

# The Pharaoh's Favorite Novel

## Chapter 100



### Chapter 100



#### Epilogue

[POV Renet]

Golden light bathes the endless wheat fields, each stalk swaying in a warm breeze. I move through the grain with bare feet, my white dress flowing like water around my ankles.

I know this place – have walked these paths countless times before. The Field of Reeds, where lotus blossoms float on mirror-still canals and time holds no meaning.

A figure appears at the edge of my vision, tall and straight-backed, moving with quiet purpose through the wheat. My heart beats faster, recognizing something essential before my mind can process what it sees.

When our gazes meet, time itself seems to pause in reverence.

*"I have been waiting for you,"* I whisper, though I don't remember choosing to speak.

*"As have I, my sweet lotus flower,"* he replies, voice carrying harmonics that resonate in my very bones. *"I have searched for you in every corner of existence."*

He extends his hand and I reach for it without hesitation.

The moment our palms touch, the world explodes into light – not harsh or blinding, but warm as the sun on my face during childhood summers.

childhood summers.

He leans forward, his forehead resting against mine, and his touch sends waves of warmth cascading through me where his fingers brush my cheek.

*"Never again,"* he whispers against my lips. *"Never again will we be parted."*

But even as the words flood through me, everything begins to fracture.

The wheat fields dissolve, the golden sky fades, and his face, *always his face*, slips away like water through my fingers...

I jerk awake with a gasp. The tarot card that had been stuck to my cheek fluttering down to the counter – *The Lovers*.

Groaning, I sat up rubbing my face, checking that I hadn't drooled on the deck again.

"That damn dream again," I murmured to myself, straightening in my chair behind the counter of "Celestial Roots".

It's been recurring for months now.

Always the same and with a man whose face I can never quite recall upon waking, yet who feels more familiar than my own reflection.

The shop was empty, the dull hum of the neon sign in the front window the only sound.

My little corner of mysticism wedged between a Starbucks and a hot yoga studio doesn't exactly scream "thriving business," but it's mine.

Every crystal, every worn book spine, every stick of incense – mine.

I stretch, working out the kinks from falling asleep at my own counter like some amateur. The tarot deck feels warm under my fingers as I gather the scattered cards.

The doorbell chimes and I glance up, expecting the delivery guy, but it's not.

A man steps through the doorway, pausing to let his eyes adjust to the dimmer light inside. He's tall and lean, with bronze skin that gleams in the lamplight and midnight-black long hair woven into a neat braid adorned with tiny golden rings.

His clothes are simple, but there's something regal in the way he carries himself – calm, composed, like he belongs everywhere and nowhere all at once.

And his dark eyes... They hit me like déjà vu.

I don't know him. Every logical neuron confirms this. But something deeper, something that operates below conscious thought, recognizes him with an intensity that borders on pain.

"Evening," he simply says, voice carrying a slight accent I can't place. "I hope you might be able to help me."

"Hi." My voice comes out a little too eager, so I clear my throat. "Welcome. What are you looking for?"

He approaches the counter with easy confidence, never breaking eye contact.

There's something magnetic about his presence, a gravitational pull that makes me want to lean closer even as my rational mind warns me to maintain proper customer service distance.

"I'm searching for something to enhance my meditation practice. A friend mentioned your shop has an exceptional selection of incense."

"Well, your friend was right," I say, stepping from behind the counter to lead him to the display. "We import from all over the world. Did they recommend anything specific?"

"Not exactly," he admits, scanning the neatly arranged packages. "I'm relatively new to this actually. What would you suggest for a beginner?"

When he looks at me again, I catch myself staring at the way the light plays across his features.

*Professional, I remind myself. Stay professional.*

I select several options, arranging them on the nearby table.

My hands move with practiced ease, but my attention remains fixed on his face, searching for the source of my inexplicable recognition.

"This depends on what you're hoping to achieve," I explain. "Sandalwood promotes grounding and focus, frankincense deepens spiritual connection..."

I pause, my fingers hovering over one particular package.

Something about his presence, his energy, draws me to it.

"This one is special, though. Sweet lotus. It's excellent for accessing deeper states of consciousness."

He studies me for a long moment, as if seeing something that hadn't been there before. The intensity of his gaze makes heat rise in my cheeks, and I have to resist the urge to smooth my hair or check my appearance in the mirror behind him.

