

THE YOKE

A Romance of the Days When the Lord Redeemed the Children of Israel From the Bondage of Egypt

By Elizabeth Miller

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CHAPTER XV.

THE TOMB OF THE PHARAOH.

It was far into the tenth night that Kenekes arrived in Thebes. On the sixteenth day Rachel would begin to expect him, and he could not hope to reach Memphis by that time. She should not wait an hour longer than necessary. He would get the signet that night and return by the swiftest boat obtainable in Thebes. The dawn should find him on the way to Memphis.

He entered the streets of the Libyan suburb of the holy city and passed through it to the scattering houses set outside the thickly settled portion and nearer to the necropolis. At the portal of the most pretentious of these houses he knocked and was admitted.

He was met presently in the chamber of guests by an old man, gray haired and bent. This was the keeper of the tomb of Rameses the Great.

"I am the son of Mentu," he said, "thy friend and the friend of the incomparable Pharaoh. Perchance thou dost remember me."

"I remember Mentu," the old man replied after a space that might have been spent in rumination or in collecting his faculties to speak.

"He decorated the tomb of Rameses," the young man continued.

"Aye, I remember. I watched him often at the work."

"Thou knowest how the great king loved him."

"The old man bent his head in assent. 'He was given a signet by Rameses, and on the jewel was testimony of royal favor which should outlive the Pharaoh and Mentu himself. It was lost. But the place in which it was lost is small, and I would search for it again.'"

By this time the old man's face had become inquiring.

"There is need for the signet now. It was lost in the tomb of the incomparable Pharaoh. May I not visit the crypt? I would go this very night."

"The keeper's face sobered, and he shook his head."

"Deny me not, I pray thee," Kenekes entreated earnestly. "Never was a greater stake upon the saving of time than in this strait, which is the peril of spotless womanhood. I can go alone. There is no need that thou shouldst waste an hour of thy needed sleep for me. I pledge thee I shall conduct myself without thee as I should beneath thine eye, and none need ever know I went alone."

The ancient keeper weakened at the earnestness of the young man.

"Canst thou open the gates?"

"I gave not forgotten from the daily practice that was mine for many weeks."

"Then go, and let no man know of this."

Kenekes thanked him gratefully and went at once.

In chambers hewn in solid rock the monarchs of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were entombed. All along the walls of the gorge nature had secured the sacred resting place of the sovereigns against trespass from the east and sides of the chasm, and Egypt had dutifully strengthened the one weak point in the fortification—the entrance—by the gateway of granite. But there was no vigilance of guards. Whosoever knew how to open the gates might enter the valley. The secret of the bolts was known only among the members of the royal family and the court. To Kenekes, whose craft as a sculptor had taught him the intricate devices used in closing tombs, the opening of these gates was simple.

He let himself into the valley and, closing the valves behind him, went up the tortuous gorge, darkened by the shadows of the walls. He continued past the mouth of the valley's southern arm, wherein were entombed the kings of the eighteenth dynasty. Here, in this open space, he could see the circling bats, which before he could only hear above his head. Somewhere among the rocks up the moonlit hollow an owl hooted. But the tombs he sought were in the upper end of the main ravine.

With trembling hands he pushed the doors, rough with inscriptions, and the great stone valves swung ponderously toward, the bronze pins making no sound as they turned in the sockets. Kenekes entered and closed the portals behind him.

Instantly all sound of the outside world was cut off—the sound of the wind, the chafing of the sands and cries of night birds, beasts and insects. Absolute stillness and original night surrounded him.

With all speed he lighted his lamp, but the flaring flame illuminated only a little space in the brooding, hovering blackness about him.

He moved forward, his path only discovered to him, step by step as the light advanced, the sumptuous frescoes done by the hand of his father emerging, one detail at a time. The solemn figures fixed accusing eyes upon him from every frieze; the passive countenance of the monarch himself confronted him from every wall. One ponderous chamber after another he traversed, for the tomb penetrated the very core of the mountain.

