

STONE CRAZY

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FADE IN:

EXT. EGYPTIAN ARCHAEOLOGICAL DIG - DAWN

C.U. vulture, seen from behind, standing with outstretched wings, CAWING; B.G. archaeological dig.

PANS over Sphinx, trenches, Khafre's pyramid, ending on Khufu's pyramid from below.

AUDIO: from TEN COMMANDMENTS: Charlton Heston scene.

CUT TO:

TEN COMMANDMENTS SCENE

On a computer monitor, Charlton Heston scene, saying, "There are 2000 men on those ropes."

CUT TO:

EXT. SANDY GROUND - DAWN

C.U. running feet of a BOY. SOUNDTRACK suddenly throbbing drums. Boy runs into a tent, stops in the doorway of PROFESSOR, watching Heston scene on his computer. Audio reverts to TEN COMMANDMENTS.

BOY  
They've found something!

CUT TO:

INT. TOMB - DAWN

PROFESSOR being led through dark passageways by BOY with torchlight, to RADCLIFFE, a young archaeologist and his team, preparing to break open a stone portal.

RADCLIFFE  
This is it, Professor! The Queen's burial chamber!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PROFESSOR looks on unfazed as stone is BROKEN. MUSIC UP. POV from inside of chamber: surprise on faces of RADCLIFFE and workers. Reverse shot reveals - nothing. MUSIC CUT. Small bare rock chamber. PROFESSOR turns and leaves, RADCLIFFE steps into chamber pushing on the stones within in vain.

CUT TO:

INT. PROFESSOR'S TENT - DAY

PROFESSOR stalks tent, making tea, laying out charts, pecking at computer keyboard, lighting a Cuban cigar while he speaks. RADCLIFFE sits.

PROFESSOR

They did that all the time, y'know. Maybe to lead tomb vandals astray? Or simply because the workers were laid off before they could finish? Whatever the reason, any culture that can exert its will over four generations--

RADCLIFFE

But why go to all that trouble to build--

PROFESSOR

The most accurately aligned structure in existence?

PROFESSOR puffs on his Cuban. RADCLIFFE coughs at the smoke; PROFESSOR ignores him.

RADCLIFFE

But wasn't it economically unfeasible? I mean - just considering the thousands of slaves - they've gotta be fed, you need overseers, masons, brewers - the infrastructure alone would create whole cities.

PROFESSOR

Maybe it wasn't as extensive as we think, Radcliffe... The mistake we make when we "use ancient methods" to construct pyramids is we deny ourselves the actual ancient methods. For instance, people try moving these stones directly over the desert floor - but the sand won't let you; you need to harden the ground first, like the Egyptians did.

RADCLIFFE

Concrete?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PROFESSOR opens a small fridge and throws RADCLIFFE a beer, taking one for himself, gulping it.

PROFESSOR  
(Belch) Beer.

RADCLIFFE  
Touch of heat stroke, Professor? At least this should help.

PROFESSOR  
You sound like one of those Egyptologists who want me in a sarcophagus. The ancient Egyptians thrived on brews for breakfast, lunch and dinner - hell, they used it as wages. And - it's a hardening agent when poured onto sand.

RADCLIFFE  
You're kidding me, right?  
(aside)  
And a waste of beer!

PROFESSOR  
Those were different times, Radcliffe - when kings were gods and the most precious thing in life was--

RADCLIFFE  
(mid beer-swig)  
Death?

PROFESSOR  
Immortality.

While PROFESSOR is speaking, his computer runs diagrams, CG simulations of everything he speaks about.

PROFESSOR (CONT'D)  
The Book of the Dead, Anubis weighing hearts, the pyramids being tombs; chasing immortality. To achieve that in one lifetime, you work faster, cheaper--

RADCLIFFE  
(dismissive)  
"Faster, cheaper, better" - NASA's credo.

PROFESSOR  
Despite the fact you can't have all three simultaneously. But the Egyptians went one better - they worked smarter.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

RADCLIFFE

Published your theories, Professor?

PROFESSOR

Pardon the pun, but they've all been buried.

Computer simulations show canals leading to pyramid base, filled with water, stones on barges sailing up to pyramid.

PROFESSOR (CONT'D)

The ancient Egyptians were paragons of ingenuity: from the quarrying of 80-ton blocks of granite, to the sailing of stones...

RADCLIFFE

(looking at computer)

Look at that!? Ingenious. But there's so much water involved--

PROFESSOR

Exactly! Why deprive ourselves of water when the Egyptians used it extensively? See these canals built right into the pyramids?

RADCLIFFE

So the Charlton Heston method of 2000 pulling slaves is a myth?

PROFESSOR

Not exactly - use pulleys and you still pull; just not with 2000 slaves.

Computer pictures of pulley system with ranks of workers pulling away from the weight they are pulling uphill.

PROFESSOR (CONT'D)

And look! The pyramid side itself is a ramp - why don't we account for that in our "modern" methods?

RADCLIFFE

But wasn't the pyramid too steep?

PROFESSOR

Maybe if you pulled stones up the side like a slave. Go further, young Radcliffe - why pull at all when something can do it for you?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

RADCLIFFE

The water?

C.U. PROFILE: The PROFESSOR puffs his Cuban and blows out the smoke.

PROFESSOR

The wind...

Computer stills of kites painted like vultures, simulations of pulling stones up scaffolding and pyramid sides; kites sailing stones along waterways on barges; kite-wranglers riding the stones.

RADCLIFFE

(takes a beat to digest this)

How do you--? But how did these methods--  
? Who figured--?

PROFESSOR

And that, my dear Radcliffe, is the real tale. Who first learned how to sail these stones? Did they hide the message, or did they communicate on a level we still don't understand? The discovery of fire, the wheel, electricity - nothing happens all at once - all great innovations are 90% perspiration and 10% sheer... blind... accident--

CUT TO:

EXT. SHOPKEEPER'S ARENA - AFTERNOON

C.U. BOY's feet, as he trips over shelf display outside a shop. Clay bowls go flying (allusion to "accident"). Shopkeeper shouts after BOY, who continues running. BOY is flying a small kite.

TEXT: Egypt, 2580 B.C.

BOY turns a corner and crashes into KHAFRE, our hero.

KHAFRE

Whouf! Where's the oasis, kid?

Boy continues running. KHAFRE flinches as boy's kite goes past his nose.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KHAFRE continues walk through KHUFU'S PALACE SHOPKEEPER ARENA, CAMERA at floor level, peripheral views of shops as he passes: Music Store, Health Foods, Gym, etc. (think Caesar's Palace boardwalk).

JUMP CUT TO:

INT. PUB - AFTERNOON

KHAFRE enters pub, sees barroom brawl in progress. A beat, as he backs out, while CAMERA holds. Suddenly he rushes back in and dives into brawl. A llama bucks across foreground, someone hanging onto its neck (running gag for every brawl). Soon KHAFRE is thrown over the counter, behind the bar, where BABA is cleaning glasses, unconcerned.

BABA  
(to KHAFRE, unconcerned)  
You really should stop that brawling every time you walk in here.

KHAFRE  
(panting, still on the floor)  
Oh, and give me one reason, Baba boy.

BABA  
Reason One: You own the bar, Khafre.

KHAFRE  
(rises)  
What's it about this time?

BABA puts two glasses before KHAFRE, who fills them with beer quickly, obviously at home behind bar. They drink and talk.

BABA  
They're "discussing" who's going to win the pyramid-building competition.

KHAFRE  
Since when do palace shopkeepers compete to build pyramids?

BABA  
Since Goofy Khufy made them impossible to build.

CUT TO FLASHBACK:

INT. THRONE ROOM - DAY

TEXT: Five hours ago, B.C.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Pharaoh KHUFU in in-ground milk pool, set before his throne. His Grand Vizier, IMHOTEP, stands to the side of the pool. SLAVEGIRL-1 fans KHUFU with giant feather, SLAVEGIRL-2 stands nearby with amphora of milk. SLAVEGIRL-3 in milk with KHUFU, sponging him down. KHUFU preens with a mirror. Every time KHUFU shouts for milk, everyone flinches.

IMHOTEP

...But mighty Pharaoh Khufu, we can't build a smooth pyramid of that size! It's not physically possible--

KHUFU

Teppy! You are the Grand Vizier, son of Imhotep the Large; you can do anything! Milk! We need more milk!

SLAVEGIRL-2 steps forward, pours milk into bath, retreats.

KHUFU (CONT'D)

See?

KHUFU raises SLAVEGIRL-3's hand up from under the milk. She holds a small gleaming, smooth-sided pyramid. The hand and pyramid go back underwater when KHUFU releases them.

IMHOTEP

Sire, the base blocks for such an immense pyramid would be 15 tons each. And the capstone for the burial chamber would be eighty tons. On the other hand, a nice, respectable Step Pyramid, of my father's design, uses two-ton stones and still rises 70 feet to heaven, ensuring your journey through the underworld--

KHUFU

(reminiscing)

Knew your father We did, Teppy. He was a grand Grand Vizier. He poured Us Our first milk bath when We were younger by half than this olive-skinned wench.

(comes back to reality)

But no - his step pyramid is so - 3000 BC. We want a smooth pyramid! It shall be grander, shinier and more pleasant for the gods to look upon.

IMHOTEP

But sire, the manpower and time to build a pyramid 500 feet high is beyond feasible--

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

KHUFU

Well then, invent a faster way to build pyramids, Teppy! Now go, before We feed you to Our llama.

SLAVEGIRL-3 starts doing something under the water, to which KHUFU responds. IMHOTEP turns and exits quickly.

KHUFU (CONT'D)

We feel - oh, We feel - a pyramid--

INT. KHUFU'S PALACE, CORRIDOR - MOMENTS LATER

IMHOTEP passes a PALACE GUARD, who greets IMHOTEP.

PALACE GUARD:

May the Pharaoh shine his blessings on you, Teppy!

IMHOTEP

(turns on GUARD acerbically)  
 "Imhotep," you drained camel's hump! I am the son of Imhotep the Large, the Grand Vizier to Pharaoh Djoser, builder of the Great Step Pyramid at Saqqara! Display your insolence again, I'll have you crucified!

PALACE GUARD:

Yessir, Grand Vizier Tep - er, Imhotep the Large Pyramid Builder.

IMHOTEP turns on his heel, stalks off. PALACE GUARD makes silent nyah-nyah gestures behind IMHOTEP'S back. When IMHOTEP turns, PALACE GUARD suddenly stops the nyah-nyah and is standing at attention.

JUMP CUT TO:

INT. IMHOTEP'S CHAMBER - DAY

IMHOTEP enters, slams door behind him. His aide, YOJIMBO, caught playing with toy figures on blueprints of mastabas and the Giza Necropolis, suddenly stops, trying to hide toys.

IMHOTEP

He's insane!

YOJIMBO

Yes he is Tep-

IMHOTEP gives YOJIMBO deathly glare.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

YOJIMBO (CONT'D)  
-er, who, Grand Vizier?

IMHOTEP moves to desk, studies blueprints. Small step pyramids are used as paperweights.

IMHOTEP  
Khufu! You mongoose stain!

YOJIMBO  
Well, they don't call him Goofy Khufy for nothing-

IMHOTEP  
(turns on YOJIMBO)  
Never let me hear that name in my presence or I'll have you boiled in ox fat! He is our Pharaoh. The masses must believe he is the incarnation of Horus on Earth - it is politic to look like we are doing his bidding!

YOJIMBO  
(making claw and fang gestures)  
Yeh, and that llama of his... so why does my lord the Grand Vizier call him insane?

IMHOTEP  
(motioning at blueprints)  
This smooth pyramid obsession! It cannot be done in one lifetime, Yojimbo! The palace engineers tell me the base of the pyramid would be over 750 feet square!

YOJIMBO  
Then let's raise the palace guard against him. Or defect across the Suez Gulf to The Middle East - I hear that's a quiet, peaceful area. We can retire and live like Pharaohs.

IMHOTEP  
Ahhh! I'm sick of running from my past.

YOJIMBO  
Oh, Grand Vizier - that look in your eye...

As IMHOTEP speaks, YOJIMBO acts out enthusiastically behind him, making pointed roof, sparkling treasure, "oh" with arms shielding from blinding dazzle.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

IMHOTEP  
 (resolves)  
 Let's build it! A smooth pyramid, 500  
 feet high, covered in reflective  
 limestone, so dazzling it will blind the  
 gods! And by Isis, they will remember my  
 name:

YOJIMBO  
 (in a grand flourish)  
 Teppy!--

IMHOTEP slaps YOJIMBO nonchalantly, who corrects himself.

YOJIMBO (CONT'D)  
 Imhotep!

IMHOTEP  
 Imhotep the Large Pyramid Builder! Summon  
 the engineers. They will start planning  
 before the Sun God rises--

YOJIMBO  
 But they told you they don't know how!

IMHOTEP moves in on cowering YOJIMBO. MUSIC UP.

IMHOTEP  
 Then there will be pain! But you're  
 right!

YOJIMBO  
 I am, Teppy?

IMHOTEP  
 (slaps YOJIMBO distractedly)  
 The engineers might not know how... but  
 there is someone out there who does...

Last shot is of step pyramid paperweight.

CUT TO:

INT. PUB - AFTERNOON CONT'D

C.U. of small step pyramid on bar counter. Dialog starts O.C.

BABA  
 (absentmindedly twirling ankh  
 on his finger)  
 (MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BABA (CONT'D)

...so Teppy announces that the Palace is looking for a faster way to build a bigger pyramid. Khafre, the news has spread like Nile floodwater.

KHAFRE

Who wants to be in this stupid competition?

BABA

You're lookin' at 'em. There's Hunefer...

As BABA mentions names, we see shots of them in the pub melee. Most of KHAFRE'S and BABA'S dialog is O.C.

KHAFRE

He's an ox-cart salesman! What does he know about pyramids?

BABA

And Buto.

KHAFRE

Largest slave trade this side of Sinai. Who stands a chance against his 2000 slaves?

BABA

Dunno, maybe Charlton Heston. Well, Kamoses is gonna try.

KHAFRE

The Sales rep from Gypway, eh?

BABA

You gotta admit - he knows about networking and pyramid schemes.

KHAFRE

Yeh, and they're all as promising as this pyramid scheme.

KHAFRE grabs a bottle of liquor, pops top with an ankh from his belt. Swigs. Manipulates ankh like any tradesman would manipulate a much-used tool (pointing, twirling, etc.).

BABA

Hathor wants a shot as well.

Shot of HATHOR, lifting table, breaking it on someone's head.

KHAFRE

Isis! That's gotta hurt. Is he bringing his merry men from the gym along?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

BABA

Oh yeh. And Elvith is in. Says his  
harmonic sound waves can move the stones.

Shot of ELVITH, guitar strapped across back, dark glasses on,  
punching air. BLACKMORE, a band member, is near him shouting,  
"Hit 'im again, dude!"

BABA (CONT'D)

And Sennach thinks her health foods will  
give her workers a "nutritional edge."  
(BABA makes quotation signs.)

Shot of SENNACH in scuffle, well-built female, taking on all  
comers as lustily as any man. Near SENNACH, her aide, SABOLA,  
encourages her, while lustily groping guys, her "Oh yeh!"s as  
much for SENNACH beating someone as for grabbing buttcheeks.

KHAFRE

(indicating "quotation marks")  
What does that mean?

BABA shrugs his shoulders.

KHAFRE (CONT'D)

What's Bankole doing? Isn't he the  
engineer who built Khufu's palace? That  
ain't right - he's a ringer!

Shot of BANKOLE - geek with plastic pen holders trying to  
stay out of fracas.

BABA

A square palace isn't exactly a  
triangular tomb, Khaffy. It's a whole  
different set of logistics.

KHAFRE

Who's the hat?

Shot of HATSHEP, off to one side, wearing a step pyramid hat,  
gesticulating wildly, as if casting spells on the fight.

BABA

Hatshep - leads that cult, The Canalers.  
Thinks otherworld aliens built the  
pyramid at Saqqara.

KHAFRE

And they're coming back just to help him,  
I guess?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

BABA

Hey, I'm just the messenger.

KHAFRE

Isis! Do any of these guys actually know how to build a pyramid?

BABA

Well, that's kinda what I figured, so... I entered us into the competition.

KHAFRE

You what? What do we know about pyramid building?

BABA

Relax! You've been to Saggara and done the step pyramid tour - the first one that Teppy's father built?

KHAFRE

Yeh, back in school - I got lost in the catacombs; it was like the Temple of Doom in there! Osiris help us!

BABA

Yeh, well, it's just stone steps - how hard can it be?

KHAFRE

It's five hundred camel-necked feet of stone steps! Count me out, Baba. I have a hard enough time running this bar.

BABA

Correction: you own the bar. I run it.

KHAFRE

So if you go off building a pyramid, who's gonna keep these lushes drunk?

BABA

Winner gets a million shekel contract.

KHAFRE

What are we waiting for?

In the brawl, someone smashes an urn over someone's head.

BABA

Hey! That urn is 3rd Dynasty.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

KHAFRE  
Pharaoh Djoser? I love that period.

BABA  
I love that urn!

KHAFRE  
(motioning over the counter)  
After you.

KHAFRE and BABA dive over the counter into the heart of the brawl. As they land in the mess of bodies with an impact -

CUT TO:

INT. GYM - DAY

A fist impact on a punching bag. It is MERESANKH, a fit female, working out in the gym. MERESANKH overhears conversation between RHINOPLASTY and HIPPOCAMPUS.

RHINOPLASTY  
A million shekels!

HIPPOCAMPUS  
That's the reward?! And all we do is help Hathor push the stones up the Giza Plateau?

RHINOPLASTY  
(both bust out laughing)  
Up the Giza? Nothin' like man-muscle, pudding.

HIPPOCAMPUS  
Mmm! Well-oiled! Give me a piece of that meaty rump!

RHINOPLASTY  
When Teppy announced the competition (wearing those drab white robes with that completely awful Third Dynasty head-dress) the palace shopkeepers jumped on the cash prize--

HIPPOCAMPUS  
Does Goofy Khufy know Teppy the Tiny is using palace collateral for such gaiety?

RHINOPLASTY  
Khufu doesn't know when he's running his own milk bath.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Wild sniggering. MERESANKH overhears every word.

RHINOPLASTY (CONT'D)

So - you in, dove?

HIPPOCAMPUS

Does Anubis weigh hearts? You bet I'm in!

MERESANKH, now angered, slams into the punching bag. As she impacts -

CUT TO:

INT. TUTU RAM'S CHAMBERS - DAY

Slam of door as IMHOTEP enters his son, TUTU RAM'S, chambers.

IMHOTEP

Tutu Ram - at the Great Pyramid's ground-breaking, you will marry that Nefret wench and the power of Egypt will flow into our hands like the Nile in flood.

TUTU RAM

Er, father, is that entirely legal in our nepotistic imperial autocracy? I don't wanna marry her anyway. I think I like boy--

IMHOTEP

(doesn't hear TUTU'S  
"confession")

Details! This is the bloodline of Egypt in our grasp, Tutu. The deal is set in stone. All we need is a method from those madmen. And history will lay the repute at the Grand Vizier's feet--what?!

A knock on the door. YOJIMBO enters.

YOJIMBO

Grand Vizier, the Princess Meresankh wishes an audience with you.

IMHOTEP

Tell her I will be there shortly.

YOJIMBO

Grand Vizier - she is here.

