service. The hummus and flat bread are all consumed. There are barely any scraps on their plate. They have eaten pistachios and dates. They have drunk a whole bottle of champagne. Now they are becoming intoxicated with each other.

Dan and Amira realize that they have to return to Cairo. The purity of their love is again becoming something almost illicit. They are suffering because of their pride. They believe that their love is greater than anything else in their lives. Their excess devotion might be an interference with their work. But the intellectual calculations and the physical endeavors are only a type of love-making. They continue to subsist in this wildness. It will only become more absurd.

When they finally return to Cairo, they have to face preparation for more journey. There are problems with the supply routes from the Red Sea. They have to go to Qena before Aswan. They plan to take some time off and do some sight-seeing. After that they can do their business.

The director tells them, "If you're going to be driving all the way, you could give one of the other engineers a ride to Al Fayyum." They almost feel that the engineer will be an encroachment on their private time together. But they realize that it is all a blessing in disguise.

Sure they have to do work, but they will also have some time off.

Seeing the Pyramids in Gheza and Saqqara are a real inspiration to Dan. It reminds him why he committed himself to his vocation in the first place. It is not simply the immensity of these structures. They demonstrate for him the essential spirit that informed their building. He can still feel that echo as he walks around them. The balance between knowledge and execution is the very thing that has inspired him all along. More than a simple construction, the edifices reached for the stars. In this communication, the people became artists. They participated in the heavens. They did not simply observe the cosmos. They brought themselves closer to the stars.

In the original construction of the Great Pyramids, the limestone outer layer acted to reflect sunlight to appear like a star in the heavens. This was the ultimate in the gesture of immortality. These ancients took their place among the constellations. They no longer only looked up at the heavens. They actually communicated with their gods.

Now Amira and Dan participate in the same sort of wonder. They welcome the opportunity to finally be alone together in their hotel room. Dan's life is beginning to have a more solid purpose. He has been able to unify his intellect and his physical side. When he was with Estelle, he never felt that he could really share his thoughts with her. With Amira, he thinks just by being with her.

Dan tells Amira, "If I die before you, I want you to build me a pyramid so that you can remember. You can use it so that we can be together once more."

She teases him, "Who do you think you are, a pharaoh?"

"I am more like a high priest."

The kiss. He pushes her over on the bed. He is sitting above her.

Amira asks, "What are you going to do? Sacrifice me?"

"I have thought about that. Then you could return to me as a ghost."

She pulls him over so that he now resting against her. "I'm not enough for you now!"

They laugh. Their embrace speaks of the fear that they have of losing each other. Their kiss has an urgency. They will not let go.

The night of passion is greater than anything that they have felt before. They have truly learned how to transform themselves into spirits. It is impossible to tell where the body leaves off. But they seem to vanish from the room.

"If they came in now, they would wonder where we had gone," Amira notes.

Dan reiterates, "That is why we need a pyramid so that they can have contact with our love."

In imagination, they build these awesome structures. They follow the designs of the ancients. But they aspire after something more grandiose. The whole world reflects the shape of these new pyramids.

There is something almost tragic in the love that they feel for each other. Something in the world is conspiring against them. The only way that they can achieve their eternity is in communicating in death. They are ready to follow the ancients in the journey to the underworld.

There is hardly anything morbid in their thoughts. They are not depressed about their state. Rather they have achieved a special calling on earth. In their love-making, they are able to attain a new level of understanding that can hardly be understood in normal terms. When they walk the pyramids together, it all makes sense. They are continuing on a destiny from another

time.

There is no hesitancy on their parts. When he looks in her eyes, it all makes sense. Her eyes are so captivating, they are like the light of the stars. By kissing her lips, he is only beginning his journey to the heavens.

When they set out together from Al Fayyum, there is almost a solemn quality to their journey. Sure they are on business trip. But they are following the life-giving waters to their source. They are bringing new life to this world.

She drives today. And her pace is quicker than usual.

He asks her, "Why so fast? We have nowhere to be at this moment."

"I just want to get there so that we can relax next to each other."

"You're not suspicious about being in a car together."

She laughs, "Not at all. Remember that we are immortal now."

The sun beats down on the SUV. But they are hardly affected by it. Inside, the atmosphere is climate-controlled. The cooling air is supplied by the turning dynamo under the hood. It is a mystery that is more elemental than the driving wind. It speaks of magnetic forces and primitive attractions that riveted the gods. It is fueled by a life-force that trails away even as it strikes its flame.

Dan and Amira race the wind. They can feel these fires burn from within. The heat is part of a delicate balance. They have stretched that balance from one side in the hope that they might be able to turn the tide their way. But these ancient sea of a direction of their own. Once again they will need to yield to the flood waters.