The innermost crypt contained the altars. This was the sanctuary, the holy of holies, never entered except by a hierarch.

When Kenekes reached the final

threshold he paused. Thus far his presence had been merely a midnight intrusion. If he entered the sanctuary, his coming would be violation. He thought of the mistress of Rachel and dared.

The first alabaster altar glistened suddenly-out of the night like a bank of snow. Kenekes' sandal grated on the sandy dust that lay thick on the floor. Not even the keeper had entered this crypt to remove the accumulated dust of six years.

In this chapel the signet had been lost.

Kenekes set his light on the floor and began his search. The first time he searched the floor he laid the lack of success to his excited work. The second time the perspiration began to trickle down his temples. Thereafter he sought lengthwise and crosswise, calling on the gods for aid, but there was no glint of the jewel.

At last, sick with despair, he sat down to collect himself. Suddenly across the silence there smote a sound.

For a moment Kenekes sat transfixed, and in that moment the sound came nearer. He remembered the injunction of the old keeper. Human or supernatural, the newcomer must not find him there. He leaped behind the altar of Shaeum, extinguishing the light as he did so. He flung the corner of his kamis over the reeking wick that the odor might not escape, but his fear in that direction was materially lessened when he saw that the stranger bore a fuming torch.

On one end of the short pole of the torch was a knot of flaming pitch; on the other was a bronze ring fitted with sprawling claws. The stranger set the light on the floor, and the device kept the torch upright. He crossed the room and stood at the altar of Neferrari Thermuthis.

By the deeply fringed and voluminous draperies and by the venerable beard, rippling and streaked with gray, the young sculptor took the stranger to be an Israelite. As Kenekes looked upon him he was minded of his father, the magnificent Mentu. There was the bearing of the courtier, with the same wondrous stature, the same massive frame. But the delicate features of the Egyptian, the long, slim fingers, the narrow foot, were absent. In this man's countenance there was majesty instead of grace; in his figure, might instead of elegance.

The stranger stood in profound meditation, his splendid head gradually sinking until it rested on his breast. The arms hung by the sides. The attitude suggested a sorrow healed by the long years until it was no more a pain, but a memory so subduing that it depressed. At last the great man sank to his knees with a movement quite in keeping with his grandeur and his mood and bowed his head on his arms.

Pressed down with awe, Kenekes followed his example, and, although he seemed to kneel on some rough chisel mark in the floor, he did not shift his position. The discomfort seemed appropriate as penitence on that holy occasion.

After a long time the stranger arose, took up the torch and quitted the chamber. He went away more slowly than he had come, with reluctant step and averted face.

When night and profound silence were restored in the crypt, Kenekes regained his feet and, examining the irritated knee, found the offending object clinging to the impression it had made in the flesh. The shape of the trifle sent a wild hope through his brain. Groping through the dark, he found his lamp and lighted it with trembling hands.

He held the lapis lazuli signet! He did not move. He only grasped the scarab tightly and panted. The sudden change from intense suspense to intense relief had deprived him of the power of expression. Only his physical makeup manifested its rebellion against the shock.

He examined the scarab. The cord by which it had been suspended passed through a small gold ring between the claws of the beetle. This had worn very thin and some slight wrench had broken it.

"Ah!" he exclaimed aloud. "It is even as I had thought. But let me not seem to boast when I tell my father of it. It will be victory enough for me to display the jewel and abasement enough for him to know he was wrong."

He ceased to speak, but the echoes talked on after him. He shivered, caught up his light and raced through the tomb into the world again.

It was near dawn, and the skies were pallid. He was hungry and weary, but most impatient to be gone. He would repair to Thebes and break his fast. Thereafter he would procure the swiftest boat on the Nile and take his rest while speeding toward Memphis.