In walks MERESANKH, the boxer from the gym, but resplendent in regal robes, attended by FEMALE AIDE.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MERESANKH  
(deadly serious)  
Grand Vizier, we must talk.

IMHOTEP  
At once, Your Highness.

IMHOTEP motions for TUTU RAM and YOJIMBO to leave, hastily.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. PUB - NIGHT

KHAFRE and BABA clean up after the brawl, sweeping, righting tables, chairs, straightening pictures.

KHAFRE  
...so we employ the best engineers and builders and sit back and oversee with our cash.

BABA  
Where're we gonna get these engineers, Khaffy? The best in the world are in this palace - and they're not gonna help us. Wonder what Teppy gets out of all this?

KHAFRE  
Maybe a nice triangular storage place for his millions of gold cups and amulets?

BABA  
Nah, he's a Party-Before-Country guy. He'd sell his Ka and Ba to make a drachma. Word on the plaza is that Teppy's son, that Tutu Ram, is slated to marry Khufu's oldest daughter, Nefret. Since Khufu has no sons, Tutu's son will become Pharaoh, which means:  
(counting on his fingers)  
Teppy's bloodline in the palace; Teppy with power over the Pharaoh; Teppy with power over Egypt...

They both snap their heads to look at each other in wide-eyed realization. Exclaim in unison.

KHAFRE  
Teppy's gonna kill the Pharoah!

BABA  
Teppy's gonna kill the Pharoah!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KHAFRE and BABA run out the door in opposite directions, "AAAAAAAAAAHHH!" As soon as they are out, one beat, and they come back in, rational, talking simultaneously.

KHAFRE  
You were always one for melodrama. I don't know what comes over you sometimes - you gotta take a powder, my son...

BABA  
That really is a bit unreasonable, I must say. I mean, what would be the motive? Your imagination really does tend to run away with its bad self, young man...

They resume cleaning. KHAFRE grabs a bottle, swigs, sits.

KHAFRE  
What're you gonna do with your share?

BABA  
(gives KHAFRE a look like he's a bit slow)  
Okay, say we devise a method to move giant stones even though neither of us is an engineer; and say our loving fellow shopkeepers won't try to sabotage us; and say Teppy doesn't fix it so no one gets paid; and say we don't die of sunstroke - I'd say: me and Lilliankh want to get a little place of our own far removed from the Red Land.

KHAFRE  
Yeh, the desert can be rough for a young couple. Looking up in the Black Land?

BABA  
Where else? Along the banks of the Nile, where that black silt makes the soil rich and fertile; watch the sun set over our own farming property, y'know?

KHAFRE  
I feel you, Baba.

BABA  
And what about you, Khaffy?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

KHAFRE

Well, Baba - saying all those things with the sunstroke and the sabotage - that old Egyptian saying pretty much sums me up: "The mouth of a perfectly contented man is filled with beer." This pub is my life. I'll be embalmed by this stuff long before they wrap me in bandages.  
(takes swig)

BABA

We just need to find you a good woman to embalm next to.

KHAFRE

Ah, I got a good woman.

BABA

If you call the fact that political protocol forbids you within fifty feet of her on pain of death "got."

KHAFRE

We make it happen.

BABA

You aim too high, my lush friend.

KHAFRE

(sadly)  
Maybe she's aiming too low?

BABA

(poignantly, arm around KHAFRE)  
No. You're a pair of royal sandals, mate.  
(rises)  
C'mon let's get this place ready for tomorrow night's brawl.

FADE OUT.

INT. NEFRET'S CHAMBERS - DAY

NEFRET sits before her mirror primping, while MERESANKH stalks the room.

MERESANKH

He presumes too much, Nefret! One would think he is the Pharaoh himself.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NEFRET

You know that Imhotep greases the kingdom's gears so that our father can live like the god he is.

MERESANKH

A god that bathes in milk and plays with duckies and smooth pyramids? Imhotep has contracted a million shekels for a stone-moving competition!

NEFRET

Well, technically he is in charge of palace finances--

MERESANKH

But not for juvenile games. A king's tomb is a sacred monument! And - he has manipulated our father into marrying you to Tutu Ram!

NEFRET

(laughing it off)

Not if I have anything to say about it!

MERESANKH

That's the problem, Nefret - you don't! Our father will relinquish the throne to the son that you bear - a son of Imhotep's bloodline! Our Fourth Dynasty ends with your marriage.

PUSH IN on Nefret, somber now.

CUT TO:

INT. GYM - DAY

SLOW MOTION SHOTS of MERESANKH pounding bag, bench-pressing, sweating solidly. KHAFRE also in gym, ineptly dropping barbells, getting caught under benchpress, etc., KHAFRE and MERESANKH nonchalantly give each other askew glances.

INT. GYM - CORRIDOR WITH PILLARS - DAY

SLOW MOTION, KHAFRE and MERESANKH approach each other from opposite ends of corridor, suddenly noticing they are alone. They meet and duck between gap in pillars, MUSIC CUTS, RESUME NORMAL FILM SPEED. As Khafre necks amorously, MERESANKH is distant.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MERESANKH

We must find a way to build my father's tomb without Imhotep usurping his power.

KHAFRE

Hey! How about a "nice to see you after two lonely nights, Khaffy!" or something?

MERESANKH

You know I long to see you, Khaffy - but the kingdom is at stake--

KHAFRE realizes MERESANKH is preoccupied with the pyramid. He schmoozes her with the subject.

KHAFRE

You still on about that?-- Okay, I'll find a way to move those stones like the wind.

MERESANKH

You are in the stone-moving competition at Giza?

KHAFRE

You bet! Lemme just--

MERESANKH

Two days ago, you said it was the stupidest thing in Egypt!

KHAFRE

Baba signed the contract - what am I gonna do? Let him have all the fame?

MERESANKH

Khafre! It's wonderful!

KHAFRE

(aiming for her chest)  
It is! I mean - if it gets you there--

MERESANKH

(pushes him off suddenly)  
But no - it's not!

KHAFRE

(moves back in)  
It is! It is!

MERESANKH

(pushes him off again)  
Don't you see?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

KHAFRE  
 (referring to her chest)  
 I do! I do!

MERESANKH  
 It is dangerous enough for us to be seen  
 together - now it is impossible!

KHAFRE  
 It's not! It's not!

MERESANKH  
 If you win, you will be a national hero;  
 it might be our only chance to marry  
 without disgrace. But if anyone discovers  
 us and thinks I lent my royal hand to  
 your team, we will both be banished.

KHAFRE is stunned for a beat. MUSIC UP to denote serious  
 intent - suddenly mood is broken as he dives in and grapples  
 with MERESANKH again.

PUSH IN on MERESANKH'S breasts.

CUT TO:

INT. THRONE ROOM - DAY

PULL OUT on SLAVEGIRL'S breasts. KHUFU in milk pool, with  
 SLAVEGIRL-1. NEFRET circles milk-pool.

NEFRET  
 But daddy, why can't Meresankh marry  
 Tutu?

KHUFU  
 Daughter Nefret, you must be married at  
 the opening ceremony of our Grand Tomb to  
 fulfill the prophecy.

NEFRET  
 What prophecy?

KHUFU  
 (distant look)  
 There shall come one among you and his  
 name shall be Emmanuel.

NEFRET  
 Daddy, that's the Kingdom of David. It's  
 from the Bible - a bestseller on Egypt's  
 fiction list.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KHUFU

I don't care! A prophecy is a prophecy!  
And who's Emmanuel?

NEFRET

I don't know, and I'm not marrying him!

KHUFU

Emmanuel? Nefret! You are Our oldest  
child. Our royal bloodline flows through  
you. Ooooooh!

KHUFU, shocked, jerks half out of the pool. SLAVEGIRL-3 rises from below with the small pyramid. She exits, while KHUFU looks after her longingly.

NEFRET

Daddy, Meresankh says Imhotep's bloodline  
will--

KHUFU

Hush, child! We must have a male heir to  
continue Our divine legacy.

KHUFU plays with sailboats and his rubber ducky, MAXI, blowing MAXI on a sailboat across the pool.

KHUFU (CONT'D)

Go on, Maxi! Explore! Find new lands for  
Us to conquer.

NEFRET

But Imhotep will use a male heir to--

KHUFU

Your Deity has spoken. We will hear you  
no more. Send in Our slavegirls!

SLAVEGIRLS dance in as NEFRET, frustrated yet powerless, exits. KHUFU continues blowing sailboats around.

PAN OUT palace window, across sand dunes.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. FRIENDS OF THE SAND OFFICE - NIGHT

PAN ACROSS sand dunes. Suddenly, we come across a bulletin board (showing protest dates) and realize dunes are painted on walls. TESHUB the Environmentalist sits cross-legged in a room full of sand, speaking with NEFRET in a hooded cape, incognito. Do not reveal NEFRET until her last line.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TESHUB (ENVIRONMENTALIST)  
Exactly where do they plan to build?

NEFRET  
The Giza Plateau, on the Nile shores.

TESHUB (ENVIRONMENTALIST)  
Why tell Teshub and the Friends of the Sand?

NEFRET  
Pharaoh's tomb will be an exercise in vanity, Teshub! It will disrupt the ecology for decades. The sands of Mother Egypt will cry out!

TESHUB (ENVIRONMENTALIST)  
Since when have you been a Friend of the Sand?

NEFRET  
Since when has a Friend of the Sand needed a reason to protest?

TESHUB (ENVIRONMENTALIST)  
Touché. But though we do the work of Hershef - He of the Sand - Teshub and his minions are but mortals and cannot route the sand-demons with the required brutality with nought but our--

NEFRET throws a purse of coins in TESHUB's lap. Without missing a beat, TESHUB continues dialog.

TESHUB (ENVIRONMENTALIST) (CONT'D)  
--when is a good time for you?

NEFRET  
Two mornings after the Day of The Sun.

TESHUB (ENVIRONMENTALIST)  
Shall we call it Tuesday?

NEFRET  
How dare you speaketh that swear word in the presence of a Princess?! All I ask is that you disrupt the construction as you have disrupted your Ka and Ba.

NEFRET exits.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

TESHUB (ENVIRONMENTALIST)  
 (mumbling to himself)  
 My Ka and Ba's just fine, thank you very  
 much, Miss Pointy Pants...

FADE OUT.

END ACT I

ACT II

FADE IN:

EXT. THE DOCKS - DAY

OPENING SHOT: from below, vultures wheeling in sky. Vultures  
 dissolve into seagulls.

PAN DOWN. KHENSU'S freight sailing ship is docking. KHAFRE is  
 waiting on docks with JAFARI and ox-carts to be loaded.

KHAFRE  
 Ay, Khensu! Back from the edge of...Where  
 you been this time?

KHENSU (SAILOR)  
 (waves greeting from ship)  
 Ay Khafre! Any way the sea flows, any way  
 the wind blows.

JUMP CUT TO:

EXT. THE DOCKS - DAY, MOMENTS LATER.

Slaves unload beer jugs down gangplank onto KHAFRE'S ox-  
 carts. Single file, one jug each. Empty-handed slaves walk up  
 parallel gangplank, back onto ship's deck.

JUMP CUT TO:

EXT. THE DOCKS - LATER.

Khafre's loaded ox-carts move out. While KHAFRE signs a  
 clipboard, KHENSU inquires.

KHENSU (SAILOR)  
 I was in Morocco - did I hear right?  
 World's largest smooth pyramid? Stone-  
 moving competition?

KHAFRE  
 Me and Baba - we're in, Khensu!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KHENSU

(laughs)

But what do you guys know about--?

KHAFRE

Nothing! That's the beauty - neither does anyone else! Can't hurt to ride the wave. For Mother Egypt.

(hands back clipboard)

You outa here?

KHENSU

(slyly, like a confidant)

More like 'for a princess.' No, not yet - I've got these 1000 gallons of milk to deliver to the palace.

KHENSU motions to slaves now with milk amphoras on gangplank.

KHAFRE

What does Goofy Khufy do with all that milk?

KHENSU (SAILOR)

Well, it keeps his thighs supple, and I hear from his slavegirls it smells better than the egg whites he used to bathe in two harvests ago.

Beat, then KHAFRE and KHENSU make a shuddering "icky" gesture together.

CUT TO:

EXT. PUB - LATER THAT DAY

Khafre approaches PUB on ox-cart, BABA gestures excitedly.

KHAFRE

What you got, Baba?

BABA

Our business problems are solved.

INT. PUB - DAY

BABA proudly shows KHAFRE pulley system he has installed over cellar floor doors, which lead to beer jug storage. He calls down into cellar.

BABA

Okay! Load 'er up!  
(pulls jug up from cellar)  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BABA (CONT'D)

With this machine, think how much we'll save by letting half our slaves go? No more feeding and housing and nominal health care.

KHAFRE

You make us sound like an arm of the government. Quite tasty, Baba!

As BABA speaks, he pulls ankh from his belt and deftly anchors rope. Then he hoists jug off rope, pulls another ankh from his belt, uncorks jug seal, then replaces cork seal lightly in jug mouth. BABA places jug on a shelf.

BABA (CONT'D)

Our business - is gonna fly!

CAMERA PULLS BACK to reveal that jugs are stacked "pyramid-wise" on shelves (i.e. top row has one jug, the next, two jugs, and so on, with five jugs in bottom row).

KHAFRE

Can we rig these Pulling Things to move the jugs off the ox-carts?

BABA

Khaffy, we can rig these things to move the jugs and the ox-cart and the ox. The more Pulling Things in a row, the more leverage we get. We can move a mountain if we wanted to!

KHAFRE visualizes jug pyramid morph into a stone pyramid.

KHAFRE

What'd you say?

BABA

What? The first thing or the second thing?

KHAFRE

The third thing.

BABA

Oh - we can rig these things to move the--

KHAFRE

No, no - must've been the first thing then!--

BABA

What, you mean the more Pulling Things in a row--

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

KHAFRE  
No! The other thing!

BABA  
What other thing?

KHAFRE  
Look - you said three things--

BABA  
Are you counting ends of sentences or  
semi-colons?

Suddenly, REPORTER appears in f.g. STEADICAM ON REPORTER,  
KHAFRE and BABA in b.g.

REPORTER  
This is Robert Foster for CNN, the Cairo  
News Network.

KHAFRE  
Who's that? Hey, what you  
doing here? Staff only in  
here, mate!--

BABA  
I dunno! Who let you in here?  
What's he talking about?

REPORTER (CONT'D)  
(continues reportage over  
KHAFRE and BABA's indignation)  
Here at Khafre's Brewery, proprietors  
Khafre and Baba run a smooth hard liquor  
trade for Pharaoh Khufu's palace--

BABA  
Oh, it's that Reporter guy.

KHAFRE  
(pointing at camera)  
Oh, that guy! What's that thing? Why is  
he talking to it?

REPORTER  
Khafre, in the stone-moving contest, how  
will you beat the palace shopkeepers who  
are your very customers?

KHAFRE  
What? Er... I guess we just figure a fast  
method of moving stones, but our research  
has been pretty, well...

REPORTER O.C.  
Solid?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

KHAFRE

No--

REPORTER O.C.

Concrete?

KHAFRE

No, I'm thinking more along--

REPORTER O.C.

Inebriated?

KHAFRE

You calling us drunks?

REPORTER O.C.

Well, if the skirt fits...

KHAFRE trips over a bucket behind bar, which spills its water into a gutter that runs the length of the bar at its base. He turns and smacks his face into a hanging beer jug.

KHAFRE

Ow! I need to get outa here. You good for a minute, Baba? Lemme take a walk with the stiff - show him we know what time it is around here.

BABA

(sarcastically, while hoisting another jug)

Go ahead. If you call this helping, I'll need to hire more slaves.

With ankh, KHAFRE unlocks back door, which whips open in the high wind.

KHAFRE

We've had a lot of beer spills out here, fellas, so watch your step--

KHAFRE slips and pratfalls. REPORTER and CREW laugh madly.

JUMP CUT TO:

EXT. KHUFU'S COURTYARD - DAY

BRIEFING SEMINAR

IMHOTEP speaks from a 2-foot high dais, map of Giza Plateau and Nile behind him. YOJIMBO stands behind IMHOTEP.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

20 PALACE GUARDS line the dais perimeter, spears and shields at attention. PALACE SHOPKEEPERS (including KHAFRE and BABA) sit or stand casually before dais.

IMHOTEP

...You compete against Tehuti, the god of time. You are not here to build a pyramid - you compete to demonstrate the fastest, most economic method to move the largest stones ever quarried - 80-ton granite slabs.

REACTION SHOTS of SHOPKEEPERS.

IMHOTEP (CONT'D)

The Great Pyramid of Khufu must tower above the world of men!

ELVITH, stoned, raises hand. YOJIMBO informs IMHOTEP.

YOJIMBO

Elvith, owner of the palace music store.

IMHOTEP

Speak!

ELVITH (MINSTREL)

Er, Teppy, how long before-

IMHOTEP

(infuriated, corrects his name)  
Imhotep!

ELVITH (MINSTREL)

Er... what?

IMHOTEP

(through gritted teeth)  
You have a question.

ELVITH (MINSTREL)

You told me I had a question?

IMHOTEP

(Almost explodes, reins himself in, moves on)  
Ghe-! Barges will deliver 80-ton capstones to the shores of the Nile, one mile from the foundation of the proposed pyramid. If you can move this stone at great speed - you can move a mountain. The finished tomb requires 2 million, three-hundred-thousand blocks, weighing two-and-a-half tons on average.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

IMHOTEP (CONT'D)

To raise this monument in our lifetime,  
we must shift 180 blocks per hour -  
that's 3 stones a minute, vendors!

REACTION SHOTS of SHOPKEEPERS, dismayed.

IMHOTEP (CONT'D)

For ten years!

REACTION SHOTS of SHOPKEEPERS, visibly worried. A voice  
shouts into the silence.

HATSHEP (CULT)

Faith... moves mountains, sonny! Eoouy!

IMHOTEP

Who? What?--

YOJIMBO

Hatshep, Grand Vizier. His cult maintains  
that otherworldly beings--

HATSHEP (CULT)

The Visitors From Beyond, fake priestess!  
The VFB's - Eoouy! They who built the  
step pyramid at Saggara will levitate the  
stones of Khufu as they did for Djoser.

IMHOTEP

You speak madness, priest! Why should we--

HATSHEP:

(completely defocused)

Eoouy! Elron! Elron! I am that I am!

IMHOTEP

(to YOJIMBO)

Is he talking to me?--

ELVITH (MINSTREL)

Oh yeh, I remember now--

IMHOTEP

(rounds on ELVITH)

Silence!

HATSHEP (CULT)

(Charlton Heston-style)

The VFB's will show us the Soaring  
Stones. The Way International.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

HATSHEP (CULT) (CONT'D)  
 Pray for your Ka and Ba, Grand Vizier,  
 and the VFB's will save your heart from  
 Ammut's gullet!

CUT TO:

INT. THRONE ROOM - DAY

Open on C.U. of KHUFU'S mouth, being fed grapes by SLAVEGIRL-3 in milk-bath. Tiny ships float in the milk, unattended. SLAVEGIRL-2 stands with milk amphora. MERESANKH stalks the outskirts of the milk bath.

MERESANKH  
 ...Is it wise for Tutu Ram to marry into  
 our Dynasty? Will he be true to Mother  
 Egypt?

KHUFU  
 (dribbling grape juice)  
 Why worry your royal tresses, Meresankh?  
 Is there trouble afoot? Afoot?! Hee hee!  
 More milk!

