

The clouds hung gray that morning, drifting slowly by on lazy desert winds. It almost looked as if it would rain, but it almost never did.

Hardly anyone came outside at these early hours—just light enough to see, but not enough to stir the commonfolk. He had at least another hour before any early-morning enthusiasts would dare to roam the sandy streets.

He had grown to know the path quite well, weaving between the least-noticed back alleys of the sandstone and limestone buildings, ducking beneath windows to make sure he remained unseen. He meandered his way until he came beneath the tall, polished-limestone temple—a measly construct in temple terms, but still standing doubly higher than any other nearby buildings. It was nothing like the great, magnificent temples they built in the cities, but was obviously constructed to at least appear more important than any other building in the vicinity. It didn't have much to compete with, anyways—the only thing around here was pitiful mud-brick and sandstone houses.

He glanced around before slipping through the only back doorway there was. His talons clacked on the polished stone beneath, but the noise seemed to bother him not. He was safe, and most importantly, alone.

He pulled the hood of his robe off, revealing the white, feathery face beneath, beset with a black beak. Tawny feathers covered most of his head, the border between brown and white outlined by black plumage that rimmed his visage. A pair of cautious eyes darted around in their sockets, irises of sparkling amber set in polished obsidian stones—a rare trait, at the very least, that always drew attention—the last thing he wanted right now.

He had made sure there would be no attention to be had, however. He had even gone as far as to withhold practicing his “worship” the first few days—he had simply sat in the temple and waited, making sure no one would come by who might disturb his practice. And no one had.

Slipping off his robe, he made his way past the mock-altars dedicated to dozens of different deities. He had no interest in any of them, though he was careful not to disrupt them, lest it mar his respect. He only had interest in one altar, and he knew where it was.

He approached the inset on the wall covered with glyphs, where a stone falcon statue stood solemnly. Barely taller than an arm's length, it was no remarkable gaud, but the fact that it existed—and that it wasn't on the floor like many others—said enough. This was a popular god, popular enough to warrant a small statue and elevation despite the small temple's obvious lack of decoration.

There was nothing on the stone inset other than the statue. But for that matter, there was nothing anywhere for any god. The ritual bowls and statues always stayed put, but all the offerings—trinkets, valuables, coins—were gone. They cleared them every few days—he had seen them doing it on the days he had come. They needed to, lest things overflow, but he cared not. He had seen half the trinkets on the altars not a day later, on the priests' persons or in the priests' pockets. He knew they had no interest in rituals or gods.

Posers, liars, infidels. All-around disgusting people. They didn't believe in the gods, and if they did, it was only enough to satiate their existential paranoia. All they were there for was to keep the temple clean and reap the rewards—an easy job with a big payout.

But he was different. Convinced, wholeheartedly, that many—or most—of them existed, especially his idol, which was a fading trait in these unkempt lands. Most believed the gods had forgotten them long ago—gods didn't care for people with no status, much less towns with none.

Horus, the god of the sky. His left eye the sun, his right eye the moon, protector of Egypt. Depicted as a falcon, like the statue before him.

He tossed his linen robe to the floor. Under it he wore nothing but a cheap shendyt, which was little more than a large linen cloth wrapped around his upper waist, hanging down to his knees. He did, however, offset the cheap attire with modest jewelry: a metallic cuff on his ankle and a valuable-looking bib necklace around his neck. Neither were his own—he had found them sitting atop the altar on the days after they had cleared them. They had always cleared absolutely everything, which made these particular pieces peculiar—what was even more peculiar was that they had shown zero signs of wear, as if brand-new. He knew not if someone else had left them, but it seemed impossibly unlikely that they had been simply left there—it almost seemed as if they had been placed there just for him. So he took them, and wore them. It felt a little wrong, but he had confidence in the gods to tell him if it was.

In a different city—one that wasn't one of the smallest on this side of the Nile—the temple would've been much greater. Four times as tall and many more times wider and longer, it would've been nothing less than a grand commemoration of the gods' names. The stone inset would be a grand altar, and the statue might even be of solid gold.

He didn't need gold to satiate his fantasies, however. A stone likeness would do, and he could even do it with nothing at all.

He placed a hand on the smooth stone of the worn statue and closed his eyes. He flooded his mind with images, filling in the gaps that touch couldn't provide. The tall, powerful figure standing before him. The soft touch of feathered skin, much like his own. The deep, commanding voice.

The owl slid a hand into his shendyt, beginning to touch himself.