The inn of the necropolis was like an immense dwelling, except that the courts were stable yards. The doors, opening off the porch, were always open and a light burned by night within the chamber. So long and so murkily had it burned that the chamber Kenekes entered was smoky and redolent of it. Aside from a high, bench-like table running half the length of the rear wall, there was nothing else in the room. Kenekes rapped on the table. In a little time an Egyptian emerged from under the counter on the other

side. Understanding at last that the guest wished to be fed, he staggered sleepily through a door and, presently reappearing, signed Kenekes to enter.

The room into which the young sculptor was conducted was too large to be lighted by the two lamps, hung from hooks, one at each end of the chamber. Down either side, hidden in the shadows, were long benches, and from the huddled heap that occupied the full length of each it was to be surmised that men were sleeping on them. Above them the slatted blinds had been withdrawn from the small windows and the morning breeze was blowing strongly through the chamber. At the upper end was another table similar to the one in the outer room except for a napkin in the middle with a bottle of water set upon it. An Egyptian woman stood beside this table and gave the young man a wooden stool.

As Kenekes walked toward the seat a stronger blast of wind puffed out the light above his head. The woman climbed up to take the lamp down and set it on the table while she relighted it. The skirt of her dress caught on the top of the stool she had mounted and pulled it over on the wooden floor with a sharp sound.

One of the sleepers stirred at the noise and turned over. Presently he sat up.

Kenekes righted the stool and sat down on it, the light shining in his face. He saw the guest in the shadow shake off the light covering and walk swiftly through the door into the outer chamber.

Meanwhile the silent woman served her guest with cold baked waterfowl, endives, cucumbers, wheat bread and grapes and a weak white wine. Kenekes ate deliberately and consumed all that was set before him. When he had made an end, he paid his reckoning to the woman and returned into the outer chamber.

At the doors he was confronted by four members of the city constabulary and a Nubian in a striped tunic.

"Seize him!" the Nubian cried. Instantly the four men flung themselves upon Kenekes and pinioned his arms.

"Nay, by the gods," he exclaimed angrily, "what mean you?"

"Parley not with him," the Nubian said in excitement. "Get him in bonds stronger than the grip of hands. He is muscled like a bull."

The young sculptor looked at the Nubian. He had seen him before—



"Seize him!" the Nubian cried.

had had unpleasant dealings with him—and then he remembered, so suddenly and so fiercely that his captors felt the shews creep in his arms.

"Set spurs thee and thine infamous master to me!" he exclaimed violently. The Nubian retreated a little, for Kenekes had strained toward him.

"Get him into the four walls of a cell," the Nubian urged the guards.

"I may not lose him again, as I value my head."

The guards started out of the doors, and Kenekes went with them, unresisting, but not passively.

The prison was a square building of rough stone, flat roofed, three stories in height. The red walls were broken at regular intervals by crevices, barred with brouze. There was but one entrance.

Kenekes was led through the doors, down a low roofed, narrow stone walled corridor to the room of the governor of police.

The governor of police was absent, but his vice, who was jailer and scribe in one, sat in a chair behind the great table.

When the party entered he sat up, undid a new scroll, wetted the reed pen in the pigment, and was ready.

Kenekes assaid, "Wherefore am I taken?"

"For sacrilege and slave stealing," the scribe replied calmly.

"At the complaint of Har-hat, bearer of the king's fan," Kenekes added.

"Until such time as stronger proof of thy misdeeds may be brought against thee," the scribe continued.

"Even so. In plainer words, I shall be held till I confess what he would have me tell or until I decay in this tomb. Let me give thee my word, I shall do neither. Unhand me, I shall not attempt to escape."

At a sign from the scribe the four men released him and took up a position at the doors. Kenekes opened his wallet and displayed the signet. The scribe took it and read the inscription. There was no doubting the young man's right to the jewel, for here was the name of Mentu, even as the chief adviser had given it in identifying the prisoner. The official frowned and stroked his chin.

"This petitions the Pharaoh," he said at last. "I cannot pass upon it."

"Send me to my cell, then, and do thou follow," Kenekes said. "I have somewhat to say."

"Take him to his cell," the official said to the men as he returned the signet to the prisoner. "I shall attend him."