KHUFU finds his foot remark uproarious, pokes foot out of milk, points to it and giggles.

SLAVEGIRL-2 pours milk, sets tiny ships bobbing on the waves. They go unnoticed.

MERESANKH  
 Father, if a commoner were to perform a  
 grand deed which would trumpet your  
 Immortality across time, would he qualify  
 for marriage into the Royal House?

KHUFU  
 (jerks around looking)  
 A commoner? Where? Where? Marrying into  
 our Dynasty? When Egypt freezes over!--

MERESANKH  
 A commoner who would revere Mother Egypt,  
 unlike your Grand Vizier.

KHUFU  
 Only a daughter of Ours could utter such  
 heresy and live, Meresankh. Yet how might  
 Our Grand Vizier enact treachery, being  
 under the constant surveillance of Our  
 all-seeing Eye?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MERESANKH

Only gods and politicians can speak and say nothing! The Deity's Eye does not see all. Your Grand Vizier plots to overthrow your Dynasty through your own blood!

KHUFU swishes his hand through milk, trying to be profound, only confusing MERESANKH.

KHUFU

Is not milk thicker than blood?

MERESANKH

What--? When your daughter bears a son to Tutu Ram, the child will be Imhotep's bloodline, not yours!--

KHUFU

By the beard of Osiris!

MERESANKH

Do you see the catastrophic implications, Father?

KHUFU splashes to retrieve MAXI, floating sideways in pool.

KHUFU

Indeed, daughter! Maxi! Hold on!  
(grabs MAXI, gives CPR)  
Come back, Maxi! It's not your time!

MERESANKH

Father!

KHUFU

(interrupted)  
Daughter?!

MERESANKH

Imhotep!

KHUFU

Imhotep?

While MERESANKH speaks, KHUFU lovingly sets MAXI upright in milk, hums Styx's COME SAIL AWAY to himself, oblivious to MERESANKH.

MERESANKH

Imhotep! His vanity blinds him to being a loyal subject - the fame of his father is a stain on his ego.  
(assertive, yet edge of tears)  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MERESANKH (CONT'D)

Imhotep will build a grand tomb - not for your glory, but his. And the expedient method he seeks is not to hone the art of faster tombs, but to hone your tomb faster. When you are walking the Land of the Dead, Imhotep and his descendants will have free reign to ruin Egypt.

KHUFU

Hmm... We must consult Our Grand Vizier Teppy on these charges--

MERESANKH

Father! Have you not heard me?

KHUFU

What? Of course, daughter! You are right - the Grand Vizier is busy. We must consult Our other royal advisors...

(claps twice regally)

Send in Our llama! Milk! More milk!

SLAVEGIRL-2 pours milk. When the tiny ships bob on the waves, MERESANKH now notices them, through her frustration.

CUT TO:

INT. KHUFU'S COURTYARD - DAY

BRIEFING SEMINAR

HUNEFER (OXEN)

...I've signed a lot of contracts in my day - and they all have fine print. Are we obligated to finish our research at Giza? What if I need to sacrifice a fatted calf or clean my Augean stables? Can we claim extenuating circumstances?--

ELVITH:

Yeh dude, can we call shenanigans?

IMHOTEP

Your permits are binding for the--

HATHOR rises, body-oiled, in skimpy, skin-tight gym gear, short shorts, tank top, exposed midriff.

HATHOR (GYM)

Grand Vizier, me and my men would like--

VOICE FROM CROWD:

Your merry men!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SNIGGERS from CROWD.

HATHOR (GYM)  
 (looking around)  
 Who said that?

Silence.

YOJIMBO  
 Hathor, Grand Vizier. He runs the Gym of  
 De Nile near the south corner.

HATHOR (GYM)  
 Grand Vizier, would you please--

VOICE FROM CROWD-2:  
 Oil me down, sweetheart!

CROWD'S LAUGHTER rises in intensity.

IMHOTEP  
 Silence! Guards! Eject the offenders!

PALACE GUARDS move to find hecklers, can't locate them.

HATHOR (GYM)  
 By Isis and Osiris! Show yourself or I'll  
 harm you so wickedly--

VOICE FROM CROWD-2:  
 Sure you will, pudding bear!

While CROWD LAUGHS, IMHOTEP turns to YOJIMBO.

IMHOTEP  
 Why do they insult him so? Is he a gay  
 stereotype?

VOICE FROM CROWD:  
 Not yet!--

HATHOR dives into crowd, starting barroom brawl. The llama  
 goes cross-screen. IMHOTEP calls for order, bangs gavel.

IMHOTEP  
 Silence! Guards, eject everyone! Out!  
Out, you raving dogs! We continue at noon  
 on the morrow!

JUMP CUT TO:

INT. MERESANKH'S CHAMBERS - NIGHT

MERESANKH and her AIDE enter. There are long-stemmed candles set up in the middle of room in shape of a heart, and Nile lilies hung from every stem. MERESANKH dismisses AIDE, who listens outside chamber door.

MERESANKH  
(speaks to room)  
You are amazing!

KHAFRE  
(revealing himself)  
Enough for someone who bathes in riches every day?

MERESANKH  
(moving amongst candles)  
That's why I love you, Khaffy! Riches can never buy the heart that you devote to me--  
-What's the matter?

KHAFRE  
This stone competition, Mere; where do we start?

MERESANKH  
(she moves in)  
We start... walking on air.

KHAFRE  
Can we get off the girly stuff for a minute?

MERESANKH  
You'd rather I did not help you?--

KHAFRE  
"Walking on air" is help?

MERESANKH  
I can only envision as far as anyone can in this golden age, Khaffy. Our natural world cries out to us - if only we would listen...

KHAFRE  
(embracing her)  
I'm listening...

They pause, hear the wind whistling outside.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KHAFRE (CONT'D)  
--and I hear a Grand Vizier!

KHAFRE dashes for the window, where he left his rope, as MARCHING FOOTSTEPS approach outside MERESANKH'S door.

IMHOTEP  
(from corridor)  
Lock down the Palace grounds! Find the intruder!  
(banging on door, storming in)  
Princess Meresankh! Are you in peril?

EXT. MERESANKH'S CHAMBERS -NIGHT

KHAFRE sees PALACE GUARDS waiting at the rope base and swings onto a tree, then onto rooftops, as PALACE GUARDS give chase.

INT. MERESANKH'S CHAMBERS - NIGHT

MERESANKH  
Grand Vizier! I am in no danger! Leave!

IMHOTEP ignores her, crosses to window, sees chase, shouts to PALACE GUARDS giving chase.

IMHOTEP  
Bring him to me! Alive!

EXT. TREETOPS AND ROOFS - NIGHT

KHAFRE loses his pursuers, disappears into the dark.

INT. MERESANKH'S CHAMBERS - SAME TIME

MERESANKH  
There is no cause for alarm, Grand Vizier!--

IMHOTEP  
(sneering)  
But there is, Your Highness! Someone reported an intruder climbing your windo--  
(he notices candles and lilies)  
--and someone was right... a special occasion, Princess?

MERESANKH  
I appreciate beauty, Grand Vizier.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

IMHOTEP  
 (holding her chin)  
 So does a certain palace vendor, my  
 Princess. Who?

MERESANKH  
 There was no one here this night!

IMHOTEP  
 Someone saw--

MERESANKH  
 You take the word of "someone" over your  
 Princess? You forget your place, Grand  
 Vizier!

IMHOTEP  
 (snidely)  
 I live to serve, Your Highness! My  
 intrusion is to safeguard your life!

MERESANKH  
 Now leave - to preserve yours.

INT. CORRIDOR OUTSIDE MERESANKH'S CHAMBERS.

IMHOTEP sweeps into corridor from MERESANKH'S chamber, as  
 YOJIMBO falls in step behind him.

IMHOTEP  
 (muttering)  
 Chicks!

CUT TO:

INT. CULT CAVE - NIGHT

HATSHEP sits cross-legged in sandy dark cave, wearing step-  
 pyramid hat, eyes closed. REPORTER crawls toward him by  
 torchlight. Canalers cult members in B.G. chant "om."

REPORTER  
 (hushed tones)  
 This is Robert Foster for the Cairo News  
 Network, and I've been invited into the  
 Canalers' sanctum, a cult led by former  
 mongoose beater for the royal family,  
 Hatshep.

REPORTER crouches near HATSHEP. Two beats, then HATSHEP's  
 eyes snap open with exclamation. Everyone startled.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HATSHEP (CULT)  
Eoouy! Jim Jones!

REPORTER  
Hatshep, will the Visitors From Beyond  
accept shekels if you win?

HATSHEP (CULT)  
Riches! Worldly goods! Oh, material girl!  
Eoouy! We build not for riches, Marshall  
Applewhite cow! We build for...Salvation.

CULT, in unison, go from chanting "om," to "salvation."

HATSHEP:  
When the tomb is complete, its apex will  
be the key, Jerry Falwell!

REPORTER  
The key to what?

HATSHEP (CULT)  
The key to the Gate... of Heaven.

REPORTER  
Heaven's Gate?

HATSHEP (CULT)  
The VFB's shall unlock the red sands.  
Forever will their deeds cause confusion  
in false prophets and history's blind  
soothsayers. Salvation! Eoouy!

CULTISTS CHANTING, "Salvation, salvation..." start crawling  
towards HATSHEP and REPORTER on all sides.

REPORTER  
(slightly distressed)  
The Pharaoh's astronomer, Sagan, tells us  
the Visitors come from so far away, light  
from Ra the Sun God takes eons to reach  
them. Will they make it here in time?

HATSHEP (CULT)  
Oh, woman of Moroni faith! Dare you taint  
our promised souls with your polygamist  
ranch doubts?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

STEADICAM SKEWING AROUND ROOM, SEEING CULT MEMBERS CRAWL TOWARDS REPORTER AND TOWARDS CAMERA ITSELF.

REPORTER  
 (making "cut" motion to camera)  
 Okay, I think we've got it. We can move slowly towards that opening in the rock--

SHOT: STEADICAM POV, PULLED OVER FROM BEHIND. WHITE NOISE.

CUT TO - BLACK.

INT. FRIENDS OF THE SAND OFFICE - NIGHT

TESHUB and The Friends of the Sand (F.O.T.S.) gather around Giza Plateau diorama, showing pyramid base, Nile River, tiny competitor figures.

Enter NEBIBI, cloaked and hooded, from clandestine reconnoiter. Everyone looks to him for news. NEBIBI and TESHUB do the F.O.T.S. salute: bend down, grab handful of sand in left fist, stand and let sand run out through bottom of their fist sideways.

NEBIBI  
 Save our Sand, Leader Teshub.

TESHUB (ENVIRONMENTALIST)  
 Save our Sand. Talk to me, Nebibi!

NEBIBI  
 It's true - the competition stones arrive at dawn near the Giza Plateau. Each stone will be a mile from the base of the tomb. Leader, the base is over 750 feet square!

A collective gasp of surprise from the F.O.T.S.

TESHUB (ENVIRONMENTALIST)  
 They are indeed serious about Khufu's monument to immortality. After all, all life comes from sand...

VOICE OFFSCREEN  
 No it doesn't.

TESHUB (ENVIRONMENTALIST)  
 (pays no heed to comment)  
 They move these stones along the living sand, so we will sink the ground around the tomb to stop them getting near.

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

ELVITH (MINSTREL)

Ahh, take it easy, Journalistic Reporter Dude. All we are is dust in the wind, man...

REPORTER O.C.

Elvith, as a minstrel, what do you know about moving stones?

ELVITH (MINSTREL)

Them cats can faxcilitate their muscle couture, but dude, you've got to find the stone's vibration, man. Lemme show you.

ELVITH leads REPORTER to 2-foot square stone mounted on spherical rocks on table. A rudimentary speaker faces the stone. ELVITH plugs a rope into his acoustic guitar.

ELVITH (MINSTREL) (CONT'D)

You've got to make that cosmic bond through musical harmonics, dude.

ELVITH strums guitar frantically; vibrating woofers in speaker push the stone forward slightly on its rocks.

REPORTER

This is, frankly, amazing. This stone moves on air power!

BLACKMORE

(shouting over din)  
Fundamental frequencies, dude!

ELVITH stops banging guitar and sits exhausted, lighting up.

BLACKMORE (CONT'D)

And these perfect rolling stones.

REPORTER

(does a Jagger accent)  
"Rolling Stones"? Sounds like a good name for a--

ELVITH (MINSTREL)

(holding out stones)  
Geb, the earth god, supplied the rocks and Hapi, the Nile god, rolled 'em round.

BLACKMORE

We found 'em on a freakout by the river.

REPORTER

So your method is simply rock rolling?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ELVITH (MINSTREL)  
Yeh... Rock. And rolling.

BLACKMORE hands flyer to REPORTER.

BLACKMORE  
Come to our gig at the Luxor tonight.  
It'll be crazy large, bro!

CUT TO:

INT. KHUFU'S COURTYARD - DAY

BRIEFING SEMINAR. YOJIMBO at podium, while SHOPKEEPERS hurl fruits, projectiles and insults at him.

YOJIMBO  
Okay, settle down; no need to go there,  
Mr. Hunefer; Mr. Buto, could you stop  
doing that to your slavegirls?; ow! You  
could've put my eye out!...

CUT TO:

INT. TUTU RAM'S CHAMBERS - SAME TIME

IMHOTEP  
I know what she wants: marry a commoner  
and usurp the throne from me!

TUTU RAM  
She can't marry a commoner!

IMHOTEP  
She can and she will, Tutu! With absolute  
power comes absolute irresponsibility! By  
Horus! If her vendor wins the  
competition, we get the method to win the  
throne - but we lose the throne!

CUT TO:

INT. KHUFU'S COURTYARD - SAME TIME

BRIEFING SEMINAR. YOJIMBO is still being heckled.

YOJIMBO  
(pleading like a schoolgirl)  
Okay, okay you guys, now stop it! Just  
stop it! I've got power too, y'know.  
Imhotep's not the only one can boil you  
in ox fat--

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

IMHOTEP strides up behind YOJIMBO, unnoticed. CROWD abruptly goes silent. YOJIMBO changes his tune.

YOJIMBO (CONT'D)  
That's better, you little bitches! I am Yojimbo the Large, son of Rashomon and Sanjuro. You will kneel before Zod! I don't need Imhotep--

IMHOTEP  
(pushes YOJIMBO aside  
nonchalantly)  
Move!

YOJIMBO  
(terrified)  
Yessir! Oh, god of our children and our children's children--

IMHOTEP glares at YOJIMBO to shut him up, then glares at SHOPKEEPERS, wondering who is MERESANKH's lover. BANKOLE rises timidly.

IMHOTEP  
You?! Chief Engineer?! Do you confess?

BANKOLE (ENGINEER)  
Uh, yes?... Grand Vizier?

IMHOTEP  
Arrest this treasonous scum!

2 PALACE GUARDS grab BANKOLE's arms. He squeals.

BANKOLE (ENGINEER)  
Eeee! The wind! I confess! It's the wind!

IMHOTEP  
(motions GUARDS to wait)  
What are you talking about?

BANKOLE (ENGINEER)  
(stutters and throat-clears  
throughout dialog)  
Your Grand Vizier-ness, sir - the high winds on the Plateau.  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

BANKOLE (ENGINEER) (CONT'D)  
 Considering the tomb will directly align with the Earth's polar axes and that low pressure systems promulgate along those axes, the pulling power which may be achieved through prescribed scaffold-ramp-and-slave methods would be negated by the opposing high knot winds... your Excellency, your honor, sir.

IMHOTEP looks to YOJIMBO for clarification.

YOJIMBO  
 He's worried that the high winds at Giza may be too strong to move large objects against them.

BANKOLE (ENGINEER)  
 Affirmative, Grand Vizier, your grand Teppyness, sir.

IMHOTEP  
 Circumvent the problem, engineer! And -  
 (foreboding)  
 my name is Imhotep.

BANKOLE (ENGINEER)  
 (chokes)  
 I - er, believe my team of - my team has a solution, your Imhotep, your High Vizier, sir.

BUTO (SLAVES)  
 (interrupts, to IMHOTEP)  
 Yo yo yo! Check this out! Check this out!

YOJIMBO  
 (outraged, to BUTO)  
 You will address your Grand Vizier with respect, slave trader!

IMHOTEP  
 What solution, engineer?

BANKOLE (ENGINEER)  
 Oh - er, relocate.

IMHOTEP  
 Relocate? When Giza has been ordained by your god Khufu?

BUTO (SLAVES)  
 (to YOJIMBO)  
 Hold up, homey! you don't even know!  
 That's my homeboy!  
 (mumbles)  
 (MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

BUTO (SLAVES) (CONT'D)

This guy's all up in the Kool Aid and don't even know the flava!

BANKOLE (ENGINEER)

(pushes on)

Your honorific, I intend no disrespect to mighty Pharaoh; I suggest ten miles south, where wind is negated by hills--

IMHOTEP

Your Deity shall watch with interest vendor.

(to BUTO)

Slave trader! Do not try my patience today!

BANKOLE (ENGINEER)

(flummoxed)

And I shall, er - enjoy being watched...

SABOLA

(licking lips)

Oh yeh...

BUTO (SLAVES)

(to crowd)

Yo, that's my boy! I keep him on point with a steady supply of bangin' tricks for all o' his love fiestas.

Beat. IMHOTEP looks to YOJIMBO for translation.

YOJIMBO

He says he supplies all the slavegirls for your orgies--

IMHOTEP

(cuts off YOJIMBO before more embarrassing details)

Speak, slaver!

BUTO (SLAVES)

Yo, chill out, Teppy! Don't forget I still got those engraved hieroglyphics from your last orgy. I just need to get a head count for the competition. Can I pack 'em in tighter than the Pyramid Club on Ladies Night, or just a table for two?

YOJIMBO

He wants to know whether there's a limit to the number of slaves he can use.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

IMHOTEP

This race is for efficiency, vendors! If you use twenty-thousand slaves, you may finish first, but feeding and housing them creates its own logistical problems. The Pharaoh seeks long-term solutions that will be economically viable over an epoch.

BUTO (SLAVES)

Ergonomically what?

YOJIMBO

(now translating for BUTO)

The less people the better.

BUTO holds up stone tablets showing IMHOTEP and many SLAVEGIRLS.

BUTO (SLAVES)

That's not what it looks like up in here, Teppy!

IMHOTEP

(slams fist on podium)

Geb damn you, slave trader!

(to YOJIMBO)

Call a recess!

IMHOTEP stalks offstage.

JUMP CUT TO:

INT. IMHOTEP'S CHAMBER - SAME TIME

Open on YOJIMBO, mock-pushing on a large decorative obelisk, singing to himself. IMHOTEP enters.

YOJIMBO (CONT'D)

(straightens up, gets serious)

Ahem! Grand Vizier, what if these lunkheads waste the next decade - on our funding - while the palace comes to a standstill?

IMHOTEP

What did the Old Kingdom have to say about the only sure things in life?

YOJIMBO

(gestures around his groin)

Something about rubbing the lotion when the spots--

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

IMHOTEP

Taxes and Death, Yojimbo! We've already offered them cash. If that doesn't move stones, I'm sure the "other sure thing" will.

YOJIMBO in B.G. looks down his skirt at his groin worriedly.

