

Dedi and the Children of Rud-dedit

The day came when the sons of the woman Rud-dedit were to be born. Then the high priest of Ra, her husband, prayed unto the goddess Isis and her sister Nepthys; to Meskhent, goddess of birth; and to the frog goddess Hekt; and to the creator god Khnm , who gives the breath of life. These he entreated to have care of the three babes who were to become three kings of Egypt, one after the other.

The deities heard him. Then came the goddesses as dancing girls, who went about the land, and the god Khnm followed them as their burden bearer. When they reached the door of the high priest's dwelling they danced before him. He entreated them to enter, and they did according to his desire, and shut themselves in the room with the woman Rud-dedit.

Isis called the first child who was born Userkaf, and said: "Let no evil be done by him". The goddess Meskhent prophesied that he would become King of Egypt. Khnm , the creator god, gave the child strength.

The second babe was named Sahura by the goddess Isis. Meskhent prophesied that he also would become a king. Khnm gave him his strength. The third was called Kaka.

Meskhent said: "He shall also be a king", and Khnm gave him strength.

Ere the dancing girls took their departure the high priest gave a measure of barley to their burden bearer, and Khnm carried it away upon his shoulders.

They all went upon their way, and Isis said: "Now let us work a wonder on behalf of these children, so that their father may know who hath sent us unto his house.

Royal crowns were fashioned and concealed in the measure of barley which had been given them. Then the deities caused a great storm to arise, and in the midst of it they returned to the dwelling of the high priest, and they put the barley in a cellar, and sealed it, saying they would return again and take it away.

It came to pass that after fourteen days Rud-dedit bade her servant to bring barley from the cellar so that beer might be made.

The girl said: "There is none left save the measure which was given unto the dancing girls."

"Bring that then," said Rud-dedit, "and when the dancing girls return I will give them its value."

When the servant entered the cellar she heard the low sounds of sweet music and dancing and song. She went

and told her mistress of this wonder, and Rud-dedit entered the cellar, and at first could not discover whence the mysterious sounds issued forth. At length she placed her ear against the sack which contained the barley given to the dancing girls, and found that the music was within it. She at once placed the sack in a chest and locked it, and then told her husband, and they rejoiced together.

Now it happened that one day Rud-dedit was angry with her servant, and smote her heavily. The girl vowed that she would be avenged and said: "Her three children will become kings. I will inform King Khufu of this matter."

So the servant went away and visited her uncle, who was her mother's eldest brother. Unto him she told all that had happened and all she knew regarding the children of her mistress.

He was angry with her and spoke, saying: "Why come to me with this secret? I cannot consent to make it known as you desire."

Then he struck the girl, who went afterwards to draw water from the Nile. On the bank a crocodile seized her, and she was devoured.

The man then went towards the dwelling of Rud-dedit and he found her mourning with her head upon her knees. He spoke, saying: "Why is your heart full of gloom?"

Rud-dedit answered him: "Because my servant girl went away to reveal my secret."

The man bowed and said: "Behold! she came unto me and told me all things. But I struck her, and she went towards the river and was seized by a crocodile."

So was the danger averted. Nor did King Khufu ever discover the babes regarding whom Dedi had prophesied. In time they sat upon the throne of Egypt.

Source: *Egyptian Myth and Legend* by Donald Mackenzie (1907). [Weblink](#).

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