"I have but to crave a messenger of thee—a swift and a sure one—one who

can hold his peace and hath pride in his calling. I can offer all he demands. And this further: Keep his going a secret, for I am beset, and I would not have my rescue by the Pharaoh thwarted."

"I can send thee a messenger," the jailer answered.

The solid section of wall swung shut behind him, and the great bolts shot into place.

Some time later the bar rattled down again, and the jailer stood without, a scribe at his side. At a sign from the jailer the latter made as though to enter, but Kenekes stopped him.

"I have need of your materials only," he said, "but the fee shall be yours nevertheless." The man set his case on the floor, and Kenekes put a ring of silver in the outstretched palm.

"Fare me not in a faithful messenger," the prisoner repeated to the jailer. The official nodded, and the door was closed again.

Kenekes sat on the floor beside the case, laid the cover back and, taking out materials, wrote thus:

To My Friend, the Noble Hotep, greetings: This from Kenekes, whom ill fortune cannot wholly possess while he may call thee his friend.

I speak to thee out of the prison at Tape, where I am held for stealing a bond maiden and for executing a statue against the canons of the sculptor's ritual. The accumulated penalty for these offenses is great. My plight is most serious.

The plying gods have left me no chance for escape. If I fall I shall molder here, for my counsel is mine, and the demons of Amenti shall not rend it from me.

The tale is short and miserable. But for the necessity I would not repeat it, for it publishes the humiliation of sweet innocence.

Suffice it to say that the offended is she of whom we talked one day on the hill back of Mazaarah; the offender is Har-hat, who hath buried me here in Tape.

One morning he saw her at the quarries and, taken with her beauty, asked her at the hands of the Pharaoh for the hatefullest bondage pure maidenhood ever knew.

She fled from the minions he sent to take her and came to me in that spot on the hillside where thou and I did talk.

There the minions found us, and by the evidence they looked upon I am further charged with sacrilege.

Thou dost remember the all powerful signet which my father had from the incomparable Pharaoh. He lost it in the tomb of the king three years ago, abandoning the search for it before I was assured that it was not to be found.

So strong was my faith that the signet was in the tomb that when this disaster overtook her I came to Tape at once to look again for the treasure. I found it.

But by some unknowable mischance mine enemy discovered my whereabouts, and a third minion, who escaped my wrath before the statue that morning, appeared in the city and caused me to be delivered up to the authorities on the charges already named.

She is hidden, and I have provided for her protection, as well as I may, against the wishes of the strongest man in the land. For her immediate welfare I am not greatly troubled. But alas! I would be with her. Thou knowest, O my Hotep, the hunger and heartache of such separation.

If the Pharaoh honor not the signet herein enclosed, tell my father of my plight, let me know the decision of the king, and then I shall trust to the Hathors for liberty.

Of this conspiracy I would not speak at length, it may be tempting the caprice of the Seven Sisters to presuppose such misfortune.

Let not my father intervene for me. He shall not endanger himself further than I have already asked of him.

But remember thou this injunction most surely. That it shall be last and therefore freshest in thy memory, I put this at the end of the letter.

Put the petition herein enclosed into the Pharaoh's hands! For my life's sake, let it not come into the possession of any other.

I shall write no more. My scant eloquence must be saved for the king. Gods, but it is good to have faith in a friend! I salute thee. KENKES.

The letter to Hotep complete, Kenekes took up another roll and wrote thus to Menepthah:

To Menepthah, Beloved of Ptah, Ambassador of Amen, Vicar of Ra, Lord Over Upper and Lower Egypt, greetings:

At this point he paused. His power of expression, aghast at the magnitude of the stake laid on its successful use, became panic stricken and fled from him. He feared that words could not be chosen which would justify his sacrilege or prove his claims to Rachel greater than Har-hat's. Menepthah would be hedged about with prejudice against his first cause and deterred by the prior right of Har-hat in the second. The last man that talked with the king moldered him. Flattery alone might prevail against coercion. It was the one hope.