CUT TO:

INT. KHUFU'S COURTYARD - SAME TIME

Recess. SHOPKEEPERS partake of snacks, mingling. KAMOSSES sidles up to BANKOLE.

KAMOSSES (SALES)

I say, old chap, you look a bit piqued. Ready for the old heave-ho?

BANKOLE (ENGINEER)

(spooning cake into mouth)  
Er...I guess. I'd just like more information on the building site.

KAMOSSES (SALES)

My good man, there are three types of people: 1 - Take action now; 2 - take action with more information; 3 - Refuse to take action.

BANKOLE (ENGINEER)

What was the middle one again--?

KAMOSSES (SALES)

Excellent! Now a 1 can never become a 2 or 3, but a 3 and 2 can become a 1: 3-2=1! Quod erat demonstrandum!

BANKOLE (ENGINEER)

Er - that's fine an' all, but I just want more cake--

KAMOSSES (SALES)

Nonsense, lad! Now if you divide your day into 48 hours, that's your 25 or 6 to 4 method. I call it my Chicago system.

BANKOLE (ENGINEER)

What's a Chicago?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KAMOSESES (SALES)

Rather, old bean! The bottom line is the proof of the pudding. Success is that simple!

KAMOSESES slaps BANKOLE on the back heftily and walks off. BANKOLE chokes on cake. In B.G. someone yells in German accent, "Dr. Heimlich! Dr. Heimlich!"

JUMP CUT TO:

INT. KHUFU'S COURTYARD - DAY

BRIEFING SEMINAR. IMHOTEP returns to podium and glares at everyone.

IMHOTEP P.O.V. CAMERA moves in on KHAFRE, talking to BABA. Go to SLOW MOTION. KHAFRE turns to glance at IMHOTEP. MUSIC UP.

SENNACH (HEALTHFOOD)

(interrupts IMHOTEP's thoughts)

If the Pharaoh is indeed an omnipotent god, why does he seek the advice of mere mortals?

YOJIMBO

Sennach, the Health Food proprietor.

IMHOTEP

A great Pharaoh once said, "If you build it, they will--"

SENNACH (HEALTHFOOD)

(to CROWD and IMHOTEP)

Will they come? We build these monuments to the gods, for the gods, yet they stay silent and invisible to us.

HATHOR (GYM)

You go, girlfriend!

SENNACH (HEALTHFOOD)

Why does a deity command us build a tomb, when he can conjure one from dust?

IMHOTEP

When mortals believe they discern a god's will, drought follows, famine reigns, dynasties fall.

SENNACH (HEALTHFOOD)

Blame a god, you stop searching for truth.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SENNACH (HEALTHFOOD) (CONT'D)  
 You never identify the causes of your  
 problems, so you never seek real  
 solutions!--

IMHOTEP  
 (glares at SENNACH)  
 Solutions? Like "human sacrifice"?

SENNACH goes quiet.

IMHOTEP (CONT'D)  
 (to ALL)  
 The Deity desires his monument now. That  
 is all ye need to know. To the winner: a  
 building contract for a million shekels.

JAFARI  
 A million shekels!

KHAFRE nudges JAFARI aside, interrupts IMHOTEP.

IMHOTEP	KHAFRE
Losers resume their palace business--	How long do we have to find this... method?

IMHOTEP  
 The Deity insists you find a method  
 before Akhet - the Inundation - when the  
 Nile floodwaters signal the harvest.

KHAFRE  
 (to CROWD, addressing BABA)  
 How long does that give us, Farmer Baba?

BABA  
 (loud enough for all to hear)  
 We are in the First of Proyet; the Nile  
 will breach her banks in three weeks.

KAMOSSES (SALES)  
 Three weeks?! I say!

HUNEFER (OXEN)  
 (softly, to himself)  
 Isis! The fine print!

KHAFRE  
 What if no one finds a method?

IMHOTEP  
 You will all be executed.

Even YOJIMBO is taken aback as he looks at IMHOTEP.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

GASP from SHOPKEEPERS, who collectively make a threatening move toward dais. PALACE GUARDS lower and lock their spears with a CLASH. SHOPKEEPERS freeze, powerless.

IMHOTEP (CONT'D)  
 (saucily)  
 Taxes and Death, my good vendors. Now  
 fly: serve your Deity. Serve Egypt. Serve  
 Imhotep the Large Pyramid Builder!

Shattered looks on SHOPKEEPERS' faces. MUSIC UP.

FADE TO BLACK.

EXT. HUNEFER'S CAMP, NILE SHORES - DAWN.

TEXT: DAY 1

HUNEFER and young aide, CAMPO, with 20 oxen.

CAMPO  
 (whispering)  
 Hunefer, why are we here so early?

HUNEFER (OXEN)  
 Shh, Campo! You heard Teppy - we find a  
 method or we die.

CAMPO  
 Yes, but if all of us shopkeepers worked  
 together, maybe no one has to die?

HUNEFER (OXEN)  
 You want those pub urchins or those nerd  
 engineers to win the contract?

CAMPO  
 Not particularly. But I don't want to die  
 either; not before I experience the love  
 of a good woman or the thrill of Ankh  
 Vegas.

HUNEFER (OXEN)  
 So -

HUNEFER looks at CAMPO seriously, while making gestures of  
 throat-cutting, karate-chop, breaking-stick, kneeling-groin.

CAMPO (CONT'D)  
 But that's not fair, boss.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HUNEFER (OXEN)

Is it fair to threaten us with death if we don't follow a god's will?

CAMPO

Isn't that how all religions work?

HUNEFER (OXEN)

Enough! We do good, we live. We do bad, we live longer!

While HUNEFER and CAMPO tend to oxen, REPORTER appears from nowhere, startling them. Dialog starts O.C.

REPORTER

Hunefer, the ox-cart dealer: a leader of modern transport in Pharaoh Khufu's palace, providing the Egyptian on-the-go with the latest model oxen and carts - sport and family models - for the past six Inundations.

HUNEFER (OXEN)

(startled)  
Wha-? Oh, it's you. Oh, we weren't doing anything--

CAMPO

(indicating camera)  
Hey! What's that thing?

REPORTER

Hunefer, what gives you the edge on the other competitors?

HUNEFER (OXEN)

Well, Greg, look at these new models - imported from the Aswan Peninsula. Worth ten men, these are!

REPORTER O.C.

They each have the strength of ten men?

HUNEFER (OXEN)

No - they're worth ten men. Had to trade 200 employees for these beauties. Low intake, high output; hoof-guards forged from that element all the kids are using in their chariots - iron. And feel that rump!

HUNEFER grabs REPORTER'S hand and places it on rump of oblivious ox, chewing cud.

HUNEFER (OXEN) (CONT'D)

Haven't seen a rump like that since Queen Bathsheba!

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

HUNEFER (OXEN) (CONT'D) (CONT'D)  
 (slaps rump heftily)  
 And uh, don't tell anyone about Queen  
 Bathsheba and me. Phew! What a tart!  
 (lovingly, to oxen)  
 Ready to make us richer than King Midas,  
 my raging bulls? Wait!--

HUNEFER ducks, REPORTER and CAMPO follow his lead, as he  
 peers through dawn mist, across the beach.

CAMPO  
 What is it, boss?

HUNEFER (OXEN)  
 Geb damn it! The slaver is here!

LONG SHOT: A mile distant, BUTO heads his slave ranks.

HUNEFER and CAMPO crouch, while REPORTER sees something and  
 runs off in other direction, calling his crew. CAMPO looks.

CAMPO  
 So is that man-woman, Sennach!

LONG SHOT: A mile distant in other direction, SENNACH heads  
 team of hot women, high-stepping crisply. Pack-mules follow,  
 laden with "OJ," "Nile crocodile," "Grade A Figs." Team  
 SENNACH chants, "No trans fats."

RUNNING STEADICAM, APPROACHING TEAM SENNACH.

SENNACH (HEALTHFOOD)  
 Smell that crisp Nile air! Brisk and  
 clean like an apple from the sun god's  
 personal vintage--

REPORTER O.C.  
 Mistress Sennach from the palace health  
 food store - Healthy Giza - has provided  
 nutritional balance to Pharaoh's palace  
 since the Great Flood of Hatshepsut.  
 Sennach--

SENNACH stops, her ranks crash into her, complaining.

SENNACH (HEALTHFOOD)  
 Good health, Greg!

REPORTER O.C.  
 We know eating right will allow us to  
 tread the afterlife with a regular bowel,  
 but how does it move 80-ton stones?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

SENNACH (HEALTHFOOD)

On a healthy diet of figs and Nile River crocodile, my workers will trek this stone before the Sun God rests! Buto's slaves and Hunefer's oxen - ptuh! Those goat-milk drinking pansies!

REPORTER O.C.

They're quite impressive teams, Sennach.

SENNACH (HEALTHFOOD)

Don't let their outer musculature fool you, Greg. Inside, they are weak. Their metabolisms cry out unheeded; it's about balancing your phytonutrients and antioxidants in a synergistic, metabolic detoxification cycle.

REPORTER O.C.

So eating right gives you super strength?

SENNACH (HEALTHFOOD)

No, Greg. You know the old story of a mother lifting an ox-cart to save her trapped child?

REPORTER

Well, I know David Banner couldn't lift that car to save his wife--

SENNACH (HEALTHFOOD)

We all possess that potential. At Healthy Giza, we stick to a scientifically accurate intake protocol that avoids goat milk, mead, salt, and that new processed foodstuff invented by Akhbar McDagmar - the hamburger.

SHOT: HUNEFER AND ALL HIS OXEN DO A HEAD-TURN IN SENNACH'S DIRECTION ON MENTION OF "HAMBURGER."

REPORTER

Well, it's fortunate I'm not in the competition, Sennach.

(to camera)

This is Robert Foster, and I'm off to McDagmar's - over two-thousand people served!

REPORTER exits. SENNACH and her aide, SABOLA, keep marching.

SABOLA

He's cute. Look at that tricep!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

SENNACH (HEALTHFOOD)

Keep your endorphins circulating and your eyes open, Sabola: those vultures are going to try sabotage.

SABOLA

Who? Those Friends of the Sand hotties?

SENNACH (HEALTHFOOD)

The other shopkeepers, you sugar-eating man-toy!

SABOLA

Why would they try to ruin us?

SENNACH (HEALTHFOOD)

Because unlike we who watch our bad cholesterol, they are cursed with greed!

SENNACH looks to the waterline. Stops dead. Her ranks crash into her back, complaining.

SENNACH (HEALTHFOOD) (CONT'D)

Osiris preserve us! The stones!

EXT. NILE RIVER - DAY

Eight ships, each transporting an 80-ton block, hove into view along the shoreline, a few hundred feet apart.

EXT. BUTO'S CAMP, NILE SHORES - DAY SAME TIME

BUTO halts his slaves, gaping at the ships.

BUTO (SLAVES)

(utter shock)

By the beard of Tippu Tip!

AHMOSE

Crazy large, boss!

BUTO (SLAVES)

(still looking at stone)

Ahmoose! Yo, dog! Get the crew together!

We start as soon as they unload.

(peers back inland)

Where's that pyramid base?

EXT. PYRAMID BASE - DAY CONT'D

LONG SHOT: A distant mile away, through early morning haze, BUTO sees pyramid base marked out atop the slope of the Giza Plateau with small flat stones.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BUTO (SLAVES)  
 (to himself)  
 Damn! This ain't gonna be a breeze!

CUT TO:

EXT. NILE RIVER - DAY CONT'D

THE STONE-DELIVERY SHIPS: 80-ton stone sits lashed on deck, lashed to a pallet with ropes running lengthwise (so that log rollers under the pallet won't be hindered).

The pallet sits on log rollers, aimed to roll it off the side of the ship. The log rollers sit on a hinged base, which SLAVES lever to dump the stone over the side of the flat-bottomed ship near shore.

Stones and log rollers make giant splash in shallow water. Pallet on which the stone sits is unaffected by drop. Ship then moves away. Some stones land on their side, with their pallets exposed.

CUT TO:

EXT. BANKOLE'S CAMP, SOUTH PLAINS - DAY

BANKOLE awaits arrival of his stone, ship in the distance, while his engineers construct scaffold.

BANKOLE (ENGINEER)  
 (with clipboard in hand)  
 So, er... Akil. You've checked vertical sturdiness against leverage ratio?

AKIL  
 Twice, sir.

BANKOLE (ENGINEER)  
 You've re-checked that dual stanchion causing the intermittent wobble?

AKIL  
 Rectified, sir.

BANKOLE (ENGINEER)  
 Wind speed?

AKIL  
 (picks up sand and tosses it)  
 Almost nil, sir.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BANKOLE (ENGINEER)  
 Exceptional, my dear Akil! Well then,  
 nothing more to do but--

CUT TO:

EXT. HATHOR'S CAMP, NILE SHORES - SAME TIME

SHOT: HATHOR'S FACE ENTERS FRAME IN C.U.

HATHOR (GYM)  
 (a la drill sergeant)  
Sex! It weakens the kundalini! So until  
 this stone here is on that base there, we  
 do not weaken our kundalinis. Crystal?

Team HATHOR at attention. RHINOPLASTY and HIPPOCAMPUS give  
 each other looks, as in "How are we gonna go that long?"

JUMP CUT TO:

INT. BABA'S BEDROOM - DAY

BABA and his wife, LILLIANKH, in bed, move apart after sex.

BABA  
 S'pose I'd better get Khaffy and the team  
 together.

LILLIANKH  
 My sweet pomegranate! This risk is too  
 great!

BABA  
 (as he dresses)  
 The risk is worth the reward, Lilliankh.  
 But if the worst comes down, remember  
 that land we travelled two seasons ago?

LILLIANKH  
 From our dream, to our sanctuary, Pommy!

BABA  
 If I send word, go! Don't look back. I  
 will meet you there. But for now -  
 (kisses her goodbye on the bed)  
 I've gotta get stoned...

INT. KHAFRE'S BEDROOM - DAY - MOMENTS LATER

KHAFRE sleeps stomach-down, drooling, blanket messed, beer  
 bottles on night table, pillow on floor.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KNOCKING on his chamber door, jerking him awake, KNOCKING BOTTLES off table. His hourglass sand-clock says 12 noon.

KHAFRE  
(in dream-state)  
Ahhh - how many seas must a white dove  
sail?!...

BABA  
(from outside)  
Khaffy - get your drunk ankh out here! We  
gotta roll, man!

KHAFRE  
Yeh, yeh, gimme one grain of sand.

KHAFRE looks around, dazed, then grabs a sketch of his:  
vultures harnessed to ropes pulling a stone. Rushes out.

CUT TO:

EXT. HATHOR'S CAMP, NILE SHORES - DAY.

Team HATHOR oil themselves down sensually, while REPORTER  
interviews HATHOR near his stone.

REPORTER O.C.  
The Gym of De Nile, run by world-class  
bodybuilder and Egypt's First Ambiguous  
Heterosexual, Hathor, seeks to move  
mountains by way of men--

HATHOR (GYM)  
"Man" power. That's right, Greg! Here at  
the Gym of De Nile, we believe in Men.  
Nothing more reliable, nothing more  
powerful, nothing more delicious -

HATHOR pulls REPORTER into camera range.

REPORTER  
Uh, p-pardon?

HATHOR (GYM)  
(holding REPORTER's arm)  
"Man" power is gonna move this stone,  
Greg. Man sweat. Man muscle. Man stench.  
(lustful orgasmic sound)  
Ooohhhuh!

REPORTER  
(to cameraman)  
Could we possibly...cut?  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

REPORTER (CONT'D)  
 (to HATHOR)  
 Er, shall we give you a moment - er?

HATHOR (GYM)  
 (in sensual afterglow)  
 Your tri's feel good, Greg.

REPORTER  
 (bashful)  
 Well, through my shirt you can't really--

HATHOR (GYM)  
 No, trust me. I'm a professional body  
 designer. I can tell when someone has  
 massive upper body strength.

REPORTER  
 Well, in college, I took third place in  
 the clean and jerk.

HATHOR (GYM)  
 Oooh! Am I lying? Am I lying?  
 (voice becomes throaty)  
 You please my kundalini, Greg.

REPORTER is up against wall now, HATHOR leaning and blocking  
 his exit with a muscled arm, stroking REPORTER'S hair.

REPORTER  
 Er, your 'what' now?  
 (to crew)  
 Can we cut please?

HATHOR (GYM)  
 We can do whatever you want to, baby...

CUT TO:

EXT. PALACE GROUNDS - DAY

NEFRET and TUTU RAM walk palace market grounds.

NEFRET  
 (confessing)  
 Thanks for seeing me, Tutu. I need to  
 tell you something: I have ensured  
 Pharaoh's pyramid will not be built.

TUTU RAM  
 Uh, I'll take your word that you wield  
 that kind of power.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NEFRET

It is not power I wield against Khufu -  
it is confusion. I have employed the  
Friends of the Sand.

TUTU RAM

But why, Nefret? I don't want marriage  
either - but that pyramid is a monument  
to Mother Egypt--

NEFRET

Your father puts himself before Mother  
Egypt, and if the pyramid is built, I  
fear for Khufu's life and legacy.

TUTU RAM

I don't think I should hear this!

NEFRET

I don't think you should ignore it!

LONG SHOT: MUSIC UP as TUTU RAM walks away, NEFRET follows,  
talking animatedly, TUTU putting his fingers in ears, going  
"la-la-la" not to hear.

CUT TO:

EXT. KAMOSE'S CAMP, NILE SHORES - DAY.

KAMOSE'S strikes "Amway"-type chart with pointer; people  
arranged in pyramid pulling graph.

KAMOSE'S (SALES)

Right! It's a simple question of pyramid  
dynamics. You see, one person anchors  
this rope, which is attached to these two  
people, which in turn is attached to  
these four people, and so on and so  
forth.

Cheering from Team KAMOSE'S O.C.

JUMP CUT TO:

KAMOSE'S being interviewed by REPORTER.

REPORTER O.C.

Kamoses, executive marketing consultant  
for "Egyptian Way" products - known in  
trade circles as "Gypway."

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KAMOSESES (SALES)

Y'know, my first job was palace piss-boy. My hours were from the rising to the setting of the Sun God. One day, at a business luncheon and orgy, I was introduced to the Faster Cheaper Better plan. Soon I worked my way up to palace food-taster. They were always telling me to wash my hands...

REPORTER O.C.

And how will this translate to 80-ton granite blocks, Kamoses?

KAMOSESES (SALES)

Well, old bean, I tripled my income with my I.B.O. while working from home less than one month per wet season--

REPORTER O.C.

Yes, but how will you move your sto--

KAMOSESES (SALES)

You just don't get it, do you, Greg?

REPORTER

(to camera)

For CNN, this is Robert Foster.

CUT TO:

EXT. BUTO'S CAMP, NILE SHORES - DAY.

PAN ACROSS BUTO'S slaves in rows: All slaves are white - 1800s plantation owners, corporate bankers, WASPs, soccer moms, Washington, Lincoln, Klan, etc. Noticeably no blacks. BUTO'S crew lustily whip the ranks.

BUTO (SLAVES)

(wielding whip)

Slaves! That's what you need! A gang of 'em!

REPORTER O.C.

Slave-Trader Buto inherited the most successful slave-trading outfit in Egypt from his father, the legendary Tippu Tip.

BUTO (SLAVES)

That stone better move or somebody's gonna get their ass kicked quicker than a trick short on her money.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

REPORTER O.C.