The firm muscles building a strong, robust figure. The muscular curves and creases of an undoubtedly perfect body. The taboo that lay within that armored loincloth, something he so dearly yearned to see—

“Here to defile my altar a third time?”

The voice boomed like a shout, though barely more than an utterance. It ricocheted in his head like a bullet, ripping and tearing his thoughts into pieces in an instant. He froze, one hand still on the statue and the other touching his crotch.

He opened his beak as if to speak, but nothing came out. He could barely even construct a sentence in his head, his thoughts a storming mixture of shock, embarrassment, dumbfoundedness, and disbelief.

His face flushed hotly. His heart raced. His breathing turned shaky and uneven. He slowly pulled his hand from his linen coverings. It was shaking.

“I see you found my gifts.”

The owl stared for a moment before shakily fingering the necklace he wore. He had found it on the altar around the statue’s neck as if Horus had left it for him. Immaculately new, it showed no sign of wear—he had his doubts, but he believed it to be given by Horus himself. But for some reason, his mind seemed unwilling to accept that fact. Everything was coming much, much too fast. He could barely keep his whole body from trembling.

He stared at the statue, unsure of what to do amidst his shock. He was being watched, *talked to* by a god. The sound of talons clacking wrested him from his thoughts, however, and his breath caught in his throat. It was not just watching and talking. Horus was *here*. Horus was *behind* him. He swallowed, an uncomfortable act that took much more effort than it usually did.

The footsteps came right up behind him and stopped. He didn’t need to see anything, not even a shadow—he could feel the god’s presence looming over him like imposing doom. He had never felt so small.

A gray hand drifted slowly over his shoulder and down to his neck, gently examining his necklace.

His whole body tensed as the defined fingers of a god-sized hand slipped under his chin, the bodily warmth radiating from it like sun-baked sands. It was there. It was real. It was *touching* him.

He glanced down at the clawed fingers. The hand was huge, much larger than his own. Worn yet young digits made their way over the intricacies of his necklace with deceptive gentleness, uncharacteristic of such a tough, strong-looking hand.

It comforted him a little, enough for him to realize he wasn’t breathing. He let out a soft, shuddering sigh that tickled the feathery skin of the fingers on his chest.

“Worthy of royalty.”

The voice boomed again, but still barely more than a murmur. It was much, much closer now. He could feel the air of the words brush the feathers on his scalp.

A second hand slipped around his waist, fingers gently curling around one of his hips, right above his clothes. It did little more than rest there, but it felt like an inescapable grip of iron. His whole body tensed at the touch.

He took a deep breath, focusing on the soothing warmth of the god’s palm on his belly. It calmed him, and he slowly got his breathing under control.

He managed to stop shaking by the time the god’s hands slipped away from his body, the warmth retreating. The looming presence seemed to lift as the god moved away a short distance, but the owl still didn’t have the nerve to turn around.

“You think I don’t feel when you spread your seed on my likeness?” the god said.

“I-I won’t...” he sputtered, struggling to speak, the words sticking in his throat like tar. His voice came out meek and quiet.

“I w-won’t do it again.”

He took in a tenuous breath to calm his racing heart. An uncomfortable length of silence passed.

“You won’t. But sins still carry a price.”

His heart sunk, and his stomach turned.

“I—I’m sorry—”

His apology was cut short by the sound of clinking metal, like chainmail or armor being dropped to the floor. First it was one, then another, then a third, all with a long silence in between them.

“As much as I commend your dedication to my cause,” the commanding voice continued, “I cannot leave before serving you justice.”

The owl wanted to run, but he simply couldn’t. Not just from his nerves, but as if it was an inescapable fate that he was destined to suffer.

The last metallic clink sounded, followed by a long silence. Then, the familiar sound of talons on stone sounded, and that same presence loomed over him once again, only this time it felt stronger.

His terrified curiosity bested him, and he looked up. Two glowing eyes looked judgmentally down from above, as if staring into the depth of his soul. A stern, stoic face and a black beak stiffened into a stern expression accompanied them, forming a grave, falcon-like face the owl could only label as that of the very god he envisioned in his mind.

Suddenly, one of those gray hands snapped to the owl’s black beak, curling around it in an instant to lock it shut in a firm clasp. It felt as if his mouth had been instantaneously cast shut with solid metal.

“*Mmph!*” he tried to screech, but nothing but a pitiful, muffled murmur came out.

The other huge, gray hand found its way onto his stomach, pulling him backwards with decided and absolute conviction. The owl’s body moved back with it, but it was stopped as his back connected with the god’s naked front.