"Lotus sounds nice. I'll take that one," he says finally.

As I ring up his purchase, I notice him glancing at the tarot cards on my counter.

"Are you a fortune teller as well?" he asks with a note of gentle mockery in his voice.

"I read cards, yes," I replied, taking them with steady hands. "Though I prefer to think of it as guidance rather than *fortune telling*."

"Ah, guidance," he let out amusingly.

He leans against the counter, clearly intrigued. The casual pose brings him closer, and I catch a hint of his scent – something warm and spicy.

"And what sort of guidance do the cards provide?"

"That depends entirely on the person asking." I meet his challenging gaze with one of my own, surprised by my own boldness.

There's something about him that makes me want to impress.

To show him I'm more than just another shop owner peddling

mystical trinkets.

Something shifts in his expression – surprise, perhaps, or recognition. "I have to admit, you've piqued my curiosity."

"Why don't we test that skepticism of yours then?" I suggest, shuffling the cards with fluid motions. "A reading. No charge, on the house."

He laughs, the sound unexpectedly warm and familiar. "Well, how can I refuse such an offer? Though I warn you, I'm likely to be a difficult customer."

"I think I can handle you," I reply, cutting the deck with practiced ease. "Two questions. Choose carefully."

"Very well then." He considers for a moment, his expression growing more serious. "Will I achieve success in my current business venture?"

I draw three cards, arranging them in a spread before studying them intently.

The images seem to shimmer in the afternoon light – The Chariot, The Tower, The Star. Victory, upheaval, hope.

The story is clear.

"Yes," I say confidently, "but not in the way you expect. There will be unexpected challenges, possibly a complete restructuring of your plans. But ultimately, you'll find something better than what you originally sought."

His eyebrows rise slightly. "Interesting."

Commented [Ma1]:

"Your second question?" I reply, gathering the first spread and reshuffling.

He hesitates, his expression growing more vulnerable. When he speaks, his voice is softer, almost uncertain. "What about my near future? My... destiny, I suppose you'd call it."

This time, one card fell out of the deck while I was still reshuffling them and The Lovers appeared face-up on the counter.

As I stare at it, that strange feeling washes over me again, stronger than before.

"You're going to meet someone," I say, my voice barely above a whisper. "Someone important, who you've been searching for without even knowing it."

I look up to find him watching me intently, something unreadable in his dark eyes.

"Someone I've been searching for..." he repeats slowly. "That's a rather romantic notion."

"Is it?" I ask, still holding his gaze.

For a moment, the air between us seems to crackle with unspoken tension. Then he clears his throat, reaching for his wallet.

"Well, that was certainly more interesting than I expected, I must admit," he says, his tone light but his eyes still serious.

"What do I owe you for the incense?"

As I calculate his total, he studies my face with the same intensity I've been watching his. "I don't think I caught your name."

"Renet," I reply, surprised by how breathless I sound.

"Renet," he repeats it as if testing the syllables, and something in his voice makes my name sound like a prayer. "It's beautiful. And those eyes of yours..."

He pauses, studying my face with newfound intensity.

"They're remarkable, really. That deep green that holds mysteries you sell."

Heat floods my cheeks at the unexpected compliment.

"Um... thank you," I manage, acutely aware of how my pulse has quickened.

Before paying, he points to the display case behind me.

"Actually, could you add that green scarab amulet as well? The one on the second shelf."

I retrieve it, the small carved stone warm against my palm but when I move to place it in his bag with the incense, he stops me with a gentle touch on my wrist.

The contact sends electricity shooting up my arm.

His skin is warm, calloused in a way that speaks of work with his hands, and the brief touch feels like coming home.

"That's for you," he says softly. "A gift. Call it payment for the reading, if you prefer."



reading, if you prefer."

"I couldn't possibly—"

"Please." His eyes hold mine, and I see something there that makes my breath catch. "I want you to have it. It perfectly matches the color of your stunning eyes."

Reluctantly, I accept the amulet, closing my fingers around the smooth stone.

It feels significant somehow, as if it's more than just a simple piece of jewelry.

"Thank you," I whisper. "That's incredibly generous, really, but I don't even know your name."

"Amenis," he says, placing exact change on the counter.

His fingers brush mine as he does, sending another jolt of that strange heat through me.

"Though my friends simply call me Amen."

[THE END]

## **End** *of* *The* **Chapter**

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Comments

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Gifts

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