Buto is constantly under fire from the Pink-sploitation Movement. But we can't take Pinkies seriously if they've descended from damn dirty apes.

BUTO (SLAVES)

(sizing up REPORTER O.C.)

Yo, Greg! You got your swoll' on - y'ever did any time?

REPORTER O.C.

What? Oh, I'm not really...

BUTO (SLAVES)

(feels REPORTER'S arm)

You sure you ain't done no time, dog? Lookit dat tricep! Y'ever pulled a rope?

REPORTER

(bashful)

Well, I was telling Hathor I did a bit of weight-lifting in my day--

BUTO (SLAVES)

Oh, you throw up weights? That's what I'm talkin' about, homey! Get yo ass into line, Pinkie!

(whips REPORTER)

REPORTER

(gets in line, rubs backside)

Owah! I'm not a Pinkie! I'm a light-skinned Egyptian! Can we contact my agent? Er, Mr. Buto?...

CUT TO:

EXT. KAMOSESES CAMP, NILE SHORES - DAY.

KAMOSESES pep talks. Team KAMOSESES is roped to their stone pyramid-fashion, one at the head, a massive number near the back, next to the stone.

KAMOSESES (SALES)

Right! I want you to remember what a tremendous opportunity this is. Now you are a 1! Your 2's and 3's have become 5's and as for 4, I say, "What for?"

Team KAMOSESES cheers wildly.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KAMOSSES (SALES)  
All for 1 and 1 for Gypway! Pull!

A giant yawp as Team KAMOSSES leans into the ropes.

JUMP CUT TO:

EXT. KHAFRE'S CAMP, NILE SHORES - DAY

KHAFRE, BABA and their team arrive on three ox-carts. Lead cart carries beer. Other carts hold supplies, cages.

Down the beach, every 500 feet, other teams mobilizing their ranks around their stones.

Team KHAFRE'S stone sits on the beach in shallow surf, wood pallet lashed to the bottom of it, log rollers strewn.

KHAFRE  
(stands on cart, addressing team)  
Okay, you've all got a papyrus copy of our plan. Remember, no one talks to that Greg Interviewer guy -

SEFU:  
Isn't his name Steve?

JAFARI  
What kind of name is that?--

KHAFRE  
No one talks to anyone from the palace - and we especially do not talk to the other teams. Mummy's the word.

BABA  
(shields eyes, looks at sky)  
It's pretty bare up there.

KHAFRE  
(looks up, then at other teams)  
No one's dead yet.  
(to their team, solemnly)  
Bring out Billy.

From behind the ox-carts, a worker leads a goat. Another worker follows with an axe. MUSIC UP.

CUT TO:

EXT. NILE HILLS - DAY CONT'D

REPORTER has panoramic view of all teams. As he speaks, a TELEGRAPHER near him manipulates a reflective disk like Morse Code, reflecting the sun, aimed at other TELEGRAPHERS inland.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

REPORTER

Salutations Mr. and Mrs. Egypt and all the barges at sea. This is Robert Foster for Cairo News Network and I'm looking out over the first day of Pharaoh Khufu's stone-moving competition. Sunny skies and high winds greet us as we look down on the Nile banks: to the far north - Khafre's pub team.

LONG SHOTS OF EACH TEAM AS REPORTER MENTIONS THEM.

REPORTER O.C.

Just south, Kamoses the Gypway sales rep; then Hatshep and his Canaler cult; Sennach's health team; Hathor's gym bodies; Hunefer's oxen; Buto's slaves and Elvith's minstrels, the newly-named Rolling Rocks, who have not yet arrived, proving that Old Kingdom saying, "It ain't a real band unless someone's late."

LONG SHOT: Team KHAFRE unloading beer barrels and cages.

LONG SHOT: team KAMOSSES' pulling pyramid of people.

LONG SHOT: Team HATSHEP sit cross-legged around their stone, some in the surf, almost dragged under with every wave.

LONG SHOT: SENNACH setting out meal on stone table.

LONG SHOT: Team HATHOR oiling up.

LONG SHOT: HUNEFER yoking oxen with CAMPO.

LONG SHOT: BUTO whipping and yoking slaves.

LONG SHOT: ELVITH road crew, mullets, mill aimlessly.

REPORTER

Will Pharaoh's tomb be the largest "smooth" pyramid in history? The answer, my friends, is blowing in the thermal updrafts.

PAN UP into sky. PAN DOWN from sky to -

MEDIUM SHOT of Team SENNACH around their stone table.

C.U. on a table leg joint, which is slipping out of place slowly, unnoticed. Stone table rocks in wind and falls over onto one of Sennach's team, trapping her under it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

REPORTER O.C. (CONT'D)

Oh! Mr. and Mrs. Egypt, Sennach's stone table has fallen and trapped someone! And it looks like - oh, Isis have mercy! It looks like Sennach's team cannot lift it!

EXT. BUTO'S CAMP, NILE SHORES - SAME TIME.

BUTO looks at AHMOSE, who reaches into his hip-pouch to reveals 4 pegs, which we presume were removed from SENNACH'S table leg. BUTO gives AHMOSE devious smile.

LONG SHOT of SENNACH'S trapped teammate dying under the stone table.

REPORTER O.C. (CONT'D)

A terrible, terrible loss! The wind has proven a harsh mistress for this harsh mistress here on the banks of the Nile! If they can't move a table, it doesn't bode well for moving a stone!

REPORTER, in MEDIUM SHOT, emotes sadly only until CAMERA pans off Team SENNACH, whereupon his mood becomes jaunty again.

REPORTER O.C. (CONT'D)

Ohh, the humanity, Mr. and Mrs. Egypt. This misfortune gives us pause to reflect on the fragility of our tender--  
(pointing south)  
Of course, the wind problem was addressed by engineer Bankole, whose stone is ten miles south, where wind conditions are far more languorous.

PANNING and DISSOLVING in JUMP-CUTS, we now follow one TELEGRAPHER network, as it crosses inland, over dunes, via numerous other TELEGRAPHERS, to a TELEGRAPHER at the palace, transmitting REPORTER'S coverage to MERESANKH.

INT. MERESANKH'S CHAMBERS - DAY CONT'D

MERESANKH reclined on divan, listening to report like a radio program, while fruity TRANSLATOR watches a TELEGRAPHER on a distant hill and vocalizes the message to her.

TRANSLATOR:

...opted to receive his stone ten miles south, where wind conditions are far more languorous. That means -

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MERESANKH

I know what languorous means, Translator.  
Insult me again with your slow wit and I  
will feed you to my father's llama.

TRANSLATOR:

A thousand apologies, Your Highness.

MERESANKH

(impatient)  
Continue!

TRANSLATOR:

By Isis and Osiris! It looks like  
Khafre's team have slaughtered a goat on  
the sand and - yes, the other teams are  
laughing at them--

EXT. NILE HILLS - DAY CONT'D

REPORTER

(looking up at sky)  
--and they've drawn the attention of some  
unsavory visitors.

LONG SHOT, FROM REPORTER POV: Team KHAFRE on sand, as  
vultures dive on their goat carcass.

REPORTER O.C. (CONT'D)

Mr. and Mrs. Egypt, this is truly  
amazing!

CUT TO:

EXT. KHAFRE'S CAMP, NILE SHORES - DAY

Team KHAFRE throwing nets over vultures.

REPORTER O.C.

As vultures molest the goat carcass, Team  
Khafre seem to be capturing them--

FOUR SHOTS, CRASH-CUTS.

REPORTER (CONT'D)

What--

INT. MERESANKH'S CHAMBERS - DAY SAME TIME

MERESANKH

--are--

EXT. TESHUB'S VANTAGE, NILE HILLS - SAME TIME

TESHUB (ENVIRONMENTALIST)  
--they--

EXT. KAMOSE'S CAMP, NILE SHORES - SAME TIME

KAMOSE'S (SALES)  
--doing?

CUT TO:

EXT. KHAFRE'S CAMP, NILE SHORES - SAME TIME

As KHAFRE holds down a vulture, a wing smacks him in face repeatedly, punctuating each of his words:

KHAFRE  
Get - this - thing - in - that - cage!

EXT. BUTO'S CAMP, NILE SHORES - SAME TIME.

BUTO (SLAVES)  
Yo! Those pinkies are on tilt! Stone cold  
crazy!

EXT. TESHUB'S VANTAGE, NILE HILLS - SAME TIME

TESHUB (ENVIRONMENTALIST)  
(suddenly notices goat carcass,  
rises up, fist in air)  
There is blood on the Sand! This is an  
insult to Hestef! Friends of the Sand:  
protest with extreeeeeme prejudice!

The F.O.T.S. stream over the dunes they were hiding behind, carrying pickets: Save Our Sand, No Pyramid, S.O.S., Make Sand Not Tomb, Say F.U. to Khufu, etc.

EXT. NILE HILLS - DAY CONT'D

LONG SHOTS of Team HUNEFER, BUTO and HATHOR.

REPORTER  
Hatshep's cult prays the living Jesus out  
of their stone, but it refuses to move in  
mysterious ways; Hunefer's oxen have  
rolled to a strong start. Meanwhile,  
Buto's slaves do The Heston, their sheer  
numbers dragging the stone directly  
across the sand;  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

REPORTER (CONT'D)

Elvith's slaves - what he likes to call his "road crew" - have used the down time to invent milling aimlessly--and Team Hathor are still oiling up.

REPORTER hears distant CHANTING, growing louder, "Save our Sand, Save our Sand."

LONG SHOT of F.O.T.S. approaching Nile shores.

REPORTER O.C. (CONT'D)

But wait - approaching from the west, a picketing environmental group. It's the Friends of the Sand, Mr. and Mrs. Egypt!

LONG SHOT of F.O.T.S. approaching Nile shores.

EXT. NILE SHORES - DAY

TESHUB (ENVIRONMENTALIST)

No building on the sand! No tombs! No monuments! The sand is sacred! The sand is Mother Egypt! The sand is our friend!

TESHUB gesticulates, seemingly putting hexes on every SHOPKEEPER he passes. He scoops handfuls of sand into mouth and hair, coughing and ranting, rolling around. The F.O.T.S. form picket line against the onslaught of BUTO'S slave-line.

CUT TO:

INT. MERESANKH'S CHAMBERS - DAY CONT'D

MERESANKH listens in anxiety as all hell seems to be breaking loose on the Nile shores.

ALTERNATE TRANSLATOR SHOTS AND MERESANKH REACTION SHOTS.

TRANSLATOR:

(speaking REPORTER'S words)

Mr. and Mrs. Egypt, the tableau is incredible - it looks like Buto's slaves are walking right over the Friends of the Sand as their leader cries out like Moses at Sinai; the high winds are diabolical, causing Hunefer's oxen to lose ground; while Sennach tries to lift the fallen table. Khafre has trapped vultures but his stone is unmoved. Some of the cultists have drowned from the tide coming in--and Hathor's men are still oiling up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MERESANKH's anxiety is apparent. MUSIC UP.

CUT TO - BLACK.

FADE IN:

EXT. KHAFRE'S CAMP, NILE SHORES - EVENING

KHAFRE and BABA sit in the shade of their carts, drinking. Nearby, a scaffold with ten pulleys threaded with rope. Twenty vultures in cages, SQUAWKING. JAFARI runs up.

JAFARI  
What now, Khafre?

KHAFRE  
Now? We go home. But tomorrow, we put these birds to work and move that rock.

JUMP CUT TO:

INT. MUSIC STORE - NIGHT

ELVITH asleep, being shaken awake by BLACKMORE.

BLACKMORE  
Dude, we gotta roll! We missed the whole first day of competition!

ELVITH (MINSTREL)  
(snaps awake)  
Dude?!

SUBTITLES: You're kidding!

BLACKMORE  
Dude!

SUBTITLES: I kid you not, bro!

They both grab guitars, musical paraphernalia and run out.

CUT TO:

INT. PUB - NIGHT

Group of revelers at Table 7 get loud as KHAFRE walks into pub. A regular customer, DAKARAI, sits at the bar.

DAKARAI  
(as KHAFRE rounds the bar)  
Ay, Khafre! How about some of that filtered Nile bankwater?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KHAFRE

You got it, Dakarai. How's business?

KHAFRE hands DAKARAI an opaque glass of water, with an ankh in it like an umbrella.

DAKARAI

McDagmar's is wooing all our customers, so we're gonna stop putting actual meat in our burgers as well...

(regards the water)

Hey! Even cleaner than last time!

(he drinks)

KHAFRE

Our filtering technology is downright futuristic.

(to BABA)

What's with Table 7?

BABA

News has travelled, Khafre. Merchants from Morocco. Want in on the competition.

KHAFRE

Will Teppy let 'em in?

BABA

Dunno. But I'm gonna show 'em out soon.

Table 7 occupants are getting rowdy, breaking beer steins and spilling beer, falling off chairs, loudly cheering.

KHAFRE

I guess we're gonna get all kinds of bounty hunters comin' through--

KHAFRE looks to the end of the bar and sees: WILLIAM MUNNY sitting, hat down, tending a small whiskey glass. MUNNY (CLINT EASTWOOD cameo) raises his head to meet KHAFRE'S gaze. KHAFRE does a double-take, stutters to get BABA'S attention.

Meanwhile, MERESANKH enters pub, incognito, in hood and cloak. Sailors immediately cat-call her.

KHAFRE, still trying to tell BABA that CLINT EASTWOOD is at the bar, is brought back to the moment by BABA.

BABA (CONT'D)

Uh-oh. Incognito princess at 10 o'clock.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

KHAFRE

Ohhh boy! I'd better break up those gorillas.

MERESANKH makes beeline for KHAFRE, but a Table 7 sailor blocks her path. She stops, as other Table 7 sailors surround her. MERESANKH sees KHAFRE move towards her and motions surreptitiously not to interfere.

KHAFRE freezes, looks back at BABA in "What do I do?" gesture. BABA looks back helplessly.

Six SAILORS move around MERESANKH, touching her, laughing, pushing her from one to another.

KHAFRE (CONT'D)

Uh-oh, they don't wanna do that...

MERESANKH takes the physical harassment from the SAILORS for only a few seconds. Then she explodes.

As MERESANKH destroys the six SAILORS (while still in her hood and cloak), the pub erupts in its usual barroom brawl. Llama goes across screen.

KHAFRE (CONT'D)

(to BABA)

Baba - get their horses! Make sure those deadbeats don't leave the palace grounds.

BABA

Where you goin'?

KHAFRE

I'm gonna help!

KHAFRE dives into melee.

CUT TO:

EXT. PUB - NIGHT

Six horses. BABA ties three reins to an ankh. KHAFRE crashes out window, lands at BABA'S feet. BABA hands KHAFRE the ankh he has tied and works on another.

BABA

Here. Still helping?

KHAFRE takes ankh without rising.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KHAFRE  
(from the ground)  
Got 'em right where I want 'em.

BABA  
Where's that?

KHAFRE  
Near Meresankh.

JUMP CUT TO:

INT. PUB - NIGHT CONT'D

PALACE GUARDS storm the pub, try to arrest Table 7 SAILORS, who now brawl with PALACE GUARD. The llama goes across-screen. BABA and KHAFRE enter.

BABA  
Y'think Hunefer will mind we left them in his stables?

KHAFRE  
(dismissive, like Eric Cartman)  
He'll be fine!--

KHAFRE is punched by SAILOR. BABA dives into fight.

MERESANKH meets KHAFRE rising from floor, as brawl continues in b.g. She puts something into KHAFRE'S hand.

MERESANKH  
Think smarter. And you will find your "faster" and "cheaper" and "better."

Before KHAFRE looks at her gift, he is knocked sideways by a SAILOR punch. MERESANKH sidekicks the SAILOR, then disappears into the night.

JUMP CUT TO:

INT. PUB - NIGHT

LONG SHOT: we see KHAFRE sitting behind bar, rubbing his chin and contemplating something small on bartop. (It is one of KHUFU'S tiny ships. Do not reveal at this point.) Pub is closed, empty. Ship falls behind bar. As KHAFRE stoops to retrieve it, he disappears from sight as he falls off stool. Beat. Expletive.

CUT TO - BLACK.

FADE IN:

EXT. KHAFRE'S CAMP, NILE SHORES - DAWN.

TEXT: DAY 2

Sun is rising as HUNEFER and CAMPO sneak around, freeing vultures from cages.

HUNEFER (OXEN)

I can't imagine what they wanted these for - we'll never know. Demon birds.

The vultures immediately attack HUNEFER and CAMPO, who both slip and fall. Vultures fly off.

CAMPO

Aawww! It's sticky! What's all this?--

HUNEFER (OXEN)

(sniffs the ground)

It's - It's beer!

HUNEFER follows with his eyes, the trail of beer spillage.

HUNEFER (OXEN) (CONT'D)

What did they pour out all their beer for? It's spilled all the way to...

His voice trails off as he sees trench in the distance, 10 feet deep, dug across the front and around sides of the pyramid base.

HUNEFER (OXEN) (CONT'D)

(mouth agape, on all fours)

By the eye of Horus!...

EXT. HUNEFER'S CAMP, NILE SHORES - SAME TIME

Oxen are peacefully resting. Team HATHOR'S men, HIPPOCAMPUS and RHINOPLASTY, sneak amongst them, unhooking each ox.

HIPPOCAMPUS

Rhinoplasty, where's Hunefer?

RHINOPLASTY

He's fooling around with Khafre's zoo.

HIPPOCAMPUS

What's that all about?

RHINOPLASTY

Beats me, Hippocampus! But Khafre's up to something. How you doing?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HIPPOCAMPUS

Nearly done - by the gods!

RHINOPLASTY

(whispering loudly)

Ssshh! Whatsa matter with you?

HIPPOCAMPUS

This cow just took a dump on my thigh!

RHINOPLASTY

So wipe it off and - Geb damn it!

HIPPOCAMPUS

You're telling me to shush--

RHINOPLASTY

This dumb beast just crapped on me!

HIPPOCAMPUS

(laughing)

See? Like a Cairo sewer! You wanna finish this job covered in shi--oh! Ammut's gullet!

RHINOPLASTY

What now?

The oxen start mooing, intermittently, then urgently.

HIPPOCAMPUS

More dung! Rhinoplasty, I don't like this!

RHINOPLASTY

Oh, and I do?

HIPPOCAMPUS

No - I mean, something's wrong with these bitches--Oh, Fenuku's beard!  
(more crap)

RHINOPLASTY

Hippocampus -  
(an ox unloads on his face)

HIPPOCAMPUS

Rhinoplasty -  
(an ox unloads on his head)

RHINOPLASTY

Ruuuun!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Covered in black poo, they run desperately through ranks of oxen, slipping and rolling, as piles of projectile poop comes at them, oxen mooing crazily from the diarrhea.

CUT TO:

EXT. KHAFRE'S CAMP, NILE SHORES - DAWN

HUNEFER, on all fours, hears his oxen in the distance.

HUNEFER (OXEN)  
My babies!

HUNEFER sprints toward his campsite, followed by CAMPO. As he runs past Team HATHOR'S campsite, he suddenly stops as he sees KAMOSEs slathering buckets of black grease on HATHOR'S ropes. KAMOSEs sees HUNEFER, stops dead. Then they pretend they don't see each other, and HUNEFER starts running again.

HUNEFER arrives at his campsite on the run, HIPPOCAMPUS and RHINOPLASTY are far in the distance.