The metallic clinks had been Horus’s armor.

The broad form of a muscled, firm body pressed into him. His shoulders pressed into the god’s chest, his back against the god’s abs, and his still-clothed ass against the god’s crotch. A stiff mass pressed up against the owl’s backside. His eyes widened.

The grip around his beak lifted upwards, pulling his chin up and forcing their gazes to meet. All the owl could do was look up with worry, but where he expected a pair of angry, unforgiving eyes, he found a soft, calming gaze.

“I’ve been watching you for a while,” Horus said, “and it would be wasteful to let a form like yours go unused. I shall defile your likeness, as you have defiled mine. A fitting punishment, is it not?”

The owl stared up with apprehension and confusion. He wanted to believe the stories and myths—that his punishment would be severe, given by an unforgiving god with little remorse—but for some reason, he couldn’t. He knew he would face rightful shame for his

actions, but Horus's touch was too gentle. His eyes showed no hate. His voice, however, stayed condescending and authoritative, contrary to his body.

Horus's other hand slid down the smaller bird's belly and into his shendyt, undoing the cloth covering with ease. Casting it aside, he exposed the smaller bird, nothing left between the male's supple, effeminate body and Horus's own broad, robust form.

The owl squirmed a little, his eyes squeezing shut. He was being stripped and humiliated, his naked body on display for the greater bird's enjoyment. There was nothing he could do but accept the shame.

That same firm grasp clamped around his thigh, lifting his leg.

"*Mmf—*" the owl objected, his privates and tailhole exposed as Horus raised his leg high into the air, shamelessly exposing him in full. He wriggled a little, but there was nothing he could do to stop the god from claiming his body, the deity's cock sliding up between his split legs and against his balls.

It was only now he realized that he himself was rock-hard. The more jarring realization, however, was the size of Horus's cock.

*Deific* was an understatement. He had always wondered exactly how endowed a god might be, but he never would've expected this. He had always imagined an unrealistically-proportioned dick to pair with an unrealistically-perfect masculine figure, but this was far beyond his wildest expectations.

It was comparable to a horse's. The size of his forearm at the very least, it was easily twice his own in both length and circumference, replete with similarly-proportioned balls to match. With a pointed tip like his own, it even had a medial ring, exemplifying the daunting image it gave. And it was undoubtedly real, throbbing against his own, teasing him with its weight and warmth.

"*Nngh...*" he groaned, shifting uncomfortably. His mind filled with unbearable apprehension. He had never taken another male before, lest it scar his masculinity, but while he figured he might've been able to take a normal-sized insertion, this god-sized monstrosity was far out of the question.

He squirmed, but his raised leg kept him from putting up any useful struggle. His head swarmed with humiliation, apprehension, and otherwise, but they all melted together to form an overwhelming unease. The shame of his naked body was only half of it—there was still a long way to go.

The god pulled back, that oversized cock sliding against the owl's balls before disappearing back between his legs. The owl whimpered a muffled plea, stifled by the hand around his beak.

"Do not be afraid," the god reassured. "I am always gentle with my females."

Horus readjusted the owl, lining himself up. The smaller bird wriggled uselessly, his heart pounding in his chest.

Warm flesh pressed against the owl's asshole, smearing warm, slimy precum over his entrance.

“*Nnh—*” he groaned into Horus’s hand, his back arching as his body shied away from the imminent penetration, hands bracing on the god’s shoulder and the stone statue for balance.

Horus pressed further, matching the owl’s reluctance, his cock pushing up against the little bird’s unwilling tailhole. His cocktip mashed against the pink, pre-stained ring, which caved inwards softly before resisting like stubborn dough. The owl whimpered.

“You cannot resist divine punishment,” Horus stated, lifting the boy’s leg up a little further. “Accept your fate.”

Horus pushed upwards gently but firmly. His cocktip pressed eagerly against the boy’s asshole, caving the malleable flesh in even further and threatening entrance, refusing to let up. With nowhere to go, the owl simply squirmed—but in such an exposed, immobile position, it amounted to little more than gentle wriggles, which did nothing to stop the god’s cock from progressing.

“*Mmph!—*” he squawked into the god’s hand, feeling his virgin asshole beginning to stretch. It was an agonizing, slow feeling that flooded his body with panic, his tight tailhole slowly succumbing to another male’s girth, inevitable and inescapable. His virginity was seconds away from being stained forever, wrested away from him by the god he loved.