Kenekes seized his pen and wrote: This from thy subject, Kenekes, the son of Mentu, thy market.

I give thee a true story, O Defender of Women.

There is a maiden whose kinsmen died of hard labor in the service of Egypt. Not one was left to care for her. Of all her house she alone remains. They died in ignominy. Shall the last remnant of the unhappy family be stamped out in dishonor?

If one came before thee seeking to insult innocence and another begging leave to protect it, thou wouldst choose for him who would keep pure the undefiled. Have I not said, O my king?

Alas! even now is such a choice. Already thou hast given over the mastership of Rachel, daughter of Menepthah, to thy fan bearer, Har-hat. By the lips of his own servants I am informed that he would have put her in his harem.

She fled from him, and I hid her away, for I could not bear to deliver her up to the despoiler.

I love her, she loveth me. Wilt thou not give her to me to wife?

Thine illustrious sire bespeth thy favor out of Amenti. Behold his signet and his injunction.

Furthermore, I confess to sacrilege against Athor in carving a statue which ignored the sculptor's ritual. For this and for hiding the Israelite am I imprisoned in the city stronghold of Tape.

I would be free to return to my love and comfort her, but if I shall overtax thy generosity, release me, I pray thee, announce my sentence and let me begin to count the hours till I shall come forth again.

The Israelite hath a nurse, a feeble and sick old woman, Deborah by name, whom the minions of Har-hat abused. She can be of no further use in servitude, and I would have thee set her free to bear company to her love, the white scaled Rachel.

But if these last prayers impel the great Athor upon the indulgence, O beloved of Ptah, do thou set me abasement and grant only the safety of the oppressed maiden.

I have but to crave a messenger of thee—a swift and a sure one—one who

The letter complete, he summoned the messenger.

Kenekes gave him the message and a handful of rings. The man expressed his thanks, after which he went forth and the door was barred.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

DRY IN CHARLESTON.

First Dry Sunday Quite Successful—No Cases in Court Against Any Liquor Sellers.

The first dry Sunday of Gyness in Charleston may be regarded as a success, and demonstrates a control of the situation. A majority of the tigers were closed tight, and it was really difficult to get the refreshing draught with convenience. Rumor has it that there were several of the large places of liquid refreshment running freely, but there were no cases in the police court today against any of the dispensers of iced harmonizers.

Especially was the blockade effective against the smaller places of liquor selling. At many a corner shop, where tradition had it that bottles of booze were sold, knots of disappointed customers could be discerned waiting in vain for the doors to open to their knocks. There was nothing doing, and the dry humans had to move off, and quench their thirst at the artesian wells, where liquid of high merit flowed freely.

At several places prominently located an unusually large number of visitors could be observed, going in and out and one or two would use a handkerchief to wipe, perhaps, the foam of ginger ale from his refreshed lips. There were no sensational raids, however, and everything went along quietly. There is no doubt of it that there were more, many more, places closed than opened, and Charleston was kept practically dry.

The inquiry is now running along the lines why the other places of business that have no legal right to run on Sundays should not be closed up. Many of the business men on King street, who keep the law are asking this question with emphasis.—Charleston Post.

State of Ohio, City of Toledo, Lucas County, ss.—Frank J. Cheney makes oath that he is senior partner of the firm of F. J. Cheney & Co., doing business in the city of Toledo, county and State aforesaid, and that said firm will pay the sum of \$100 for each and every case of catarrh that cannot be cured by the use of Hall's Catarrh Cure. Frank J. Cheney

Sworn to before me and subscribed in my presence, this 6th day of December, A. D. 1886.

A. W. Gleason, Notary Public

Hall's Catarrh Cure is taken internally, and acts directly on the blood and mucous surfaces of the system and for testimonials free.

F. J. Cheney & Co., Toledo, O. Sold by all druggists, 75c.

Take Hall's Family Pills for constipation.

SAN FRANCISCO TREMBLES.

Earthquake Shock Felt This Morning—But No Damage Done.