HUNEFER (OXEN) (CONT'D)  
(shouting after RHINOPLASTY and  
HIPPOCAMPUS)  
I'll nail your muscle-bound hides to my  
barn, you dung beetles!

CAMPO  
Er, speaking of dung, boss...

HUNEFER and CAMPO see the oxen mess. Reaction shots illustrate how bad the smell is.

CUT TO:

INT. IMHOTEP'S CHAMBER - DAY

IMHOTEP  
Who told you this, Tutu?

TUTU RAM  
Forces align against you: Nefret,  
Meresankh, the Friends of the Sand--

IMHOTEP  
Those idiots?! Weren't they called  
"Grainpeace" last season.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TUTU RAM

It's a circus maximus out there, Father!  
All the vendors are so scared of losing,  
they're sabotaging each other - and your  
stones aren't budging.

IMHOTEP, in C.U. calls out.

IMHOTEP

Yojimbo!

IMHOTEP never budes from C.U. as in B.G. YOJIMBO tumbles  
head-over-heels into the room from screen-right.

YOJIMBO

Yes Boss!

YOJIMBO enters again screen-left in B.G., stands at attention  
behind IMHOTEP.

IMHOTEP

Your new Intelligence Agency; why do they  
not inform us of the dissension at Giza?

YOJIMBO

Beg pardon, Grand Vizier! They tell you  
what they think you want to hear, based  
on what they think they know for sure. I  
call them the C.I.A.

IMHOTEP

(voice rising)  
What's that? The Cairo Idiots  
Association?

YOJIMBO

Er, no, actually Tep--

IMHOTEP

They dare sabotage my pyramid? Kill them  
all and start again! There is money  
enough in the royal coffers--

TUTU RAM

(mock applause)  
And I thought Pharaoh Khufu was a drama  
queen! Father, it's better business to  
use the Palace Guard to stop them killing  
themselves. I want this monument too -  
Mother Egypt deserves it--

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

IMHOTEP

Mother Egypt be damned! But you are right about one thing, Tutu. My pyramid will rise. Imhotep the Large Pyramid Builder will be remembered.

YOJIMBO

It stands for Central Intelli--

IMHOTEP slaps YOJIMBO nonchalantly to shut him up.

CUT TO:

EXT. PYRAMID BASE - HOURS LATER.

KHAFRE and BABA, on the way to their campsite, ride past the pyramid base, looking at the trench in surprise.

KHAFRE

What's this? Trench pixies?

BABA

Was that there last night? That wasn't there last night, was it?

A whoop of awe in the distance - HATSHEP has seen trench. Canalers storm trench, HATSHEP pushing his own people out of his way in fervor to get to it.

HATSHEP (CULT)

Rejoice! Oh, rejoice! David Koresh! The VFB's have given us a sign! Witness!

HATSHEP turning CANALERS' heads to the trench, with each "Witness!" even though most of them are looking in that direction anyway.

HATSHEP (CULT) (CONT'D)

Witness! Witness the power of the Visitors From Beyond! Ooh, witness! Witness, damn you!

CANALER

(being manhandled)  
I'm witnessing, I'm witnessing!

HATSHEP (CULT)

Witness more, you heathen!

CANALER

If I witness any more I'd be in back of it!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HATSHEP (CULT)  
 Oooh! Monkey! Sweet Joseph Smith monkey!  
 Pray with me! Eoouy!

HATSHEP grabs the CANALER and drags him into a prostrate position and lies on top of him, arms and legs outstretched.

CUT TO:

EXT. KHAFRE'S CAMP, NILE SHORES - DAY

KHAFRE and BABA slowly come upon their campsite. BABA sees the beer spillage, broken barrels, jumps off his ox-cart, hands on head in anguish.

BABA  
 Oh, no, no, no!

KHAFRE regards spillage sadly, sees vulture cages empty, slowly dismounts ox-cart.

KHAFRE  
 (dazed, looking at cages)  
 Jafari, Sefu, go back to the pub and get some more beer, wouldja?

JAFARI  
 How much, Khaffy?

KHAFRE  
 Uh, I dunno. Enough. Er, and get a coupla goats as well, huh?

BABA gestures to JAFARI and SEFU not to leave yet.

BABA  
 (cautiously)  
 Uh, Khafre? Tell you the truth, I don't think this method is working.

KHAFRE  
 (confrontational)  
 What're you saying, Baba?

BABA  
 I'm saying: It seems like the right idea - but in the wrong direction.

KHAFRE slowly turns to face BABA, hands on hips, deadly serious. JAFARI and SEFU rooted to the spot, watching.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KHAFRE

(stares at BABA two beats)

I agree... But I'm telling you we're onto something.

BABA

I agree. But what?

KHAFRE

(pacing, thinking out loud)

Your Pulling Things, the log rollers, the wind, these ropes, this monolithic... monolith - So how do we put it all together?!

CUT TO:

EXT. PALACE RAMPARTS - DAY

YOJIMBO points toward pyramid base, IMHOTEP peering.

IMHOTEP

What in Ammut's name are we looking at?

YOJIMBO

Grand Vizier, the Friends of the Sand have - with the trench, and the thing, and the deep, and the ooohh--

IMHOTEP

Fill it in.

YOJIMBO

A thousand pardons, Grand Vizier; the Friends of the Sand are fanatics; the amount of labor on that excavation--

IMHOTEP

(loudly, expressionless)

Fill! It! In!

IMHOTEP turns on his heel and stalks away. CAMERA stays on YOJIMBO, literally frozen like a statue with a look of terror on his face.

CUT TO:

EXT. NILE SHORES - DAY CONT'D

REPORTER is on the sand now, constantly attended by TELEGRAPHER. Up-close-and-personal interviews.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

REPORTER

This is Robert Foster, bringing you Day 2 of Pharaoh Khufu's stone-moving competition. We're live on the Nile, bringing you the excitement as it happens. As it happens, there just isn't any excitement on the Nile right now.

SHOT of ELVITH's band lounging as their road-crew sets up.

REPORTER O.C. (CONT'D)

Elvith's Rolling Rocks made it to the gig; now they're arguing over the chord changes in the bridge.

REPORTER runs toward BUTO, walking at the head of his slave team, Steadicam following.

REPORTER

Let's get an exclusive with Buto--

BUTO (SLAVES)

(whips REPORTER)

You better check yourself, son!

REPORTER

(yawns, rubbing his tailbone)

Owaah! I guess he's in conference.

As REPORTER passes HUNEFER'S oxen, he scrunches up face and blocks nose. We see HUNEFER'S oxen moving slowly through poo.

REPORTER O.C. (CONT'D)

Oh gods! Hunefer's oxen extruded so much excrement that - eeeeww!

JUMP CUT TO:

Team HATHOR lies in a body-oiled clump. They drink and loudly cat-call REPORTER as he passes. Their drinks are pink and blue with ankh umbrellas.

REPORTER O.C. (CONT'D)

HATHOR's men finished oiling up this morning, and were ironically too slippery for the ropes, which were also--

PRODUCER O.C.

Uh, that's not the meaning of "ironic"--

When young female PRODUCER interrupts, STEADICAM skews around taking in REPORTER and PRODUCER.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

REPORTER  
Yes it is!

PRODUCER  
It's "subsequently" they were too  
slippery.

REPORTER  
But then it won't sound ironic!

PRODUCER  
It's not ironic!

REPORTER  
You're talking "tautology"--

PRODUCER  
You're talking bullshit!--

REPORTER and PRODUCER start slapping each other like girls.  
CAMERA goes WHITE NOISE.

JUMP CUT TO:

EXT. SENNACH'S CAMP, NILE SHORES - DAY

The table is sticking up from the sand on its side, in same  
position it landed, but a little deeper.

REPORTER O.C. (CONT'D)  
Ironically--  
(looks angrily at PRODUCER, who  
nods acquiescence)  
--Team Sennach's table of health foods  
has become their headstone.

JUMP CUT TO:

EXT. PYRAMID BASE - DAY CONT'D

HATSHEP and cultists sit cross-legged and lie prostrate in  
and around the trench. HATSHEP is silent, eyes closed.

REPORTER O.C.  
HATSHEP's Canalers tell us the mysterious  
trench was dug by the Visitors From  
Beyond, but the new palace Intelligence  
Agency, the CIA, have leaked information  
that it was, in fact, Trench Pixies.

JUMP CUT TO:

EXT. KAMOSESES CAMP, NILE SHORES - DAY.

KAMOSESES sits dejectedly amongst a rabble of people all squabbling around him.

REPORTER O.C.

Team Kamoseses started arguing soon after no one could figure how to actually make money with a pyramid scheme.

JUMP CUT TO:

EXT. KHAFRE'S CAMP, NILE SHORES - DAY

SHOTS of the beer spillage extending to the trench.

REPORTER O.C. (CONT'D)

KHAFRE found his prodigious supply of beer spilled by saboteurs. We tried to get an interview...

FLASHBACK FOOTAGE: KHAFRE and BABA declining interview, putting hands over camera; shaky HAND-HELD CAMERA, with overlapping audio.

REPORTER

What were the vultures for, Khafre? Do you know who did this?--

KHAFRE

We're not at liberty to say - uh, turn those cameras off, wouldja, we've got sensitive material here...

BABA

Get that cat outa here! No, we're not suspending our campaign - that's a rumor started by the Canalers...

REPORTER O.C. (CONT'D)

...but they refused to comment, citing security measures and bad coughs.

Resume REAL-TIME FOOTAGE. REPORTER on-camera.

REPORTER

Join us later for a special report on engineer Bankole's progress on the south plains. For CNN, this is Robert Foster.

JUMP CUT TO:

EXT. BANKOLE'S CAMP, NILE SHORES - DAY

Team BANKOLE drunk around their stone, which is buttressed up against scaffold, ropes tangled everywhere. Singing loudly. Algebraic calculations in chalk all over stone.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BANKOLE drunkly waves papyrus diagrams of scaffolds and stones as he interviews.

BANKOLE (ENGINEER)  
I don't know whassa matter! We used this exact same exact scaffold to build Pharaoh's palace.

REPORTER O.C.  
But how many engineers does it take to haul an 80-ton stone?

BANKOLE (ENGINEER)  
My calcula--waitaminute! Is this one of those "screwing in the lightbulb" gags?

REPORTER O.C.	BANKOLE
Screwing in a <u>what</u> ?	Exactly!

JUMP CUT TO:

EXT. KHAFRE'S CAMP, NILE SHORES - DAY

KHAFRE approaches BABA, JAFARI and SEFU digging with their hands disconsolately under their stone. KHAFRE carries makeshift white flag in one hand.

KHAFRE  
Whatcha doin'?

BABA  
Getting these rollers under this thing.  
What's that?

KHAFRE  
(C.U., to BABA)  
I don't wanna do it, but it seems like the sensible thing to do.

KHAFRE hoists a small white rag tied to a stick (a "peace flag"), walks purposefully towards KAMOSESES' campsite. BABA, JAFARI and SEFU follow. The rag flaps madly in the wind.

EXT. KAMOSESES CAMP, NILE SHORES - DAY.

KAMOSESES (SALES)  
(sees Team KHAFRE approaching)  
What the devil is this?

JUMP CUT TO:

EXT. NILE SHORES - MOMENTS LATER

Gathered together: KHAFRE, BABA, JAFARI, KAMOSESES, SENNACH, SABOLA, HATHOR, HUNEFER, CAMPO, ELVITH, BLACKMORE, and a sprinkling of workers from all teams. Most of this Argument Scene dialog is overlapped.

KHAFRE  
...and if we all don't make it - we all die! So why are we fighting against each other?

KAMOSESES (SALES)  
Hear, hear, old boy!

HATHOR (GYM)  
You're saying we should work together to find a method to move one stone and share the prizemoney?

JAFARI  
That's exactly what he's saying! Er - that's what you're saying, right boss?

BABA  
The kid's right. There's no reason we can't all benefit, instead of all dying.

HATHOR (GYM)  
Well, let's get to work and move my stone!

HUNEFER (OXEN)  
Hang on! Why should we move your stone?

HATHOR (GYM)  
Well, cos I'm behind everyone.

Same voice from BRIEFING SEMINAR calls out from offscreen.

VOICE FROM CROWD-2  
You can say that again, sweetheart!

As HATHOR and those near him look offscreen for the voice, the argument continues unabated.

HUNEFER (OXEN)  
And that's exactly why we shouldn't move your stone--

SENNACH (HEALTHFOOD)  
Well, why don't we move my stone then?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KAMOSE (SALES)  
 (indicating with  
 fingers)  
 I say! Mine's not that far -  
 if we could just see our way  
 clear to - er...

HATHOR (GYM)  
 (to SENNACH)  
 Because you haven't put your  
 rollers under it yet--

SENNACH (HEALTHFOOD)  
 (to HATHOR)  
 Neither have you!

HUNEFER (OXEN)  
 My oxen are halfway there already - just  
 come over and help us do the last--

BLACKMORE  
 You call that halfway, dude?!  
 You're like, 400 hundred  
 miles away!

CAMPO  
 (to BABA)  
 How come they get first  
 choice?

BABA  
 Look, no one's getting any choice - we  
 didn't mean to move his stone--

SABOLA  
 (indignant, crossing her arms)  
 Oh? Then what did you mean? To move your  
 stone?

KHAFRE'S team answer in unison:

KHAFRE'S TEAM  
Yes!

KHAFRE'S TEAM  
 (immediately deny their flub)  
 I mean, No! I mean, we could move any  
 stone.

ELVITH (MINSTREL)  
 Move my stone, dude!

CAMPO  
 Move ours!

Everyone starts talking at once.

KHAFRE  
 (shouts over everyone)  
 Look it doesn't matter whose stone gets  
 moved! As long as we get the money for  
 moving it!

Everyone goes silent.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

KHAFRE (CONT'D)

And there's more than enough to go  
'round. A million shekels--

JAFARI

(can't contain himself)  
A million shekels!

KHAFRE

That's 125,000 shekels for each team--

JAFARI

A hundred-and-twenty-five thousand!

SENNACH (HEALTHFOOD)

How'd you figure that?

KHAFRE

I divided by eight - there're eight teams  
here, so--

HUNEFER (OXEN)

(indicating the CANALERS)

Surely you're not going to include those  
weirdos in the prizemoney?

KHAFRE

Why not?

SENNACH (HEALTHFOOD)

I'll tell you why not! They're loonies!  
They're no help at all! And they don't  
believe in money anyway!

BABA

(to KHAFRE)

I kinda agree, Khaffy.

BLACKMORE

Yeh, but they got de illest manky-G,  
dudes!

KHAFRE

(bewildered, aside)  
And what's - who?--

CAMPO

(high-fives BLACKMORE)  
Bro! Hook me up, dog!

HATHOR (GYM)

She's right!

KAMOSSES (SALES)

Hear, hear, old girl!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

KHAFRE

Okay, so we split it seven ways--

SENNACH (HEALTHFOOD)

(to SABOLA)

Did he just call me 'old'?

SABOLA

(to SENNACH)

I think he's British.

ELVITH (MINSTREL)

(to KHAFRE)

What about the engineer dudes?

KHAFRE

Okay, eight ways then--

SENNACH (HEALTHFOOD)

(to SABOLA)

What's 'British'?

HATHOR (GYM)

(indicating HUNEFER and CAMPO)

Waitamminute! If each team gets one-eighth of the money, these guys only gotta share it between two of 'em. I've got fifty men here--

HUNEFER (OXEN)

Yes, but each of my oxen is worth ten men!--

KAMOSSES (SALES)

Well, I've got 64 Gypway executives directly in line to receive commissions from me and I don't think--

ELVITH (MINSTREL)

(indicating BUTO in the distance)

Yeh, but if the slave dude don't wanna hang - why should he get a fair share?

KHAFRE

Okay - hang on! Hang on!

Silence.

KHAFRE (CONT'D)

So are we back to seven or eight ways?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

HATHOR (GYM)

We're up to fifty-eight ways, skinny-legs!

On "fifty," HATHOR lunges at KHAFRE, is held back by KAMOSESES.

KAMOSESES (SALES)

(restraining HATHOR)

I say, old chap!

HUNEFER cackles, stopped by BABA, who then turns to HATHOR.

BABA

Hey, don't call him "skinny-legs!"

KAMOSESES (SALES)

(answering KHAFRE)

65 plus 54, I should say!

BLACKMORE

What's that? - Like, three million, man?

KHAFRE

(answering HATHOR)

Hey, I'm not the one with the money, I'm just saying--

SENNACH (HEALTHFOOD)

And I've got forty people of my own to feed on minimal nutritional supplies--

JAFARI

(to SENNACH)

No one asks you guys to eat such expensive, organic, humane-killed sacred cow and--

ELVITH (MINSTREL)

(to BLACKMORE)

Are they gonna move our stone, dude?

SABOLA

(to Jafari, defending SENNACH)

No one asks you to consume so much brain-damaging, liver-frying alcohol--

HATHOR (GYM)

Look, he should get one share for each ox, just like each of my men--

ELVITH (MINSTREL)

Yeh, I like the muscle dude's idea--

HUNEFER (OXEN)

But they're worth ten men!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

ELVITH (MINSTREL)  
Now that's bull, man!

Everyone starts talking at once.

KHAFRE  
Okay okay okay okay! Shaataaap!

Everyone goes silent.

SHOT of the "peace flag" planted in the sand, flapping in breeze. Far-off sound of BUTO'S SLAVES HUFFING and being WHIPPED.

KHAFRE (CONT'D)  
Now. Can we take it that everyone brought as many people as they were gonna pay anyway?

ALL  
Right. Right. Okay, Yo, dude. Right. Yes. Correct.

KHAFRE  
So. If we do it eight ways--

ELVITH (MINSTREL)  
Seven ways, dude.

KHAFRE  
Seven ways, then we each pay our subcontractors in whatever manner we were gonna - whether that's "equally" or a "percentage" or just paying them off in hay or mead or strawberry body oil. Fair?

Everyone considers this silently for two beats.

HUNEFER (OXEN)  
While we stand here talking, Buto is still moving.

CAMPO  
(looking into the distance)  
Yeh... he's moving all right...

Everyone slowly backs away from everyone else, then suddenly turn and sprint back to their campsites.

EXT. KHAFRE'S CAMP, NILE SHORES - SECONDS LATER

KHAFRE and BABA, with their team, dig madly under their stone to insert log rollers.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BABA  
Well, that went well.

KHAFRE  
Shutup and dig!

EXT. HUNEFER'S CAMP, NILE SHORES - SECONDS LATER.

HUNEFER and CAMPO yoke their oxen when their attention is drawn to a faraway noise. HUNEFER slowly looks up. CAMERA closes in on HUNEFER'S face as he sees the cause of the noise.

CAMERA moves in on BUTO seeing the noise, although not stopping his relentless forward momentum.

CAMERA moves in on C.U. of HATHOR, seeing the noise.

CAMERA moves in on C.U. of SENNACH, seeing the noise.

CAMERA moves in on C.U. of HATSHEP, near his stone, cross-legged, eyes closed. His eyes suddenly open as the noise gets louder.

CAMERA closes in on KHAFRE and BABA, digging, who stop and rise slowly as they see the cause of the noise.

The noise is the PALACE GUARD, in their thousands, marching over the dunes toward the Nile Shore campsites.

BABA  
Now what?

THE PALACE GUARD stream over the dunes. As they get closer, we see they are carrying shovels instead of spears.

LAST SHOT of KHAFRE and BABA as the MARCHING sound gets louder and louder.