Horus pulled gently down on the owl’s thigh, adding more force to the equation. Shaky groans tried to spill from the boy’s muted beak as his asshole split further, the tight entrance giving way.

The boy’s body tensed and quivered as Horus’s cocktip forced its way inside him, the reluctant, pink flesh clenching firmly against it. Slowly, agonizingly, the greater bird wedged his way inside of him, prying him open until that too-thick head rested inside his body. His wedged-open asshole could only close around the width of Horus’s cocktip, no more, an extremely foreign sensation that he wasn’t sure was good or bad.

Another male had now entered him. It could end right here, and it wouldn’t matter—his anal virginity was gone. He now permanently bore the mark of a female—Horus’s female.

With the hardest part over with, the god now had full reign of his body. That strong grip on his thigh pulled him down once again, more of Horus’s cock beginning to feed into his penetrated asshole, prying it open wider. He tensed, his back arching again, but there was nothing he could do.

“*Nngh—*” he groaned as the god’s pulsating dick pressed further into him, now past simple surface-level and prying into his deeper insides. Not a centimeter a second, he felt every single millimeter that slid past his unwilling, clenching tailhole and into his body, adding to the throbbing girth pressing deeper and deeper into him. It had started at just his ass, but now he could feel Horus’s dick making its way into his pelvis, prying open and stuffing full his soft passage. And not only that, but every new centimeter of shaft that pushed into him added another measure to the width that split him open wider and wider, the stretching sensation only growing more and more unbearable.

His cock throbbed. He had fantasized about things like this before, but not in this way. Never this wide, never this deep, and never this real.

He felt the grip around his beak loosen, the hand letting go. His mouth lolled open as he took in needed pants of breath, trying to keep his composure.

Horus's cock slid farther in. Or, he slid farther down Horus's cock. He couldn't tell at this point, and he didn't care. He was being bred by a god, and that was all that mattered. He had accepted his fate.

Two fingers slipped into his ajar mouth, pressing against his tongue.

"Ah—nh..." he mumbled, feeling the god invade another orifice, toying with his body.

The hand around his thigh pulled firmer, the god's thick cock splitting him open even faster, the boy slipping steadily down its length.

The owl could feel the cock within him throbbing above his own dick, which drooled precum at an alarming rate. And as he murmured moans over the deity's fingers pressing down on his tongue, it only slipped further up.

He slowly slid down to the god's medial ring, most of the greater bird already inside of him. His ass was split open to the width of his own bicep and the length of his own forearm, and his thighs had begun to quiver.

"*Haah...*" he huffed, feeling the god's throbs at the top of his pelvis. His ass clenched in spasmodic fashion, needy throbs of his cock pairing with each clench. It took every ounce of his being to keep his composure.

Horus grunted, pulling the boy down. A gasping cry sounded as the owl's ass yawned open, reluctantly swallowing over Horus's medial ring. He didn't stop, however, continuing to slide the boy down onto his cock, ignoring his meek, desperate groans of objection until—at long last—he had hilted.

The owl let slip a long, shaky whimper, feeling the god's girth lodged inside him. It was nothing short of intoxicating, the sensations wresting control over his body and amplifying every little movement he or the deity made. He could feel Horus's throbs behind his bellybutton, and his tailhole was pried open impossibly far, permanently split over the god's immense girth.

His breath came out in hot, uncontrolled huffs.

"Please..." he muttered behind a mouthful of fingers. "Mercy..."

Horus readjusted his grip.

"As you wish."

A quivering sigh matched the owl's shaking thighs as the bigger bird's cock pulled gently back, tugging at his walls and tailhole. A gentle clench resisted as that medial ring pulled at his entrance, parting it that extra bit before the rest slid smoothly out all the way to the tip.

It went back in the same speed, the owl's malleable ring turning from convex to concave as Horus reentered his body, firm throbs helping the poorly-lubricated length to force its way inside and back to a full hilt. Hot, shaky breaths spilled against the god's saliva-coated fingers, and the owl's raised toes furred and twitched with tense apprehension.

The process repeated, those soft, tight walls hugging Horus's cock as it slid gently out and in, though not without difficulty. The oversized nature of the deity's manhood was reason

enough to make the process agonizingly slow, but the poor boy's struggling passage—stretched too wide and stuffed too full—helped none either.

The god couldn't have sped up even if his firm pushes and pulls wanted to. Small toys—especially new ones—had to be broken in, a slow and arduous process that took time and patience. No one was born built for a deity's size, a boon and a curse for both parties—the size bigger and the fit tighter, but the process slower and the break-in harder.

