

Egyptian Cinderella

Many moons ago in the land of Egypt, there lived a young maiden called Rhodopis. She was born in Greece but was kidnapped by pirates, as a child, and sold as a slave. *Although* her owner was a kind old man, he spent most of his time sleeping under a tree. Due to this, he didn't notice how the other servant girls taunted Rhodopis.

Cruelly, they teased her because she looked *different* to them. They had straight black hair while hers was a mass of golden girls. Most had brown eyes but hers were as green as emeralds. Because they were lazy, they made her do all the work. "Go to the river and wash the clothes!" they demanded. "Make the dinner!" they cried. Poor Rhodopis was miserable and alone.

However, Rhodopis had one joy in life; she loved to dance. One evening, as she was dancing barefoot in the sand, the old man woke from his nap. Quietly, he watched and thought that she deserved a new pair of dancing shoes. Without wasting time, he ordered for a pair of poppy-red shoes with shimmering gold stitching to be made

Although she was thrilled, the other servant girls were jealous of their master's gift to Rhodopis. Word arrived that the Pharaoh was having a ball in Cairo and all the kingdom were invited. Rhodopis, desperately wanted to go to dance, sing and eat delicious food. However, the other girls left for the party without her. With tears in her eyes, she began the task of washing the dirty laundry in the river. Suddenly, a crocodile appeared and splashed her. Her beautiful new shoes were wet so she took them off to dry in the hot

sunshine. Without warning, a falcon swooped down, snatched one of her slippers in its talons and flew away. It was the god Horus.

Meanwhile, far away in Cairo, the Pharaoh (Amosis) sat on his throne at the ball feeling bored. Suddenly, Horus swooped down and dropped the slipper in his lap. *Straight away*, he realised it was a sign the god had sent. He had to find the owner of the slipper.

Amosis searched high and low for the maiden he was to marry. Early one morning, he sailed down the Nile and arrived at the village where Rhodopis lived. The servant girls, who had abandoned her, couldn't squeeze it onto their large feet. The pharaoh, spotted Rhodopis hiding in the rushes and asked her to try on the slipper. Slowly, she slid her delicate foot inside. It fitted. Amosis had found his queen.

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