FADE TO BLACK.

END ACT II

ACT III

FADE IN:

EXT. FRIENDS OF THE SAND CAMP - NIGHT

TESHUB and F.O.T.S. sit around campfire, telling tales.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HAJI

...And we didn't just spill it around their campsite - there was so much, we poured it in a pathway all the way down to the trench we dug.

F.O.T.S. break up laughing. TESHUB smiles approvingly.

HAJI (CONT'D)

(laughing madly)

It's soaking in like a roadway of liquor!

MENSAH

That's nothing! The Canalers think their Visitors dug the trench!

ZUKA

No, no. We got one better. That ox-cart guy - we fed his oxen castor oil - and they shat all over those gym guys while they were - while they were - ahh-ha ha!

TESHUB (ENVIRONMENTALIST)

How's the Geek Squad doing down in the South Hills?

MENSAH

(to everyone, while laughing)

Still no girlfriends!

HAJI

They're as confused as the dung beetles on the Nile beaches, Leader.

TESHUB (ENVIRONMENTALIST)

Make sure they stay confused, Haji.

HAJI

Yes, Leader.

NEBIBI and some F.O.T.S. arrive. TESHUB rises to meet them.

NEBIBI

Save our Sand, Leader.

TESHUB (ENVIRONMENTALIST)

Save our Sand, Nebibi. What news?

NEBIBI

They've filled in the trench, Leader.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

TESHUB (ENVIRONMENTALIST)  
 (pauses, shocked)  
 They what?... Who?

NEBIBI  
 Teppy's Palace Guard.

TESHUB is silent, then is bodily furious, silently.

MENSAH  
 (steps forward)  
 Leader, should we--

TESHUB (ENVIRONMENTALIST)  
 (calms down - raises hand to  
 interject)  
 Dig.

MENSAH  
 Again? Leader, the Friends are so worn  
 out after the last excavation that--

TESHUB (ENVIRONMENTALIST)  
 (insanely)  
Dig it!

MENSAH  
 Yes, Leader. Save our Sand.  
 (performs the salute fearfully  
 and exits)

As MENSAH exits, TESHUB dutifully grabs a handful of sand,  
 but wildly splays it everywhere in his anger. He performs the  
 salute superficially, not really in respect or farewell.

TESHUB (ENVIRONMENTALIST)  
 Save our--ghaaa!

CUT TO:

EXT. PYRAMID BASE - NIGHT

MENSAH and ANPU re-dig the trench with a host of F.O.T.S.  
 They speak in half-whispers.

MENSAH  
 "Dig," he says. I don't see him breaking  
 his back out here.

ANPU  
 Hey! Teshub says "dig" - we dig. Do it  
 for the Sand, Mensah.  
 (MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANPU (CONT'D)

Now, if we dig towards the beach, the water will find its own level down to here.

MENSAH

But how will the trench hold water?

Sound of SHOVEL hitting someone's head in the darkness.

F.O.T.S.-O.C.

Geb damn it! Watch where you're digging!

ANPU

Keep it down, you desert camel's armpits!  
(to MENSAH)  
Teshub says dig it down to the rock under the sand and the Plateau will act as a natural basin.

MENSAH

Is that true?

ANPU

I dunno - but if his story doesn't hold water, the trench won't either.

MENSAH

Why flood it anyway?

ANPU

(digging as he speaks)  
One: so Teppy's palace pigs can't fill it in again, and two: so they still won't be able to get their evil stones up the--

Sound of SHOVEL hitting ANPU'S head. MENSAH has hit him accidentally and is cringing for the coming retribution.

ANPU (CONT'D)

(holding his head)

Geb damn it! Watch where you're digging!

F.O.T.S.-O.C.

Sssssshhhhhh!

MENSAH looks warily at steaming ANPU, then drops his shovel, silently takes off in other direction, ANPU giving chase.

CUT TO:

EXT. PYRAMID BASE - DAY

TEXT: DAY 3

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PAN DOWN FROM BLUE SKIES. A rope is attached to the top of a scaffold. PAN LOWER. Canalers are swinging from rope off BANKOLE'S scaffold (now erected on pyramid base) and SPLASHING into the water in the trench around the base. A quarter-mile trench also runs from the base trench towards Nile, ending near Khafre's camp.

HATSHEP runs up and down banks of trench canals, again physically forcing Canalers to "witness" the miracles.

HATSHEP (CULT)

Witness the power of the Visitors From Beyond! Eoouy! The false Pharaoh tries to subvert their handiwork and the Visitors give us two signs - not one, but two, not three, but two signs, not seven, but two! Not five, but two!--

Two Canalers tackle HATSHEP from offscreen and drag him down.

CUT TO:

EXT. TESHUB'S VANTAGE, NILE HILLS - DAY

F.O.T.S. HAJI and ANPU watch the CANALERS with amusement.

ANPU

Those guys are ten drachmas short of a shekel. Well done, Haji!

HAJI

It wasn't easy - fifty of us on a ten mile jog with a bleedin' scaffold on our shoulders!

CUT TO:

EXT. PYRAMID BASE - DAY

KHAFRE and BABA on ox-cart, come upon the CANALERS.

BABA

(does a triple-take on the scaffold and canal)

If Seth, the god of confusion, came down right now, I don't think I could be more confused.

KHAFRE stares at the scaffold. MUSIC UP, as he is about to have an epiphany. Then -

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KHAFRE  
I need a beer.

CUT TO:

EXT. ELVITH'S CAMPSITE, NILE SHORES - DAY

ELVITH'S road crew lever their stone, placing rolling rocks under it, while ELVITH pontificates:

ELVITH (MINSTREL)  
"Give me a lever long enough, and a place to stand, and I will move the world, dude!" Okay... let 'er go!

Stone drops hard, squashing rocks into the sand. ELVITH unperturbed.

ELVITH (MINSTREL) (CONT'D)  
(as if onstage, large greeting)  
Hello Cleveland! We are The Rolling Rocks! And this... is Stone Jam!

Band plays. Of course, nothing moves. Suddenly, band stop playing and stare agape at something offscreen.

LONG SHOT: BAND BETWEEN C.U. LEGS OF SLAVES.

MEDIUM SHOT: BAND DROPPING AND PROSTRATING THEMSELVES.

CUT TO:

EXT. KHAFRE'S CAMP, NILE SHORES - DAY

SHOT FROM OUTSIDE, KHAFRE and BABA in tent, perusing plans on table. People running outside, past camera. KHAFRE looks up.

KHAFRE  
(to passerby)  
Hey! Where's the oasis?

PASSERBY  
The Princess Meresankh is here!

KHAFRE looks at BABA in shock.

BABA  
Seth is at it again.

CUT TO:

EXT. HATHOR'S CAMP, NILE SHORES - DAY

MERESANKH'S litter passes Team HATHOR and Team KAMOSESES, who all bow. MERESANKH remains motionless, ignores everyone behind translucent veil.

JUMP CUT TO:

EXT. KHAFRE'S CAMP, NILE SHORES - DAY

KHAFRE and BABA exit their tent, see MERESANKH'S litter approach, borne by four slaves. PALACA GUARD surround the litter, which stops before KHAFRE'S tent with curious team members from every camp in tow.

KHAFRE

To what do I owe the pleasure of this visit, your Royal Highness?

MERESANKH

(staying in royal character)  
You will speak when spoken to, subject!  
And what audacity to think I aim to pleasure you with my presence!

KHAFRE

I did not mean to offend, your Royal Highness.

MERESANKH

I did not mean to pleasure, lowly subject.

BABA makes a "What a burn!" face at KHAFRE, who has to stay in character himself in public, so is trying not to laugh.

MERESANKH (CONT'D)

I visit my subjects to view the moving of my father's monument stones. What progress, subject?

KHAFRE

Er, none, your Royal Highness.

MERESANKH

None?! The Grand Vizier will be painfully disappointed, subject. Although I see the slaver has made progress...

KHAFRE

May I speak freely, your Royal Highness?

A SMALL GASP from the crowd.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MERESANKH

Insofar as you consider yourself "free"  
under the absolute theocratic governance  
of the Royal Deity.

BABA give KHAFRE another "burn" face.

KHAFRE

The Grand Vizier is the reason we  
shopkeepers are running around like  
headless ibises.

MERESANKH

Take care with accusations, subject!

KHAFRE

He has threatened us with death if no one  
discovers a faster method to move  
Pharaoh's stones.

MERESANKH

(genuinely surprised)

I was not aware.

(resolved)

Yet he has absolutely no authority to  
threaten my father's subjects with--

KHAFRE

Whether he does or not, Your Royal  
Highness, his Palace Guard have very  
pointy spears.

A MEDIUM GASP goes up when KHAFRE interrupts the Princess.  
MERESANKH is about to speak when KHAFRE interrupts again.

KHAFRE (CONT'D)

And--

SLIGHTLY LARGER GASP from crowd.

KHAFRE (CONT'D)

(after double-take on crowd)

--we fear for our lives, making us  
sabotage amongst ourselves.

CROWD agrees, lots of head-nodding and RHUBARBS of assent.

KHAFRE (CONT'D)

We should be competing for the glory of  
Egypt, but we're running in circles for  
the treasure of Teppy and--

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MERESANKH

(cuts him off defiantly)

Subject! Interrupt me again and you will face the llama of Khufu.

BIG GASP from crowd. Then APPLAUSE (for the best interruption, which cannot be topped).

MERESANKH (CONT'D)

For now, a supply ship "sails" for this beach in a few days.

KHAFRE

Yes, your Royal Highness.

MERESANKH

(tries giving Khafre a clue)

The supply ship sails.

KHAFRE

Yes, your Royal Highness... again.

MERESANKH

By the way, subject, how are your sails?

KHAFRE

(confused, looks to BABA for aid)

Uhm, my sales are low, your Royal Highness; I've spent most of my time out here on the Nile.

MERESANKH

Then you should raise your sails, subject.

KHAFRE

(hesitantly)

I... will?

(looks to BABA, who motions to be assertive)

I mean, I will, your Royal Highness.

MERESANKH can't be any more blunt; claps her hands in frustration, litter departs. Crowd disperses, as KHAFRE turns to BABA, shaking his head dismissively.

KHAFRE (CONT'D)

Chicks!

JUMP CUT TO:

EXT. NILE SHORES - DAY

TEXT: DAY 7

PANORAMIC SHOT shows SHOPKEEPERS along beach with stones, ropes and log rollers twisted every which way.

Supply ships hove to shore in the distance, large white sails prominent. Team BUTO is halfway to the pyramid base.

BUTO (SLAVES)

We don't need no damn buffet! Half rations for everybody! Keep pullin' fools! We almost there!

INT. KHAFRE'S TENT, NILE SHORES - DAY

JAFARI interrupts KHAFRE and BABA in the war-room tent.

JAFARI

You gotta see this, bosses!

JAFARI shows KHAFRE and BABA the hardened beer spillage on the sand.

BABA

What the - ?

KHAFRE stamps the ground, testing its firmness. He looks from the stone, all the way to the trench and the pyramid base.

KHAFRE

(contemplating)

It's like those beers spills behind the pub... Jafari! Grab some guys and bring over the log rollers.

KHAFRE IN C.U. In B.G., JAFARI does tap dance on hard area, until Khafre calls him, whereupon he stops, hears the directive and runs offscreen. He returns instantly and dumps log rollers on hard area behind KHAFRE, startling him.

CUT TO:

INT. THRONE ROOM - DAY

MERESANKH to KHUFU in milk bath. NEFRET stands contrite.

MERESANKH

Your daughter herself has admitted to sabotage of your eternal monument because of the treachery of your Grand Vizier.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KHUFU  
(to NEFRET)  
Are We to believe the accusations of your  
sister, daughter?

NEFRET  
Not unless she wants to take the  
accusations further, Father.

MERESANKH  
You will respect the decisions of our  
Father, sister!

NEFRET'S dialog is in B.G. as CAMERA PUSHES IN on an "eye"  
glyph on throne room wall.

NEFRET  
Father, even though I acted selfishly,  
sabotaging your temple on the Nile Shores  
might save Egypt from a terrible fate.  
Meresankh has tried to warn me of  
treachery but I did not listen -

Behind "eye" glyph is a REAL EYE watching throne room. A spy.  
As CAMERA PUSHES IN, the eye disappears from behind glyph.

CUT TO:

INT. IMHOTEP'S CHAMBER - SAME TIME.

C.U. bag of coins being thrown into lap of someone (CAMPO).

IMHOTEP  
That's a lot of coin for a lot of  
nothing.

CAMPO  
Can I help it if no one is making any  
progress, GV?

IMHOTEP  
Any leads on Loverboy?

CAMPO  
Dry as the Nile in Dry Season, GV.

YOJIMBO bursts through IMHOTEP'S door.

YOJIMBO  
Grand Vizier! Meresankh and Nefret are  
singing like whooping cranes to the  
Pharaoh--Oh, hi Campo. Whatchoo doing  
here?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

IMHOTEP  
 (to CAMPO)  
 Get out! Oh, and boy... my name is  
 Imhotep the Large.

CAMPO gulps as he exits.

INT. THRONE ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

As MERESANKH speaks, commotion is heard as IMHOTEP bursts through the Guard at Throne Room door, enters with YOJIMBO.

MERESANKH  
 (to KHUFU)  
 It is now at the stage where there is  
 more work needed to rectify your site  
 than to build upon it--  
 (startled, to IMHOTEP)  
 How dare you interrupt an audience with  
 the Pharaoh, Grand Vizier?!--

IMHOTEP  
 How dare you preach conspiracy to my  
 Pharaoh, Princess?--

NEFRET  
 How dare you use that tone with a  
 Princess, Grand Vizier?!--

KHUFU  
 (hugging ducky to his cheek)  
 How dare you all frighten Maxi?!

IMHOTEP  
 (to KHUFU)  
 Your Highness, might I suggest a backrub  
 and a slavegirl to--

KHUFU  
 Enough, Teppy! Our kingdom may be large,  
 but Our patience is small. We will visit  
 the site of Our future monument. Today.

PUSH IN REACTION SHOTS OF IMHOTEP, MERESANKH, NEFRET, AS  
 KHUFU DOES "ROAD TRIP" WITH MAXI.

KHUFU (CONT'D)  
 (making MAXI squeak in unison)  
 Would you like that Maxi? Road Trip! Road  
 Trip! Road Trip!...

CUT TO:

EXT. KHAFRE'S CAMP, NILE SHORES - DAY

KHAFRE exits war-room tent to meet the supply ship, talking to BABA behind him.

KHAFRE

...but what I'm really jonesing for are those cashews from Morocco. I think that monkey ate the last--

KHAFRE turns to the water. The large white mainsail of the closest ship fills his vision. He slips on the hardened beer pathway and goes down, hitting his head.

PUSH IN on KHAFRE'S unconscious face. Suddenly, flashes of visions, to all the pratfalls and hard knocks he's taken. Now - we see all the reveals:

vulture wings slapping his face, FOCUS on wing;

he falls off stool behind bar and lands near the tiny ship, FOCUS on ship in bar gutter/trench;

in sailor brawl, just before he is punched, MERESANKH has put one of KHUFU's tiny ships in his hand, FOCUS on ship;

as he lands on his back outside pub window, BABA places ankh in his hand, FOCUS on ankh tethering horse reins;

when he slips outside pub door and REPORTER laughs, FOCUS on hardened beer patch;

trips over bucket; FOCUS on bucket water running into gutter;

smashes face into beer jug, FOCUS on pulley it is hanging from;

little boy with kite; FOCUS on kite.

KHAFRE jerks awake. BABA is tending him, JAFARI nearby.

BABA

Khaffy! You okay? You look like someone from the Spirit World just walked over your mastaba.

KHAFRE

(mumbling, being helped)  
It's paint! No bird... I got it! It's just paint!...I got it!...

BABA

You got what? Khaffy, talk to me, sweetie. Use longer sentences revealing your subject and predicate.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KHAFRE

I got it! Baba, you gotta believe me. We got it! You gotta trust me - we got it, Baba baby! Woooo hoooo!

KHAFRE plants big kiss on BABA's mouth, leaps onto an ox-cart and rides hell-bent towards docks.

BABA, now sitting on the ground in dismay, looks at JAFARI.

JAFARI

Congratulations! Can I be the bridesmaid?

CUT TO:

EXT. THE DOCKS - LATER.

KHAFRE with KHENSU on the docks, KHENSU'S ship docked behind them, sails folded, sailors tending to mainsail.

KHAFRE

As sure as Shu is the god of winds, Khensu, we just need your help to win this thing. How about it? No more carting milk for a pissboy's wages. You'll be on Grand Vizier salary if we pull this off.

KHENSU (SAILOR)

(contemplating)

I dunno... you wanna throw in some slavegirls?

KHAFRE

All you can eat!--

KHENSU (SAILOR)

I'm in! So...er, what you got for me?

Mainsail of KHENSU'S ship snaps out in the wind behind them.  
PUSH IN on mainsail.

CUT TO - BLACK.

EXT. NILE HILLS - DAWN

TEXT: DAY 9

HUNEFER draws almost level with BUTO.

BUTO (SLAVES)

Hey ox-tail! I gotta coupla t-bones for you! Barbecue flava!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HUNEFER (OXEN)  
 (covering closest ox's ears)  
 Hey! Some respect, slaver! And it's not a  
 race, remember?

BUTO (SLAVES)  
 Yeh, it ain't a race when you losin'!

CUT TO:

EXT. NILE HILLS - DAWN CONT'D

REPORTER O.C.  
 Team Khafre were absent all day  
 yesterday, Mr. and Mrs. Egypt, and now  
 they've brought strange wooden constructs  
 onto the playing field along with their  
 dirty laundry.

LONG SHOT: Team KHAFRE with pulleys, scaffolds, sails. KHENSU  
 barks orders on the field, indicating BANKOLE'S scaffold,  
 being used by CANALERS to swing on.

KHENSU  
 ...with that scaffold at the base, our  
 path must end there, so we need to roll  
 along this beer road and over the water  
 trench in a straight line...

REPORTER O.C.  
 And it looks like - yes, Bankole's  
 engineers have arrived at the Plateau -  
 and they want their scaffold back.

LONG SHOT of Team BANKOLE arriving and Team HATSHEP rushing  
 from the scaffold to meet them head-on.

HATSHEP (CULT)  
 Persecute the unbelievers!

EXT. HATHOR'S CAMP, NILE SHORES - DAY

Team HATHOR have lengthwise logs half-buried under their  
 stone, allowing them to push the stone inch by inch. Every  
 advance, a "Yay!" goes up, then silence.

HATHOR sees the fracas at the trench, stops pushing, adjusts  
 his skimpy top and heads for trench, rubbing hands in glee.

HATHOR (GYM)  
 Ow yes! Fight!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Team HATHOR start chanting, "Fight! Fight! Fight!" as they stop pushing and run toward the brawl.

When HATHOR'S men move away from the stone, we see RHINOPLASTY trapped half under it.

RHINOPLASTY  
(to everyone now offscreen)  
--er...guys?...

EXT. KHAFRE'S CAMP, NILE SHORES - SAME TIME

KHAFRE and BABA oversee a scribe, carving the wind-moving method in glyphs on the side of their stone.

KHAFRE  
Get the drift of that?

BABA  
Clear as a windy sky. But I'll bet some Pinkie translates it all wrong.