Despite the size difference, however, lubrication was an equally gentle process, nothing other than pre there to slick the boy's walls. Each slow, methodical push in and pull out smeared the thick slimes up and down his insides, gradually making each new push and pull easier than the last. But even though nothing other than natural lubrication aided the process, the bird's deepest reaches were slimed and saturated with Horus's precum surprisingly quickly, turned slippery only through a proliferation of the substance. Something had to have stirred the god's deep lusts to produce so much—maybe the pitiful incapability of a mortal body to handle his sex, or maybe the secret taboo of breeding lesser beings.

Nevertheless, it took a significant while for the boy to warm up to Horus's cock—not that he had a choice. Stripped and exposed like a wanton whore, claim laid to his body and virginity without hesitation. He had not objected, though, a combination of veneration, shame, submission, and fantasy keeping him from resisting. He was but a lowly mortal, and Horus a god—every ounce of his being, body, and mind belonged to the deity to do as he pleased, and he would have it no other way. He was his.

Now properly lubricated, the pace finally began to hasten. Horus stopped pausing in between passes, his cock now always on its way in or on its way out. The only major resistance left was the clash between Horus's size and the boy's virgin tightness, as well as the weak clenches of the boy's stretched passageway.

Though the boy was loosened and lubricated as much as could be, none of it helped his shaky thighs and tensing body. And now that the god had the capacity to speed up, the sensation of that girth sliding in and out only got more unbearable, poking at his deepest insides more regularly and pressing his prostate aside to make way for that stiff, hardened length. Every amount he got used to the deity's oversized sex was simply nullified by a slight increase in pace, leaving him no choice but to shudder, to tense, and to whimper through a mouthful of fingers.

He had not counted thrusts nor minutes, but it had already felt like a lifetime. He had already forgotten what the absence of the god's deific phallus had felt like, and he wasn't sure if he could stand on two legs, if given the chance.

All of his senses were tuned to Horus inside him and his own lust multiplying. Through the increasing fluidity and speed at which the god used him, his own dick incessantly throbbed and hardened until it seemed it could throb nor harden no more. Pre drooled out of his tip messily as his arousal humiliatingly dangled on display, bouncing with the rhythm of Horus's heavysset sacks bumping shamelessly against his own, the god's balls equally as obscene in size as his cock.



The owl's comparatively pitiful orbs were well acquainted with Horus's oversized ones once the deity slid into a moderate rhythm, the boy's tailhole yawning and retracting around the god's girth with each thrust. He was given no pause, that entrance forced to swallow the god's sex whole, then back again, over and over.

Horus himself had begun to show wear, however lightly. Shallow huffs of breath from his nares and his flexing muscles signalled that the niceities were over—he was fully intent on fucking, and his stamina had begun to shrink. Whether from the boy's silken insides that groped his length or the profound tightness of a virgin hole, all that mattered was his seeming resolution to fulfill the punishment he dealt.

There was a long way to go, however, which the boy quickly learned. The god seemed to never tire, even speeding up into a nigh-unbearable full-force fucking, and he displayed no sign of weakness—quite opposite to the owl, who gradually slipped deeper and deeper into a state of overwhelmed incohesion.

“*Nngh...*” he moaned, his talons furling and his eyes half-lidded as he struggled with his battered senses. “M-mercy...”

Horus refused.

“Serve your punishment with honor. Submit.”

He pulled the owl's leg back, changing his angle of entry as he barraged the poor boy's insides, sticking his fingers deep into the back of the smaller bird's beak.

A sputtering, choked cry shot out of the boy's mouth, his back arching as his whole body shuddered. His cock let loose a bout of desperate, violent throbs, precum spurting out of his tip as Horus's diamond-hard dick rammed against his erogenous zone, continuing up into his deep internals before sliding back out to repeat the motion.

The boy violently squirmed, but Horus gripped his thigh firmly, slamming another thrust straight into his prostate.

“You resist. You fail to realize you have no control.”

He increased his pace, brutally battering the poor bird's pelvis with sharp, overwhelming stimulation. The owl's body shook and twitched, bucking back and forth uselessly in a pitiful attempt to escape the unbearable assault.

He could not hold back. His body was no longer his to control, and as Horus willed it, he crumbled to the unbearable stimulation. His cock spasmed, forceful throbs sending violent spurts of cum against the altar, painting the glyphs with oozing white.