San Francisco, Cal., June 5.—An earthquake shock lasting ten seconds was felt here early this morning, but no damage is reported.

EARTHQUAKE RECORDED.

Washington, June 5.—The Weather Bureau issued a bulletin today saying in part: "A distinct earthquake was recorded last night by the seismographs of the weather bureau, lasting nearly an hour. The conclusion based on the records the origin of the quake was not more than three thousand miles distant and probably south of Washington."

Every Man His Own Doctor.

"The average man cannot afford to employ a physician for every slight ailment or injury that may occur in his family, nor can he afford to neglect them, as so slight an injury as the scratch of a pin has been known to cause the loss of a limb. Hence every man must from necessity be his own doctor for this class of ailments. Success often depends upon prompt treatment, which can only be had when suitable medicines are kept at hand. Chamberlain's Remedies have been in the market for many years and enjoy a good reputation.

Chamberlain's Colic, Cholera and Diarrhoea Remedy for bowel complaints.

Chamberlain's Cough Remedy for coughs, colds, croup and whooping cough.

Chamberlain's Pain Balm (an anesthetic ointment) for cuts, bruises, burns, sprains, swellings, lame back and rheumatic pains.

Chamberlain's Stomach and Liver Tablets for constipation, biliousness and stomach troubles.

Chamberlain's Salve for diseases of the skin.

One bottle of each of these five remedies costs but \$1.25. For sale by DeLorme's Pharmacy.

The New York State excise department receives from the saloons of Manhattan and the Bronx boroughs \$17,808 each day in the year.

"When you feel the need of a pill take a DeWitt's Little Early Riser. Small pill, safe pill, sure pill. Drives away headaches. Sold by all druggists.

ROOSEVELT AT JAMESTOWN.

He Will Deliver Two Addresses at Exposition on Georgia Day.

Washington, June 7.—Two speeches, two reviews and several receptions will keep President Roosevelt busy at the Jamestown exposition next Monday when Georgia Day will be celebrated. The president, with his family, will proceed to Jamestown on Sunday on the yacht Mayflower. In the Georgia State building, which is a reproduction of Bulloch Hall, after the reviews the president will be presented a silver service donated by the Georgia people. President Roosevelt will deliver the Georgia Day address, and an address to the National Editorial convention.

"Piles get quick and certain relief from Dr. Sloop's Magic Ointment. Please note it is made alone for piles, and its action is positive and certain. Itching, painful, protruding or blind piles disappear like magic by its use. Large nickel-capped glass jars 50c. Sold by Sibert's Drug Store.

SEEKING SOCIAL EQUALITY.

Boston Negroes Announce Their Belief in Mixed Schools.

Boston, Mass., June 7.—Drawing the color line in education has reached the climax here with a protest against Howard University, a negro school, which has an industrial department supported largely by Federal appropriations. The Suffrage League, organized recently and comprising many of the most prominent colored men of Boston, today notified Booker T. Washington that it disapproved of his election as a trustee of that institution and urged him not to accept. The league adopted a resolution declaring its belief in an American system of education for all Americans regardless of race or color.

Colic and Diarrhoea.

"Pains in the stomach, colic and diarrhoea are quickly relieved by the use of Chamberlain's Colic, Cholera and Diarrhoea Remedy. For sale by DeLorme's Pharmacy.

CHANGE OF VENUE GRANTED.

Libel Suit Against Editor of Dillon Herald Transferred.

Marion, June 6.—In the Court of General Sessions here this morning Judge Prince granted a change of venue in the case of the State vs. Arthur E. Jordan, editor of the Dillon Herald, charged with malicious and defamatory libel. On account of the prominence of the parties interested a great deal of interest was manifested in the case, quite a number having come from Dillon, the home of the defendant, to witness the trial, which had been set for today.

When court opened this morning Solicitor Spears announced that the State was ready for trial, whereupon the attorneys for the defence made a motion for a change of venue and in support of the motion submitted a number of affidavits stating that the defendant could not receive a fair and impartial trial in Marion County.