The stone sits lashed to its wooden pallet on the beer path, rollers under the pallet. There are ropes to anchor "stone-riders" to the top. From stone-rider position, ropes extend forward to the first scaffold, through pulleys on the scaffold to a large white sail being held on the ground.

3 scaffolds lead to the pyramid base, one before the trench, one mid-trench and BANKOLE'S scaffold on the base itself. Sails, pulleys and ropes thread through the first two; BANKOLE'S is bare except for the CANALERS' rope.

JAFARI  
(runs up, to KHAFRE)  
Boss, they're storming the scaffold. They say it's theirs. The Canalers are fighting them off.

KHAFRE  
Who?

JAFARI  
Bankole's engineers!

KHAFRE  
Jafari - never thought I'd say this - help the Canalers!  
(to BABA)  
This is the break we need.  
(shouts after JAFARI)  
That scaffold is our last hope!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JAFARI  
 (shouts back as he runs off)  
 You got it, drama queen! Bring it,  
 mathletes!

EXT. ELVITH'S CAMPSITE, NILE SHORES - DAY

ELVITH and band are playing to the stone. SIMMONS the bassist sees the commotion at the trench and stops.

SIMMONS  
 Hey Elvith - look!

ELVITH and band run towards the trench, yelling, "Fight fight fight!" When ELVITH'S band move away from their stone, BLACKMORE is revealed lazing in the sand with bong.

BLACKMORE  
 Er... guys?...

EXT. NILE HILLS - DAWN

REPORTER  
 Hathor's men have joined the Canalers in  
 battle! Now Khafre's men are in there  
 too! The question remains:  
 (suddenly flabbergasted)  
 Who - what - why?

EXT. KAMOSE'S CAMP, NILE SHORES - DAY.

KAMOSE'S (SALES)  
 (watching the tussle)  
 I say, that's just not cricket, lads!

EXT. SENNACH'S CAMP, NILE SHORES - SAME TIME

SENNACH and her team stand with arms crossed, watching the battle disapprovingly. SENNACH turns to SABOLA.

SENNACH (HEALTHFOOD)  
 Hmph! Testosterone!

STEADICAM amongst battle. Llama goes across screen. A BAND MEMBER smashes a guitar over someone's head.

ELVITH (MINSTREL)  
 (to BAND MEMBER)  
 Hey! Whoa! Whoa! Whoa! What're you doing?  
 (MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ELVITH (MINSTREL) (CONT'D)  
 No real musician would ever smash their  
 guitar over someone's head! You been  
 watching too many movies, dude!

JUMP CUT TO:

EXT. PYRAMID BASE - MOMENTS LATER

BANKOLE'S engineers lie defeated, with CANALERS' feet on  
 their chests. KHAFRE and HATSHEP talk.

HATSHEP (CULT)  
 For driving the demons from our sacred  
 site, mannish boy, we shall Waco your  
 wish. Eoouy!

HATSHEP'S CANALERS let KHAFRE'S men approach the scaffold.

JUMP CUT TO:

Atop BANKOLE'S scaffold, KHENSU and BABA attach pulleys and  
 ropes. At the base, JAFARI and SEFU secure the scaffold with  
 metal spikes and mallets.

JUMP CUT TO:

EXT. KHAFRE'S CAMP, NILE SHORES - DAY

KHAFRE and BABA sit lashed atop the stone, KHAFRE holding a  
 rope which leads to the first scaffold. KHENSU gives final  
 instructions to KHAFRE.

KHENSU (SAILOR)  
 ...and as soon as you hook onto your  
 second ankh, cut the first sail loose.  
 I'll make sure the handover is done  
 precisely - or we start moving backwards--

KHAFRE  
 Hey Khensu... What if we can't make it up  
 the side of that base?

KHENSU (SAILOR)  
 (a bit too flippant)  
 Then we all die.

BABA  
 (gives KHAFRE resigned look)  
 Well, I cleared my diary...

Just past dawn and there is no wind.

EXT. HATHOR'S CAMP, NILE SHORES - SAME TIME

Team HATHOR laugh at KHAFRE, one of them making a gesture with finger like a limp penis.

No one but BUTO and HUNEFER are still moving forward.

INT. CATERING TENT, NILE SHORES - DAY

SHOT of REPORTER chatting to PRODUCER wearing headset, in modern craft services tent, with crew members dressed in jeans, t-shirts, walkie-talkies, etc.

JUMP CUT TO:

EXT. KHAFRE'S CAMP, NILE SHORES - LATER

Sun rises, wind nips at sail, tantalizingly. KHAFRE and BABA look at each other; look searchingly up at cloudless sky.

BABA

You feelin' a little like this was another wrong direction, Khaffy?

KHAFRE

(whispers to himself)  
Give us some of that magic, Shu!

EXT. NILE SHORES - DAY.

Near the trench, guarded by Team HATSHEP, Team BANKOLE huddle. PUSH IN on BANKOLE, wondering what KHAFRE is up to.

SHOTS OF EACH SHOPKEEPER AS THEY LOOK OVER AT KHAFRE AND BABA SITTING MOTIONLESS ATOP THEIR STONE.

EXT. TESHUB'S VANTAGE, NILE HILLS - DAY

F.O.T.S. watch KHAFRE. TESHUB notices wind nipping at the sail on the ground.

TESHUB (ENVIRONMENTALIST)

I know what they're trying to do!

ANPU

The wind, Leader?

TESHUB (ENVIRONMENTALIST)

Global Cooling! He's using Global Cooling! I knew this would destroy the planet! I warned the Pharaoh--

JUMP CUT TO:

EXT. KHAFRE'S CAMP, NILE SHORES - LATER.

Day proper. No wind. KHAFRE and BABA look up and see vultures circling now. They look at each other, concerned.

BABA

I just wanted to ask: We're at "do or die" here, right? I mean, if this fails, we got nothing else, right?

KHAFRE

I'd like to say no, Baba. But, er--

KHAFRE feels a heavy tug on his ankh, hears a sudden, quick grinding noise. He looks at BABA in surprise.

KHAFRE (CONT'D)

But - er...

Rope is suddenly pulled taut, almost crushing KHAFRE's hand. He anchors the ankh to a carabiner, as the stone starts grinding forward on its rollers. JAFARI and others who were sitting up against the stone get out of the way fast.

KHENSU (SAILOR)

(immediately assumes command)

We're rolling! Go go go go go!

The sail fully extends, pulling the stone, and we see it is painted like vulture wings.

EXT. TESHUB'S VANTAGE, NILE HILLS - SAME TIME

TESHUB (ENVIRONMENTALIST)

(hears commotion)

What the?-- Go go go! Save the sand with extreme prejudice!

The F.O.T.S. storm over the hills yelling, "Save our Sand!"

As stone steamrolls over solidified beer roadway, Team KHAFRE transfer log rollers from the back to the front. The pathway of rollers extends over two lengths of the stone, yet the stone starts outpacing the replacements at front.

INT. CATERING TENT, NILE SHORES - SAME TIME

REPORTER is startled out of his snack by the commotion; PRODUCER and crew try to get off-camera. A TELEGRAPHER sticks to REPORTER as he runs from the tent.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

REPORTER  
 (cramming last snack in mouth)  
 By Horus! Something's happening on the  
 sand, Mr. and Mrs. Egypt. Khafre's team  
 have started...  
 (words fail him)  
 ...have started...and they're riding  
 their...and the stone is - no,  
 wait!...and there's a sail and...

REPORTER peters out, dumbfounded. Mic drops to his side as he follows KHAFRE's stone with his head, as TELEGRAPHER waits with raised reflector for more commentary which doesn't come.

EXT. KHAFRE'S CAMP, NILE SHORES -SAME TIME

F.O.T.S. surround stone, try to remove rollers, while Team KHAFRE fight them off. But stone outpaces everyone.

F.O.T.S.  
 Save our Sand! Save our-- hey!

The stone outpaces HUNEFER and BUTO. REACTION SHOTS of open-mouthed SHOPKEEPERS. Everyone stops what they're doing to watch KHAFRE'S stone thunder across the Nile sands.

HUNEFER (OXEN)  
 (sees stone, then looks up at  
 vultures wheeling)  
 The thousand winds of Egypt...

The stone nears the trench, as KHENSU orders SEFU to throw the next ankh to BABA. This ankh is attached to the rope for the second sail, being held on the ground by Team KHAFRE.

KHENSU (SAILOR)  
 (running alongside, to BABA)  
 Attach!  
 (to release second sail)  
Now!  
 (to KHAFRE)  
 Cut it! Cut it!

BABA attaches the ankh to the carabiner as Team KHAFRE release the second sail from the ground. KHAFRE cuts the first sail loose, which whips into the sky.

KAMOSEs runs to retrieve the first sail.

The log rollers span the trench and KHAFRE'S stone keeps rolling above the water. Team KHAFRE cannot replace front rollers fast enough for the speed of the stone.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KHENSU, running alongside stone, looks at BABA, shaking his head in anxiety. KHENSU shouts to the roller-replacers.

KHENSU (SAILOR) (CONT'D)  
Get those rollers forward! Faster!

BABA  
Khaffy! We're going too fast!

KHAFRE  
(determined, eyes fixed ahead)  
And History says it's about time, Baba!

BABA  
The rollers can't take it--

Halfway along the trench, the rollers are so scarce that they crack under the weight of the stone. With a mighty SPLASH the stone, KHAFRE and BABA still lashed to it, hits the water.

CUT TO:

EXT. PYRAMID BASE - SAME TIME

As KHAFRE'S stone falls into the trench, KHUFU, MERESANKH, NEFRET, IMHOTEP, YOJIMBO, PALACE GUARDS arrive at the site, about 500 feet from the pyramid base.

KHUFU rides in a milk bath litter with Maxi, carried by ten slaves, MERESANKH and NEFRET each in a normal-sized litter, carried by four slaves; IMHOTEP, YOJIMBO walk, accompanied by PALACE GUARDS.

No shopkeepers notice the royal family, as they all hold their breath watching where KHAFRE'S stone went down.

The splash disperses. The stone is floating on its wooden pallet. And moving still. KHAFRE'S team cheers. Other teams cheer as well now, caught up in the astounding spectacle.

KHAFRE looks at the pulleys, ropes, scaffolds, joints. Wind blowing in his hair, he yells:

KHAFRE  
We can move a mountain if we wanted to!

Near middle of the trench, KHENSU barks his last orders:

KHENSU (SAILOR)  
Jafari - now!  
(to BABA)  
Attach!  
(to release last sail)  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

KHENSU (SAILOR) (CONT'D)

Let 'er go! You're on your own, you crazy geezers!

JAFARI throws third and last ankh-line to BABA. The stone flies down the water-filled trench and SMASHES into the plateau slope of the pyramid base, then is dragged up the slope on its pallet, and up under the scaffold, where it hangs and sways.

REACTION SHOTS of SHOPKEEPERS and ROYALTY.

C.U. IMHOTEP glares at CAMPO ("Why didn't you report this?"), who shrugs ("This just happened!")

KHAFRE and BABA, lashed to the stone's top, sway under the scaffold. The sail is pulled taut by the wind.

KHAFRE

(wielding knife, to cut rope)  
You ready to buy that farm?

BABA

(hefts knife also)  
I'm already there, Khaffy!

They cut their ropes. With a mighty smash, throwing up a giant sand cloud, the stone falls to rest on one corner of the pyramid base.

Silence as dust clears. Then mad cheering from ALL.

REACTION SHOTS of SHOPKEEPERS.

BUTO (SLAVES)

Who woulda thought them liquored up pinkies coulda pulled that off?!

KAMOSE (SALES)

I say! I say! Bravo, chaps! Bravo!

HATSHEP (CULT)

(looks with awe on Khafre)  
The Visitors From Beyond... are here!

HATSHEP's Canalers bow down and worship KHAFRE and BABA.

EXT. NILE SHORES - DAY

SENNACH (HEALTHFOOD)

Men! Who do they think they are?

SABOLA

(effuses, then recants when  
SENNACH scowls at her)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SABOLA (CONT'D)

I dunno, that Jafari is kinda cute--I mean, who do they think they are... with those big pec muscles and...

HATHOR (GYM)

(among his cheering men)

The boy's got spunk. I like that in a man.

HUNEFER (OXEN)

(to oxen)

Don't worry, my pretties! There, there...

CAMPO

I'm off, boss!

HUNEFER (OXEN)

Where're you going?

CAMPO

(holds up moneybag)

Ankh Vegas.

BUTO (SLAVES)

(whipping cheering slaves)

Check yourself, fools!

SLAVE-1

(whipped and cheering)

Thank you sir! May I have another?

BUTO keeps whipping.

ELVITH (MINSTREL)

(grabs BLACKMORE'S shoulders,  
half-crying)

We're gonna live, dude! We're gonna live!

BLACKMORE

Did we win?

TESHUB and F.O.T.S. stop dead when the stone falls, mouths agape. Drop their picket signs and walk off, talking amongst themselves. Collective attitude of "What the hell, it was a shot, let's do something else now."

EXT. PYRAMID BASE - DAY.

BANKOLE, guarded no more, is taking notes amongst the throng.

KHUFU

(to PALACE GUARD)

We will speak with that young man.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PALACE GUARDS escort KHAFRE to KHUFU'S mobile milk bath.  
MERESANKH runs and embraces KHAFRE in a long public kiss.

MERESANKH  
(proudly, to KHUFU)  
Father, this is the commoner.

KHAFRE bows and remains mute, but smiling. IMHOTEP fumes.

KHUFU  
You are not very common, young man.  
(to IMHOTEP)  
Teppy!

IMHOTEP  
(gritting teeth)  
Yes, Your Royal Highness?

KHUFU  
Bequeath this uncommon young man a  
million shekels and build Our monument to  
Immortality.

Wild cheering as KHAFRE hugs MERESANKH, looks over crowd.

Suddenly, IMHOTEP grabs a PALACE GUARD spear.

SLOW MOTION: IMHOTEP yells a long, "Nooooo!" and hurls spear  
at KHAFRE. CHEERING stops. C.U. REACTION SHOTS OF KHAFRE,  
MERESANKH, KHUFU, SHOPKEEPERS.

Silence. C.U. SHOT OF SPEAR SHAFT STICKING INTO SOMETHING ON  
GROUND.

NORMAL SPEED: PULL OUT, we see spear has gone into ground  
directly in front of IMHOTEP. Everyone nonchalant, as KHUFU  
motions PALACE GUARD to arrest IMHOTEP.

KHAFRE  
You okay, Tepmonster? Chill, dude!

KHUFU motions KHAFRE closer, as CHEERING starts again.

KHUFU (CONT'D)  
(aside)  
You will build a milk bath into it, won't  
you, uncommon young man?

FADE TO BLACK.

TEXT ON BLACK: ONE YEAR LATER.

SOUNDTRACK for montage: "Any Way The Wind Blows" by Southern Pacific. We catch up with each SHOPKEEPER:

INT. GYPWAY OFFICE - DAY

KAMOSESES' office is now "Pyramid Products": selling kites, rolling balls, levers, tiny smooth pyramids, etc.

INT. PUB - NIGHT

SHOT of ELVITH'S band performing above song, now calling themselves "The Pyramidiots" on a banner behind them.

In crowd: TUTU RAM and YOJIMBO, halfheartedly watching show. Their eyes meet, sparkle.

JUMP CUT TO:

TUTU RAM and YOJIMBO dirty dancing violently.

In crowd: NEFRET, clapping with crowd watching TUTU RAM and YOJIMBO; she is bumped by a guy moving through crowd. She turns to yell, but her breath catches at his wild beauty (he looks like Jesus).

NEFRET

Hey!--oh, er, what's your name?

EMMANUEL

Emmanuel.

Their eyes sparkle.

EXT. PYRAMID SITE - DAY

HATHOR'S men help with construction, levering, raising scaffolds, etc.

SENNACH caters food to the pyramid site; demonstrates stone tables with legs that can't tip over in wind.

BUTO heads small contingent of slaves, pulling with kites.

HATSHEP and Canalers on the streets chanting, holding banners portraying KHAFRE in regal attire as a god.

HUNEFER giving tours of the pyramid site in his ox-carts.

EXT. NILE RIVER - DAY

KHENSU at the prow of his ship, transporting three 2-ton stones, proudly looks back across his fleet of ships carrying stones. His white sails are painted like vultures.

REVERSE SHOT from the prow of KHENSU'S ship to the shore, where far off in the haze of the Giza Plateau, we see the Great Pyramid of Khufu under construction.

EXT. PYRAMID SITE - DAY

KHAFRE (in Grand Vizier robes) sits regally atop a covered dais, overseeing construction, with MERESANKH at his side.

MEDIUM SHOT of pyramid under construction, scaffolding and kites painted like vultures engulf the construct.

BABA supervises on the ground. LILLIANKH plants a kiss on him. BABA waves up to KHAFRE.

BABA  
(motioning at pyramid)  
It's just stone steps! How hard can it  
be?

KHAFRE laughs.

HIGH WIDE SHOT OF PYRAMID: we see the construction fully, with limestone casing built into the sides of the pyramid as it rises, creating ramps which are the pyramid sides itself; rolling rocks being used; beer being poured onto the sand. JAFARI sneakily holds a cup to the waterfall of beer, fills it and moves off.

TELEGRAPHERS signal to ships from shore.

KHAFRE looks out over the construction, turns to MERESANKH, smiles, then shouts for IMHOTEP.

KHAFRE  
Ay, Teppy!

IMHOTEP enters, dressed in YOJIMBO'S garments (indicating his demotion), gritting his teeth.

IMHOTEP  
Yes, Grand Vizier.

KHAFRE  
More mead, Royal Assistant!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

IMHOTEP  
 Yes, Grand Vizier.  
 (turns, stopped by KHAFRE)

KHAFRE  
 Oh, and Teppy.

IMHOTEP  
 (still gritting teeth)  
 Yes, Grand Vizier.

KHAFRE  
 Make that sharpish, wouldja? Me and my  
 wife are baking like unleavened bread out  
 here.

IMHOTEP  
 Yes, Grand Vizier.

IMHOTEP exits.

KHAFRE  
 Nice guy, that Teppy. Open that jaw,  
 he'll probably make more friends... See  
 that rock outcrop there? Wanna carve it  
 into a massive stone guardian of this  
 necropolis. Gotta work on that before  
 building my own temple out here.

MERESANKH  
 You sure you're not getting as power-mad  
 as the ex-Grand Vizier?

KHAFRE  
 Hey, every King needs his guardian.

MERESANKH  
 (meaning herself)  
 You've got one, Khaffy.

They kiss.

KHAFRE  
 But I can't seem to think of a name for  
 the thing...

MERESANKH is about to answer, but sneezes. It sounds like:  
 "ah-sphinx."

KHAFRE (CONT'D)  
 (contemplating)  
 Mmm... Yeh... yeh...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CAMERA PUSH IN on VULTURE SAIL in the harbor.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. EGYPTIAN ARCHAEOLOGICAL DIG - DAY

Vulture sail morphs into opening shot of movie: live vulture seen from behind, wings outstretched, standing and cawing. We are back in modern times.

RADCLIFFE is holding a small kite in his hand as he attaches it to a stone 1 x 1 x 2 feet.

RADCLIFFE  
(skeptically)  
Wind, my ass!

RADCLIFFE lets the kite go. It is torn out of his hand by the wind, dragging the stone with it, which knocks him in the chin, unconscious.

CUT TO - BLACK.

THE END