Almost as if on cue, a thick splurt of hot warmth hosed his deep insides, then another. Each pulsating throb of Horus's cock started sending forceful spurts of thick, goopy virility up into his intestines without pause as the god pounded him, leeching warmth into his pelvis.

Contrary to expectation, Horus seemed to struggle to remain stoic as he continued thrusting, his oversized sacks emptying into the boy's body. But ass already occupied with the size of the god's sex, half of the thick, hot white forced its way deeper into the boy's intestines while the other half forced its way back out the way it came, splurting messily out the owl's tailhole and onto the adjacent scene.



The thrusting added to the mess, Horus's size forcing the limitless contents of his balls either deeper into the quivering owl or sloppily out. The poor boy's cock desperately throbbed and tensed in spasms as the stimulation continued, even as he drained himself dry, his poor body unwilling to give up his orgasm. But as he whimpered and wriggled, Horus just kept thrusting, more and more godly seed transferring from one body to another.

The boy's body broke down more and more as the god refused to let up, until he could stand no more. He limped, giving up, his cock still raging and his body still twitching as Horus pumped the latter half of his orgasm into the littler bird, unconcerned for the boy's well-being. And it seemed Horus broke as well, if only just a little—his thrusting growing uneven, his beak gritting, and suppressed grunts slipping out between his jaws.

But eventually, after an agonizing eternity of seemingly limitless seed, the deity finally began to slow, orgasm reluctantly easing bit by bit until finally it was no more, the god's fleeting weakness replaced by resolution once again.

The owl hadn't just been filled with the god's mark, he was covered in it. His ass was utterly drenched in cum, oozing sloppily down his legs and drooling onto Horus's thighs. And

even with the god's cock plugging his entrance, more seeped out slowly to add to the rest in warm, slimy fashion.

There was no refuting it now, even if he wanted to. The proof was there: Horus had claimed him as his female, and he would bear the mark for the rest of history. And even if other people didn't know it, the gods certainly did. However undignified, humiliating, or degrading it was, he was Horus's.

The god's cock slipped out sloppily, the boy's cum-coated walls barely resisting as it slid out with ease. A heavy wave of thick cum followed, washing out over the scene and tripling the mess.

Horus smeared his dick over the still-clean bits of the boy's backside, wiping it partially clean. Cum leaked profusely from the boy's loose tailhole, drooling out and down to join the rest of the oozing mess, which was now dripping down his legs to his toes. He lowered the owl to the ground, the boy finally able to stand on two legs again, albeit unevenly.

The owl leant on the altar for support, his legs still shaky. Every movement accentuated the soreness in his backside. He stood there for a long while, recovering his senses and muscles, his dick still twitching limply as if there was more to be had.

He looked down at the streams of cum flowing down his legs to his ankles and feet. It was only then he noticed the shafts of light hitting the ground through the skylit roof, which reminded him: he hadn't much time before he needed to leave, lest he be spotted. And he knew, very well, that this was likely the worst time there ever was to be spotted.

Grabbing his cloak and shendyt off of the ground, he turned to give the god one last reverence, but he was already gone. He stared at the empty space for a moment before turning to leave, but paused, turning back to wipe his cum from the altar, leaving it clean as he left.

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He spent the next few hours cleaning himself and nursing his sore backside, finding the quietest way down to the bathing river and making absolutely sure the spot he chose was well away from the public eye, which took much longer than he expected. Taking the bare minimum amount of time to clean and make sure he didn't look suspicious, the first thing he did was bolt back up to the altar.

What he found there, however, was exactly what he had feared—not the usual activity, but a distressed crowd surrounding the temple. Pushing through the commotion, he expected to find a sea of onlookers huddled around the mess he had made in front of Horus's likeness, but to his surprise there was nothing to be seen, as if it had never even happened. But in its place—and many other places, for that matter—were pools of blood, and the bodies of the priests.

He hadn't originally wanted to believe it was the Horus's doing, but the more he thought about it the more likely it seemed. All the altars had remained clear of blood except for Horus's, and he wouldn't have expected the god to show up only to defile his body. He had more important things to do than that.

He had no pity for the bodies on the floor—he knew them well, and as fakes at best. None of them were in it for the piety, but only for the pay.

But he knew better. He had *seen* better. And as far as he knew, he was the material of myths, one of the only mortals to ever *see* a god, much less *feel* one. All the nonbelievers that walked by him on the streets, scoffing at the temples, were wrong.

And with new vacancies in priesthood, he could *prove* them wrong. And, as far as his lowly life was concerned, that's where he wanted to be—as close to the gods as possible.